

FILE NO.: Z-2496-A

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NAME: Fletcher Library Short-form PD-O

LOCATION: Located at 523 North Buchanan Street

DEVELOPER:

Central Arkansas Library System  
c/o Allison Architects  
200 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 400  
Little Rock, AR 72201

SURVEYOR:

White-Daters and Associates  
24 Rahling Circle  
Little Rock, AR 72223

AREA: 1.22 acres      NUMBER OF LOTS: 1 zoning lot      FT. NEW STREET: 0 LF

CURRENT ZONING: R-3, Single-family & O-3, General Office District

ALLOWED USES: Single-family & General office

PROPOSED ZONING: PD-O

PROPOSED USE: Branch library

VARIANCE/WAIVERS: A variance from Sections 30-43 and 31-210 to allow the drive on North Buchanan Street nearer the property line than typically allowed.

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BACKGROUND:

Ordinance No. 12,534 adopted by the Little Rock Board of Directors on August 16, 1971, rezoned the western portion of the property from "B" Residence to "E-1" Quiet Office. Section 36-7, Conversion of previous zoning classifications or district, provides a conversion table for the former zoning districts. In this case E-1 Quiet Office District was reclassified to O-3, General Office District. The eastern portion of the property is zoned R-3, Single-family.

On September 20, 1994, the Little Rock Planning Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit request to allow the construction of a new branch library on the R-3, Single-family zoned portion of the property. The building was proposed containing 13,500 square feet of floor area. The plan included the placement of 33 on-site parking spaces. That project has been constructed.

A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The total site area is approximately 1.22 acres and is located at 823 North Buchanan Street, which is south of 'H' Street between Pierce and Buchanan Streets. Central Arkansas Library System is proposing to construct a new building to be used for library functions but will also serve as a community meeting building containing 3,596 square feet (in addition to the existing building containing 13,500 square feet). The site plan indicates 41 parking spaces to serve the site. The expansion will occur within the existing parking lot to the west of the existing structure. Central Arkansas Library System has acquired a parcel of land to the south with frontage on 'G' Street which will not be developed at this time.

The site plan indicates the existing eastern drive on 'H' Street will be removed and a new drive will be placed on North Buchanan Street near the southern property line. The driveway will require a variance from the City's Master Street Plan and Subdivision Ordinances.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The library has existed at this location for many years. The property is located at the edge of a residential neighborhood with single-family homes to the south and east of this site. Other uses in the area include a school to the north, across 'H' Street, and a variety of office uses to the west. The site sits two (2) blocks east of North University Avenue. Sidewalks are in place along 'H' Street as well as curb and gutter. There are no sidewalks or curb and gutter along North Buchanan or North Pierce Streets.

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 Hillcrest Residents Neighborhood Association were notified of the public hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS:

PUBLIC WORKS CONDITIONS:

1. Due to the proposed use of the property, the Master Street Plan specifies that North Buchanan Street for the frontage of this property must meet commercial street standards. Dedicate right-of-way to 30 feet from centerline.
2. Due to the proposed use of the property, the Master Street Plan specifies that 'G' Street for the frontage of this property must meet commercial street standards. Dedicate right-of-way to 30 feet from centerline.
3. A 20-foot radial dedication of right-of-way is required at the intersection of North Buchanan Street and 'H' Street.
4. With site development, provide design of street conforming to the Master Street Plan. Construct one-half street improvement to 'G' Street including 5-foot sidewalk with the planned development.
5. Repair or replace any curb and gutter or sidewalk that is damaged in the public right-of-way prior to occupancy.
6. 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.
7. Damage to public and private property due to hauling operations or operation of construction related equipment from a nearby construction site shall be repaired by the responsible party prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
8. Per Section 29-102 an evaluation should be conducted on the basis of existing downstream development and any analysis of stormwater runoff with and without the proposed development. If the proposed development will cause or increase downstream flooding conditions, provisions to minimize such flooding conditions should be included in the design of the stormwater management improvements. Such provisions may include downstream improvements and/or detention of stormwater runoff and it regulated discharge to the downstream storm drainage system.
9. Additional traffic is being added to 'G' Street which is 10 feet wide.
10. A grading permit in accordance with Section 29-186 (c) and (d) will be required prior to any land clearing or grading activities at the site. Other than residential subdivisions, site grading and drainage plans must be submitted and approved prior to the start of construction.

E. UTILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT/COUNTY PLANNING:

Wastewater: Sewer available to this site.

