

*City of Jonesboro Metropolitan Area Planning Commission  
Staff Report – RZ 22-07: 625 & 641 Gant St. and 907 Kitchen St.  
Municipal Center - 300 S. Church St.  
For Consideration by the MAPC Commission on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022*

**REQUEST:** To consider a rezoning of three tracts of land containing 0.43 acres more or less.

**PURPOSE:** A request to consider recommendation to Council for a rezoning from “R-2” Multi-Family Low Density District to “PD-RM” Multi-Family Residential Planned Development District.

**APPLICANTS/  
OWNER:** Tim Cooper, Cooper Mixon Architects, 505 S. Church St., Jonesboro, AR 72401

**LOCATION:** 625 & 641 Gant Street and 907 Kitchen Street

**SITE  
DESCRIPTION:** **Tract Size:** Approx. 0.43 Acres  
**Street Frontage:** 134.4 along Gant St. & 140.6 along Kitchen St.  
**Topography:** Predominately Flat  
**Existing Development:** No structures / Vacant

**SURROUNDING CONDITIONS:**

ZONE	LAND USE
North	C-1 Downtown Core Commercial District
South	R-2 Multi-Family Low Density District
East	R-2 Multi-Family Low Density District
West	C-1 Downtown Core Commercial District

**HISTORY:** Vacant

## ZONING ANALYSIS:

*City Planning Staff has reviewed the proposed Zone Change and offers the following findings:*

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND USE MAP:**

The Current/Future Land Use Map recommends this location as a **Downtown Growth Sector - Medical Center Cluster**. Downtown is the focal point of Jonesboro. The compact, walkable environment is the hub of employment, entertainment, civic and cultural activities, with a mix of housing types thrown in. Downtown Jonesboro is symbolic of the growth of the Jonesboro area, starting with the historic downtown commercial buildings, St. Bernard's Regional Medical Center, the Craighead County Courthouse, and the Jonesboro Municipal Center, plus the traditional grid street network. Design guidelines developed by the City in conjunction with the Downtown Jonesboro Association, as well as appropriate setback, parking, on-street parking, landscaping, and open space requirements will help maintain the downtown feel. Outdoor seating for restaurants, pocket parks, and plazas will encourage strolling and will add to the sense of place. Additionally, the wide range of uses will help to ensure this area remains vital seven days a week.

With the presence of St. Bernard's Regional Medical Center as well as its medical, clinical offices, and facilities owned also by NEA Baptist Hospital Bernard's -Downtown is home to a considerable medical center cluster. This is perhaps the strongest cluster within Downtown Jonesboro, at this time, and one that is expanding continuously.

The entire Medical Mile area has evolved in a very positive fashion over time. This has promoted a major clean-up and enhancement of the edges of the Medical Center Cluster as originally recommended by the Hyett Palma Study. The efforts should continue to promote links between the Medical Center Cluster and the other clusters within Downtown, as well as the Arkansas State University Campus.

