

City Plan Board

Item Number: 1

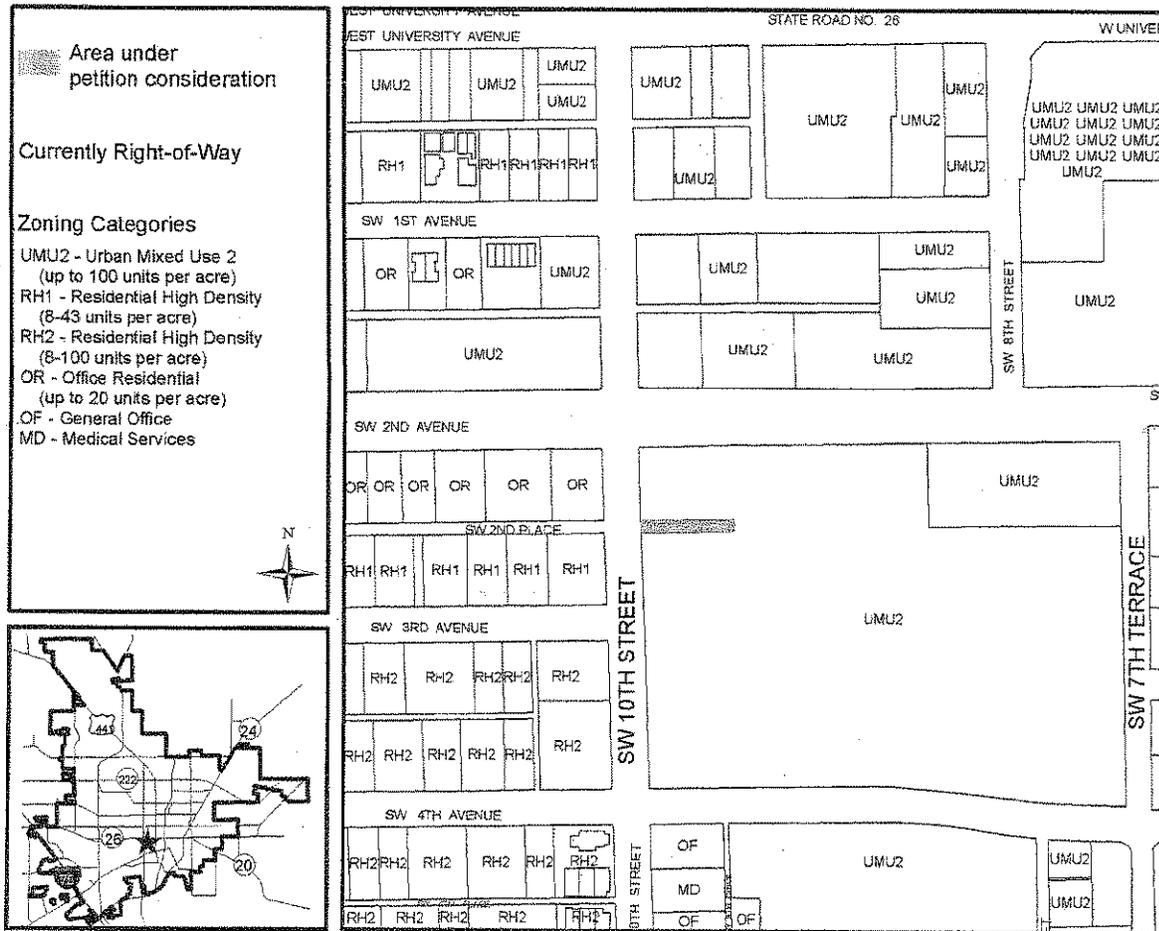
FROM: Planning Department Staff

DATE: July 22, 2010

SUBJECT: Petition PB-10-69SVA, City of Gainesville. Pursuant to Section 30-192(b), City of Gainesville Land Development Code, to vacate, abandon and close that portion of Southwest 2nd Place, located east of Southwest 10th Street right-of-way and running east for a distance of 157 feet More-O-Less.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Petition PB-10-69SVA with conditions.



Explanation

This is a request to vacate a portion of Southwest 2nd Place east of Southwest 10th Street. The vacation of this right-of-way has a two fold purpose.

- 1.) Facilitate the redevelopment of the new Innovation Square (AGH) property. The Innovation Square is a long-term economic development project that could support 500,000-1,000,000 square feet of mixed-use development, including technology research, retail and residential development; and
- 2.) Allow for a land swap of physical land area for the development of a round-about at the intersection of Southwest 6th Street and Southwest 2nd Avenue.

Additional right-of-way is needed as part of the Southwest 6th Street and Southwest 2nd Avenue traffic roundabout. Approximately 1,400 square feet is needed on the southwest corner of this intersection. The property needed is a portion of Tax Parcel 13327-000-000, owned by Shands Teaching Hospital & Clinics, Inc. (Shands). As a portion of its redevelopment (Innovation Square) adjacent to Southwest 10th Street, Shands has requested public interest in a segment of Southwest 2nd Place be vacated in exchange for the deed of the portion of its property needed for the roundabout. The portion of Southwest 2nd Place is approximately 20 feet wide by 157.2 feet deep. It runs easterly from Southwest 10th Street along the south side of Lots 6, 7, and 8, and terminates at a portion of Southwest 2nd Place which was vacated in 1972 by Ordinance No. 1792.

