

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

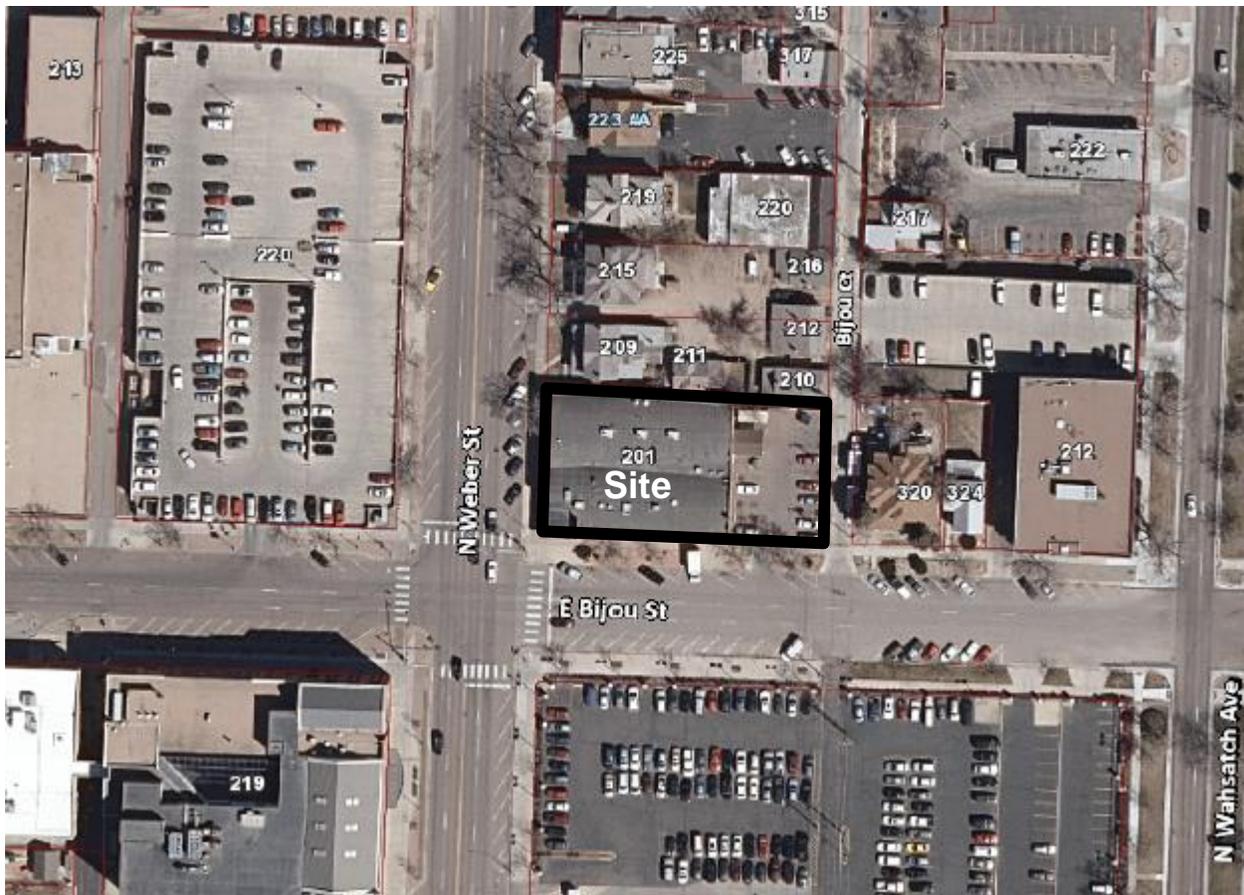
STAFF: RYAN TEFERTILLER

FILE NO:
CPC CU 17-00012 – QUASI-JUDICIAL

PROJECT: ECUMENICAL SOCIAL MINISTRIES WOMEN'S TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

APPLICANT: ANN LANZ

OWNER: THE COLORADO SPRINGS ECUMENICAL SOCIAL MINISTRIES



PROJECT SUMMARY:

1. Project Description: This application was submitted to allow The Ecumenical Social Ministries organization, operating at 201 N. Weber St., to convert 6 office spaces totaling roughly 1,650 square feet within the existing building into transitional housing units for up to 16 unaccompanied women. **(FIGURE 1)** The subject property is roughly 18,500 square feet in size and contains a 12,625 square foot office/civic building. The property is zoned C6 (General Business), and is located at the northeastern corner of N. Weber St. and E. Bijou St.
2. Applicant's Project Statement: **(FIGURE 2)**
3. Planning and Development Team's Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the application, subject to modifications.

BACKGROUND:

1. Site Address: 201 N. Weber St.
2. Existing Zoning/Land Use: C6/Office and Social Services
3. Surrounding Zoning/Land Use: North: C6/Multi-Family Residential, Office and Commercial
South: FBZ-T2A/Religious Institution and Associated Parking Lot
East: C6/ Multi-Family Residential, Office and Commercial
West: FBZ-T1/YMCA and Shared Private Parking Structure
4. Comprehensive Plan/Designated 2020 Land Use: Regional Center
5. Annexation: Town of Colorado Springs, 1872
6. Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use: Experience Downtown Master Plan (2016)/General Residential.
7. Subdivision: Town of Colorado Springs, 1872
8. Zoning Enforcement Action: There are no current enforcement actions on this site.
9. Physical Characteristics: The property is developed with a 12,625 square foot office/civic building and a roughly 15 stall parking lot.

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT: The public process involved with the review of this application included posting of the site and sending of postcards on two separate occasions to 195 property owners within 1,000 feet of the site. Staff received only one comment from the public; support for the application was submitted by the Downtown Residents Coalition.