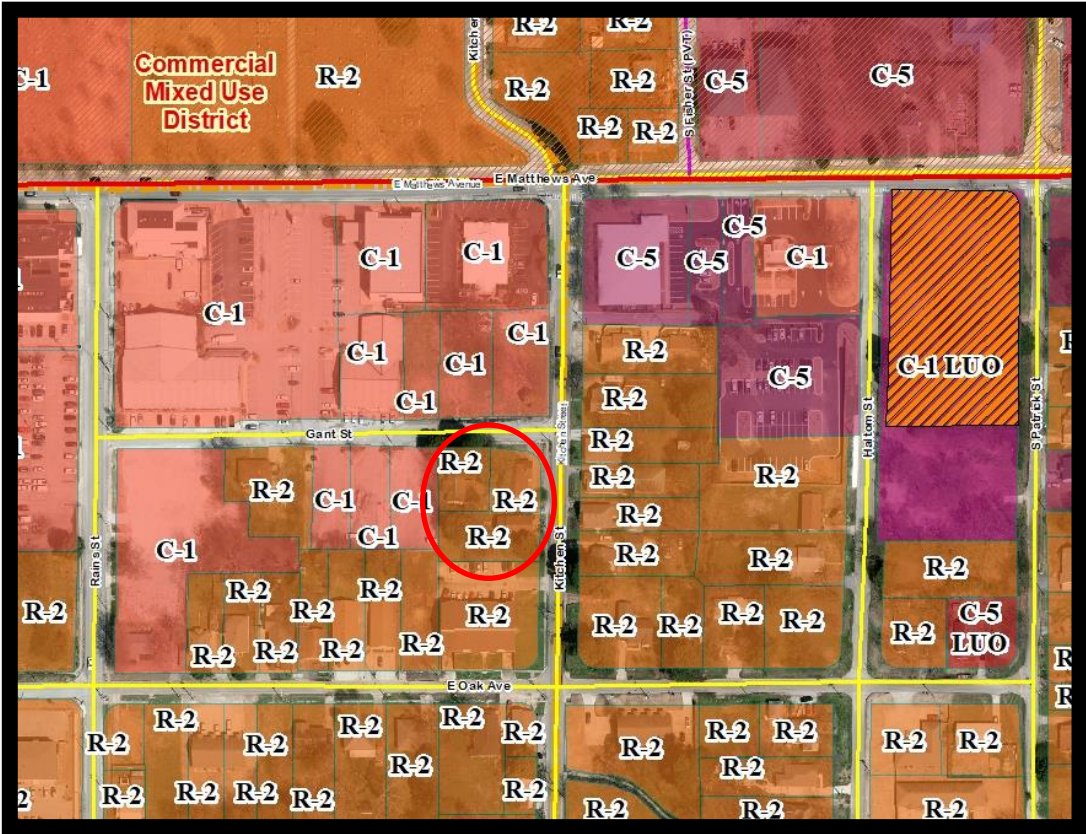
The Medical Center Cluster is composed mostly of "hard materials -e.g., brick, concrete, and asphalt -and contains little in the way of greenery, at this time. It is evident with the new greenway pedestrian trail that this cluster will continue to evolve with increasing numbers of trees, flowers, landscaping, adequate parking facilities, and open space.

The Hyett Palma Study has noted that this area can have a huge impact on the overall visual appeal of Downtown. Therefore, it is suggested that the institutions located within this Medical Center Cluster set an example in making Downtown a beautiful aesthetically pleasing area through attention to building design, landscaping, and signage.

### **Downtown Recommended Use Types Include:**

- Multi-family
- Attached single family residential Retail
- Medical and Professional Offices Public Plaza
- Pocket Park
- Parking Deck
- Museums and Libraries
- Live/work/shop units
- Sit-down Restaurants





*Zoning Map*



*Master Street Plan*

**Master Street Plan/Transportation**

The subject property is served by Kitchen Street and Gant Street. The Master Street Plan classifies Kitchen Street as a Collector and Gant Street as a Local Street. The applicant will be required to adhere to the Master Street Plan recommendations.







Collectors provide for traffic movement between arterials and local streets. They carry moderate traffic volumes over moderate distances and have a higher degree of property access than arterials.

Local Streets serve the lowest traffic volumes. Low traffic volumes combined with slow travel speeds help to create a good residential setting. New developments should be reviewed to avoid creating cut-through streets that become commuter routes that generally lower quality of life for residents.



**Approval Criteria- Chapter 117 - Amendments:**

The criteria for approval of a rezoning are set out below. Not all of the criteria must be given equal consideration by the MAPC or City Council in reaching a decision. The criteria to be considered shall include, but not be limited to the following list.

Criteria	Explanations and Findings	Comply Y/N
<b>(a) Consistency of the proposal with the Comprehensive Plan/Land Use Map</b>	The proposed district rezoning is consistent with the Adopted Land Use Plan, which was categorized as Downtown Growth Sector.	
<b>(b) Consistency of the proposal with the purpose of Chapter 117-Zoning.</b>	The proposal will achieve consistency with the purpose of Chapter 117, with compliance of all District standards.	
<b>(c) Compatibility of the proposal with the zoning, uses and character of the surrounding area.</b>	Compatibility is achieved with this rezoning considering there are multi-family in this area.	
<b>(d) Suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted without the proposed zoning map amendment;</b>	Without the proposed zoning map amendment, this property will likely not develop as multi-family. The R-2 Zoning does not allow multi-family with zero lot lines.	
<b>(e) Extent to which approval of the proposed rezoning will detrimentally affect nearby property including, but not limited to, any impact on property value, traffic, drainage, visual, odor, noise, light, vibration, hours of use/operation and any restriction to the normal and customary use of the affected property;</b>	No detrimental or adverse impacts are predicted, if proper assess management controls are implemented.	
<b>(f) Impact of the proposed development on community facilities and services, including those related to utilities, streets, drainage, parks, open space, fire, police, and emergency medical services</b>	Minimal impact if rezoned due to the fact that businesses and residential currently exist in this area.	

