

CITY OF RICHARDSON
CITY PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES – OCTOBER 17, 2023

The Richardson City Plan Commission met on October 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room #CH157 of the Richardson City Hall, 2360 Campbell Creek Boulevard, Suite 525, Richardson, TX.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bryan Marsh, Chairman
Kenneth Southard, Vice Chairman
Nate Roberts, Commissioner
Gary Beach, Commissioner
Gwen Walraven, Commissioner
Byron Purdy, Commissioner
Joe Costantino, Commissioner
Michael Keller, Commissioner
Sebrena Bohnsack, Commissioner

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Chris Shacklett, Asst. Director of Development Svcs. – Planning
Derica Peters, Senior Planner
Sam Chavez, Director of Development Services
Anna Jo Castaneda, Executive Secretary

BRIEFING SESSION

Prior to the start of the regular business meeting, the City Plan Commission met with staff regarding staff reports and agenda items. No action was taken.

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

1. Approval of Minutes of the regular business meeting of October 5, 2023.

Motion: Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Costantino. Motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Zoning File 23-12 Special Permit & Planned Development – Naturich:** Consider and act on a request to rezone approximately nine (9) acres located on the south side of Research Drive, west of Telecom Parkway, from PD Planned Development for the I-M(1) Industrial District with modified development standards to PD Planned Development for the I-M(1) Industrial District with modified development standards and revised concept plan and for approval of a Special Permit for a Manufacturing Facility, Heavy use. *Property Owner: Prakash Purohit, representing Naturich Labs Inc. Staff: Derica Peters.*

Chairman Marsh recused himself on this agenda item.

Ms. Peters began her presentation by stating the subject site is undeveloped and located south of Research Drive and west of Telecom Parkway. The subject site is comprised of two (2) properties totaling approximately nine (9) acres. The surrounding properties are industrially zoned and developed with industrial and office uses. The site was rezoned from I-M(1) Industrial to Planned Development with a Special Permit for heavy manufacturing in 2019 and 2021. Both Special Permits expired since building permits were not acquired. The applicant's request is to modify the concept plan and elevations and to request a new Special Permit for a heavy manufacturing use, which is defined as a facility that processes raw materials. Naturich will process natural ingredients such as sea salt, aloe and essential

oils to produce organic beauty and personal care products. She explained the concept plan will be revised to accommodate new loading areas and an increased building area.

Ms. Peters described the overall site to include Phase 1, which is the 6.68-acre property to the west and Phase 2, the 2.28-acre property to the southeast. Both tracts have the same use and development regulations, however, the Special Permit would only apply to Phase 1. She explained the applicant does not have immediate plans to develop Phase 2, but it is expected to be additional office or warehouse space. If they intended to utilize Phase 2 for heavy manufacturing, an additional Special Permit would be required.

Ms. Peters stated the proposed building is larger than the previously approved building; the proposed building would be approximately 125,000 square feet. There are loading areas on the east and west sides of the building. She stated the loading docks at overhead doors would be added to the east elevation and described changes to the loading dock area on the west elevation. Although the loading dock areas are not required to be screened from the road or from adjacent non-residential properties, the applicant proposed a 10-foot-tall masonry screening wall along the sides of loading docks in addition to an evergreen tree line planted along the screening walls and along the street. The site exceeds the minimum 10% landscape requirement, providing 16% landscape area. Parking is provided at the same ratio as established in the current PD, and adequate parking is provided.

Ms. Peters presented the proposed elevations and explained the building will be constructed with painted concrete tilt wall panels, featuring metal accents and aluminum storefront windows. Ms. Peters explained the maximum building height allowed for a 1-story building was twenty-five (25) feet plus a 4-foot-tall parapet, but the current PD allowed a maximum height of thirty-five (35) feet including the parapet. Due to the design of the loading dock areas, and since building is measured at adjacent grade, the applicant requested a 40-foot maximum height to accommodate building design.

Ms. Peters concluded with a summary of the request and conditions to be included if the Commission recommended approval. Ms. Peters further stated that one (1) letter in opposition to the request was received from the neighbor to the west, who has specific concerns about the western loading docks and the anticipated truck traffic in that area.

Commissioner Roberts asked if there had been discussion related to a traffic study when the property was previously zoned for heavy manufacturing.

Mr. Shacklett stated that there was not a requirement for a traffic study with the previous zoning cases or this one because the uses such as offices, warehouses, traditional manufacturing, and high-tech manufacturing are all allowed by-right. The proposed facility is expected to generate the same traffic that is already allowed by right. The Special Permit is only required due to the processing of raw materials.

Commissioner Roberts asked staff to confirm there was not an issue with the proximity of the building to the fire lane.

Ms. Peters replied that the Fire Marshal had reviewed the plans, and there was not an issue with the proximity of the building to the fire lane.

Commissioner Roberts stated that during the work session, the screening to the west was discussed, and it was determined it is not possible to screen that area based on the layout of the fire lane and the access easement.

