

October 04, 2007

ITEM NO. 1 - C.B.C. 607 - NEW MATTERS

Applicant: Summit Bank, Owner
Ron Tabor, agent; Gary Dean, architect; Don Chambers, landscape architect

Address: 1800/1804 N. Taylor Street

Description: Lots 5 & 6, Block 12, Mountain Park Addition to the City of Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas.

ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. A perimeter planting strip is required along any side of a vehicular use area that abuts adjoining property or street right-of-way. This strip shall be at least nine (9) feet wide. Not more than twenty-five (25) percent of the perimeter planter area may be shifted from one area of the site to another area of the site; thus a six foot nine inch (6'-9") wide landscaping strip.
2. Credit for all of the perimeter landscaping to be allowed within the public right-of-way along the southern property line. This will also require a franchise agreement with the City of Little Rock.
3. This site is located within the designated mature area of the city; however, this site is not meeting the minimum city requirements even with the reductions allowed by ordinance, of a twenty-five percent reduction which equates to a six foot nine inch (6'-9") wide landscape strip.

VARIANCE REQUESTED:

1. The reduction in the perimeter landscaping strip along a portion of the northern property line.
2. The reduction of the perimeter landscaping strip along the southern property line.
3. A reduction in the minimum city landscape ordinance requirements exceeding amount allowed at staff level.

FINDINGS:

The C-3 zoned property at 1800/1804 N. Taylor Street is occupied by a one-story brick commercial building. The property is located at the northwest corner of N. Taylor Street and Cantrell Road. There is paved parking on the east side of the commercial building. An existing

driveway from N. Taylor Street serves as access. A paved alley is located along the west property line. The alley is used by the various businesses within the block for access.

The applicant proposes to remove the north portion of the building and remodel it as a branch bank facility. The exterior walls will be removed, but the roof structure will stay intact with the overall roofline remaining the same. The north portion of the building will become the drive-thru portion of the bank facility. The existing area of parking will be utilized with the redevelopment of the property. With the right-of-way dedication, only a one (1) foot street buffer will remain. There will be an additional 16 feet of landscaped area between the new south property line and the new sidewalk constructed along Cantrell Road. The applicant is requesting three (3) variances with the proposed redevelopment.

The landscape ordinance requires minimum 6 foot-9 inch street landscape strip along Cantrell Road and N. Taylor Street sides of the parking area. As noted previously, the additional right-of-way dedication along Cantrell Road , will reduce the street buffer to one (1) foot along the south side of the parking area. The applicant is proposing the required perimeter landscaping material along this area; however, it all is located within the public-right-of-way. A franchise agreement must be obtained for this landscaping to be located within this area.

The applicant recently agreed at the Board of Adjustment meeting to relocate a sidewalk into the public right-of-way thus eliminating the need for a landscape variance on the eastern side of the property.

The landscape ordinance requires a minimum six foot nine inch (6'-9") wide perimeter landscaping strip along the northern perimeter of the property. Currently, a portion of the site drops below this minimal amount along the western portion of the property to accommodate the drive-thru facilities. However, the overall average amount of green space along this property line exceeds the amount required.

Staff is supportive of the requested variances associated with the proposed redevelopment of the property as a branch bank facility. The overall building and parking foot prints on the property will remain relatively the same. The need for one of the variances is an issue based on the fact that additional right-of-way dedication is required along Cantrell Road. Without the right-of-way dedication, a variance would not be needed along this southern property line. The variance being requested along the northern property line exceeds the overall average amount of green space required by ordinance thus improving the overall existing conditions on the site. Staff believes the applicant has proposed a nice redevelopment plan for the property which should have no adverse impact on the adjacent properties or the general area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is in support of the requested variances in association with the redevelopment of this site.