

Hearing and Action Report

APPLICATION: DCP-MPZC-2021-01300
PROPERTY: 234 Ella Street, parcel 49-S-137 in the Bloomfield neighborhood
PROPERTY OWNER: BLOOMFIELD BRIDGE ASSOCIATES LLC
NEIGHBORHOOD: BLOOMFIELD
EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT: R1A-H, Residential Single-unit Attached
PROPOSED DISTRICT: LNC, Local Neighborhood Commercial
PROPOSAL: Zone Change Petition
COUNCIL DISTRICT: 7: Councilwoman Deb Gross
MEETING DATE: January 25, 2022

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. An application has been filed by Meyer, Unkovic & Scott on behalf of the property owners, for a change the Zoning District for 234 Ella Street, parcel 49-S-137, in the Bloomfield neighborhood from R1A-H, Residential Single-unit Attached to LNC, Local Neighborhood Commercial. A map of the current Zoning is attached.
2. Enactment of this rezoning will permit the involved property to be developed for uses permitted in the LNC, Local Neighborhood Commercial.
3. No application for development has been submitted to the Planning Department.
4. There were no requests for the Zoning Board of Adjustment.
5. Property owners within 150 feet of the proposed zone change area were notified of the proposal. Notice of this Planning Commission hearing was mailed to abutting property owners 21 days in advance, posted on the City Planning website, and posted on-site.
6. A Development Activities Meeting with the Registered Community Organization for this area, Bloomfield Development Corporation, was held on November 1, 2021. The Meeting Report is attached.
7. In accordance with Section 922.05.F, the Planning Commission shall review Zoning District Map or Zoning Code text amendments based on the following criteria.
 - a. The consistency of the proposal with adopted plans and policies of the City;
 - b. The convenience and welfare of the public;
 - c. The intent and purpose of this Zoning Code;
 - d. Compatibility of the proposal with the zoning, uses and character of the neighborhood;
 - e. The suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted without the proposed zoning map amendment;
 - f. The extent to which approval of the proposed zoning map amendment will detrimentally affect nearby property;
 - g. The length of time the subject property has remained vacant as zoned;

PLANNING COMMISSION

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- h. Impact of the proposed development on community facilities and services;and
- i. The recommendations of staff.

Not all of the criteria must be given equal consideration by the Planning Commission or City Council in reaching a decision.

Recommended Motion

That the Planning Commission of the City of Pittsburgh **Recommends Approval** to City Council of the Zone Change Petition DCP-MPZC-2021-01300 to rezone 234 Ella Street, parcel 49-S-137, from Residential Single-Unit Attached High Density (R1A-H) to Local Neighborhood Commercial (LNC) with the following conditions:

1. An application for future development at the development site that includes the subject parcel shall be referred to the Planning Commission as a Site Plan Review in accordance with the provisions of Section 922.04.C; and
2. A Development Activities Meeting shall be required prior to any hearing at Planning Commission regarding future development at this development site.

SUBMITTED BY: _____

Kevin Kunak, Senior Planner

Zone Change Petition to amend the Pittsburgh Code, Title Nine, Zoning, Article 1, Section 902.03 Zoning Map, by Changing from R1A-H, Residential Single-Unit Attached, High Density to LNC, Local Neighborhood Commercial, property at 234 Ella Street in the 9th Ward.

DCP-MPZC-2021-01300

Applicant/Owner – Bloomfield Bridge Associates LLC

Date of Planning Commission Hearing – January 25, 2022

Property Involved – 234 Ella Street; Block and Lot 49-S-137

PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW CRITERIA

Pittsburgh Zoning Code Section 922.05.F sets out the criteria for review to be considered by the Planning Commission or City Council in reaching a decision on any proposed amendment to the Zoning District Map. The text of Section 922.05.F and statements of compliance are set out below with responses on behalf of the Applicant in italics following each criteria.

922.05.F – Review Criteria

The criteria for review of a proposed amendment to the Zoning District Map or the text of the Zoning Code are set out in this section. Not all of the criteria must be given equal consideration by the Planning Commission or City Council in reaching a decision. The criteria to be considered shall be as follows:

1. The consistency of the proposal with adopted plans and policies of the City;

234 Ella Street (the “Property”) is very small lot (approximately 3,000 square feet per tax records) improved with an older, vacant single-family home. The Property is currently classified as “R1A, Single-Unit Attached Residential High Density (R1A-H).” The Property is one of eight adjoining and adjacent tracts totaling almost two acres acquired by Bloomfield Bridge Associates LLC (“BBA”) in February 2020. The other seven parcels in the assemblage are improved with a grocery store, vacant VFW hall and a large, paved parking area. Those other parcels are all classified as “LNC Local Neighborhood Commercial.” The assemblage of parcels is located at the entrance to Bloomfield, at the intersection of Liberty Avenue and the Bloomfield Bridge. The parcels make up what is sometimes referred to as the “ShurSave” site.

