

## CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

**FROM:** The Office of the City Manager    **DATE:** May 13, 2019

**SUBJECT:** ZC 2019-05, Ordinance No. 3582, Public hearing and consideration of a request from Ginger Curtis for a zoning change for an event center at 8300 Starnes Road, being 0.543 acres described as Lot AR2, Block 2, Crestwood Estates Addition.

**PRESENTER:** Clayton Comstock, Planning Director

### **SUMMARY:**

Ginger Curtis is requesting a zoning change to amend the Redevelopment Planned Development (RD-PD) district on 0.543 acres located at 8300 Starnes Road. The proposed zoning change would add an event center as a permitted use on the property.

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

The site under consideration is located on the south side of Starnes Road, just west of Davis Boulevard. The site is the former location of Fire Station 1. After Fire Station 1 was moved to its new location on Shadywood Lane in 2006, the building was used for various city services, including Parks Department field offices and storage.

In August 2017, the property was sold to an interior design firm called [Urbanology Designs](#). A zoning application for the property was approved in February 2018, which rezoned the site from C-1 Commercial to RD-PD Redevelopment Planned Development. The RD-PD district approved specific site development and building standards for the property.

After occupancy of the building by Urbanology Designs, it came to the city's attention that the property was also being advertised and used as an event center space, hosting events unrelated to the office use (i.e. weddings, receptions, corporate luncheons, graduation parties, etc.) as an alternative method for generating revenue. Because an "Event Center" is not an allowed use under the zoning approved for this property and an event center has been interpreted in the past to require Special Use Permit approval, the property owner was instructed and given notice to stop holding events and make application to amend the RD-PD zoning. At the request of Ms. Curtis, city staff extended some flexibility to allow five events that had been already scheduled between May 18 and June 5 to continue as planned.

The owner is requesting an amendment to the RD-PD district to allow an event center as a permitted use on the property. The RD-PD established a base zoning district of O-1 Office. An event center is not a specifically listed land use in the zoning ordinance, but it is similar in nature to a private club in terms of operational characteristics, traffic generation, service demands, occupancy loads, and similar features. Since a private club requires approval of a special use permit or as part of a planned development district, this

application is being processed in a similar manner to provide an opportunity to review the suitability of the use at this location.

The applicant proposes to utilize the building for an event center. The facility would provide a venue for weddings, receptions, banquets, corporate and office events, and similar types of gatherings. The building includes a 1,720-square foot indoor open space area, a small conference room, outdoor space, and limited kitchen facilities. The operation of the facility would not include cooking, as the kitchen is suitable only for light prep and catering operations. Photos of the building and interior are below and floorplans showing various event layouts are attached. Additional information about the company is available online at [Urban Fire House](#).



The proposed conditions of approval for this RD-PD amendment are attached. These conditions are based on the applicant's proposed use, and recommendations for minimum operating and safety standards from the Development Review Committee. The conditions include those previously approved for Urbanology Designs and conditions specific to the operation of the event center. These conditions may be modified by City Council.

**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE:** The Development Review Committee's recommendation for denial is based on two concerns:

1. ***Parking & pedestrian safety.*** The site only has 15 parking spaces, which is appropriate for a professional office use. When used as an event center, however, the site is significantly deficient on parking. Off-site parking agreements would be required with adjacent property owners to get the necessary parking for events. To date, the property most willing to share parking is Gateway Church across Starnes. Use of Gateway Church's parking field, however, would likely create a situation where pedestrians cross Starnes mid-block, without any formal crosswalk or signage for motorists. This part of Starnes also has an unfavorable blind curve and visibility limitations both for pedestrians and motorists. The DRC discussed whether signage, mid-block crossing, and/or rumble strips were warranted, but it would still be problematic with the curve and late hours of events.

In addition, DRC is concerned that event guests may utilize neighborhood streets such as Timberidge Drive for parking which will impact residents in that neighborhood. Parking on a public street in a residential neighborhood is allowed, so it would be difficult to prevent this from occurring.

DRC Recommendation: If City Council considers approval of this request, the DRC recommends that all parking required for the event center use be achieved through formal parking agreements with properties immediately adjacent to the south and east of the subject property. These formal agreements should be filed with Tarrant County and run with the land. The event center use should be contingent on these formal agreements being in place. Furthermore, a pedestrian and/or driveway connection should be made to the adjacent property's driveway at the southeast corner of the Urban Fire House property to keep vehicles and pedestrians off Starnes Road as much as possible. These recommendations will likely require the event center to pave additional parking spaces on one or more adjacent properties.

2. **Noise & outdoor activity.** A quick internet search of event centers in North Texas found very few that were located immediately adjacent to existing single family residential uses. The DRC is concerned for the impact outdoor activity would have on the existing homeowners less than 100 feet from the back patio of the Urban Fire House. Had the event center use been conveyed during the original zoning change review, the DRC would have strongly recommended a masonry wall be constructed along the residential property line.

DRC Recommendation: If City Council considers approval of this request, the DRC recommends that all event center uses be kept indoors, and specifically that no music or entertainment activities be allowed outside.

3. **Overall scope of events.** Generally, the Development Review Committee recommends that if an event center use is approved, it be significantly scaled back from the current business plan for Urban Fire House. Events should be limited to 50 guests maximum occupancy to comply with fire safety concerns, prevent overflow of event center activity to outdoor spaces and to prevent parking across Starnes Road or in the adjacent neighborhood.

Note that the recommendation to the Planning & Zoning Commission from the Development Review Committee was to approve the request. As a result of the information presented and discussions at the Commission meeting, however, the DRC has changed its recommendation to that of denial.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:** This area is designated on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan as "Retail." This designation is intended to permit a variety of retail trade, personal and business services establishments, and offices.

**CURRENT ZONING:** The property is currently zoned RD-PD Redevelopment Planned Development with a base district of "O-1" Office to allow for office uses on the property.

**PROPOSED ZONING:** The proposed zoning is an amendment to the RD-PD Planned Development district to allow an event center use on the property.



**SURROUNDING ZONING | LAND USE:**

DIRECTION	ZONING	LAND USE PLAN	EXISTING LAND USE
NORTH	C-1 Commercial	Retail	Gateway Church
WEST	R-2 Single-Family Residential	Low Density Residential	Single family residences
SOUTH	C-1 Commercial	Retail	Daycare/pre-school
EAST	C-1 Commercial	Retail	McDonald's / Chevron

**PLAT STATUS:** The property is currently platted as Lot AR2, Block 2, Crestwood Estates Addition.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:** The Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing and considered this item at the May 2, 2019, meeting and voted 6-1 to recommend approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Deny Ordinance No. 3582.