

## CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

**FROM:** The Office of the City Manager    **DATE:** October 2, 2017

**SUBJECT:** SDP 2017-04, Ordinance No. 3482, Public hearing and consideration of a request from Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers, Inc., for a special development plan for the TEXRail Smithfield Station parking lot on 8.246 acres located at 6408 and 6416 Smithfield Road.

**PRESENTER:** Clayton Comstock, Planning Manager

### **SUMMARY:**

On behalf of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority, Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers, Inc., is requesting approval of a special development plan (SDP) in the Smithfield transit oriented development (TOD) district. The applicant proposes to construct a surface parking lot to serve the TEXRail commuter rail station that is presently under construction. The property is located at the southeast corner of Smithfield Road and the railroad right-of-way.

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

The project is located within the "TOD Core" character zone of the Smithfield TOD district. The proposed special development plan is intended to authorize the use of the property as a surface parking lot. Under the TOD standards, the use of property as a surface parking lot requires specific approval as part of a special development plan.

The Smithfield TEXRail station platform is being constructed just east of Smithfield Road. The parking lot for the station will be constructed on the south side of the tracks. The lot provides 550 parking spaces for vehicles and a separate drive and turnaround for future bus service.

Access to the parking lot is provided from Smithfield Road and a new street section of Cardinal Lane, which is planned to serve as another connection from Smithfield Road to Davis Boulevard between Main Street and Mid-Cities Boulevard. The Cardinal Lane section will be constructed to provide access to the parking lot for drivers and buses. A copy of the site plan, landscape plan, and signage plan for the parking lot is attached.

**DRC REVIEW:** The Development Review Committee (DRC) evaluated the proposal based on the design intent and standards for the Smithfield TOD area. A summary of the DRC review is detailed below.

***Streetscape design.*** The architectural plans for the station are intended to be emblematic of early twentieth century materials that would have been used for

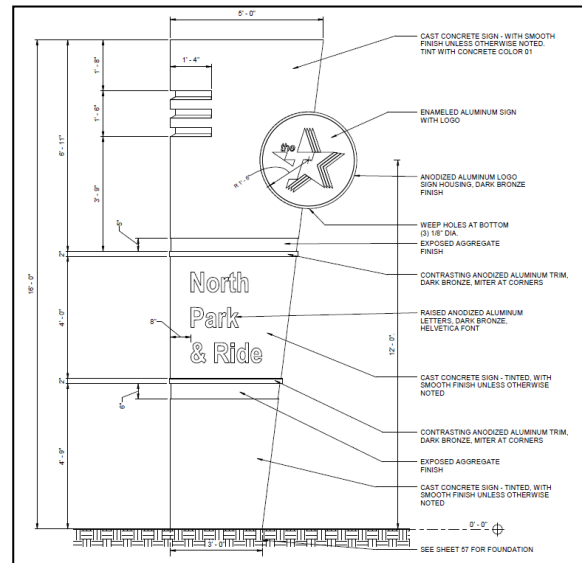
railroad station platforms. The planned color scheme is darker bronze rather than a platinum silver color. To coordinate with the platform, the parking lot light fixtures, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and other amenities should have a darker bronze finish.

**Signage.** A 16-foot tall cast-concrete sign similar to the one shown at right is also proposed as part of this Special Development Plan. The sign would be located along Smithfield Road to identify the entrance of the station's park-and-ride lot. As monument signs are not permitted within the TOD Core unless along a major arterial such as Davis Boulevard or Mid-Cities Boulevard, special approval is required for this proposed sign.

**Landscaping.** As has been the case with previous Special Development Plan applications, a reduction to the required parking lot landscaping is being requested as part of this application. As written, the TOD Code would require a considerable amount of parking lot landscape islands and trees. Due to the limited land area and need for a specific number of parking spaces, meeting the parking lot landscaping requirements was not feasible for this site. Additionally, future success of the station and surrounding transit-oriented development may require future investment in structured parking, at which time parking lot landscaping would be removed.

**Detention pond.** A storm water detention pond is also being proposed in the bus lane loop provided at the northeast corner of the site. This drainage feature will only hold water in times of heavy rainfall and is intended to release downstream at a rate appropriate for the downstream storm water infrastructure. At all other times, it will remain dry. Because detention ponds require special approval by City Council, this element is also included in the Special Development Plan request.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & CURRENT ZONING:** This area is designated on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and is currently zoned Transit Oriented Development. The purpose of the transit oriented development code is to support the development of the community's station areas into pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban neighborhoods, with convenient access to rail transit, shopping, employment, housing, and neighborhood retail services. The goal of each station area is to encourage an efficient, compact land use pattern; encourage pedestrian activity; reduce the reliance on private automobiles; promote a more functional and attractive community through the use of recognized principles of urban design; and allow property owners flexibility in land use, while prescribing a high level of detail in building design and form.



**SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** The applicant is requesting a special development plan for consideration of modifications to the standards of the transit oriented development district. The special development plan process is intended to allow applicants development flexibility to address specific market opportunities and/or contexts within the transit oriented development district. In evaluating a special development plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council must consider the extent to which the application meets the following:

- the goals and intent of transit oriented development in the city;
- provides an alternative "master plan" approach by consolidating multiple properties to create a predictable, market responsive development for the area;
- fits the adjoining context by providing appropriate transitions;
- provides public benefits such as usable civic and open spaces, livable streets, structured and shared parking, and linkages to transit; and,
- does not hinder future opportunities for higher intensity transit oriented development.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:** The Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing and considered this request at the September 21, 2017, meeting and voted 6-0 to recommend approval with the condition that curb return radii be a minimum of twenty-five feet.

One of the concerns raised by the Planning & Zoning Commission was the width of the driveway throat along Smithfield Road. The engineers for the Fort Worth Transportation Authority have revised the driveway to provide a 25-foot radius and 24-foot driveway throat width. This change is reflected in City Council's packet.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve Ordinance No. 3482.