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Planning and Zoning Commission Agenda Memorandum

AGENDA DATE: February 26, 2025

SUBJECT: Zoning Case No. ZON24-0002: Rezone of Mountain View Farms West PUD to R-1, R-2, MU-RC and I-1

ACTION PROPOSED: Consideration of Zoning Case No. ZON24-0002 to change the zoning of Mountain View Farms West PUD to R-1, R-2, MU-RC and I-1.

LOCATION: A Parcel of Land situated in the Southwest Quarter of Section 22, Township 5 North, Range 68 West of the 6th P.M., Larimer County, Colorado.
5531 East Highway 402, Johnstown, CO 80534

APPLICANT: West Ridge Holdco LLC.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application
2. Vicinity Map
3. Zoning Map
4. Mountain View Farms ODP
5. Traffic Impact Study
6. Staff Presentation
7. Applicant Presentation

PRESENTED BY: James Shrout, Planner I
Jeremy Gleim, AICP, Planning & Development Director

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY

West Ridge Holdco LLC. (Applicant) is seeking to rezone approximately 133 acres of land from PUD-MU to four different zoning designations: I-1 (Industrial Light 27.1 acres), MU-RC (Mixed Use-Regional Commercial 49.5 acres), R-1 (Residential 36.7 acres), and R-2 (Residential 20.1 acres).

The subject property is currently identified as Mountain View Farms and was annexed into the Town of Johnstown in 2008 under Ordinance 2008-797 and zoned by way of Ordinance 2008-804.

The Community that Cares

SURROUNDING ZONING & LAND USE

North: Rural Residential – Unincorporated Larimer County
South: PUD-MU (Mixed Use) – City of Loveland
East: I-25 & PUD-MU (Mixed Use) – Town of Johnstown
West: Rural Residential – Unincorporated Larimer County

PUBLIC NOTICE & AGENCY REFERRALS

Notices were mailed to all property owners within 800 feet of the property subject to this public hearing on January 15, 2025. This notice provided the date, time, and location of the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing, as well as a description of the project. Notice for the Planning & Zoning Commission hearing was published in the local newspaper of widest circulation, the Johnstown Breeze, on Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

LAND USE DESIGNATION

The property is subject to two land use designations: High Density/Intensity (HDI) on the eastern half, and Medium Density/Intensity (MDI) on the western half.

Pursuant to the Town’s adopted Comprehensive Plan,

A High Density/Intensity area (HDI) will be generally characterized by a high percentage of non-residential uses, with some residential possibly integrated into larger development areas. These HDI corridors and nodes will accommodate and experience larger volume of traffic and be located along busy arterial and highway corridors, and especially at interchanges and intersections.

These areas are intended to provide high-quality, high-visibility locations for retail, office, and employment activities, with some light industrial uses that can appropriately mitigate impacts and contribute to the employment base. These areas will have taller, larger-scale structures, a wider span of business hours, large parking areas, and a mix of uses that create economic synergies. Gathering spaces, entertainment venues, and walkable and enjoyable retail areas may be located adjacent to larger “big box” retailers. Town Gateways will also benefit from these HDI locations where most travelers may first be made aware that they are in Johnstown.

While HDI areas are largely served by vehicular transportation with speeds of 35 mph or more, these areas may also serve as ideal locations for transit facilities, and multi-modal trails that allow cyclists and pedestrians to safely connect to the services offered from neighboring residential areas. Residential may be integrated into mixed-use structures, or be provided as stand-alone complexes, whereby residents can easily access employment, entertainment, and shopping opportunities, as well as the nearby transportation network and any transit facilities.

The Community that Cares

The intent and desired character of MDI areas, as described in the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan, is described as follows:

A Medium Density/Intensity area (MDI) will generally be characterized by a more balanced, and wider-ranging mix of land uses—incorporating walk-up apartment buildings, townhomes, small lot (3,500-5,000 SF) attached and detached single-family housing, in close proximity to neighborhood-scale shopping, personal services, restaurants, small medical facilities, and facilities such as libraries and recreational centers. MDI areas may also occur along arterials and other major corridors, and may serve as the next layer away from the High Density/Intensity areas they may neighbor, as a transition to lower density neighborhoods. MDI's will offer complete neighborhoods with a diversity of shops and services, including schools and civic facilities, within walking or biking distance from residential areas; and offer good walking connections along with larger-scale multi-modal trails.

