



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 12/12/2023

REQUESTER: Doyle's Electric

PRESENTER: Jane Hudson, Director of Planning & Community Development

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2324-31 UPON SECOND AND FINAL READING: AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AMENDING SECTION 36-201 OF CHAPTER 36 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN SO AS TO REMOVE LOTS TWENTY-TWO (22) AND TWENTY-THREE (23), IN BLOCK SIXTY-EIGHT (68) OF ORIGINAL TOWN OF NORMAN, NORMAN, CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA, FROM THE CCFBC, CENTER CITY FORM-BASED CODE, AND PLACE SAME IN THE CCPUD, CENTER CITY PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF. (122 West Comanche Street)

REQUEST SUMMARY/CCFBC EXCEPTIONS: This is a request to rezone the area located at 122 W. Comanche Street, designated as Center City Form Based Code District, Urban General Frontage, to a Center City Planned Unit Development (CCPUD), as outlined in Appendix B of the Center City Form-Based Code.

The proposal for this site is to demolish a portion of the existing building that has severely deteriorated over the years, while retaining the rear portion of the cinderblock structure to utilize it for service materials associated with the applicant's existing business. The area of the lot cleared from the demolition will remain open and can be utilized as a portion of open space for the overall development or can be utilized for temporary parking. If paved for a parking area, the area can still be utilized as open space, possibly seating for staff during breaks, food trucks or private business uses. In addition, the applicant would like the opportunity to utilize the roof-top area of the cinderblock structure as active open space area as well. The cinderblock structure is a single-story and will remain as such in the near future.

The current open area on the east side of the existing building/east side of the lot is where the applicant proposes to construct a new office building. This two-story office building will be brought to the sidewalk, located at the north property line. The proposed location of the new building violates the established RBL, Required Build Line, in this District. Therefore, this rezoning is proposing to move the RBL to the north property line.

BACKGROUND:

This is the fourth application moving forward to Planning Commission and City Council requesting an amendment to the recently adopted Center City Form Based Code (CCFBC). City Staff and the community recently amended the CCFBC in an effort to simplify the processes; even with the recent amendments additional amendments are necessary to allow for the envisioned development under the CCFBC.

CCFBC HISTORY:

City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Norman and the University of Oklahoma (OU) on January 14, 2014. The MOU set forth the terms and conditions that would govern the development of a Center City Master Plan/Visioning Project and outlined the responsibilities of the City of Norman and the University of Oklahoma.

The Center City Form-Based Code, which is the outcome of this Project, was generated and recommended through a Steering Committee. In addition, there was an Executive Subcommittee of the Steering Committee which was comprised of one representative from the City of Norman, one representative from the University of Oklahoma, and one citizen chosen jointly by the City of Norman and the University of Oklahoma.

City Council moved forward with the original project in cooperation with the University of Oklahoma for many reasons. Historically, the current zoning regulations were not adequately addressing the growing, modern demand for infill development in Norman's Center City area; that there was significant community disagreement about market-driven proposals for infill development; that the professional charrette process was the best technique available to articulate community-supported vision; and that building community support for a vision followed by development of land use regulations that allows the achievement of the vision will provide both community and investors' confidence and certainty. The results of the Charrette process became the foundation for the community-supported vision of the Center City area, Center City Form Based Code (CCFBC).

ZONING DISTRICTS INCLUDED IN THIS DOCUMENT:

Urban General – The basic urban street frontage, once common across the United States. The purpose is to develop multi-story buildings placed directly at the sidewalk or behind small dooryards.

Urban Residential – Same as the Urban General except that the uses are limited to residential and related support services.

Urban Storefront – Represents the prototypical “main street” form with shopfronts along the sidewalk and a mix of uses above. A high level of pedestrian activity is anticipated. It is a subset of the Urban General frontage, with more specific requirements at the street level.

Detached – This frontage is represented by the traditional single-family house with small front, side and rear yards along tree-lined streets.

The CCFBC is composed of Building Form Standards and Public Space Standards mapped to a Regulating Plan.

Building Form Standards regulate: how far buildings are from sidewalks, how much window area at a minimum a building must have, how tall it is in relation to the width of the street, how accessible and welcoming front entrances are, and where a building's parking should be located. Building Form Standards require buildings to have windows and welcoming entries that contribute to life on the sidewalk and they require the placement of parking to the rear of buildings to ensure that it doesn't get between buildings and pedestrians. These standards require that buildings support and shape the public spaces of our city.

Building Form Standards control the use of land in a more indirect way than standard zoning, they describe general uses. And they try to guide land use through building type. For example, if a community wants a pedestrian-friendly main street, its standards would prescribe shopfront or mixed-use buildings.

Public Space Standards regulate the form of streets and squares. These standards provide for comfortable and useful spaces for many activities, including walking, bicycling, driving, public transit, and a community's social life rather than just providing for the movement and storage of cars. A shopping street is a different kind of street than a boulevard, which is different from a residential street, which is different from a rear alley.

PARTICULARS OF THIS CCPUD:

The applicant is requesting this CCPUD in order to retain a portion of the existing building on this parcel while constructing a new structure in-line with the other existing structures on the block, as illustrated on the attached drawings. The applicant is able to comply with most of the CCFBC requirements. However, due to the applicant's desire to retain the non-conforming structure, create parking in front of the existing building, to build a new structure at the property line, and allow for a sign on a canopy the applicant is requesting the following modifications to the Center City Form Based Code:

1. Move the Required Building Line (RBL) along Comanche Street from ten feet (10') behind the property line forward to the property line.
2. Eliminate Parking Setback Line. The applicant will provide a steel framed gate with wood slat infill across the west side of the Property to secure this open/parking area.
3. Allow Open Space to be provided on roof deck of the existing building to remain and in an area in front of the existing building. This will also allow a single-story structure.
4. Allow for canopy sign on the front of the building, as shown on submitted elevation drawings.

OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS:

PRE-DEVELOPMENT: A pre-development meeting was not required for this application.

GREENBELT COMMISSION MEETING: No meeting was required for this application.

PARK BOARD: Parkland dedication is not required for this application.

PUBLIC WORKS: No comments.

UTILITIES: Existing meter must be abandoned at the time of building permit.

CONCLUSION: Staff forwards this request for a CCPUD and Ordinance No. O-2324-31 for consideration by City Council.

At their November 9, 2023 meeting, Planning Commission recommended adoption of Ordinance No. O-2324-31 by a vote of 8-0.