# Staff Findings:

## Applicant's Purpose

The proposed area is currently classified as an R-2 Multi-Family Low Density District. Located on the corner of Gant Street and Kitchen Street, this rezoning is required for multifamily redevelopment.

Rezoning this property is consistent with the *Jonesboro Comprehensive Plan* and the *Future Land Use Plan*. Rezoning makes sense considering there are already multi-family homes in the area.

## Chapter 117 of the City Code of Ordinances/Zoning defines PD-RM – Multi-Family Residential Planned Development District as follows:

The purpose of the PD planned development district is to:

- (1) Allow for flexibility in the zoning requirements where the result will be a higher quality development;
- (2) Provide for and locate suitable recreational facilities, open space, and other common facilities, while preserving the existing landscape to the greatest extent possible;
- (3) Encourage sound planning principles in the arrangement of buildings, the preservation of open space, the utilization of topography and other site features;
- (4) Obtain creative and coordinated designs and allow procedures supplemental to those applicable in other use districts to establish under which development plans particularly designed to meet the objectives of this section; and
- (5) Allow for creative development that conforms to the goals and objectives set for in the city comprehensive plan.

## Departmental/Agency Reviews:

The following departments and agencies were contacted for review and comments. Note that this table will be updated at the hearing due to reporting information that will be updated in the coming days:

Department/Agency	Reports/ Comments	Status
Engineering	No issues were reported	
Streets/Sanitation	No issues were reported	
Police	No issues were reported	
Fire Department	No issues were reported	
MPO	No issues were reported	
Jets	No issues were reported	
Utility Companies	No issues were reported	CWL
Code Enforcement	No issues were reported	

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**MAPC RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS: PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON May 10, 2022**  
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**Tim Cooper of Cooper-Mixon Architects is requesting a Rezoning from R-2, Multi-Family Low Density District, to PD-RM, Multi-Family Residential Planned Development District for .43+/- acres of land on the corner of Gant Street & Kitchen Street.**

**APPLICANT: Tim Cooper representing Gary & Stacy Gestring requesting rezoning from R-2 to PD-RM: It's not just a blanket zoning, it's more of a specific zoning because basically it's what they show on the site plan. Approximately 80% of the property in that area, the adjacent property, is commercially owned or owned by LLC's, those types of entities. There are at least two private residences that might be resided in by the actual owner, but this plan is consistent with the other things going on in the neighborhood and is consistent with the City's plan for growth.**

**COMMISSION: Roberts asked for staff comments from Planning Director Derrel Smith.**

**STAFF: Smith stated the request has been reviewed and meets all six of the rezoning criteria and so would recommend approval with the following conditions:**

- 1. That the proposed site shall satisfy all requirements of the City Engineer, all requirements of the current Stormwater Drainage Design Manual and Flood Plain Regulations regarding any new construction.**
- 2. A final site plan illustrating compliance with site requirements for parking, signage, landscaping, fencing, buffering, outdoor storage, dumpster enclosure, sidewalks etc. shall be submitted to the Planning Department prior to any redevelopment of the property.**
- 3. Any change of use shall be subject to Planning Commission approval in the future.**
- 4. This development shall comply with all Planned Development District standards.**

**COMMISSION: Roberts asked for comments from the public.**

**PUBLIC: John Snodgrass, owner of the property to the south, has a question about elevation which they have been unable to get any information on. Currently, they are having a horrendous problem with the drainage in this area. With water coming down Oak Street and coming down Kitchen Street, and there's a big culvert at the bottom of the hill, it constantly gets flooded and there are houses that get flooded over on the Oak Street side. His question is what will be done on the flooding? He will have a lot of concrete behind him that's going to be putting water back onto his parking lot. He does not see on the drawing the alley which is dedicated behind that property, it does not appear to be illustrated on any information he was able to obtain. He is not opposing the project but has questions.**

**APPLICANT: Tim Cooper agreed that he did see that early on. If you go back and look at some of the old drawings where the city used auto-cad for years, you'll see that there was a little alley of some sort and in a lot of these little neighborhoods, but when we got our survey, nothing showed up so it was not used as any kind of. . . He doesn't think it's platted anywhere.**

**COMMISSION: Roberts interjected that a lot of this would be covered on the site plan, as opposed to just the rezoning request.**

**APPLICANT: There is an official survey included (not just architectural drawing) and on that, which is all he had to go on, there is no alley. He agreed it would be nice if there were an alley.**

**PUBLIC: Mr. Snodgrass said CWL (Jonesboro City Water & Light) says there is. His property line goes up to it, and he was told there is an alley back there.**



**APPLICANT:** Mr. Cooper said they would definitely consider that but they met with CWL & City Planner Derrel Smith and nothing was brought up but they will definitely check that out.

