

FILE NO.: Z-7626-B

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NAME: Joe T. Robinson Revised Long-form POD

LOCATION: Located at 21001 – 21501 HWY 10

DEVELOPER:

Pulaski County Special School District  
Dr. Jerry Guess, Superintendent  
925 East Dixon Road  
Little Rock, AR 72206

SURVEYOR:

Development Consultants Inc.  
Attn. Robert Brown  
2200 North Rodney Parham Road, Suite 220  
Little Rock, AR 72212

AREA: 66.47 acres

NUMBER OF LOTS: 1

FT. NEW STREET: 0 LF

CURRENT ZONING: POD

ALLOWED USES: School

PROPOSED ZONING: Revised POD

PROPOSED USE: School

VARIANCE/WAIVERS:

1. Driveway spacing eastern driveway located less than 150-feet from the eastern boundary.
2. Driveway spacing western driveway to include a median to separate an entry and two exit lanes that exceed the maximum driveway width of 40 feet.
3. Allow screening of new trash containers with part masonry wall and part evergreen plant screening, in lieu of full opaque fence and gates.

BACKGROUND:

The school site is located outside the City limits but within the City's zoning jurisdiction. The school was constructed many years prior to the City extending zoning to the area. The Little Rock Planning Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit for this site on May 6, 2004. The approval allowed for phased construction of a baseball field, a softball field, a gymnasium and additional parking. Phase I consisted of a baseball field, 10 parking spaces and a maintenance access drive. Phase II consisted of a softball field. Phase III, anticipated in 2 to 5 years from the approval, consisted of a gymnasium and an 80-space parking lot. The baseball field and gymnasium were to replace facilities located on property owned by Deltic Timber. The ball fields were to be fenced and lighted and would include spectator seating areas. The lighting would be directed onto the fields. An architect had not yet designed the Phase III gymnasium so specifics of building material were not available. The height of the building was limited to 45 feet. The gymnasium and Phase III parking were to be constructed to the Highway 10 Design Overlay District standards for setbacks and buffers. The ball fields and gymnasium were anticipated to be used seven days per week from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm. The facilities would be available for use by groups other than the Joe T. Robinson School students.

Ordinance No. 20,065-X adopted by the Little Rock Board of Directors on February 3, 2009, rezoned the site from R-2, Single-family to Planned Office Development to allow the existing school to place a new drive inconsistent with the typical standards established by the Highway 10 Design Overlay District. According to the applicant the property experienced significant congestion within the site and on Highway 10 during peak traffic hours. The applicant stated the congestion was due to bus and vehicular traffic using a common driveway to access the site and several turning conflicts on Highway 10. Construction of the new driveway and parking lot were intended to allow for the separation of bus and vehicular traffic by a new concrete plaza adjacent to the proposed building addition. These improvements were intended to alleviate congestion by improving circulation within the property and eliminating turning conflicts and vehicle stacking on Highway 10. The request included the construction of a new parking lot and a small building addition. The previous phases of the approved Conditional Use Permit, which were not completed at the time of the POD approval, continued to be a part of the approval request. The drive has not been constructed.

A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The applicant is requesting to revise the previously approved POD, Planned Office Development, for the property located at 21001 and 21501 HWY 10. The property was rezoned to POD in 2009 to resolve a drive spacing variance within the Highway 10 DOD. The proposed (fifth) driveway was never constructed. The applicant is resubmitting the request to acquire approval for construction of a new middle school building, new indoor practice facility for athletics, additional parking areas, improved bus and vehicle drives, new basketball and softball fields and potential future expansions to buildings and parking.

The applicant is requesting variances as follows:

1. Reconstruct existing eastern driveway to include two exit lanes and maintain the existing location that is less than 150-feet from the eastern boundary.
2. Reconstruct existing western driveway to include a median to separate an entry lane and two (2) exit lanes that exceeds the maximum driveway width of 40-feet.
3. Allow screening of new trash containers with part masonry wall and part evergreen plant screening, in lieu of full opaque fencing and gates.