The Property’s current classification (R1A-H) is not appropriate for meaningful development and improvement. The existing house on it is vacant, has no particular architectural significance, and has not been occupied for some time. Because of the Property’s small size, it is unlikely that any new stand-alone development could occur on it.

In the first instance, the Planning Commission should give consideration to having the Property’s zoning be consistent with the balance of the site,

allowing in all instances a unified approach to development of a highly visible and important location in Bloomfield. Specifically as to BBA, rezoning the Property allows it to be part of BBA's proposed "Bloomfield Square" project. Bloomfield Square will combine all eight of the parcels owned by BBA for development of a new 3 and 4-story mixed-use building, to contain a 28,000 square foot grocery store and approximately 10,000 square feet of ancillary retail on the ground floor, 3 floors of multi-family dwelling units containing 191 units erected on top of the ground floor, an interior resident-only terraced courtyard, and below grade parking (the "Project"). Additionally, the Project will include a 9,300 square foot public plaza to be located between the grocery store and ancillary retail space, along with a pedestrian passageway which extends Stack Way through the Property. BBA supports and will comply with the pending expansion to the Bloomfield neighborhood of the City's Inclusionary Zoning Overlay district so at least ten (10%) of the apartment units in the Project will be "affordable" as required by the Inclusionary Zoning Overlay program.

Adoption of the amendment will facilitate the Project, allowing for development of a high-quality mixed-use project that combines retail and multi-family residential uses. The inclusion of a new grocery store will stabilize Bloomfield, improve the City's tax base and give impetus to create new quality affordable and market housing opportunities. These factors were specifically established by Pittsburgh's Affordable Housing Task Force as goals to be sought as the City reviews development plans and proposals.

2. The convenience and welfare of the public;

Neither the convenience nor the welfare of the public is enhanced by holding the Property out separate and apart from the larger assemblage. Doing so substantially hinders any consistent development of the larger site of which the Property is part. Moreover, the current zoning classification of the Property makes it difficult for BBA to meet the development guidelines proposed for the larger site by the Bloomfield Development Corporation; namely that vehicles be able to enter the Project from both Howley and Ella Streets.¹ Because of its small size, it is very unlikely any new development would occur on the Property alone. Leaving the Property in the RIA-H classification creates the proverbial "sore thumb" of an older (vacant) house in an area ripe for mixed-use redevelopment.

3. The intent and purpose of this Zoning Code;

Among other things, Section 901.03 of the Zoning Code identifies the following as purposes of the Zoning Code:

- Facilitate development of good quality;*
- Spur reinvestment in the existing building stock; and*
- Maintain and strengthen the City's neighborhoods.*

¹ Zoning Code §912.01.D prohibits the Property from being used as a driveway to the Project (an accessory use) because the Property and the balance of the Project site are in different zoning districts.

These purposes will be met for this area if the proposed amendment is adopted.

4. Compatibility of the proposal with the zoning, uses and character of the neighborhood;

Rezoning the Property would simply add it to the existing LNC zoning covering the balance of BBA's site.

5. The suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted without the proposed zoning map amendment;

The current zoning classification of the Property is too restrictive and discourages investment in the Property. The "highest and best" use of the Property is to be incorporated into BBA's larger site and Project.

6. The extent to which approval of the proposed zoning map amendment will detrimentally affect nearby property;

Far from having a detrimental impact on nearby properties, the zoning map amendment will likely act to encourage others to invest in nearby properties.

7. The length of time the subject property has remained vacant as zoned;

It is uncertain how long the Property itself has been vacant. It has not been occupied since acquired by BBA. The immediate prior owner did not live in it or rent it and used the Property for occasional meetings related to the operation of the existing grocery store on the larger site.

8. Impact of the proposed development on community facilities and services;

The zoning change will not affect existing community facilities and services.

9. The recommendations of staff;

To be provided by staff.

Development Activities Meeting – Form to Use During DAM

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

| Logistics | Stakeholders |
|---|---|
| Project Name/Address: Bloomfield Square Zone Change (4401 Liberty Ave) | Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation Friendship Community Group Lawrenceville United City Council District 7 Office of State Representative Sara Innamorato Office of State Representative Emily Kinkead |
| Parcel Number(s): Affects only 49-S-137 (entire development site also includes 49-S-101, 49-S-102, 49-S-103, 49-S-106, 49-S-125, 49-S-128, 49-S-136) | |
| ZDR Application Number: DCP-MPZC-2021-01300 | |
| Meeting Location: Zoom (Bloomfield Development Corporation hosted) | |
| Date: November 1, 2021 | |
| Meeting Start Time: 6:30 PM | |
| Applicant: ECHO Realty, L.P. (Phil Bishop; Kevin McKeegan) | Approx. Number of Attendees: 84 |
| Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Planning Commission: zone change request for Parcel #49-S-137 from R1A-H to LNC | |