**COMMISSION:** Roberts asked if Michael Morris, City Engineer, had any thoughts.

**STAFF:** Morris stated he would have to research it.

**PUBLIC:** Mr. Snodgrass said they'd be glad to have the development in the neighborhood as it will be an improvement over the empty lot but questions the drainage problems they are already fighting. As it is now, he gets about three inches of water in this basement every time there's two inches of rain.

**APPLICANT:** Mr. Cooper said Tralan Engineering reviewed the site and did some preliminary calculations on the drainage, and they feel like they should be able to detain the water they need to. He said it should not be a problem.

**COMMISSION:** Jimmy Cooper said there were a lot of those alleys, especially in west Jonesboro, that were abandoned and he does not know whether it was by ordinance or what, but there very many of those alleys. Roberts asked for questions from the commissioners of city staff or the developer. Monroe Pointer asked if questions raised would in fact be covered in the next phase of the process.

**STAFF:** Derrel Smith said yes, when they actually submit site plans with full civil and architectural plans, the city will look at all of that then and make sure it complies with all the codes.

**COMMISSION:** Cooper asked if they had to have any kind of detention area there.

**STAFF:** All that will be included. (Drainage study.)

**APPLICANT:** Just to the east of the number 7 unit, that area is proposed for detention. It won't be a wet pond but will be grass, etc. in compliance with the city's requirements.

**COMMISSION:** Roberts said it will meet the drainage codes or it won't be approved, but they should be able to see all that on the site plans. He thanked Mr. Snodgrass for his input. He asked for any other questions or comments from commissioners.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

Mr. Monroe Pointer made a motion to approve Case RZ: 22-07, as submitted, to the City Council with the stipulations that were read by the Planning Department:

1. That the proposed site shall satisfy all requirements of the City Engineer, all requirements of the current Stormwater Drainage Design Manual and Flood Plain Regulations regarding any new construction.
2. A final site plan illustrating compliance with site requirements for parking, signage, landscaping, fencing, buffering, outdoor storage, dumpster enclosure, sidewalks etc. shall be submitted to the Planning Department prior to any redevelopment of the property.
3. Any change of use shall be subject to Planning Commission approval in the future.
4. This development shall comply with all Planned Development District standards.

The MAPC finds to rezone property from R-2, Multi-Family Low Density District, to PD-RM, Multi-Family Residential Planned Development District, for .43+/- acres of land on the corner of Gant Street & Kitchen Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kevin Bailey.

**Roll Call Vote: Aye: 7 – Stephanie Nelson; Jeff Steiling; Kevin Bailey; Monroe Pointer; Jimmy Cooper; Jim Little and Dennis Zolper**

**Nay: 0**

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**Conclusion:**

The Planning Department Staff finds that the requested Zone Change submitted for subject parcel, should be evaluated based on the above observations and criteria of Case RZ 22-07 a request to rezone property from “R-2” Multi-Family Low Density District to “PD-RM” Multi-Family Residential Planned Development District, the following conditions are recommended:

1. That the proposed site shall satisfy all requirements of the City Engineer, all requirements of the current Stormwater Drainage Design Manual and Flood Plain Regulations regarding any new construction.
2. A final site plan illustrating compliance with site requirements for parking, signage, landscaping, fencing, buffering, outdoor storage, dumpster enclosure, sidewalks etc. shall be submitted to the Planning Department prior to any redevelopment of the property.
3. Any change of use shall be subject to Planning Commission approval in the future.
4. This development shall comply with all Planned Development District standards.

Respectfully Submitted for Planning Commission Consideration,

The Planning and Zoning Department

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**Sample Motion:**

I move that we place Case: RZ-22-07 on the floor for consideration of recommendation by MAPC to the City Council with the noted conditions, and we, the MAPC find that to rezone property from “R-2” Multi-Family Low Density District to “PD-RM” Multi-Family Residential Planned Development District and will be compatible and suitable with the zoning, uses, and character of the surrounding area.