Entergy: Entergy does not object to this proposal. Electrical service is already being provided to the existing structure. Service can be provided to the new proposed community meeting space on the property from an existing power line located across 'H' Street. Contact Entergy in advance regarding future service requirements to the development, desired line extensions and future facilities locations 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. 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.
3. Contact Central Arkansas Water regarding the size and location of water meter.
4. 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.
5. 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: No Comments

Parks and Recreation: No comment received.

County Planning: No comment.

Rock Region Metro: Location is currently served on Route 8 - Rodney Parham by Rock Region METRO. The plan as shown indicated two (2) curb cut closures and sidewalk additions which will improve stop options at this location. We have no objections to the plan.

F. ISSUES/TECHNICAL/DESIGN:

Building Code: Project is subject to full commercial plan review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit. For information on submittal requirements and the review process, contact a commercial plans examiner:

Curtis Richey at 501.371.4724; [crichey@littlerock.org](mailto:crichey@littlerock.org) or  
Mark Alderfer at 501.371.4875; [malderfer@littlerock.org](mailto:malderfer@littlerock.org).

Planning Division: This request is located in the Heights Hillcrest Planning District. The Land Use Plan shows Residential Low Density (RL) for this property. The Residential Low Density is for single-family homes at densities no greater than six dwelling units per acre. The applicant has applied for a rezoning from R-3 (Single Family District) and O-3 (General Office District) to PDO (Planned Development Office) to allow for the development of new library space to also serve as community meeting space in a separate structure on the west side of the property and within the existing parking lot. The site is within the Hillcrest Design Overlay District which has lot coverage, height and other regulations.

Master Street Plan: The north side of the property is 'H' Street and it is a Collector; the other three (3) sides of the property are 'G', North Pierce and Buchanan Streets and they are shown as Local Streets on the Master Street Plan. The primary function of a Collector Street is to provide a connection from Local Streets to Arterials. The primary function of a Local Street is to provide access to adjacent properties. Local Streets that are abutted by non-residential zoning/use or more intensive zoning than duplexes are considered as "Commercial Streets". A Collector design standard is used for Commercial Streets. These streets may require dedication of right-of-way and may require street improvements for entrances and exits to the site.

Bicycle Plan: There are no bike routes shown in the immediate vicinity.

Landscape:

1. Site plan must comply with the City's landscape and buffer ordinance requirements and the Hillcrest Overlay District.
2. A perimeter planting strip is required along any side of a vehicular use area that abuts adjoining property or the right-of-way of any street. This strip shall be at least nine (9) feet wide. One (1) tree and three (3) shrubs or vines shall be planted for every thirty (30) linear feet of perimeter planting strip.

3. Trees and shrubs are required to be placed between the proposed building and the 'H' Street right-of-way. Plant material is to be provided at the rate of one (1) tree and three (3) shrubs for every 30 linear feet.
4. The southwest properties are zoned R-3, Single-family. As a component of all land use buffer requirements, opaque screening, whether a fence or other device, a minimum of six (6) feet in height shall be required along these perimeters of the site.
5. The site is located within an area of the City which is designated as the Mature Area. The minimum landscape strips may be reduced by 75 percent but in no case be less than six feet nine inches (6'9").
6. 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). The minimum size of an interior landscape area shall be one hundred fifty (150) square feet for developments with one hundred fifty (150) or fewer parking spaces. 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.
7. An automatic irrigation system to water landscaped areas shall be required for developments of one (1) acre or larger.
8. 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. Brian Dale of White-Daters and Associates and Katie Bruhl of Allison Architects were present representing the request. Staff presented an overview of 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 questioned the proposed lighting plan, the screening of the rear yards of the homes to the west and the location and hours of any dumpster service. Staff questioned the proposed signage plan and the proposed activities for the new building.

Public Works comments were addressed. Staff stated dedication of right of way to 30-feet from centerline was required on the abutting streets. Staff stated a radial dedication of right of way was required at the intersections of all the boundary streets. Staff stated 'G' Street was a substandard street and would require dedication of right of way and street improvements adjacent to the lot proposed for development. Staff also stated a grading permit was required prior to any grading activities on the site.

Landscaping comments were addressed. Staff stated screening and buffering was required adjacent to the perimeters abutting single-family. Staff also stated a minimum street buffer of six feet nine inches (6'9") was required along the abutting streets.