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

- Christina Howell introduced Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) as the Registered Community Organization (RCO) for the Bloomfield neighborhood and gave a background on the Bloomfield Square project. She mentioned that the Shur-Save store (now called Community Market) had been for sale for six to eight years and that Milhaus was the previous potential developer. BDC convened a community meeting in 2018 between Milhaus and the community, which was attended by over 400 participants, with thousands of Facebook Live views. C. Howell explained that Milhaus wanted a gated community with a pool and that lower-income residents were not part of the developer’s demographic. She expressed that she was excited to see that they are part of the demographic for ECHO Realty’s development plans. After Milhaus withdrew its proposal, BDC received a grant from ACTION-Housing to hold a “proactive community visioning process” to figure out what the community wanted at the site. Out of that process came a report called the Bloomfield Central Gateway Development Guidelines. ECHO Realty purchased the site in early 2020, and BDC met with Vice President Phil Bishop to go through the guidelines from that report. C. Howell mentioned that the ECHO Realty team has taken a lot of cues from the report for its proposed plans.
- C. Howell introduced the project, explaining the ECHO Realty is requesting to rezone the residential parcel adjacent to the Ella Street entrance to the Community Market parking lot. She said that this meeting qualifies as a DAM for the rezoning, which will go before the Planning Commission at least 30 days after this meeting.
- C. Howell went over the timeline for the process to rezone a property, mentioning that the Planning Commission hearing will be at least 30 days after this DAM and that community members could submit written testimony or attend the hearing. She explained that after the Planning Commission hearing, a maximum of 120 days could go by

before the City Council hearing and that within 90 days after the Council hearing, Council will vote to approve or deny the request to rezone the parcel.

- C. Howell discussed BDC's role in this DAM, which she said was to listen and figure out what the consensus is, not just from this meeting but also from calls, emails, and social media. BDC will then form an opinion based on the feedback received. The position it will take will be "support," "support with conditions," "oppose," or "no opinion."
- C. Howell mentioned that BDC would be testifying at all of the public hearings where possible, based on the feedback from this DAM and BDC's existing community plans. She said that meetings are during the day and that this creates barriers to participation but that community members could call or email BDC and that BDC would transcribe everything said in the feedback given.
- C. Howell went over the ground rules and meeting logistics. The public meeting is to end at 8:00 PM, with an additional community-member-only session (without the developers) to end at 8:30 PM.
- P. Bishop introduced the project team, which included himself as Vice President at ECHO Realty, engineer Joe Tassone, architects Philip Wilkinson and Jonathan Golli of AE7, and legal counsel Kevin McKeegan. He went over ECHO Realty's business as long-term investors and the owner of most of the Giant Eagle grocery stores in Western Pennsylvania and Ohio as well as the owner of some Harris-Teeter and Safeway grocery stores on the East Coast.
- P. Bishop explained that Bloomfield Square is the name his team settled on, because "Bloomfield is the attraction."
- P. Bishop said that ECHO Realty purchased the 2.08 acres of property in February 2020. He mentioned that ECHO Realty was a local company and understood what Bloomfield was about.
- P. Bishop showed the Community Goals and Neighborhood Wishlist from the Bloomfield Central Gateway Development Guidelines from June 2019. He mentioned that the project team took all these items into consideration and sat down with AE7 to come up with the plan being presented. He also showed a list of key community goals and key development goals.
- P. Bishop explained that his team would only be talking about the zoning change at this meeting and that there would be 12 to 15 months more of meetings to go over architectural character and other similar concerns.
- P. Bishop said that Shur-Save (now Community Market) has been at the development site for over 40 years. He mentioned that ECHO Realty worked closely with BDC to transition Shur-Save to Community Market after the former operator ceased operations in July 2020.
- P. Bishop pointed out that the site comprises 1.97 acres (85,700 square feet).
- P. Bishop mentioned that the VFW building and adjacent garage and single-family home is also included in the development area footprint. He added that the driveway in the rear (an abandoned paper street) was not part of the purchase and would be left open for pedestrians.
- P. Bishop showed slides outlining the following subject matter:
 - Development goals, including key community goals
 - Project background and a history of Bloomfield, including a collage of the neighborhood
 - Site and context aerial map with mile/walk radii
 - Site and context with existing photos of surrounding buildings
 - Site and context showing western and eastern gateways of Bloomfield
 - Site and context with property lines
 - Zoning and development program, with requirements and assumptions:
 - LNC district
 - Programmatic intent – grocery store of 28,000 square feet, ancillary retail of 10,000 square feet, 190 residential apartment units (10% affordable)
 - Parking assumptions
 - Zoning map of the development site
 - Zoning map of the parcel to be rezoned – currently R1-A, to be rezoned to LNC
 - Proposed massing diagram
 - "Thoughts" on residential facades, commercial facades, public plaza – with the intent to "stitch" the development and project site into Bloomfield's neighborhood fabric
 - Example of what the residential facades may look like
 - Access plan
 - Ground-floor site plan
 - Basement level plan – access to the main level would be via elevators

