

ITEM NO. 2 GPI TO IG; 7.7 ACRES; 711 E 23RD ST (MKM)

USD 497 Vehicle Storage: **Z-16-00147**: Consider a request to rezone approximately 7.7 acres located at 711 E 23rd St from GPI (General Public and Institutional Use) District to IG (General Industrial) District. Submitted by Lawrence Public Schools USD #497 and BG Consultants, Inc. on behalf of Douglas County, property owner of record. *Deferred by Planning Commission on 6/20/16.*

STAFF PRESENTATION

Ms. Mary Miller presented the item.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Mr. David Hamby, BG Consultants, addressed concerns that were included in communications from the public. He said this new site would be similar to the existing site.

PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Marsha Heeb, 2134 Learnard Ave, wondered if the traffic impact study really addressed traffic during peak times. She expressed concern about 160 busses every hour to an already busy segment of 23rd Street. She felt a better location could be found.

Mr. Kerry Altenbernd expressed concern about increased traffic. He felt a traffic light should be added during the times the busses would be coming and going. He did not feel it was addressed properly in the traffic impact study.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Struckhoff thanked staff for their work on this.

Commissioner Sands asked if Planning Commission would be making a decision on whether to rezone and put a condition on the method of exit.

Mr. McCullough said a condition like that would happen during the site planning stage.

Commissioner von Achen inquired about the turning distance and clarification on the number of busses.

Mr. Hamby said it would be 80 vehicles in and 80 vehicles out and they wouldn't all be at the same time. He said all of the backup would take place on their property or perimeter road. He showed a picture on the overhead of the turning movement.

Commissioner Sands said some of the public comments referred to alternate sites.

Mr. Hamby said he could not speak to that.

Mr. Ron May, Lawrence Public Schools, said he had been working with First Student and that they would absorb the cost through their contract. He said the school district wasn't shopping around to move the busses, it was just an opportunity that came up.

Commissioner Willey asked if personal vehicles would be restricted to right turns only.

Mr. Hamby said passenger vehicles would not be restricted to turning movements.

Commissioner Carpenter inquired about busses routing through the Barker Neighborhood.

Mr. Wayne Zachary, First Student, said currently the busses were located on 23rd Street to the north near Harper. He said there would be some busses potentially using Learnard.

Commissioner Carpenter asked if there was a difference between long and short busses.

Mr. Zachary said he would not want the large busses trying to maneuver the turn onto the frontage road. He said Learnard Avenue would not be used as a main avenue for returning routes.

Commissioner von Achen asked if there was a need for a stoplight there.

Mr. Hamby said he did not think it was a valid option or would be permitted by City Public Works.

Commissioner Struckhoff said he felt better about learning of the policy of right out and right in. He said his concern was for the south end of Learnard Avenue being used as egress and ingress. He was interested in knowing how many busses would come from the east that might require a left turn from 23rd Street into the site.

Mr. Hamby said only short busses and that it would be infrequent.

Commissioner Britton asked if restricting the busses to right in and right out would come during the site planning stage.

Mr. McCullough said that was correct. He said uses with zoning could change over time. He said part of the site plan review was looking at the traffic impact study by the traffic engineer.

Commissioner Britton asked if staff would not recommend for Planning Commission to see the site plan.

Mr. McCullough said he did not feel it rose to that occasion. He said it was a large site and anything on that site would need to use the existing network of streets.

Commissioner Britton inquired about busses coming from Learnard to the frontage road.

Mr. Zachary said he would not recommend that for the large busses. He said there was a left turn lane there that they could potentially use. He said his preference was to not have busses making a left turn across more than one lane of traffic, when possible.

Commissioner Sands asked if the existing traffic impact study would be used for the site plan.

Mr. McCullough said it would depend on the final site project.

Commissioner Sands said the opening of the South Lawrence Trafficway would relieve some of the congestion on 23rd Street.

ACTION TAKEN

Motioned by Commissioner Sands, seconded by Commissioner Butler, to approve the rezoning request, Z-16-00147, for approximately 7.7 acres from GPI (General Public and Institutional Uses) District to IG (General Industrial) District and forwarding it to the City Commission with a recommendation for approval based on the findings of fact found in the body of the staff report, including direction to staff to scrutinize and mitigate traffic impacts to Learnard Ave and other residential streets at a high level during the site plan process.

Commissioner Britton said he would support the motion. He felt safety concerns would be continuously looked at during the site planning process by staff. He said there would never be a perfect spot for it but that this site would be a better location than the current one. He felt the right-in, right-out should be the preference for the site.

Commissioner Carpenter wanted busses kept off Learnard Ave.

Commissioner Willey said she would support the motion. She said there were good elements to the site but would put more pressure on commuters using the frontage road. She was in favor of the right-in, right out.

Commissioner von Achen thanked the applicant for the traffic impact study. She urged staff to try to keep the right-in, right-out condition.

Motion carried 8-0-2, with Commissioners Harrod and Kelly abstaining.