

Commercial Pre-Application Meetings October 25, 2023

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.

763 Third Avenue. The applicant plans to purchase this .83-acre parcel for an ACE Hardware store. He plans to add a 6900 sq. ft addition to the existing 3000 sq. ft. building which was formerly a bank. There was a preapplication meeting [in October 2022](#), but the applicant was not ready to move forward at that time. The applicant would like to review information gathered then to make sure it is still current and to discuss timelines. The following are some comments/concerns shared with the applicant:

Planning:

- The city requires one parking space per 300 sq. ft. of retail space. That would mean 47 parking spaces. With a 10% credit if trees are saved, it would be 42 spaces. That does not seem realistic for a hardware store with lots of large and bulk items. Staff asked the applicant whether they had a cross access easement agreement with the shopping center. There is the possibility of sharing parking spaces. The applicant will follow up on this. They can also apply for a variance to allow fewer spaces and/or smaller than the 10X20 required spaces.
- The applicant needs to check with St. Johns River Management District regarding stormwater requirements.
- B-5 zoning does not allow outside storage. The applicant will need to apply for a variance to store bulk goods (e.g., mulch, stones) outside.
- The applicant is proposing that the outside area will be shielded with a fence and shade cloth. Staff were concerned that the shade cloth will not stand up to the wind coming off the ocean. They recommend something more ornamental and sturdier.
- The outside of the building will need some sort of façade covering the metal walls. Staff will send link to the city's architectural design standards.
- This project will require a Class 2 site plan approval prior to the permitting process.

Utilities:

- Need to do flow tests on existing fire hydrants to make sure that water mains are sufficiently large.

Next Steps: The applicant will work on getting shared parking agreements with the shopping center, and they will coordinate with St. Johns Water Management District regarding stormwater permits. Staff will work with the applicant regarding the number of parking spaces required. The applicant will apply for variances (outdoor storage and parking). They will aim for the January 8 P&Z meeting. Once variance is approved, they can apply for site plan approval and then the building permit.

Walmart/Regency Parcel. The applicant had been hired by Walmart to design a gas station/convenience store that would be located on the SW corner of the Walmart parking lot and wanted to discuss the proposal for its feasibility. The following are some of the comments/questions/concerns shared with the applicant:

Planning

- The original PUD had no mention that this type of business would be put on the property. However, it is a permitted use on the MDA. They will need to submit a revised PUD Conceptual Plan showing this and other design exhibits. Applicant asked to see both copies, and Staff stated they will send them.
- Staff asked if Walmart was aware that a Murphy's Oil is planned close to their site.
- A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) will have to be done as it's a highly congested area at times and access roads are a problem. Murphy is going to submit their own PUD as they annex into the city which may cause a problem with both access and more traffic.
- Walmart and Regency own and control the acreage and both must agree on new projects. Walmart hasn't approved use of its east access road for the Regency multi-family apartment complex. This project might have the same challenges for gaining access.

Utilities Commission

- All utilities are there, however, the desired location is directly over the utilities' easement, and it would be costly to move the water mains, gravity sewers and manholes. Staff will send their maps to them, for future reference.

Next Steps: The applicant needs to touch base with Walmart regarding access. After speaking with them and looking at the utilities map, they should decide whether they wish to proceed with the project. Staff suggests a second Pre-app meeting before proceeding with a plan.

Renzulli Property (2 acres, adjoining on the east side of CubeSmart Self-Storage and behind Winn Dixie). The applicant once owned the entire shopping center, which is named Lakeside Business Park, but he kept this one parcel and now wants to put in an aerial lift and heavy equipment rental and service business called High Reach 2. He has several other locations in Central FL and wants to know what he needs to do to locate one here. The project would include a building with parking in front and a fenced or walled enclosure where the rental equipment will be stored and maintained in a bay-like area. Proposed is a 15-foot front landscape buffer between the new parking lot and the access road (Renzulli Road) and a 10-foot landscape buffer along the east, west, and north sides of the property unless the rear retention pond is extended into their property or a separate retention pond is constructed. The following are some of the comments/questions/concerns shared with the applicant.

Planning

- Equipment must be hidden from view. Either a wall or solid fence inside the landscape buffer will be needed.
- Access to the products being rented may be a problem as Staff does not want the public access easement (Renzulli Rd.) to be the loading area. The applicant stated that they will provide a delivery and pick up service to the job sites but will allow for customer pickup and drop off.

- The projected 15 parking spots should be ok, and if customers do pick up equipment, they will use the same driveway that they use to put in their rental equipment.

Engineering

- Applicant will need to search the State stormwater permit from St. Johns to see what was approved and that this parcel was included in that original permit. If it was and he owns it, then the State stormwater permit would be grandfathered in. If not, then the site would need a new State permit or follow the city's current requirements.
- The total impervious proposed will decide on which threshold the project meets. A small project may just have to meet the city requirements without a state permit.
- Even though property was built up, it will still need to be evaluated in order to have the correct stormwater system.

Utilities Commission

- All utilities are there (good foresight) but may need to upgrade for 3-phase.
- Water main is 10' but pressure may not be enough for water flow through the existing fire hydrants to meet the current standards. This will need to be checked.

Next steps: The applicant will have to verify the state storm water permit, the ownership of the existing pond, and the fire hydrant fire flow. If the fire hydrant flow is too low and/or the retention pond is not part of this parcel for use, the project may not be able to proceed until corrected. If it can proceed, then an architectural site plan with proposed landscaping and building elevations can be submitted at a future Pre-application meeting.