- Placeholder layouts for the residential units – potential mezzanine floor; both market-rate and affordable apartments and those geared toward workforce development
- Cross-section showing the grade changes of the site
- P. Bishop said that in a future meeting, his team would like to work with the Bloomfield community to make sure that the design fits in the neighborhood and that the development represents a “gathering place” with adequate connection with the neighborhood, a pedestrian orientation, and adequate parking with no adverse traffic impacts.
- P. Bishop described the project as mixed-use, with a ground-floor retail use, primarily comprised of the grocery store. He announced that Giant Eagle would be the anchor tenant and that the remaining ground-floor retail tenants had yet to be determined.
- P. Bishop said that his team was still negotiating with and had yet to come to terms with a residential partner. He added that that entity would be bringing the affordable housing component. Three floors of residential are anticipated to be constructed on top of the grocery store. Parking would be handled through a small at-grade parking lot in the rear of the property.
- P. Bishop discussed that the project would be going for a LEED bonus for height. The team is asking for 54 feet (base maximum is 45 feet) and 20% extra density (2.4:1 floor-area ratio vs. 2:1 floor-area ratio). However, P. Bishop said that his team was interested in blending the development with the surrounding uses and wanted to match surrounding heights and not impose height on the surrounding neighborhood.
- P. Bishop said that there were no trees on the site today. The project team intends to have a lot of green space and street trees, with both passive and active uses of the plaza, which he described as intending to be “usable, functional, and exciting.”
- P. Bishop explained that the proposed parking entrance from Ella Street is one reason why the project team is asking for the rezoning. Having the entrance on Ella would eliminate vehicular access from Liberty Avenue. Vehicular accesses are proposed from Howley Street (in/out) and Ella Street (in/out). Pedestrian accesses are proposed with both east/west and north/south access points. The residential parking area would be accessed from Ella Street. P. Bishop explained that the project team wanted the second entrance so that residents and customers could come in and out of the garage from both sides, which would eliminate the need for using Gangwish Street in the back of the property.
- P. Bishop mentioned that the 28,000 square foot Giant Eagle store would be approximately the same size as the existing Community Market. The new grocery store would be accessed from both a side entrance from the plaza and from the parking garage, both at-grade. Retail tenants would be accessed from the plaza.
- K. McKeegan went over the rezoning process. He mentioned that the houses toward the corner of Ella and Gangwish streets were not for sale, so they are not part of this project.
- K. McKeegan pointed out that the Zoning Code does not allow for accessory uses such as driveways to serve properties not in the same zoning district as the principal use. He explained that the means to remedy that were uncertain, so in order to move forward with designing the project, the team wanted to have some certainty in terms of access and use. He added that this would be best accomplished if the whole site were in the same zoning classification, in this case LNC.
- K. McKeegan explained that in terms of process, after this DAM, the next step would be a Planning Commission public hearing to consider the rezoning request. He said it was pretty safe to assume that the Planning Commission briefing and hearing would both be in January at the earliest. The hearing and action, he pointed out, was to vote on a recommendation to City Council on the proposed rezoning. After Planning Commission makes its recommendation, K. McKeegan explained, the proposed rezoning will go to City Council, which usually takes a month to six weeks to schedule. City Council will then hold a public hearing and vote on the proposed rezoning at a subsequent hearing. He anticipated that the City Council hearing would be probably in February or March of 2022.
- K. McKeegan mentioned that the only application pending at Planning Commission for this project is this rezoning application. No formal ZDR application has been filed otherwise. The only other official communication with City Planning has been a pre-application meeting, he pointed out.
- K. McKeegan explained that the project team would need to “go back to square one” to file a ZDR application for this project. This would require staff review, design review, CDAP, and PDP review from the Planning Commission. He also mentioned that the size of the grocery store and the potential size of some of the restaurants would require a special exception hearing with the Zoning Board of Adjustment. He added that all of these public hearings would require that the project team go back to BDC for each one of the requests to have additional DAMs. He

concluded that the project team anticipates one or two additional DAMs beyond tonight’s meeting. However, the decisions regarding those requests will depend on how this rezoning process goes forward.