Commercial uses may be developed as stand-alone sites or be grouped in small 10 to 20-acre centers or campuses. Johnstown's Downtown would be ideal for this level of development. Reuse and redevelopment of existing structures may occur, with historic residences and structures changing to offices, boutiques, or personal services with alley-served parking. Commercial centers in an MDI will feature more walkability, perhaps offering covered arcades or awnings, pedestrian-scaled signage, shade trees and nice landscaping that helps slow traffic and break-up parking areas, and enjoyable outdoor spaces to gather. Rooftop and sidewalk patios, along with courtyard plazas offer patrons enjoyable places to meet and eat, gather and chat with friends.

Residential neighborhoods will provide a range of housing options and provide street and trail connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Housing will be encouraged to provide porches that extend closer to the sidewalks, and garages that are alley-loaded or setback to offer a safer, slower, and more interesting streetscape. Future considerations may include accessory dwelling or carriage house units to increase affordability and diversity. These are great neighborhoods to encourage and accommodate a diversity of lifestyles and income ranges, and allow active-agers to remain in Johnstown once larger family homes and yards may be less desirable.

ACTIVITY CENTER OVERLAY

The property is also subject to an Activity Center overlay, as depicted in the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan. As described in the Comprehensive Plan,

Activity Centers have been identified as strategic areas that support local and regional transportation networks, living, employment, recreation, and services. These areas are intended to be mixed-use centers that make a highly efficient use of space by offering high-density residential areas supported by a diversity of shops and services and a vibrant public realm. Activity Centers continue to develop at highway interchanges, Downtown, and generally in conformance with other characteristics of a High Density/Intensity area. While three of the four activity centers are located along the I-25 corridor making them

convenient for motorized travelers, these centers should also connect to the Town's trail network, facilitating and encouraging active modes of transportation, and enhancing recreation opportunities for the community. These centers are ideal opportunities for the Town to consider future transit or other transportation services, and connections to nearby systems.

GATEWAY

The intersection of I-25 and State Highway 402 has been identified in the Town's Comprehensive Plan as a Gateway, which is further described as, "unique entrances into Town. Gateways are intended to define our community—both in terms of physical limits and identity, to welcome residents and visitors, and to slow traffic well outside Town limits. These gateways should be designed and landscaped to create cohesive, attractive, and celebratory landmarks that pay homage to Johnstown's character and values

The subject property lies at the northwest corner of the gateway intersection. As development occurs in the future, it will be expected that gateway treatments be incorporated into the design.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS

The subject property is currently identified as Mountain View Farms PUD and was annexed into the Town of Johnstown in 2008. The property's annexation included an associated development agreement and a concurrent zoning application which zoned the property PUD (Mixed Use Zoning) upon annexation. The zoning case included a Conceptual Outline Development Plan (ODP) which designated the property a mixed of uses including commercial, regional activities center district, medium density residential, and low density residential.

The Applicant is proposing to change the zoning from PUD to a combination of straight zoning designations. The proposed changes are very similar to the uses identified in the Mountain View Farms PUD. The primary benefit of changing the zoning to more traditional designations is that it will better align with the Town's Land Use & Development Code and Comprehensive Plan.

As previously mentioned, this rezone proposes to establish four different zoning designations:

- I-1 (Industrial Light): 27.1 acres;
- MU-RC (Mixed Use-Regional Commercial): 49.5 acres;
- R-1 (Residential): 36.7 acres; and,
- R-2 (Residential): 20.1 acres.

I-1 (Industrial Light)

Pursuant to the LUDC, the I-1 district provides primarily service, employment, manufacturing, and distribution uses at a scale, intensity and format that will not have significant impact on adjacent uses, and which can mix with supporting and compatible service and retail uses characteristic of mixed and flex business areas. General application of this zoning designation is adjacent to heavier industrial areas, as a transition to less intense uses, and limited application as an employment component of mixed-use or commercial areas in the High Intensity Area.

