

April 18, 2017, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

Public Hearing/Zoning – Conduct a Public Hearing and consider a request to establish a Planned Development for Corridor Commercial CC for a Data Center use and adopt a Concept Plan, Building Elevations, Screening Plan, and Development Regulations for a 12.614± acre portion of Lot 2R, Block A, Allen Commerce Center Addition; generally located north of Allen Commerce Parkway and west of US Highway 75. (Z-2/27/17-21) [DFW II Data Center]

Ms. Madhuri Mohan, Senior Planner, presented the item to the Commission. She stated that the item is a Public Hearing and a Planned Development Zoning for DFW II Data Center. The property is generally located north of Allen Commerce Parkway and west of US Highway 75. The property to the north is zoned Community Facilities CF. To the west, the property is zoned Planned Development PD No. 124 Corridor Commercial CC. The property to the south (across Allen Commerce Parkway) is zoned Planned Development PD No. 78 Corridor Commercial CC. The property to the east is zoned Corridor Commercial CC.

Ms. Mohan stated that the proposal is for a data center, which are unique and have specific regulations. The PD request is to adopt a Concept Plan, Screening Plan, Building Elevations, and Development Regulations.

The Concept Plan, which outlines the 12.614± acre property, is the first component. This data center, similar to the previous data centers, will store, manage, and process data and information. Per staff's understanding, this data center is similar to the existing Cisco Data Center, and very similar to the recently approved Compass Data Center.

Ms. Mohan explained that the proposed data center building is approximately 87,000 square feet and the proposal is to construct the data center in three phases. There are two points of access into the development; both on Allen Commerce Parkway. Both entrances will be gated. The entrance on the western side is the main entrance for employees. The entrance on the eastern side is provided as a secondary, emergency access point. There are no minimum requirements for parking since data centers do not typically have many people on site, but in this case, 48 parking spaces are being provided.

Open Space provided also exceeds the *ALDC* standards.

Ms. Mohan described the screening plan and said that it shows a combination of screening for the property. Perimeter fencing will consist of an eight-foot wrought iron fence. An eight-foot precast screening wall is proposed on the southern section of the equipment yards facing Allen Commerce Parkway. The remaining screening will consist of an eight-foot black chain link fence enclosing the equipment yards.

Ms. Mohan then presented the next component of the PD request, the Building Elevations. She stated that these elevations are very similar to the elevations approved for the Compass Data Center. The buildings will be one story with a general height of 27'. Building materials include precast concrete.

The last component is the development regulations, summarized as follows:

- Base Zoning District: CC
- Concept Plan: The Property shall be developed and used only in accordance with the Concept Plan.
- Building Elevations: The buildings constructed on the Property shall be designed, developed and used only in accordance with the Building Elevations.

- Screening Plan, Screening, and Fences: Screening walls and/or fences shall be constructed on the Property in accordance with the Screening Plan. Construction of screening walls must be completed prior to issuance of CO.
- Permitted Uses: The Property may be developed with uses permitted in the CC zoning district, for a Data center, and accessory uses to Data Centers.
- Minimum Yard Depth and Width: There is no minimum setback for fencing or guardhouses.
- Off-Street Parking and Loading: Off street parking and loading shall be provided as shown on the Concept Plan.
- Access: Access shall be provided as generally shown on the Concept Plan.
- Landscaping: The property shall be developed in accordance with landscaping requirements applicable to the “CC” zoning district. Modifications may be made in order to achieve LEED certification.
- Project Phasing and Scheduling: The property may be developed in at least 3 phases.
- Miscellaneous:
 - o Lighting: Lighting shall meet the lighting standards in the ALDC, with flexibility for LEED requirements, security for the Data Center, or typical operations of the Data Center.
 - o Generators: The operation of generators and emergency equipment is allowed.
- Detention Pond Maintenance: Owner shall provide the City a copy of a fully executed agreement that provides for routine maintenance and establishes costs related to the detention pond prior to acquiring a building permit.