- K. McKeegan said that traffic considerations would be a separate process from zoning. He mentioned that the project team has had meetings with DOMI and that the City requires that intersection studies take place after school is in session. He added that physical counting of traffic is currently ongoing but that he did not have traffic impact analysis results to discuss at this meeting.
- P. Wilkinson explained that his design team used the Bloomfield Central Gateway Development Guidelines from BDC as fundamental principles in designing the project site. A goal was to have the ability for pedestrians to walk through the site and to make pedestrians a priority. He also mentioned that the project team would try to develop the bus stop at the corner of Ella and Liberty as a “mobility hub.” The other bus stop, on Howley, will be negotiated with parking access to the site. The goal, he said, was to have multiple points of access and promote connectivity — for cars, that would be parking access on the east and west sides of the site, and for pedestrians, north/south connectivity in the center of the project. Street trees and street furniture are to be provided, though the design team still wanted it to be comfortable for people to walk.
- P. Wilkinson discussed wanting an open space for meeting neighbors, holding events, and having café seating. He said that the team would try to activate all sides of the grocery building. The development would also look to align Gangwish Street with the existing residential properties on that street by allowing for possible direct entries to the new residences from that street.
- P. Wilkinson said that the retail uses would front on Liberty and Ella. Loading for the site would be along Howley Street, which he described as more of a commercial street.
- P. Wilkinson showed an architectural ground-floor plan, pointing out that the primary use is the grocery store to serve as a gateway destination.
- P. Wilkinson said that there would be 139 parking spaces for the residential component and 61 parking spaces for the grocery and retail uses. Bike parking and storage would also be provided. He said there was no “exposed” parking in the plan.
- P. Wilkinson mentioned that the apartments would look into the center of the project and that there would be a landscaped terrace on top of the grocery store abutting the apartments.

Input and Responses:

NOTE: Many of the questions were grouped together with single responses due to the sheer volume of questions and comments.