The Applicant is proposing approximately 27 acres of I-1 zoning in the northeast corner of the project site, adjacent to Interstate 25 (I-25). These types of uses are appropriate along interstate

highways, because they tend to provide a good buffer for roadway noises. The proposed location of the I-1 zoning district lies within the HDI area of the property and is an appropriate zoning designation for the prescribed HDI land use area.

MU-RC (Regional Commercial)

Pursuant to the LUDC, the MU-RC provides regional commercial, entertainment, and/or employment destinations. While compact, walkable, or transit-served locations and formats are preferred – particularly in areas designated as activity centers, this district may accommodate some higher-intensity and larger format commercial uses – particularly if they are removed from or on the periphery of activity centers or otherwise located to not disrupt walkable patterns. Limited application within Activity Centers in the Moderate Intensity areas. General application for commercial areas in the High Intensity Area.

The Applicant is proposing approximately 49 acres of MU-RC zoning in the southeast corner of the project site, adjacent to I-25 on the east and State Highway 402 on the south. This portion of the project is located in the HDI land use area and is subject to the Activity Center overlay. Based on those circumstances, the MU-RC zoning designation is appropriately sited pursuant to Applicant's proposal.

R-1 (Single-Family Neighborhood)

Pursuant to the LUDC, the R-1 district provides residential living (detached houses) in lower-density suburban or walkable neighborhood settings with access to supporting uses such as schools, churches, parks, and other public facilities. General application in low and moderate intensity areas, to provide a compatible range of lots in suburban or walkable neighborhoods. Limited applicability in greenbelt areas, where restricting site factors, hazards, or natural features may be properly mitigated and integrated into low density development patterns or coordinated with the conservation pattern.

The Applicant is proposing approximately 37 acres of R-1 zoning in the northwest corner of the project site. This portion of the project site is located in an MDI land use area. A five (5) lot single-family detached neighborhood in unincorporated Larimer County lies to the immediate west. R-1 zoning is appropriate for designation in MDI land use areas; therefore, the proposed location of this zoning district is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

R-2 (Mixed Density Neighborhood)

Pursuant to the LUDC, the R-2 district provides residential living (range of small-scale residential building types) in compact, walkable neighborhood settings, allowing a mix of housing unit options, and integration or transition to complementary and supporting non-residential uses. A well-designed public realm provides the focal point to integrate a variety of building types with a consistent neighborhood character. General application in moderate and high-intensity areas, as a complementary component of connected and walkable neighborhoods or the predominant residential component of downtown, mixed-use areas, and transit-served nodes.

The Community that Cares

The Applicant is proposing approximately 20 acres of R-2 zoning in the southwest corner of the project site. This portion of the project site is located in an MDI land use area. R-2 zoning is appropriate for designation in MDI land use areas; therefore, the proposed location of this zoning district is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

On January 29, 2025, a neighborhood meeting was held at the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Station Number 10. Notices advertising this meeting were mailed to all property owners within 800 feet of the subject property. Six (6) members of the community attended this neighborhood meeting to ask questions and raise concerns about the proposed change in zoning. The primary topics of discussion included:

- Access and circulation to Charlotte Court;
- Access and circulation to the property north of the project site;
- Roundabout designs on Highway 402; and,
- Drainage

These issues are currently being addressed through a preliminary plat application for the subject property; however, they are not directly affected by the zoning proposal.

