

1751-Z

PUBLIC HEARING Case 1751-Z/Belt Line Square. Public hearing, discussion, and take action on a recommendation regarding an ordinance changing the zoning on property located at 4021 Belt Line Road from LR, Local Retail, to PD, Planned Development District, allowing all Local Retail uses plus medical and dental offices and establishing modified development standards.

LOCATION MAP





January 13, 2017

STAFF REPORT

RE: Case 1751-Z/Belt Line Square

LOCATION: 4021 Belt Line Road

REQUEST: Approval of an ordinance rezoning the property from LR, Local Retail, to a new PD, Planned Development District.

APPLICANT: Retail Plazas, Inc. represented by Mr. Trey Hodge.

DISCUSSION:

Background: Belt Line Square is the two-story retail center at the northwest corner of Belt Line Road and Runyon Road. The site was originally rezoned from Industrial-1 to Local Retail in 1980 and developed in 1981. In 2013, the property was acquired by its current owners and underwent extensive exterior renovations, which were administratively approved under the Local Retail zoning standards. The property consists of the main two-story building, a one-story building closer to Belt Line Road, and the Scooter's Coffee drive-through building.

Medical and dental offices are not permitted uses in the Local Retail zoning district and would not currently be allowed on this property.

Proposed Plan: Given that this is a two-story retail location, the owner believes that medical uses would help supplement the other retail and restaurant occupancies, especially to occupy the second floor, which struggles to attract typical retail tenants. The owner is requesting that medical and dental offices be permitted at this location. In order to do that, the property must be rezoned to a Planned Development.

Staff is proposing a Planned Development that would permit Local Retail uses plus medical and dental offices. Staff and the applicant have also discussed revised parking standards for the property that would relax certain parking requirements in order to enable the provision of additional landscaping. The Planned Development would also be governed by a site plan, landscape plan, and building elevations.

Site Plan: The site plan would mostly stay the same with some restriping of parking spaces and modifications to parking layouts to increase landscaping. The most notable difference is the proposed closure of the driveway immediately west of the intersection of Belt Line Road and

Runyon Road. This property developed before many of the Town's current standards were in place. Properties are now limited in how many access points they can have to the same street. Additionally, there are clearance requirements that dictate how far driveways must be spaced from intersections and other driveways. This driveway does not comply with any of the current requirements. Closing this driveway will create safer traffic operations on Belt Line Road and allow for additional parking and landscaping. With this closure, the property has four remaining access points, two on Belt Line Road and two on Runyon Road.

Parking: There are currently three restaurants with plans for a fourth in this center. These will occupy a total of 17,442 square feet and account for 48% of the total square footage in the center. These restaurants are currently parked at a ratio of 1 space per 100 square feet under the Local Retail zoning. Staff is recommending capping the restaurant square footage at 17,442 square feet and maintaining the 1 per 100 ratio. For general retail, as well as medical and dental offices, the Code typically requires that those uses be parked at a ratio of 1 space per 200 square feet. Staff believes that due to the typical hours of medical and dental offices, this can be relaxed slightly in recognition that they would share parking well with the restaurants. Staff is proposing that retail and medical uses be parked at 1 space per 300 square feet. Parking standards for other uses allowed in Local Retail would remain as typically required in the Local Retail District:

- *Furniture store*. 1 space per 1,000 square feet
- *Banks or savings and loans*. 1 space per 300 square feet
- *Office*. 1 space per 300 square feet
- *Motion picture theater*. 1 space per 4 seats
- *Health club or studio for dance, music, drama, health, and reducing*. 1 space per 100 square feet.
- *Hotel/motel*. 1 space per room. Banquet or meeting space in a hotel, one space per 300 square feet.

The applicant is proposing to provide 234 spaces. As part of the Belt Line Road utility undergrounding project, the Town took land from this property at the corner of Runyon and Belt Line. This resulted in the loss of 5 parking spaces. As part of the agreement for that taking, the Town agreed to credit the property those 5 spaces. Therefore, the property will be treated as having a total of 239 spaces. This should be a sufficient number of spaces to operate, given the anticipated uses. These spaces are not technically required until a use requests a certificate of occupancy for a space, therefore staff will be able to monitor and ensure that there is sufficient parking to meet code in the future, prior to approving occupancy.

Landscaping: This property developed prior to the Town's current landscape standards and is extremely under-landscaped compared to what would be required of development today. Rezoning a property triggers that it be brought up to current standards. As staff has discussed previously with the Commission, staff has interpreted this requirement to mean that a property must do everything it can to bring the property up to current standards without interfering with other standards such as parking. In this case, relaxing the parking requirements appears to

make sense independently from other considerations. However, it also has the added benefit of freeing space for additional landscaping.