The need for the project is not due to a school closing or otherwise transferring of students. The construction of the new middle school, repurposing the existing middle school and other future expansions shown are all about enhancing the Joe T. Robinson School facilities and providing for student population growth. It is hoped that the new middle school will help attract more students to public school where this population is steadily diminishing and going to the private school options. The additional space provided by the new buildings and shifting of the high school freshmen to their own building will increase the campus capacity in each student focus area. While there is no certainty of what the actual growth may be the school is providing for a potential increase in capacity of 200 to 500 students that could be served on the campus. At the same time the school is making proactive improvements to prevent traffic issues with bus loading space and vehicle loading/stack space. The school is also enhancing parking capacity for students, parents, faculty, staff and events. The long term plan with initial improvements in the first phase of work and future expansions playing out over the next six (6) to eight (8) years. The applicant notes that Robinson High School and Robinson Middle School are the only operating public high school and public middle schools north of Colonel Glenn and West of Interstate 430. The applicant states the need for better public schools options goes hand in hand with this expanding area of Western Little Rock.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The site contains a Pulaski County School both a Jr. and High School. An elementary school is located to the northwest of this site. South and west of the site are single-family homes located within the Chenal subdivision. North of the site is wooded, single-family zoned property. Other uses in the area include churches, an automobile repair shop, an office building and a small baseball park.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

As of this writing, staff has received an informational phone call from an area property owner. All property owners located within 200-feet of the site along with the Duquesne Place Property Owners Association were notified of the public hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS:

PUBLIC WORKS CONDITIONS:

1. Stormwater detention ordinance applies to this property. Show the proposed location for stormwater detention facilities on the plan. Maintenance of the detention pond and all private drainage improvements is the responsibility of the developer and/or local property owners' association and detailed in the bill of assurance.
2. With site development, provide the design of street conforming to the Master Street Plan. Construct one-half street improvement to Hwy 10 including 5-foot sidewalks with the planned development. AHTD denied permitting the street improvements.
3. Obtain permits for improvements within State Highway right-of-way from AHTD, District VI.
4. Submit a Traffic Impact Study for the proposed project. Study should address trip generation and trip distribution for the development, the onsite traffic plan and also should take into account existing and projected traffic growth. The study should be submitted by December 16, 2015 for this item to remain on the current agenda.
5. If disturbed area is one (1) or more acres, obtain a NPDES stormwater permit from the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality prior to the start of construction.
6. On site striping and signage plans should be forwarded to Public Works, Traffic Engineering for approval with the site development package.
7. Driveway locations and widths do not meet the traffic access and circulation requirements of Sections 30-43 and 31-210. A driveway variance must be requested for the width of driveway to exceed 36 feet.

E. UTILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT/COUNTY PLANNING:

Wastewater: Sewer available to this site, but appears outside the service boundary. Contact Little Rock Wastewater for additional information.

Entergy: Entergy does not object to this proposal. Three phase power line exists around and throughout the existing property. Some of them may be in conflict with future plans and will need to be adjusted and/or relocated to accommodate those plans. Relocation costs may be incurred for facilities adjustments. Contact Entergy well in advance to discuss future service requirements, new facilities locations and adjustments to existing facilities as this project proceeds.

Centerpoint Energy: No comment received.

AT & T: No comment received.

Central Arkansas Water:

1. All Central Arkansas Water requirements in effect at the time of request for water service must be met.
2. The Little Rock Fire Department needs to evaluate this site to determine whether additional public and/or private fire hydrant(s) will be required. If additional fire hydrant(s) are required, they will be installed at the Developer's expense.
3. Please submit plans for water facilities and/or fire protection system to Central Arkansas Water for review. Plan revisions may be required after additional review. Contact Central Arkansas Water regarding procedures for installation of water facilities and/or fire service. Approval of plans by the Arkansas Department of Health Engineering Division and the Little Rock Fire Department is required.
4. A Capital Investment Charge based on the size of meter connection(s) will apply to this project in addition to normal charges. This fee will apply to all connections including metered connections off the private fire system.
5. If there are facilities that need to be adjusted and/or relocated, contact Central Arkansas Water. That work would be done at the expense of the developer.
6. Contact Central Arkansas Water regarding the size and location of water meter.
7. Due to the nature of this facility, installation of an approved reduced pressure zone backflow preventer assembly (RPZA) is required on the domestic water service. This assembly must be installed prior to the first point of use. Central Arkansas Water requires that upon installation of the RPZA, successful tests of the assembly must be completed by a Certified Assembly Tester licensed by the State of Arkansas and approved by Central Arkansas Water. The test results must be sent to Central Arkansas Water's Cross Connection Section within ten days of installation and annually thereafter. Contact the Cross Connection Section at 501.377.1226 if you would like to discuss backflow prevention requirements for this project.
8. The facilities on-site will be private. When meters are planned off private lines, private facilities shall be installed to Central Arkansas Water's materials and construction specifications and installation will be inspected by an engineer, licensed to practice in the State of Arkansas. Execution of a Customer Owned Line Agreement is required.
9. Fire sprinkler systems which do not contain additives such as antifreeze shall be isolated with a double detector check valve assembly. If additives area used, a reduced pressure zone back flow preventer shall be required.