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 a number of the technical issues associated with the request. The applicant has provided information concerning the proposed lighting plan, the proposed screening of the adjacent residential uses and indicated the hours of dumpster service will not be limited. The applicant has also provided the proposed signage plan and the proposed activities for the new building. The revised site plan has removed the parking proposed on the southern lot owned by the library and indicated no activity will take place on this lot at this time.

Central Arkansas Library located at 823 North Buchanan Street is requesting a rezoning of the site from R-3, Single-family residential and O-3, General Office District to PD-O, Planned Development Office. Central Arkansas Library is proposing to construct a new building to be used for additional library space and also for community meetings. The new building contains 3,596 square feet of floor area and 41-parking spaces to serve the library development. The new construction will occur within the existing parking lot to the west of the main library building. Central Arkansas Library System has acquired a parcel of land to the south with frontage on 'G' Street which will not be developed at this time.

The site plan indicates the existing eastern drive on 'H' Street will be removed and a new drive will be placed on North Buchanan Street near the southern property line. The driveway will require a variance from the City's Master Street Plan and Subdivision Ordinances (Sections 30-43 and 31-210) to allow the drive nearer the property line than typically allowed per ordinance.

The site plan indicates the placement of a dumpster near the southern portion of the parking lot. The applicant is working to site the dumpster in the best location to have limited impact on the adjacent single-family homes but also allow the facility to be serviced with the waste management company. The applicant has indicated the hours of dumpster service will not be limited. Staff recommends the hours of dumpster service be limited to daylight hours, 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday.

The applicant has indicated all site lighting will be low level and directional, directed downward and into the site. The applicant has indicated the maximum parking lot pole height will be 35-feet. The lighting will be shielded to limit the over-spilling of lighting onto adjacent property.

The existing building contains 13,500 square feet of floor area and the new construction is proposed containing 3,596 square feet for a total of 17,096 square feet of floor area. Parking for a library would typically be based on one (1) parking space per 400 gross square feet of floor area. This would result in the need for 41 on-site parking spaces.

The site is located within the Hillcrest Design Overlay District which has established guidelines for parking. The parking requirements within the Overlay are allowed at be 50-percent of that required by the zoning ordinance (20 spaces for this site). The maximum parking allowed for the Overlay is to be the minimum parking per the zoning ordinance (42 spaces for this site). The Overlay allows on-street parking to be credited toward the parking requirements at a rate of one (1) space per ten (10) linear feet of street frontage. This property has 280 linear feet of street frontage along 'H' Street which would result in credit for 28 parking spaces. The site has street frontage on North Buchanan Street (150 feet) and North Pierce Street (180 feet) but due to the width of these streets parking would be difficult and allow the streets to continue to function.

The applicant has indicated signage along the building facades which have public street frontage. The site plan also indicates the placement of a monument sign on Buchanan Street. The sign is proposed as allowed in office zones or a maximum of six (6) feet in height and 64 square feet in area. The existing ground sign on 'H' Street which is four (4) foot by eight (8) foot (32 square feet) will remain.

The plan indicates the placement of landscaping to comply with the zoning and landscape ordinance requirements. A minimum landscape strip of six feet nine inches (6'9") is indicated along the butting streets between the paved areas and the parking lots. A screening fence will be installed along the perimeters of the site where abutting residential zonings and uses. The fence will be a minimum of six (6) feet in height and most likely constructed of a wooden material.

The library hours of operation are from 9 a.m.to 8 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. The new construction is proposed for library functions but will also serve as a community meeting facility. Some activities may extend beyond the typical business hours of the library.

Staff is supportive of the applicant's request. Central Arkansas Library is proposing new construction of a facility to increase their available floor area but to also be used as meeting space for community activities. Staff feels the library has done an adequate job in trying to limit the impact on the adjacent residential



homes. To staff's knowledge there are no outstanding technical issues in need of addressing related to the site plan. Staff feels the development proposal is appropriate for this site.

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the request 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 variance request from Sections 30-43 and 31-210 to allow the placement of the drive on North Buchanan Street as indicated on the site plan.

Staff recommends the hours of dumpster service be limited to daylight hours, 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday.

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PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(FEBRUARY 25, 2016)

The applicant was present. There were no registered objectors present. Staff presented the item with a recommendation of approval of the request 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 variance request from Sections 30-43 and 31-210 to allow the placement of the drive on North Buchanan Street as indicated on the site plan. Staff presented a recommendation the hours of dumpster service be limited to daylight hours, 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday. 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.