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
|--|---------------------------|
| <p>You can read our Bloomfield Central Gateway Development Guidelines here: https://bloomfieldnow.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BloomfieldGateway_Report_C_C_Final_LR.pdf (6:47 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Why are you not trying to acquire the few residential sits on the site? (7:13 PM)</p> | |
| <p>10% affordable units seems very low to me - a floor, not the ceiling. I'd hate to see zoning changes supported without a firm, legally binding agreement that includes a substantially higher percentage of affordable units. (7:19 PM)</p> | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
|--|--|
| <p>There are already many vacant commercial storefronts on Liberty - where does the confidence come from that you'll be able to fill the new commercial storefronts in this development? (7:20 PM)</p> | <p>We look at what's allowed by code and by need. We have in-house real estate professionals who can identify these things. The grocery store brings the traffic in. All of the other ancillary tenants want to be by the grocery store. Those uses are defined as traction of grocery store as anchor. Hope to be 100% pre-leased when we start construction. Not always the case, but to figure out who the retail might be, most likely a restaurant but not certain.</p> |
| <p>+1 to 7:20 PM (7:21 PM)</p> | |
| <p>+2 to 7:20 PM (7:22 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Can the residential affordability also be extended to the commercial spaces? Affordable spaces for local, small businesses is really needed in our neighborhood, as evident by many of the vacant commercial spaces on Liberty. (7:22 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Agree! What is the process for determining these retail sites? (7:23 PM)</p> | |
| <p>The bus stop on Howley Street is not shown on their plans. This stop is used by grocery store shoppers boarding the bus returning to points east. Additionally it is used by Bloomfield residents returning from the Strip District and Downtown. This stop must be preserved. It is the outbound stop that is paired with the inbound stop on Ella Street at Liberty Avenue. (7:23 PM)</p> | |
| <p>The new development at Penn Ave. & Mathilda has 3 affordable small commercial spaces, all occupied with local non-profit small businesses (Assemble, Silver Eye Photo Gallery, and Level Up Studios). So it's possible! (7:25 PM)</p> | |
| <p>I agree with points by 7:19 PM and 7:23 PM #2 (7:25 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Can that traffic study also happen NOT during winter? Spring and Summer can capture when folks are out and about walking and biking around. Winter pedestrian and cyclist numbers would not be accurate. (7:31 PM)</p> | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
|--|---------------------------|
| <p>More affordability and affordable commercial space is certainly possible but would require significant subsidy that would likely slow the project. The development at Penn Ave & Mathilda was completed by Action Housing and received significant subsidy from Heinz Endowments and probably others. (7:32 PM)</p> | |
| <p>does the traffic study include use of bus stops? The point made earlier is very important about that stop at Ella and Liberty (7:32 PM)</p> | |
| <p>OK. Looks like the Howley Street bus stop will be retained. It did not appear on one map previously shown. (7:34 PM)</p> | |
| <p>If more affordability and affordable commercial space would likely slow the project, then Echo better start finding those subsidies now. Bloomfield expects nothing less than a development where our current neighbors and current small businesses can move into. If not, then i'm not sure if it's for us. We dont' need another Jimmy John's. Nothing against Jimmy John's. (7:35 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Appears Howley will be extremely busy with Rite Aid and the Beer distributor. (7:35 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Many of us pedestrians who cross the Bloomfield Bridge to reach Liberty - or your site - are older people. I appreciate that the pedestrian traverses of your site are friendly internally but crossing the Bridge/Liberty/Main intersection is already quite challenging. What can you propose proactively to offset the increased traffic that this development will assuredly bring? (7:35 PM)</p> | |
| <p>+1 to 7:35 PM #3 (7:36 PM)</p> | |
| <p>+1 to 7:35 PM #3 - this is critical. would really appreciate DOMI's help here (7:37 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Relating to 7:35 PM #3's question, how are you accounting for future changes in traffic flow and use, knowing there's a continued need for upgrading the (awful and unsafe) Bloomfield Bridge intersection?</p> | |
| <p>Hi. I Live on Main St, between Penn and Howley St. (for 13 years) I'm having an increased difficulty finding street parking within the Pittsburgh parking Auth designated area that I pay for annually. Will parking at the proposed BSQ make it even more difficult for folks like myself? Oh, I see the parking garage now (7:38 PM)</p> | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
|---|---|
| <p>Will there be interim grocery options provided for residents after the Community Market store closes and before the new Giant Eagle opens? (shuttles to other grocery stores, additional delivery options, etc.) Do you have an estimate from the market closing and GE opening? (7:38 PM)</p> | <p>Probably 18-month process. Want to have everything open at once (apartments and grocery). We are learning right now from GE as they address Shady Hill. They have great ideas, including deliveries, areas where residents can go to get their food such as pop-up locations. We'll be addressing those issues. We don't just want to close the store and say see you in 18 months. There will be some temporary inconvenience but want to make sure there are opportunities to address this with pop-up locations, home delivery, etc.</p> |
| <p>+1 to 7:38 PM #2 (7:38 PM)</p> | |
| <p>How many housing units are you planning on making accessible for residents with disabilities? (7:40 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Will the public be able to use the small retail elevated garage for night time festivities/dining, up and down Liberty Ave? (7:41 PM)</p> | |
| <p>** To piggy back off of the question regarding the safety at the intersection - it's already very dangerous and we have a TON of children walking to and from school now - can we please get SPEED HUMPS added the MAIN STREET and HOWLEY ST corridor (7:41 PM)</p> | <p>BDC staff: The city's standards for speed humps would likely deem those streets too high volume for speed humps.</p> <p>BDC staff: To follow up on your question about speed humps there are other traffic calming elements that DOMI can use. You can read about their traffic calming program (and how to request your street(s) be considered) here: https://pittsburghpa.gov/domi/traffic-calming</p> |
