



CITY OF RAPID CITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Trish Anderson, Planner II

DATE: October 4, 2002

RE: Shopping Center Development Review Options

At the June 20, 2002 Planning Commission meeting, Commissioners recommended that staff advertise for a public hearing to utilize the Planned Development concept in both of the Shopping Center zoning districts. The current terminology for the administrative approval of shopping centers (17.30.090) references Site Plans and Final Site Development Plans; terminology which is inconsistent with the rest of the Zoning Ordinance. However, in response to some questions raised by the City Attorney's office regarding the utilization of the Planned Development procedure, staff has conducted additional research on other techniques that may be used to address shopping center development. Those approaches are summarized below. Staff is seeking direction from the Planning Commission about which approach the Planning Commission wants to pursue.

Both the SC-1 Neighborhood Shopping Center District (Chapter 17.30) and the SC-2 Community Shopping Center (Chapter 17.32) were adopted in 1975. Rushmore Mall, and Baken Park are zoned SC-2 Community Shopping Center. The Southtown Mall, including the Mt. Rushmore Safeway store is zoned SC-1 Neighborhood Shopping Center District. It appears from a search of the archives that both the Rushmore Mall and the Southtown Mall submitted and gained approval of a Final Site Development Plan in accordance with the existing ordinance. Staff has been unable to locate similar documentation for Baken Park.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Options

1. Make no changes to the Shopping Center Districts. The disadvantage to this option is that the language is inconsistent with the rest of the zoning ordinance in that the administrative procedure is a specific type of review that only applies to shopping center districts. Additionally, the existing administrative development procedures for shopping centers requires approval by both the Planning Commission and City Council, thus lengthening the review period for applicants a minimum of 10 days. Further, the requirements for the administrative approval are not nearly as comprehensive as those for Planned Developments, and they lack the flexibility that the Planned Development concept provides.

2. Substitute the Planned Development requirements for the existing administrative review procedures in both of the Shopping Center Districts. Under this scenario all uses within both the Neighborhood Shopping Center District and the Community Shopping Center District would become conditional uses and a Planned Development would be required. As discussed in Option #1 above, the requirements for Planned Developments are much more comprehensive and address setbacks, building height, type and location of landscaping materials, location of curb cuts; issues which are common to large developments. The more dated administrative procedure for shopping center development does not address these issues. The potential difficulty with this approach is that there would be no permitted uses in the shopping center district; all uses would be conditional as part of a Planned Development. Staff notes that the ordinance could be written so that individual changes in internal tenancy within the mall need not be subject to a Major Amendment. Additionally, the Planned Commercial Development (17.50.100) would have to be modified to allowed Planned Developments within the Shopping Center Zoning Districts.

3. Rezone the Shopping Center Districts to General Commercial and make shopping centers a conditional use in that district. This approach allows both permitted and conditional uses; however, in order to address issues typically associated with large-scale development, size-triggering thresholds for conditional uses would have to be established. Shopping centers within the City of Sioux Falls are treated as retail trade and services, and are zoned general commercial. Permitted centers are less than one acre in size with buildings less than 15,000 square feet. Any buildings or sites exceeding these thresholds are a Conditional Use. Rapid City could adopt a similar approach and amend the General Commercial section of the code to establish size thresholds over which a Conditional Use Permit would be required. However, the flexibility provided by the Planned Development procedure would not be available under this approach. Staff also notes that the maximum height and lot coverage allowed in the General Commercial District are much greater than those allowed in the Shopping Center Districts. In the General Commercial District the maximum building height is four stories and the maximum lot coverage is seventy-five percent. Similar standards in the Shopping Center district are two and a half stories and thirty percent respectively.

4. Rewrite the Shopping Center District requirements to be more consistent with other zoning district language. Under this approach, there could be both Permitted and Conditional Uses, and size thresholds could be established such that larger developments would require a Conditional Use Permit. Planned Developments could be listed as a Conditional Use. The general description of the shopping center ordinance states the district “is intended to serve as a unified grouping of retail shops and stores....and shall consist of a harmonious selection of uses and groupings or buildings, parking etc., planned and designed as an integrated unit” The majority of the Permitted Uses in the district are related to the shopping center itself, and it would be difficult to review development as an integrated unit when different types of facilities are subject to different requirements.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that Planning Commission authorize staff to pursue Option #2 and to advertise for a public hearing to substitute the Planned Development requirements for the existing administrative review procedures in the Shopping Center Zoning Districts. Staff further recommends that the Planning Commission authorize staff to advertise for a public hearing to allow Planned Developments in both of the Shopping Center Zoning Districts. The Planned Development section of the code states that Planned Developments should be utilized “When the location of the property is such that its development may have unusually significant impacts upon public infrastructure or surrounding developed areas;”. Clearly large shopping center sites located at the intersection of major arterial roadways fit this criterion. Incorporating the Planned Development concept into the Shopping Center Zoning Districts provides for a comprehensive timely review and provides applicants with the oft-needed flexibility to make sites work.