

To: Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Jennifer M. Rauch, AICP, Director of Planning
Date: July 8, 2021
Re: Dublin Corporate Area Plan (DCAP) – Mixed Use Regional 4 (MUR-4) Zoning Code (19-117ADMC), Design Guidelines (21-086ADM) and Area Rezoning (21-087Z)

Summary

The proposed Zoning Code requirements, Design Guidelines and Area Rezoning for the MUR-4 Zoning District were introduced at the June 17, 2021 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. The Commission reviewed the materials and provided feedback regarding the three applications, and requested additional information for consideration. The members requested additional time to review the materials prior to making a recommendation, and asked staff to provide the following information below and attachments for reference:

- Detailed history of engagement and public review of the DCAP (see attachment 5)
- Comparison of adjacent commercial and residential developments
- Potential development capacity studies for Site 11 (NRI, Nationwide Realty Investments property)
- Landscape buffering information
- Comparison chart of outstanding points of impasse
- Response to Llewellyn Farms Civic Association Questions

Additionally, minor changes have been made to the draft Code and Guidelines for the Commission's consideration. These changes are represented as a redline version document for review. The most notable is the division of the MUR-4 area into four subareas to help clarify the requirements proposed for the different properties within the MUR-4 District.

Updates

Commercial/Residential Adjacency Comparison

Staff prepared a comparison for the Commission's review that outlines information about existing commercial properties that abut residential development. A detailed chart has been provided for reference for a number of development standards, including land use, acreage, building height/stories, building setbacks, and landscape buffering. The information was broken down further regarding building height and setbacks for the property line that abuts residential to provide a comparison to the provisions in the MUR-4 draft Code. The data shows that maximum building height is 35 feet with several including a two-story limitation. In terms of setbacks, the minimum pavement setback ranges from 12.5-30 feet and the minimum building setback ranges from 25-75 feet. (See Attachment 6)

Development Scenarios

Two development capacity studies were prepared by our consultant and have been provided to demonstrate potential scenarios for the development of Site 11. The studies represent one scenario that could be built under the current SO, Suburban Office and Institutional District and one scenario that could be built under the proposed MUR-4, Mixed Use Regional District. It is important to note there are any number of scenarios to which the site could be developed and these concepts are not based on current proposals, only to demonstrate potential scenarios for development. A detailed narrative about the assumptions used to develop these studies and the two capacity studies are attached for reference. (See Attachment 7)

Landscape Buffer

Staff has provided benchmarking information about buffering requirements between commercial and residential developments for reference. Additionally, staff has provided a detail of the proposed 35-foot wide buffer for Site 11 for reference. (See Attachment 8)

Comparison Chart

Staff prepared a details comparison chart outlining the outstanding items to be addressed, which represent the existing Code requirements, the proposed MUR-4 requirements, the Llewellyn Farms Civic Association requests and the NRI requests. (See Attachment 9)

Response to Llewellyn Farms Civic Association Questions

As part of the June 17, 2021 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting the LFCA provided a list of questions and clarifications regarding the proposed Code and Guidelines. Staff has provided a response to the questions and proposed changes to the Code and Guidelines to address these questions where appropriate. (See Attachment 10)

Background

The Dublin Corporate Area Plan (DCAP) was adopted in September 2018, by City Council, as a Special Area Plan within the City of Dublin Community Plan, which included the creation of four new Zoning Districts: MUR-1 (Metro/Blazer District), MUR-2 (Tuttle/Rings District), MUR-3 (Emerald District), and MUR-4 (Llewellyn Farms Office District). The goals behind the development of the DCAP plan were to:

- Reposition the "legacy" office sites within the planning area for success
- Create a walkable, mixed use environment
- Identify under-served markets
- Establish a strategy to "refresh" the Frantz Road streetscape
- Recommend mechanisms to ensure additional development along Frantz Road does not adversely impact neighborhoods.
- Recommend zoning tools to ensure successful implementation
- Introduce consistent and compatible architectural and site design guidelines

Following plan adoption, staff analyzed various options to effectively implement the plan's recommendations and zoning strategies. Staff and consultant, Greg Dale, McBride Dale, presented the implementation options and strategies to the Community Development Committee (CDC) on March 4, 2019, and the Committee recommended a phased approach that included starting with the MUR-4 District. (A detailed history of the DCAP is included in the packet.)

Each of the four areas within the DCAP plan included area specific recommendations, and those for MUR-4 (Llewellyn Farms Office District) identify a different character given the proximity to existing residential neighborhoods. The plan outlines lower density office uses for vacant and redevelopment sites within the MUR-4 District with building heights limited to two stories, and when development occurs adjacent to residential uses significant setbacks and landscape buffers should be used. Recommendations for undeveloped sites within the planning area are also included in the plan, specifically identified as Site 11, which is located within MUR-4 and adjacent to the Llewellyn Farms neighborhood. The site specific recommendations include lower density office with building heights not to exceed 2 stories with a flat roof and 1.5 stories with a sloped roof, and additional buffering requirements to minimize potential impacts of new development.

MUR-4 Development Process (Phase 1)

Throughout the past year, the implementation process included crafting appropriate zoning regulations and design guidelines for MUR-4 that implement the goals and vision of the DCAP Plan. The intention has been to create a balance between providing viable redevelopment options for the existing commercial property owners with appropriate consideration to adjacent residential properties. Staff conducted a series of meetings with the Llewellyn Farms Civic Association as well as the commercial property owners within the proposed MUR-4 area to review the proposed zoning requirements and design guidelines, as well as explain the review and approval process to adopt these proposed documents. As part of these discussion, the Llewellyn Farms Civic Association raised concerns regarding the proposed language in the Code and Guidelines, particularly as it relates to future office development adjacent to residential properties.