| <p>the bridge intersection is already very dangerous and will likely get worse with the development. (7:41 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Will this be senior citizens apartments or high-rent or condos? (7:41 PM)</p> | <p>At this point we don't know. Will be market-rate apartments with 10% affordability; if our res partner brings a senior housing component to us, that would be great, but that answer is not known yet. All I can tell you is 190 with 10% affordable.</p> <p>Follow-up question: What is affordable?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are guidelines established by the pending legislation. That is based on the applicant's income status; rent is lowered. <p>Follow-up question: This will be rentals, not sold apartments?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Correct, these will be rentals. |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
|---|--|
| <p>I live a block and a half away from site on Ella St. The grocery is wonderful and so happy you're keeping it. A lot of the project area is an eyesore now. Very very happy that you're coming to upgrade the property. Two questions -- we all want more affordable housing beyond 10%; would like you to address the 139 parking spots for the units. For 190 units, many of them will be 2-bed apartments. I think it's going to create difficulty for people looking for parking all throughout the neighborhood. Anything you can do to increase the parking? I understand there might be a liquor store as part of the grocery store?</p> | <p>Those details have not been worked out in the future. Interesting when you sit down with DOMI, they advocate for less parking. The study will tell what capacity we have relative with surrounding streets. Currently, the code requires one space for every apartment. However, allowed to reduce that with bicycle storage. And want to encourage bike and walk. Can reduce up to 30%. Garages are expensive. Happy balance — we think we're at that number between spaces and units. Compact parking, different things we can do with the layout. Requires more detailed analysis.</p> |
| <p>I wanted to ask about the retail space. I know people have questioned about making retail space affordable. Is there any possibility of making the 7,700 sf space and breaking into smaller storefronts.</p> | <p>I can't speak to the affordability, but most likely, yes, that retail space will be broken down into 5 or 6 shops, not just 2. 1,000-2,000 sf in size.</p> |
| <p>What precautions will you be taking to prevent construction dust and what's traffic pattern for dump trucks, with Children's Hospital being there?</p> | <p>Demo, access to the site, we most likely will be bringing on contractors now to figure these questions out. There are permits required, approvals necessary. I won't sit and say there won't be any noise or dust, etc., but bringing those contractors in early we'll be able to have those conversations. We will most likely have the main construction access from Liberty Ave.</p> |
| <p>Safety at the intersection?</p> | <p>That is a requirement we have to satisfy with DOMI, DPW, City Planning, that traffic doesn't have adverse impact on intersection -- whether that's traffic light timing, etc. that will be in traffic study vetted by the City. We think Liberty access is an unsafe condition. We want to keep the ped and vehicular interactions to the side streets and peds in the square in the front. If we're successful with zone change, we'll have the two entries from Howley and Ella.</p> |
| <p>traffic is our biggest concern! (7:42 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Why obviously market rate? Push the partner to bring a higher component than 10% or senior housing, or choose another partner. (7:43 PM)</p> | |
| <p>very interested in learning more regarding continued studies, at certain points of the day the traffic coming from the bridge - howley - friendship is already dense (7:43 PM)</p> | |
| <p>I think future study should be done to make Howley St two-way between Liberty and Gangwish. (7:45 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Please provide LESS parking in your parking structure, and use that construction money saved to provide more AFFORDABLE UNITS. (7:46 PM)</p> | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| <p>If we want to push them to do more than 10% affordable perhaps we should agree to allow them to build taller? That's the trade off you can make with a private developer to provide a public good (aka affordable housing) that frankly non-profits, housing authorities, and the government should provide. (7:46 PM)</p> | |
| <p>"7:41 PM #2, the city's standards for speed humps would likely deem those streets too high volume for speed humps." -- So, what can we do to increase the safety of children and other more vulnerable folks with an anticipated volume of drivers coming through this area? (7:46 PM)</p> | |
| <p>+1 to 7:46 PM #1. Please provide LESS parking in this development. (7:46 PM)</p> | <p>We're below the standard that City requires for residential parking. There at the same time may be people who complain that they can't find parking. At end of day, we want the right amount that not only supports our project but the community.</p> |
| <p>100% to 7:46 PM #1. We don't need that much parking when this site is so clearly connected to transit and is walkable (7:47 PM)</p> | |
| <p>less parking means that the apartments will be more affordable overall. most people in bloomfield don't have off-street parking as-is, this reduced parking is in keeping with the existing neighborhood (7:47 PM)</p> | |
| <p>A 2014 survey showed that only 42.1% of Bloomfielders drive to work. In other words, the MAJORITY of Bloomfielders do NOT drive to work everyday. (7:48 PM)</p> | |
| <p>What precautions will be taking place in demolition (7:48 PM)</p> | |
| <p>parking is a huge concern for all of the homes/apartments who live within a few blocks radius of the proposed development (7:48 PM)</p> | <p>There are almost the same number of parking spaces on site now (140 now) - we're adding a few more spaces but again the traffic study will show impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.</p> |
| <p>Is it possible to split the 7,700 sf space into 2 or 3 smaller units? This would make them affordable for smaller businesses or those just starting who don't need/can't afford larger spaces. (7:49 PM)</p> | |
| <p>will corday be included within the traffic study as well? (7:51 PM)</p> | <p>The intersection, Howley, Ella, Gangwish, Liberty, Main, and a couple of intersections up north will be included, so the short answer is yes.</p> |
