

Comments of the Rollingwood Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the draft Rollingwood Comprehensive Plan

The draft Rollingwood Comprehensive Plan was reviewed by the Rollingwood Planning and Zoning Commission ("P&Z") at its May 4, 2022, open meeting. The following are the comments from the P&Z regarding the draft plan for the Council's consideration:

1. With respect to the Plan's recommendation that the Council adopt "Dark Skies" lighting policies in connection with commercial development, the Commission asks that the City also consider adoption of "Dark Skies" policies for residential properties and street lighting as well as commercial properties.

2. In addition to extending "Dark Skies" policies to residentially zoned properties, and the recommendation in the Plan to reduce or eliminate the impact of lighting from commercial properties on adjacent residential properties, the Commission asks that the Council consider adoption of policies that would address residential outdoor lighting so as to reduce or eliminate impact as between neighboring residential properties.

3. With respect to the Plan's recommendation that the commercial C-1 (office) and C-2 (retail) zoning categories be combined, the Commission asks that the Council reconsider this recommendation where residential properties adjacent to office properties today could be negatively impacted by conversion of that office use to retail uses - extended hours, traffic, noise, smells and related concerns with restaurants, bars, and convenience stores being the primary concerns.

4. The Commission also asks that the Council reconsider the Plan's recommendation with respect to the "Safe Harbor" recommendation (see Comp. Plan at p. 28, Bullet titled "Safe Harbor") that the zoning code permit the renovation and/or rebuilding of an existing commercial property if it was built in compliance with existing code at the time it was built. The Commission's concern is two-fold: (a) At the time of the

discussion before the P&Z, the impervious cover percentages for existing tracts were not available; however, if existing properties have a greater impervious cover limit than would be permitted under the Plan's recommendation (which increases the current code impervious limit of 50% to as much as 65% if certain criteria are met) - the example being a building built before the current code impervious limits were enacted or being given a variance from such standards, then the Safe Harbor might discourage redevelopment meeting the updated standards as proposed under the Plan- the "fix" being to reconsider this Safe Harbor in light of existing and proposed impervious cover requirements and incentives to ensure that there are incentives to redevelop properties rather than accept the Safe Harbor; and (b) that it would be appropriate to retain a Safe Harbor that would enable properties to rebuild to the existing as built status in the event of a casualty (fire, flood, act of God).

5. The Commission also asks the Council to consider enhancing the increased impervious cover incentives (so long as the same requirements as to storm water runoff and landscaping are retained) to encourage higher quality retail commercial development and positively impact the walkability and diversity of walkable businesses in Rollingwood.