Staff input is outlined in the following sections of this report. Staff sent plans to a number of standard internal and external review agencies for comments. All comments received from the review agencies are addressed. Commenting agencies included Colorado Springs Utilities, Enumerations, and the Police Department.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA/MAJOR ISSUES/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & MASTER PLAN CONFORMANCE:

1. Review Criteria / Design & Development Issues:
 - a. Background

Ecumenical Social Ministries (ESM) has operated at 201 N. Weber St. for over 16 years. ESM describes itself as “a collaborative Christian response to low-income and homeless people in crisis.” ESM provides a range of services to roughly 74,000 people each year. Services include: “guest services” which provide clothing, personal hygiene items, prescription medications, and transportation services; assistance with utilities payment; and a food pantry facility.

The proposed conditional use permit would allow ESM to add 16 beds of transitional housing for unaccompanied women. Each resident would stay at the facility for 3 to 12 months and is required to be drug and alcohol free. Participants must successfully pass a background check and must seek employment. A portion of their salary, once employed, must be used to pay a program fee of \$65 per week.

b. Conditional Use:

The conditional use criteria are listed below and justified for the application under review.

A. Surrounding Neighborhood: That the value and qualities of the neighborhood surrounding the conditional use are not substantially injured; and

The area surrounding the ESM property is a mix of residential, civic, office and commercial uses. Immediately adjacent to the Downtown Colorado Springs Form-Based Zone, the area is expected to be made up of a vibrant mix of urban appropriate uses. ESM has operated a range of services on the site for many years and has made significant effort to mitigate any concerns expressed by adjacent property owners. No letters or emails were received expressing opposition to the proposed use. It is expected that the residents in the transitional housing program will be free of drugs and alcohol and will be gainfully employed. Staff finds that the values and qualities of the neighborhood will not be substantially injured by the proposed use.

B. Intent Of Zoning Code: That the conditional use is consistent with the intent and purpose of this Zoning Code to promote public health, safety and general welfare; and also

The proposed application will provide beds for up to 16 unaccompanied women. This is a segment of the homeless population that often goes overlooked. The proposed use will be a significant step forward to improve the health, safety, and general welfare of this population and ultimately the City as a whole. Staff finds that this application is consistent with the intent of the City of Colorado Springs Zoning Code.

C. Comprehensive Plan: That the conditional use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the City.

The City of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan spells out the objectives, policies and strategies that should be consulted when making land use decisions. This application is supported by the Comprehensive Plan in many ways. See the section below for a more detailed analysis of compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff finds that the proposed application adequately addresses all of the issues raised by the internal review agencies and meets the review criteria as set forth in City Code.

2. Conformance with the City Comprehensive Plan:

The 2020 Land Use Map within the 2001 Comprehensive Plan calls out this area as “Regional Center” which is defined as “large, intensive activity centers that combine the uses of commercial centers and employment centers and serve the city and region as a whole. They often include regional malls or corporate headquarters.” The Comprehensive Plan supports the provision of services in the locations where they are known to be needed. And while efforts must be made to ensure compatibility and harmoniousness, it is widely recognized that while Downtown Colorado Springs has many resources for homeless populations (e.g. counseling, soup kitchen, transit services, etc.) there is a shortage of shelter beds, more specifically a shortage of transitional housing beds for unaccompanied women.

While there are many Objectives, Policies, and Strategies with the Comprehensive Plan that support the proposed use, the following elements dealing with Housing within the community are particularly relevant.

Objective LU 6: Meet the Housing Needs of All Segments of the Community.

Planning and development activities, both in the public and private sector, shall include measures intended to ensure the sufficient provision of housing to meet the needs of the entire community, including housing affordable to lower-income households.

Policy LU 601: Assure Provision of Housing Choices

Distribute housing throughout the City so as to provide households with a choice of densities, types, styles and costs within a neighborhood or residential area.

Policy LU 602: Integrate Housing with Other Supportive Land Uses

Integrate housing with supportive land uses, such as employment, education, health facilities, recreation and shopping, to ensure functional and attractive neighborhoods.

3. Conformance with the Area's Master Plan:

The subject property falls within the newly adopted Experience Downtown Master Plan. The plan includes 8 primary goals, one of which directly supports the proposed application. Goal 2 is titled "Diverse and Inclusive Place to Live Integrated with Adjacent Neighborhoods" and includes 5 more specific actions steps describing specific steps recommended to achieve the goal. The fifth action step reads "Through partnerships, ensure the city has enough year-round shelter space and permanent supportive housing options so that chronic or temporarily homeless persons are safely sheltered and receiving needed services." Staff finds that the proposed conditional use will help achieve this action step and is therefore consistent with the Experience Downtown Master Plan.

4. Affordable Housing Needs:

The proposed project is also supported by the FY 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and the Housing Needs Assessment completed in 2014. Both documents recommend continued expansion of housing for low to very low income families, and support projects that aid in the prevention of homelessness. Transitional housing, such as proposed with this application, certainly meets these objectives.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

CPC CU 17-00012 – CONDITIONAL USE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Approve the conditional use for Ecumenical Social Ministries Women's Transitional Housing, based upon the finding that the conditional use complies with the review criteria in City Code Section 7.5.704 and 7.5.502.E, subject to compliance with the following technical and informational plan modifications:

Technical and Informational Modifications to the Conditional Use Plan:

1. Add the standard applicant, plan, and site data to the first sheet of the plan documents. This should include: applicant information, owner information, lot size, building size, zoning, file number, project name, etc.
2. Add a parking table communicating the number of stalls required by code and the number of stalls provided in the existing parking lot.