

Commercial Pre-Application Meeting June 23, 2021

Note: These are PRELIMINARY inquiries, many of which do not move forward. Public participation is welcomed at both the Planning & Zoning Board meetings and the City Commission meetings where variances and development agreements must be approved.

204 Magnolia St. (next to Vogue Cleaners). The applicant is thinking of buying the building and L-shaped lot to build out the first floor into a restaurant and/or retail space, with apartments being built on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The potential owner would first concentrate on the 2nd floor that has two 550 SF units and the 3rd floor that has one and leave the options open for future commercial use on the first floor once the other two are done.

The following issues were discussed by staff with the applicant:

Planning

- It is thought that 90% of the building will need to be renovated, but the entire building will have to be brought up to code. However, if more than 50% of the building is destroyed based on the value of the current building, then it will have to be rebuilt to also meet the current setbacks and all other requirements like parking and landscaping unless a variance is approved.
- The building is also “non-conforming” as it does not meet the current building setbacks. If an addition is built, it will need to be detached and have a 5’ setback.
- Anything that is demolished must be rebuilt up to code.
- There is access off Downing, but a driveway will need to be constructed and The Magnolia St. egress cannot be closed as two are needed.
- Each apartment will need its own address.
- The property can be accessed via the alley, but it must be able to accommodate emergency vehicles, so will need to check to see if it’s 20’ wide.

Fire

- Building will need a fire alarm system, sprinklers, and an added fire hydrant.
- Fire separation will be needed between first and second floors.
- The whole building will need to be brought up to today’s fire code.

Engineering

- If building and parking are increased, more stormwater retention will be needed.
- Will need to research below ground water problems that they may have.

UC

- Electric will need to be totally rewired and multi-units will need separate electric meters. Also, power will now have to come off Downing St.
- As was stated before, a new hydrant will be required. Their water is running from Magnolia and may need to give up a parking spot for it.
- Potential owner should meet one-on-one with UC to discuss all that would need to be done and for possible options.

Next steps will be to meet with the UC, look at renovation costs as ability to do so is limited by the value rule unless a variance is granted, and then submit an engineered Site Plan that would include outside building changes, parking, new driveway, stormwater, and landscaping.

350 Mission Dr. (1.83 acres, across from the post office). The owners of the Upward Trend Academy, which contains both pediatric therapy and a private school for learning disabled children (ages 2-19) opened in 2020 by two NSBHS alumni and has grown so quickly that they need a bigger space to accommodate all who would like to attend. They are looking at this property/ building (approx. 5000 SF) and wanted some advice and direction before purchasing it.

The following issues were discussed by staff with the applicant:

Planning

- The property is zoned R-4, but it will not need to be re-zoned as it would need a Special Exception as schools fall into that category.
- The FLU would also support this change as the density would be much smaller than the maximum allowed.

Engineering

- Most of the property is below flood elevation which may be tricky, so a civil engineer should be called in to help with plans.
- The county may require a turn lane into the property, so that should be researched.

Fire

- A hydrant will be needed, and the connection may need to be upgraded.
- A sprinkler system for the building will be required.

Building

- This property has been a “frequent flier” as the entire building will need to be brought up to code, and hopes are that this will be the business to do it.

City staff did not see any major “friction” areas and suggested as the next steps, the applicants should meet with a civil engineer to see what they need to do regarding the flood plain, parking, landscaping, storm water, etc. and come up with a Concept Site Plan. While this is being done, they should fill out a Special Exemption application as it must go before the City Commission for approval. Once all of this is completed, they should then set up another Pre-app meeting.