| <p>great question 7:49 PM (7:52 PM)</p> | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| Was this entire parcel purchased in one piece? I remember that the right side of Liberty Ave was always reserved for Bloomfield Bridge Tavern and Dels? (7:52 PM) | |
| Will Echo commit to accepting Housing Choice Vouchers for all the 10% affordable units? Because the prices mandated in inclusionary zoning are below the payment standards for HCVs, it wouldn't create additional costs to the developer but would allow deeper affordability. (7:59 PM) | |
| 7:59 PM, I would go further - will they accept Housing Choice Vouchers in their market rate units (if the payment standard is high enough and the tenants otherwise meet their criteria)? The affordable units under the zoning overlay should be provided without government subsidy. (8:01 PM) | |
| ^ Agreed! (8:03 PM) | |
| Less parking and more affordable units? | |
| Two questions - Is there a mechanism you might consider for more affordable units in general? | I don't know if there's one lever or another that we can say there will be more affordable units. Depends on our partner. |
| Will you be providing housing choice vouchers? | We have not asked that yet. |
| Will that be an ask that you're making? | Potentially. We haven't talked to our partner yet. |
| When will the traffic study be complete? | Back to timing that Kevin was talking about; the data that will be collected this week then needs to wait for final determination for residential units for trip generation calculation. Report not required to be submitted until after zone change. Probably next spring as we put together our next plans to go to Planning Commission. Traffic study would be made public and would be shared with BDC. |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| <p>Aesthetics question - will there be windows onto the sidewalk from the Giant Eagle? Windows on the front of buildings makes spaces much more welcoming to pedestrians. (8:04 PM)</p> | <p>We want to make sure when you come across bridge that you'll be able to see into the store.</p> <p>DCP staff: 922.04.E.3. Site Plan Review criteria. For all properties zoned UNC, LNC, and NDO, the following standards shall apply:</p> <p>b. Ground-Floor Transparency The street level facade shall be transparent between the height of three (3) feet and eight (8) feet above the walkway grade for no less than sixty (60) percent of the horizontal length of the building facade or shall include commercial-type windows and door openings.</p> |
| <p>i think it's important to note that what we're talking about regarding on-street parking is cheap/nearly free parking. one way to reduce the demand for this finite resource is to price it more appropriately, which would be done through the City's residential permit parking program (8:04 PM)</p> | |
| <p>I joined late, so I might have missed something said earlier. What is the plan for lighting in the area? That area notoriously gets quite dark, but it's also residential, so there's definitely a balance needed. (8:06 PM)</p> | <p>Lighting will be more accent lights. Balance of safety and don't want flashing lights on Gangwish and Ella.</p> |
| <p>whereas, i'm assuming the apartment tenants will probably have to pay for their parking? as there's not one for every individual tenant. this is good, & makes sure that those who don't have cars aren't paying for parking they aren't using. (8:06 PM)</p> | |
| <p>^8:06 PM #2 agree. This may be premature, but it would be ideal if parking was not included with rent, but an optional separate charge. (8:07 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Security. What will be added for security? ... Retail uses: Parking needs factored in for new retail? (8:08 PM)</p> | |
| <p>What intersections are being required by DOMI to be counted for the traffic study? (8:10 PM)</p> | |
| <p>parking is a REAL concern for people who own homes on these surrounding streets, understandably you do not know these details yet, but definitely not funny - laugh unappreciated (8:10 PM)</p> | |
| <p>For those of us returning to Lawrenceville, Howley delivers to Friendship which can be very tight. Are you suggesting that Lawrenceville residents go around to Gangwish St. and back out unto Liberty? (8:11 PM)</p> | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| is 10 percent to be section housing (8:16 PM) | |
| Would you be willing to submit to BDC your CMP and any updates, changes along the way? (8:16 PM) | |
| With this parking, it feels like this will be built just like the Giant Eagle in Shadyside. This will create more traffic problems. Why aren't there parking spaces for everyone. Will create traffic nightmare down there. It's already bad enough. | We don't want this to become a commuter parking lot. One way to control is to put a gate in and then have free parking for 1 or 2 hours and then make it exorbitantly expensive to park all day. |
| Is there residential permit parking surrounding the site? And will the development be willing to opt out of the RPP program for the tenants? (8:20 PM) | |
| Can you address the amount of parking for the Giant Eagle? Regardless of the parking for residential units, what are standards for adequate retail parking? (8:20 PM) | |
| I'll assume residents of the development are not eligible for RPP street parking? (8:20 PM) | <p>BDC staff: Anyone looking to see the current Residential Permit Parking Map: https://gis.pittsburghpa.gov/pghpermitparking/</p> <p>BDC staff: Wanted to share this tool with everyone that shows parking utilization data from the Pittsburgh Parking Authority https://tools.wprdc.org/parking/</p> |
| a common condition for new developments in dense areas is prohibiting new residents from being eligible for permit parking, which reserves the existing on-street parking for current residents (8:22 PM) | |
| I'm concerned with the branding of "Bloomfield Square," given that I do not want a Bakery Square complex in Bloomfield, and another starbucks (8:24 PM) | |
| have there been other proposals involving less apartments during initial conversations with BDC? (8:26 PM) | |
| Is there a way to have ECHO pitch into that "intersection " fund? (8:34 PM) | |
| +1 to 8:34 PM (8:35 PM) | |
| Echo is going to make SO MUCH MONEY from this development, (8:35 PM) | |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| <p>Also, the \$\$ that Bloomfield has in the City Capital Budget for a Master Plan is also hoping to address Mobility and pedestrian safety, especially around this intersection. (Councilwoman Gross, 8:36 PM)</p> | |
| <p>Is there anything in the proposed development that might limit the possibilities for that intersection redesign? For example, if they wanted to straighten the bridge to Howley connection, they might want to shave a bit from the site, but this new development would limit those options. Also, consider bike traffic as well as cars and pedestrian. (8:36 PM)</p> | |

Other Notes

Planner completing report: Phillip Wu