Fire Department:    **Maintain Access:**

**Fire Hydrants.** Maintain fire apparatus access roads at fire hydrant locations as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 **Section D103.1 Access road width with a hydrant.** Where a fire hydrant is located on a fire apparatus access road, the minimum road width shall be 26 feet, exclusive of shoulders.

**Fire Hydrants. Locate Fire Hydrants as per Appendix C of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code.** Section C101 – C105, in conjunction with Central Arkansas Water (Jason Lowder 501.377.1245) and the Little Rock Fire Marshal's Office (Capt. Tony Rhodes 501.918.3757 or Capt. John Hogue 501.918.3754). Number and Distribution of Fire Hydrants as per Table C105.1.

Parks and Recreation: No comment received.

County Planning:

1. Show source of title.
2. Show distances to two land corners. Show State Plane Coordinates for two property corners.
3. Provide surveyor's seal and signature.
4. Provide engineer's seal and signature.
5. Show contours at minimum 4-foot intervals.
6. Show water courses entering and leaving property.
7. Provide approval letter from CAW stating water supply design is approved.
8. Provide AHD/ADEQ approval of wastewater system design.
9. Provide letter of approval from local fire department.
10. Provide storm drainage plan.
11. Verify development meets ADA standards.
12. Pay \$33.00 review fee.
  - a. Obtain driveway and street improvement permits from AHTD prior to construction.
  - b. Label all property corners.

Rock Region Metro: Location is currently served near express route 25 Pinnacle Mountain by Rock Region METRO. The development indicates bus drop-off and loading area for each school building and site plan element. Sidewalk access is indicated from each drop-off area; this will allow for future bus service. The turning radius on the drop-off for the proposed Freshman Academy building should be min 45.5' outside for a 40' bus. Please verify bus access radii.

F. ISSUES/TECHNICAL/DESIGN:

Building Code: No comment. The site is located outside the City limits.

Planning Division: This request is located in the Chenal Planning District. The Land Use Plan shows Public/Institutional (PI). The Public/Institutional category includes public and quasi-public facilities that provide a variety of services to the community such as schools, libraries, fire stations, churches, utility substations, and hospitals. The applicant has applied for a revision to an existing POD (Planned Office District) to allow for the development of a middle school and a high school and their parking lots on this tract. The site is within the Highway 10 Design Overlay District.

Master Street Plan: The north side of the property is Highway 10 (Cantrell Road) and it is shown as Principal Arterial on the Master Street Plan. The primary function of a Principal Arterial Street is to serve through traffic and to connect major traffic generator or activity centers within an urbanized area. Entrances and exits should be limited to minimize negative effects of traffic and pedestrians on Highway 10 since it is a Principal Arterial.

Bicycle Plan: A Class I Bike Path is shown along Cantrell Road. A Bike Path is to be a paved path physically separate for the use of bicycles. Additional right-of-way or an easement is recommended. Nine-foot paths are recommended to allow for pedestrian use as well (replacing the sidewalk). AHTD denied permitting the street improvements.

Landscape:

1. Site plan must comply with the City's landscape and buffer ordinance requirements.
2. Eight percent (8%) of the vehicular use area must be designated for green space; this green space needs to be evenly distributed throughout the parking area(s). For developments with more than one hundred fifty (150) parking spaces the minimum size of an interior landscape area shall be three hundred (300) square feet. Interior islands must be a minimum of seven and one half (7 1/2) feet in width. Trees shall be included in the interior landscape areas at the rate of one (1) tree for every twelve (12) parking spaces.
3. An automatic irrigation system to water landscaped areas shall be required for developments of one (1) acre or larger.
4. The development of two (2) acres or more requires the landscape plan to be stamped with the seal of a Registered Landscape Architect.
5. The City Beautiful Commission recommends preserving as many existing trees as feasible on this site. Credit toward fulfilling Landscape Ordinance requirements can be given when preserving trees of six (6) inch caliper or larger.

G. SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE COMMENT: (December 9, 2015)

Mr. Robert Brown of Development Consultants Inc. was present representing the request. Staff presented the item stating there were a few outstanding technical issues related to the site plan in need of addressing prior to the Commission acting on the request. Staff requested Mr. Brown provide the proposed lighting plan and the location of any and all proposed bleachers around the sports fields.

Public Works comments were addressed. Staff stated AHTD had denied the request to allow street widening adjacent to the site. Staff stated since the site was located outside the City limits staff could not accept an in-lieu payment for the cost of improvements. Staff stated the City's stormwater detention ordinance would apply to the redevelopment of the site. Staff stated a traffic impact study was required for the proposed project. Staff stated the study was to take into account trip generation and trip distribution for the development, the on-site traffic plan and the existing and project traffic growth.

Landscaping comments were addressed. Staff stated a minimum of eight percent (8%) of the interior paved areas were to be landscaped. Staff stated with the development of a site two (2) acres or larger a stamped landscape plan was required. Staff stated an automatic irrigation systems to water the landscaped areas was required for developments over one (1) acre by both the Highway 10 Design Overlay District and the Landscape Ordinance. Mr. Brown requested staff consider a variance of this requirement. He stated the school was seeking LEED approval for the new construction. He stated in other areas and campuses the trend was now to water the plant materials and not water the grass areas. He stated native grass which were tolerant of the climate in a particular area were being used.

Staff noted the comments from the various other departments and agencies. Staff suggested the applicant contact the departments or agencies directly with any questions or concerns. There were no more issues for discussion. The Committee then forwarded the item to the full Commission for final action.

H. ANALYSIS:

The applicant submitted a revised site plan to staff addressing the technical issues associated with the request raised at the December 9, 2015, Subdivision Committee meeting. The applicant has provided the proposed lighting plan, the location of any and all proposed bleachers around the sports fields and has provided the traffic impact study.

The request is a revision to the previously approved POD, Planned Office Development, for the school's property located at 21001 and 21501 HWY 10. The original approval allowed for the construction of a driveway on HWY 10 which was not consistent with the typical driveway spacing requirements of the Highway 10 Design Overlay District. The driveway spacing variance was



approved in 2009 but the driveway was not constructed. The applicant is requesting to continue the request for the drive spacing variance but has also included revisions to the existing access and circulation, building placement, building additions and additional sports playing fields.

The existing middle school will be converted to a freshman academy. The building contains 54,950 square feet of floor area and 25 classrooms. The school district is planning to add four (4) additional classrooms. At present there are 65 staff persons and 15 staff persons will be added with the new classroom space. Parking for a high school (grades 9—12), typically requires the placement of six (6) spaces per classroom plus one (1) space for each teacher, employee and administrator on the largest shift. Stacking space is to be adequate to accommodate private vehicles and school buses. The current parking requirement for the freshman academy is 162 spaces for the classroom space and 65 spaces for staff. With the additional classrooms a total of 28 additional spaces would be required. The total number of spaces for the freshman academy upon completion would be 232 spaces.

The site plan includes the construction of a new middle school building with a maximum building height of 60-feet. The building contains 145,000 square feet of floor area. The building is proposed with multiple levels with the maximum being three (3) stories. Parking for the middle school (grades 1—8), is based on one (1) space per classroom plus one (1) space for each teacher, employee and administrator on the largest shift. Stacking space for drop-off and pick-up must be located on site. Stacking space shall be adequate to accommodate private vehicles and school buses. The middle school has 34 classrooms and 73 staff. Four (4) future classrooms are proposed with 24 staff. The typical parking required for the proposed middle school would be 325 parking spaces.

The high school contains 102,200 square feet of floor area. There are 27 classrooms and an additional 15 classrooms are proposed with future expansion area. The parking for the existing high school classroom space based on typical ordinance requirements would be 162 spaces and an additional 65 spaces for the 65 employees. The additional classroom space and an additional staff increase by 15 persons would result in the need for 105 parking spaces. The total number of parking spaces typically required for the high school would be 332 parking spaces.

The site plan includes an indoor practice facility building containing 56,000 square feet. The existing gymnasium and football facility will remain with minor upgrades. The plan includes the addition of a baseball field with lights and a softball field with lights. The lighting will be shielded to minimize bleed over to adjacent properties. The ball fields will have bleachers and accessory support structures such as dug-outs, score boards, etc.