ZONING & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The Town of Johnstown Land Use and Development Code identifies the following criteria for review of a rezone proposal decision:

1. The rezone furthers one or more of the purposes of these regulations in Section 17-1-3, and on balance any purposes that may be undermined are outweighed by the benefits of the purposes it furthers.
2. The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and any other plan, policy, or guidance adopted pursuant to that plan.
3. The change is consistent with the intent of the proposed zoning district, specifically considering:
 - a. The design of streets, civic spaces, and other open space;
 - b. The pattern, scale, and format of buildings and sites; and
 - c. The compatibility and transition with other complementary uses and development in the vicinity.
4. The change is necessary for at least one of the following reasons:
 - a. There has been a material change in the character of the area or in the Town generally, such that the proposed rezone is in the public interest.
 - b. The change will serve a community need or provide an amenity or benefit to the surrounding area that was not anticipated at the time of the initial zoning.
5. The town or other agencies have the ability to provide services or facilities that may be necessary for anticipated uses in the proposed district.
6. Any reasonably anticipated negative impacts on the area or adjacent property either are mitigated by sound planning, design, and engineering practices or are outweighed by broader public benefits to the surrounding community.

7. If owner initiated, at least two-thirds of the subject property owners within the change zone boundary have signed the application.
8. If owner initiated, the subject property has not been included in a rezone action in the prior 12 months, with the exception of property in the H-A zoning district which was established concurrently with annexation.
9. The recommendations of any professional staff and advisory review bodies have been considered.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ALIGNMENT

The proposed mix of zoning designations comply with the intent and character of the HDI and MDI land use areas, as defined in the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- Natural & Built Environment
 - *Guide growth in the community through appropriate annexation, zoning, planning, and land use development.*

Staff finds that the proposed rezone is consistent with the goal and strategy referenced above, pursuant to the adopted Johnstown Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends approval of this change of zone request pursuant to findings of fact listed below:

1. ***The rezone furthers one or more of the purposes of these regulations in Section 17-1-3, and on balance any purposes that may be undermined are outweighed by the benefits of the purposes it furthers, because:***
 This rezone will ensure the long-term value and the physical, social, and economic well-being of the residents and businesses through coordinated public and private investment. This rezone will promote planning and urban design that emphasizes distinct places and unique elements of community character throughout Johnstown. The rezone will assist in the division of the town into zones and districts that promote the character, intensity, and development patterns of distinct places identified in the Comprehensive Plan. This rezone will create compatibility within the area and will be transitional between complimentary districts, uses, and buildings.
2. ***The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and any other plan, policy, or guidance adopted pursuant to that plan, because:***
 This proposal is consistent with Goal W1 and W2 of the Comprehensive Plan by strengthening employment centers to diversify the Town's economic base and provide more jobs within the corporate boundaries of the Town, and by balancing more intense commercial uses along major highway corridors, respectively.

3. ***The change is consistent with the intent of the proposed zoning district, specifically considering, because:***

The proposed mix of zoning designations have been thoughtfully located for consistency with the High and Medium Density/Intensity land use areas, the Activity Center overlay, and compatibility with surrounding uses.

4. ***The change is necessary for at least one of the following reasons, because:***

a. *There has been a material change in the character of the area or in the Town generally, such that the proposed rezone is in the public interest.* The Town undertook a comprehensive update of the Land Use and Development Code in 2023 and the proposed change will align better with those updates.

b. *The change will serve a community need or provide an amenity or benefit to the surrounding area that was not anticipated at the time of the initial zoning.* The change will serve a community need and benefit to the surrounding area by diversifying employment options and providing regional commercial property at a major gateway.

5. ***The town or other agencies have the ability to provide services or facilities that may be necessary for anticipated uses in the proposed district, because:***

The Town and other responsible agencies have services in the vicinity of the project site. Utility infrastructure and demand analysis will supplement future development applications.

6. ***Any reasonably anticipated negative impacts on the area or adjacent property either are mitigated by sound planning, design, and engineering practices or are outweighed by broader public benefits to the surrounding community, because:***

The subject property will be governed by the adopted Land Use and Development Code to lessen the impact on adjacent property owners.

7. ***If owner initiated, at least two-thirds of the subject property owners within the change zone boundary have signed the application, because:***

One property is subject to this proposed change in zoning and is owner-initiated.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

For Approval: I move that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommends that the Town Council **APPROVE** the Change of Zone pursuant to Zoning Case No. ZON24-0002

For Denial: I move that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommends that the Town Council **DENY** the Change of Zone pursuant to Zoning Case No. ZON24-0002.