The City Plan Board and City Commission shall consider the following criteria in determining whether the public welfare would be best served by the proposed action:

1. **Whether the public benefits from the use of the subject right-of-way as part of the city street system.**

The segment of right-of-way being discussed no longer serves a public purpose, except for underground utilities that will remain and be protected by a PUE, public utilities easement.

2. **Whether the proposed action is consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.**

Staff finds that the proposed action would be consistent with the City's comprehensive plan because the object of continued revitalization and redevelopment of the urbanized areas bordering the University of Florida campus.

The Concurrency Management Element states in Policy 1.2.1 that the City shall not close or vacate streets except under the following conditions: a) The loss of the street will not foreclose reasonably foreseeable future bicycle/pedestrian use; b) The loss of the street will not foreclose non-motorized access to adjacent land use or transit stops; c) The loss of the street is necessary for the construction of a high density, mixed use project containing both residential and non-residential uses or creating close proximity of residential and non-residential uses; and d) There is no reasonably foreseeable need for any type of transportation corridor for the area in the future.

Staff also finds that the closing and vacating of the proposed right-of-way shall not prevent reasonable connection for existing and future public transit, pedestrian, and non-motorized and motorized trips. Given the nature and the impact of the Innovation Square project, it meets the intent of Policy 1.2.1.c. The limited length of the unimproved roadway right-of-way limits its use as a foreseeable transportation corridor for the area in the future.

The Transportation Mobility Element states that existing and future rights-of-way shall be protected from building encroachment to the extent that doing so promotes transportation choice. Staff finds that the closing and vacating of this portion of right-of-way shall not diminish transportation choice in the area in the future.

3. Whether the proposed action would violate individual property rights.

Staff finds that the proposed action should not violate any individual property rights. All of the property surrounding the right-of-way in question to be vacated is owned by one entity, Shands Teaching Hospital & Clinics, Inc. (Shands), the benefiting organization associated with the street vacation.

4. The availability of alternative action to alleviate identified problems.

If the proposed street was not allowed to be vacated, the viability of the Innovation Square would be negatively impacted because of the lack of contiguous land needed for the development and, in addition, the City would have to pay many thousands of dollars to purchase the land needed to complete the roundabout that is currently under construction.

5. The effect of the proposed action on traffic circulation.

The vacation of the right-of-way in question will have no negative impact on circulation in the area of Southwest 10th Street and Southwest 2nd Avenue. The approval of the street vacation will allow for the City to trade the land for land needed for the roundabout with Shands so that the City will not have to pay \$40,000-\$50,000 to buy the Shands property needed for the roundabout at Southwest 6th Street and Southwest 2nd Avenue. The roundabout will improve the traffic circulation in such a way that the existing right-of-way would not.

6. The effect of the proposed action on crime.

The development of the Innovation Square campus of this size and scope over the next several decades should provide the area with a positive impact as it relates to criminal activities. There should also be much more private security in the area associated with the Innovation Square development.

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7. The effect of the proposed action upon the safety of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

As the Innovation Square campus develops, safety for pedestrians and bicyclists should only improve as surface parking lots are replaced with structured parking garages. There will also be a better separation of pedestrians and vehicles with the campus atmosphere as the area redevelops.

8. The effect of the proposed action on the provision of municipal services including, but not limited to emergency service and waste removal services.

The effect of the proposed action should not adversely impact municipal services in the area.

9. The necessity to relocate utilities, both public and private.

There should be no issues associated with any of the existing underground utilities located within the right-of-way. GRU is requiring that a PUE, public utilities easement, be retained over the entire right-of-way being closed and vacated. Over the next two decades all utilities associated with the Shands site will be placed underground with the development of the Innovation Square campus.

10. The effect the proposed action will have on property values in the immediate and surrounding areas.

The action of the street vacation along with proposed future development should increase the property value of that property, if placed on the tax rolls, and the values in the neighborhood and surrounding area.

11. The effect of the proposed action on geographic areas, which may be impacted.

The AGH site will transition from a local hospital site with many surface parking lots and access points into a Technology Center campus with several strategically located parking garages. The overall impact on the area should be positive.

12. The effect of the proposed action on the design and character of the area.

Notwithstanding the importance of the former hospital for Gainesville and surrounding communities, the area should change drastically from a 1950's looking hospital with surface parking, to a modern looking Technology Center with ultra modern looking buildings surrounding a central park/pedestrian area having basically no vehicles visible. The character of the area will be enhanced with a better design that will improve both the physical and economic well-being of the area.

Conditions

Condition 1. A PUE, Public Utilities Easement, shall be retained over the entire right-of-way being closed and vacated.

The recommendation to approve Petition PB-10-69SVA, with conditions, is based, in part, on the comments from the following departments:

City Departments and Utilities

GRU – Real Estate Division: OK to vacate if utilities easement is retained over entire area being vacated. Owner (Shands) is aware of need and has no objections.

GRU: Approved as submitted.

AT&T: Approved as submitted

Public Works: Approved as submitted.

Fire: Approved as submitted.

CRA: Approved as submitted.

Building: Approved as submitted.

Police: Approved as submitted.

Planning and Development Services: A PUE, Public Utilities Easement, shall be retained over the entire area being closed and vacated.

Respectfully submitted,



Ralph Hilliard
Planning Manager

Prepared By:



Gene G. Francis

Attachments:

Exhibit 1. Petitioner Information