The applicant is seeking a variance to allow the existing eastern driveway to be reconstructed to include two (2) exit lanes, maintaining the existing location that is less than 150-feet from the eastern boundary. The applicant is also requesting to reconstruct the existing western driveway to include a median to separate an entry lane and two (2) exit lanes. The width of the drive exceeds the maximum driveway width of 40-feet. Each of these require a variance from Section 30-43 and 31-210.

The request also includes a variance from the typical screening requirement of the trash dumpster. The applicant is requesting to be allowed screening of a new trash containers with part masonry wall and part evergreen plant screening, in lieu of full opaque fencing and gates. The area is located a minimum of 350 feet from the property line and within an area that a large area of undisturbed buffer will remain.

The applicant submitted a traffic analysis to staff for consideration. Based on the details of the traffic analysis staff is continuing to review the results. Staff will provide an overview of the analysis and the findings of the study at the January 7, 2016, Public Hearing.

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommendation forthcoming.

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PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(JANUARY 7, 2016)

The applicant was present. There were no registered objectors present. Staff presented the item with a recommendation of deferral of this item to the February 25, 2016, public hearing to allow additional time to review the traffic analysis and to meet with the Arkansas State Highway Department concerning any potential improvements which may result from the project. There was no further discussion. The item was placed on the consent agenda and approved as recommended by staff by a vote of 10 ayes, 0 noes and 1 absent.

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STAFF UPDATE:

The applicant and staff have reviewed the traffic study and staff concerns with the findings. The traffic study indicates the need for a traffic signal to serve the school. Staff recommends the traffic signal be installed as shown in the traffic study at the time warrants are met and as determined and permitted by the Arkansas State Highway and Transportations Department.

The applicant and an adjacent property owner have been working to resolve the adjacent property owners concerns related to the ball field area and the lighting of the ball fields. The applicant has provided the following as additional notes on the site plan:

1. Ballfield lighting will have light poles and fixtures that are approximately 70-feet in height, less if feasible. Light fixtures shall be directional and/or shielded to minimize visibility and light bleed-over to adjacent properties.
2. Baseball and softball games will normally end before 9:00 pm and lights will be turned off. There may be occasional games that run into overtime and extend past 9:00 pm.
3. The public address system speakers shall be installed near and directed toward the spectator bleachers.
4. The limits of clearing and grading of the areas surrounding the ballfields will follow the preliminary slope study that has been provided as a supplemental information drawing. Existing trees to remain will be protected during the construction process.

With the previous write-up staff was awaiting the traffic analysis and the comments from the traffic study. Based on the findings of the study staff is in support of the request and the applicant's proposal for limiting the impacts of traffic on the area. Staff feels the applicant's proposal for future development and redevelopment of this site is appropriate. The applicant is proposing a multi-year, multi-phased development and redevelopment of this existing public school campus. The plan includes buffering along the perimeters of the site proposed for new construction more than adequate to meet the minimums outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. Staff feels the development as proposed is appropriate.

Staff recommends approval of the requested POD zoning subject to compliance with the comments and conditions as outlined in paragraphs D, E and F of the agenda staff report.

Staff recommends approval of the driveway spacing variance from Sections 30-43 and 31-210 to allow the eastern drive nearer the property line than typically allowed.

Staff recommends approval of the variance request for the screening of the service area along the southern perimeter of the new middle school building and the placement of plantings as proposed by the applicant.

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PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(FEBRUARY 25, 2016)

The applicant was present. There were no registered objectors present. Staff stated there had been agreements made between the school district and the adjacent property owner concerning the baseball and softball fields. Staff stated the agreements would be included in the ordinance which would be forwarded to the Board of Directors for final approval. Staff presented the item with a recommendation of approval of the requested

POD zoning subject to compliance with the comments and conditions as outlined in paragraphs D, E and F of the agenda staff report. Staff presented a recommendation of approval of the driveway spacing variance from Sections 30-43 and 31-210 to allow the eastern drive nearer the property line than typically allowed. Staff presented a recommendation of approval of the variance request for the screening of the service area along the southern perimeter of the new middle school building and the placement of plantings as proposed by the applicant. There was no further discussion. The item was placed on the consent agenda and approved as recommended by staff by a vote of 10 ayes, 0 noes and 1 absent.