The property owner is proposing to gain landscaping by closing one of the Belt Line Road driveways and adding landscaping islands adjacent to the remaining Belt Line Road driveways. Additional landscaping will be gained in the area fronting Runyon Road by converting the current row of head-in parking to parallel parking spaces. While the property owner has added landscaping, the property is still below what is required by the current standards. See the comparison below:

Requirement	Current	Required	Proposed
Overall Landscape Percentage	7.61%	20%	9.15%
Landscape Buffer on Belt Line/Runyon	22 ft / 10 ft	25 ft / 25 ft	22 ft / 23 ft
Parking Lot Interior Landscaping	2.01%	5%	4.33%

While the property owner is restriping some parking spaces to the Town’s minimum of 8.5 feet wide, there are still a significant number of parking spaces that could be restriped that would enable landscaping to be added. Additionally, some drive aisles could be adjusted or abandoned to provide more opportunities for landscaping. That being said, there is only opportunity to add about another percentage point to the overall landscape percentage through additional tree islands in the parking lot.

Building Elevations: The building elevations were upgraded in 2013 and consist of stone, stucco, and painted concrete masonry units (CMU). The Planned Development district would codify these improvements as the standard going forward.

Comprehensive Plan: The 2013 Plan was drafted just as the current owners were purchasing the property. On page 229, the Plan rates this property as “Yellow” and notes the difficulty of renting the second floor space. The assessment notes the need for a facelift, which has since occurred, and landscaping renovations, which the property owner is attempting to address.

Master Transportation Plan: The applicant submitted this request for rezoning prior to the adoption of the new Master Transportation Plan and is therefore not required to address the new standards included in the Plan for sidewalks along Belt Line Road and Runyon Road. Staff has discussed the new requirements with the property owner and they have offered to grant the easements that will be necessary in the future should the Town desire to widen and move the sidewalks away from the back of curb in accordance with the new Master Transportation Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL

Staff takes no issue with the applicant’s request to rezone the property from Local Retail to a Planned Development. Staff believes that allowing medical and dental offices will improve the competitiveness of this site. Staff also supports the adjustments being proposed to the parking requirements and the improvements shown on the site and landscape plans.

However, as mentioned above, rezoning triggers that the site be brought to up to current landscaping standards or that it be brought as close as possible. While the applicant has added landscaping, staff believes that more can be done through additional restriping and minor parking layout modifications. Historically, staff has not supported zoning cases when there are additional opportunities to gain compliance with current standards and it is important for staff to follow the ordinance's guidance and uphold historic practice. This is the basis for the recommendation to deny the request.

Staff acknowledges that the applicant is making a very minor request to add a use that in most other communities would be allowed in a Local Retail zoning district. Staff believes that the applicant is making a good faith effort to add landscaping and that additional site plan changes would offer minimal gains. Staff also notes that should the request be denied, the site will remain as-is with a driveway that is out of compliance with current standards, having less landscaping and no accommodation for future pedestrian improvements.

Staff is obligated to recommend denial because the project does not check all of the required boxes. The Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council have the latitude to weigh competing community interests and accept less stringent standards that may be more reasonable if the other elements of the case have merit.

Land Use Analysis

Attributes of Success Matrix

Belt Line Square, 4021 Belt Line Road

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Attribute	Comment	Score
Competitive	Historically, this site has struggled to attract tenants. It ranked Red in this category in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. The addition of medical uses should help it to be more competitive.	
Safe	The site has good visual accessibility. It is safe.	
Functional	The site is functional.	
Visually Appealing	The buildings on this site were recently renovated. Additional landscaping will be installed, should this case be approved, but it will still be below current standards.	
Supported with Amenities	The restaurant will be supported by the adjacent residential and office uses and should gain more support from the future growth of Addison Grove.	
Environmentally Responsible	This proposed changes will add landscaping and promote the use of an existing underutilized space.	
Walkable	A 7 foot wide sidewalk is being added as part of the work on Belt Line and the property owner has agreed to grant additional easements for future enhancements.	
Overall Assessment	Retail properties west of Midway have struggled to attract quality tenants. This is an older property that can't meet current standards. The proposed zoning changes should maximize its potential absent a complete redevelopment of the site.	



Case 1751-Z/Belt Line Square
January 17, 2017

COMMISSION FINDINGS:

The Addison Planning and Zoning Commission, meeting in regular session on January 17, 2017, voted to recommend approval of an ordinance rezoning the property located at 4021 Belt Line Road from, LR, Local Retail, to PD, Planned Development, allowing all local retail uses plus medical and dental offices and establishing modified development standards, subject to the following condition:

- There shall be no 24 hour medical uses.

Voting Aye: Braun, Griggs, Meleky, Morgan, Robinson, Schaeffer, Wheeler

Voting Nay: none

Absent: none

SPEAKERS AT THE PUBLIC HEARING:

For: none

On: none

Against: none