Chairman Cocking asked what type of landscaping is required along the eastern side of the property.

Ms. Mohan responded that she believed the landscaping was just grass, as there is no regulation in the ALDC regarding landscaping on that side.

Chairman Cocking asked if there would be any shrubs, trees, or anything else along the entire eastern side.

Ms. Sara Beth White, Kimley-Horn Engineer, 12750 Merit Drive Suite 1000, stated that the landscaping on the eastern side will generally be grass landscaping. She added that all of the landscaping on the site will be in conformance with the Allen Land Development Code.

Chairman Cocking acknowledged that there will be landscaping along Allen Commerce Parkway. However, he had concerns for the eastern (vacant) piece of property (between this property and US Highway 75) which will eventually be developed. Chairman Cocking asked if there should be some kind of landscape requirement along the eastern side of the Data Center property to create a visual barrier between the equipment yard and this eastern piece.

Ms. Mohan responded that there is no requirement per the Code. The landscaping can be requested in a motion by the Commissioners, but is not required.

Chairman Cocking stated that equipment yards are not a pretty site and was concerned that a better visual screen was not provided.

1st Vice-Chair Trahan asked about the zoning classification of the site to the east.

Ms. Mohan responded that the zoning is Corridor Commercial.

Chairman Cocking stated that the vacant property could be developed with, for example, hotel or retail uses. If the property is developed with the back of retail facing the equipment yard, then this would not be a big issue. However, if the property is developed with restaurants with more people driving around the area, then he wondered how the site would appear.

1st Vice-Chair Trahan stated that he did not remember seeing any berms on the west side of the western development (Compass Data Center).

Chairman Cocking stated the facility on the western side is actually lower, and therefore cannot easily be seen due to the topography. The elevation lines on the plans indicate a fairly large elevation drop on the property to the west. He said that the property to the west has berms along the front on Allen Commerce Parkway. This facility does not have those berms - only landscaping and the wrought iron fence.

2nd Vice-Chair Platt stated that from what he hears, landscaping is not required.

Chairman Cocking answered yes, landscaping is not required, but added that they (the Commissioners), can add requirements such as landscaping or fencing.

Chairman Cocking said the applicant did not submit a Landscape Plan.

Ms. Mohan stated that that was correct.

Chairman Cocking asked if it is normal to not see a Landscape Plan at this time.

Ms. Mohan responded that a Landscape Plan is typically submitted with the Site Plan.

1st Vice-Chair Trahan stated his initial thought was that if the property developer to the east of this property does not want to see the equipment yard, it would be their prerogative to put something up [landscaping or screening]. If there were homes proposed where people could see the equipment yard, it would be a different predicament.

Commissioner Hollingsworth stated that the Commissioners have not approved anything yet on the east side, and that the property is still vacant. There has been so much work done on the other side of U.S. Highway 75 with the decorative walls. There is no telling how long it will be until something develops on this vacant piece.

1st Vice-Chair Trahan asked if the parking lot to the east is just shadowed in and not existing.

Ms. Mohan said the parking on the plan is just conceptual.

Chairman Cocking acknowledged that there are no plans on the eastern property at this time. He expressed his concern over no buffer or visual barrier.

1st Vice-Chair Trahan replied that the applicant is complying with landscape standards. Whomever ends up developing on the eastern side and does not want to see the equipment yard can install screening on their property.

Chairman Cocking opened the public hearing.

Chairman Cocking closed the public hearing.

Chairman Cocking said no letters or correspondence were received.

Motion: Upon a motion by 2nd Vice-Chair Platt, and a second by Commissioner Hollingsworth, the Commission voted 4 IN FAVOR, and 0 OPPOSED to recommend approval of the request to establish a Planned Development for Corridor Commercial CC for a Data Center use and adopt a Concept Plan, Building Elevations, Screening Plan, and Development Regulations for a 12.614± acre portion of Lot 2R, Block A, Allen Commerce Center Addition; generally located north of Allen Commerce Parkway and west of US Highway 75.

The motion carried.

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