Ms. Peters stated the applicant proposed a plan providing screening along the sides of the loading docks, but they would not be able to provide any additional screening to the west due to the location of the fire lane and loading areas.

Commissioner Beach asked how the aloe and sea salt would be shipped to the facility and how much waste would be produced with these materials.

Ms. Peters stated that the applicant could respond to that question.

Commissioner Southard asked to confirm that the CZO would not require screening of loading areas and that instead, the applicant was applying it voluntarily.

Ms. Peters reiterated there is no requirement for screening in this district when adjacent to a non-residential area, but the applicant would provide the screening elements as part of their request.

With no further questions from the Commission, Vice Chairman Southard invited the applicant to present the request.

Mr. Prakash Purohit, president and owner of Naturich Labs, Inc., 2505 Merritt Drive, Garland, Texas, came forward and explained that all raw materials, including the aloe, came in powder or liquid extract form. This is why they would be receiving smaller freight shipments. He explained that Naturich products have various certifications. Mr. Purohit stated the facility would have a loading dock area on the west for receiving materials in small trucks and the east side would be for loading via semi-trucks.

Commissioner Purdy asked about plans for Phase 2.

Mr. Purohit answered that when they develop this area it would be for offices or as a fulfillment center, and they had no intentions of manufacturing.

Commissioner Roberts asked what kind of waste is generated by the manufacturing facility.

Mr. Purohit answered the facility generates very little waste. Most of the materials they use are biodegradable and they have a recycling program.

Commissioner Costantino asked how confident the applicant was that they will move forward to get the project complete.

Mr. Purohit stated he felt extremely confident since they have had time to work with the engineers and found they needed to modify plans for the additional building height and building area.

Vice Chairman Southard asked how many people would be employed at the site.

Mr. Purohit stated they had approximately 150 to 170 employees currently, and that they planned to hire at least a total of 250 employees for the proposed location, and they may consider the addition of second shift in the future.

Vice Chairman Southard asked if the manufacturing facility would have just one (1) shift.

Mr. Purohit answered yes, it is currently expected to have one (1) shift.

With no further questions for the applicant, Vice Chairman Southard stated that there was a letter of opposition and invited the speaker to come forward.

Mr. Stacy Kniffin, 3921 Edgewater Court Richardson, Texas, owner of property at 3150 Research Drive, located west of the subject property came forward. He provided a handout for the Commission to view. His concerns were related to the location of the loading areas and the proximity of the west side of the proposed building to the fire lane. The access lane is the only access to his property, and he is concerned with the possibility of truck traffic in this area. He explained his building faces the western loading dock and trash compactor area, so it would be beneficial to have additional screening there. He is concerned these issues will add to the degradation and market value of his property and would deprive him and his tenant's enjoyment of the property.

Commissioner Purdy asked if his building was currently occupied, and what kind of tenants would he envision having a sub-par experience due to this concern.

Mr. Kniffin stated the building is being used for storage at this time. The building has some finished space, and he has considered various office or lab tenants.

Vice Chairman Southard explained that this was the third presentation of this Special Permit, and the first approval was before Mr. Kniffin owned the property. He asked him if he was aware that this property has been granted zoning for this development.

Mr. Kniffin stated that he was not clear on the history of the zoning on the subject property.

Vice Chairman Southard asked if he received any disclosure on the previous zoning change.

Mr. Kniffin stated he did not when he first purchased the building, and he did not recall being briefed on it after he purchased the building.

Commissioner Roberts asked staff if there had been a recent change in State law relating to real estate disclosure rules.

Mr. Shacklett stated that the recent change required notification to existing tenants on the subject site for a change in zoning if the change would cause the use to become non-conforming. Since the property was undeveloped, it would not apply.

Commissioner Constantino asked staff if the proposal did not include processing raw materials and did not require additional building height, would additional zoning approval be required.

Ms. Peters stated it would not. The development plans would receive an administrative review by staff to review conformance with the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and would not be heard by Commission or City Council.

Vice Chairman Southard asked the applicant if they would like to respond.

Mr. Purohit stated that the City of Richardson defines the proposed facility as heavy manufacturing, but, in his experience, other cities do not classify it as such.

Mr. Shacklett further explained that Richardson amended the zoning ordinance in 2008 to separate manufacturing into three (3) distinct categories, manufacturing, high-tech manufacturing, and heavy manufacturing. Processing raw materials falls under the definition of the heavy manufacturing, which requires approval of a Special Permit.

Vice Chairman Southard asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak.

Seeing none, Commissioner Beach made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion: Commissioner Walraven made a motion to approve the request with a modification to Condition 1.f. related to the reference to Condition 1.e. Commissioner Bohnsack seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

ADJOURN

With no further business before the Commission, Vice Chairman Southard adjourned the regular business meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Kenneth Southard, Vice Chairman

APPROVED