One particular challenge emerged in this process regarding the only undeveloped parcel (Site 11) in MUR 4, owned by Nationwide Realty Investors (NRI) on Cramer Creek. NRI has owned this particular property since 2006. Staff and the consultants have conducted multiple meetings with both the residential neighbors and the commercial property owner (NRI) to understand both perspectives. The proposed draft zoning regulations have been updated through multiple reiterations and is based on the DCAP recommendations, site capacity and existing conditions analyses, NRI's feedback, and the neighbors' expectations and feedback. A significant number of items have been addressed through our meetings and iterations, which include:

- Minimum lot size and frontage
- Increased side, rear, and front yard setbacks
- Maximum building height
- Increased landscaping and buffering
- Architectural building design and window placement
- Uses and use specific standards
- Site design guidelines including parking lot locations
- Stream corridor protection
- On-site storm water management
- Public review process through Planning and Zoning Commission

As previously identified, the Llewellyn Farms Civic Association representatives has outlined a list of unresolved standards has been narrowed down to three main outstanding issues: maximum building height, minimum building setbacks, and the width of the required landscape buffer.

During previous discussions, NRI was initially willing to accept the requirements listed above which differ from their current Suburban Office zoning requirements; however, NRI has expressed concerns about the Code imposing more restrictive requirements for maximum building height, minimum building setbacks, and width of the landscape buffer.

Staff has made attempts to propose a compromise solution for the unresolved standards to both LFCA and NRI. However, NRI expressed that these requirements will significantly affect their ability for viable commercial development of their property given the existing site constraints and requested to be removed from the proposal. Staff has also engaged with other commercial property owners within Phase 1 and there have not been any major concerns. Again, the NRI site is the only undeveloped parcel within the MUR 4 area.

Proposed Amendments

The following outlines the proposed Zoning Code requirements, Design Guidelines and Area Rezoning:

MUR-4 Zoning Code

The proposed zoning requirements are a new section within the Zoning Code and when complete will include standards for all for MUR Zoning District. The proposed language includes only those standards that apply to proposed MUR-4 District. The requirements within the proposed zoning districts follow the same document layout and format as the Bridge Street District and Historic Districts Code sections.

153.045 Purpose and Intent

This section outlines the purpose for the proposed amendment, which is to implement the goals within Dublin Corporate Area Plan. Applicability standards and explanation for how the proposed zoning regulations should be used in conjunction with the proposed design guidelines are also included.

153.046 Uses

The use section includes permitted, conditional, size, time limited, and accessory uses for the MUR-4 District, as well as use specific standards. The section also outlines how existing uses and the expansion of existing uses shall be handled. For MUR-4, the proposed permitted uses include office uses (medical and general), professional and technical training, research and development, banks, day care, government services and parks and open spaces. These uses match those outlined in the DCAP and also align with the existing uses within the MUR-4 district. The proposed regulations include a number accessory and temporary uses, which would only be permitted in conjunction with a permitted use or approved conditional use.

Use specific standards are also included with the proposed Code for day care uses, banks and professional and technical training, as well as for a number of the accessory uses. These standards are intended to provide additional development standards to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses, development pattern and desired site design.

153.047 Site Development Standards

The proposed Code includes requirements for site development standards, architectural design,

landscaping and tree preservation, parking, circulation and access, signs, lighting and utilities. The site development standards include requirements for lot size, width and coverage; building heights; setbacks (building and pavement); and parking location. The proposed standards provide requirements for building heights and setbacks based on location and adjacency to residential, which include those commercial parcels located along Bradenton Ave abutting residential, as well as the NRI property. The requirements reflect modifications made through a series of discussions with the adjacent Llewellyn Farms neighborhood and NRI representatives. As outlined in the section above, staff has reached an impasse on an acceptable solution for the commercial property owner and the LFCA.

153.048 Review and Approval Process

The proposal includes a review and approval process similar to those in the Bridge Street and Historic Districts with a variety of application types. The Code outlines the review process based on the scope and scale of the application type. The required review body for the application type includes limited include staff approvals, with a majority of applications handled by the Administrative Review Team and Planning and Zoning Commission. City Council reviews would occur when a development agreement is involved.

MUR-4 Design Guidelines

The proposed design guidelines include an overview of the four MUR Districts with intent and applicability sections. The majority of the guidelines focus on general building and site design elements to supplement the Code requirements, as well as sub-district specific guidelines. The proposed language addresses the following details:

- Building design – Mass, form, roofs, design, materials, colors, sustainable building design, and signs and height.
- Site Design – Building frontage and placement, access and parking, open space, landscaping, and lighting, sustainable site design.
- MUR-4 Sub-district – Site and building development and future annexation areas.

MUR-4 Area Rezoning

The proposed MUR-4 Zoning District includes 27 parcels currently zoned Community Commercial, Suburban Office and Institutional and Planned Unit Development Districts. The area rezoning proposes a change from these existing zoning classifications to MUR-4. An area rezoning to MUR-4 will allow for the implementation of the proposed Zoning Code requirements and Design Guidelines. Staff recommends the area rezoning approach to provide clear expectations for the existing commercial property owners and adjacent residents regarding the requirements and guidelines for redevelopment and development of these parcels. An updated zoning map has been created for review and an area rezoning of the properties will be included with the Zoning Code amendment, which align with the new MUR-4 Zoning District.

Recommendation

Staff requests the Planning and Zoning Commission review the proposed documents for Zoning Code, Design Guidelines, and Area Rezoning and provide feedback on the proposal. Following the Commission's discussion and comments, revisions will be made and brought back to the Commission for future discussion and determination.