

Applicants report for Rezoning 2900 W. Broad Street

The request to conditionally rezone the property from its underlying zoning classification of B-3 GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT to B-5 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT is based on the following reasons:

The B-3 district is too limiting in its height restriction and too demanding in parking requirement for this particular corridor. The Broad Street right of way is in excess of 100 feet and is comprised of 6 travel lanes, on street parking and 12 foot sidewalks. The B-3 zoning imposed limitations within a corridor of this width and magnitude create a density much too low and encourages sprawl development as witnessed by the current state of development along this section of West Broad Street.

The close proximity of jobs, government services, housing, cultural and religious institutions and entertainment/dining are better-served by higher density development than is permitted under B-3. The Scotts Addition neighborhood has gone through a variety of planning exercises over the past decade which have resulted in a common desire of walkability, vibrancy, street life and diversity while maintaining small businesses, manufacturing and distribution enterprises mixed with commercial, dining and creative start-ups. This vision is hampered by the property's current zoning of B-3.

The pending construction of a Bus Rapid Transit station 2 blocks west of this site will provide an efficient transportation mode along a corridor rich with opportunities for work and play. Hence, this rezoning request is very timely in encouraging a higher density of development with less focus on automobiles.

The recent spate of residential development within existing historic warehouses has not only depleted the available space for commercial and business ventures but it has also raised property values steeply and provided only market rate "luxury" rental. This has put pressure on land owners, business leaseholders and employment prospects while ousting the diverse workforce that could once afford to live in this area.

The conditional rezoning to B-5 would allow this proposed mixed use development of over 8,500 square feet of ground floor commercial and over 50 residential units in a mix of sizes which will provide work force housing geared towards individuals and families. The height needed to permit this intensity of appropriately-placed development and its commercial uses is 5 stories. Maintaining ground floor commercial uses on the street frontage leaves only the rear of the site available to parking. We are proposing 1 specific condition to the B-5 zoning, that a secure bicycle storage room capable of holding at least 30 bicycles be provided on the ground floor.

The proposed project is consistent with the development patterns and uses in the district and the proposed BRT and transit oriented development for the area.