Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	A Form-Based Zone Conditional Use Development Plan for the Downtown Stadium project on 4.9 acres of FBZ-CEN (Form-Based Zone - Central Sector) zoned land located at 520 Sahwatch Street. (QUASI-JUDICIAL) Related File: CPC V 19-00103 Presenter: Peter Wysocki, Director, Planning and Community Development Department Ryan Tefertiller, Manager, Urban Planning Division		
Sponsors:			
Indexes:	City for Champions, Stadium		
Code sections:			
Attachments:	1. Downtown Stadium DRB Staff Report, 2. Figure 1 - Downtown Stadium CU DP, 3. Figure 2 - Downtown Stadium_Project Statement, 4. Figure 3 - Stakeholder Input, 5. Figure 4 - 2005 Site Aerial Photo, 6. Figure 5 - Downtown Stadium Parking Traffic Study, 7. Figure 6 - Downtown Stadium vacation plat, 8. DRB_Minutes_Stadium_draft, 9. 7.5.704 Conditional Use Review		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/12/2019	2	City Council	approved	Pass
10/2/2019	1	Downtown Review Board	referred	Pass

A Form-Based Zone Conditional Use Development Plan for the Downtown Stadium project on 4.9 acres of FBZ-CEN (Form-Based Zone - Central Sector) zoned land located at 520 Sahwatch Street.

(QUASI-JUDICIAL)

Related File: CPC V 19-00103

Presenter:
Peter Wysocki, Director, Planning and Community Development Department
Ryan Tefertiller, Manager, Urban Planning Division

Summary:
Owner: City Gate Stadium LLC
Consultant: NES, Inc.
Location: South of W. Cimarron St. between S. Sierra Madre St. and Sahwatch St.

The applications under consideration are a Form-Based Zone Conditional Use Development Plan and Right-of-Way Vacation application. Both have been submitted to allow development of a roughly

8,000 seat athletic stadium and supporting project elements on the roughly 4.9 acre vacant, FBZ-CEN (Form-Based Zone - Central Sector) zoned site.

Background:

A relatively brief summary of the project's history, details, code standards, and criteria are provided within this memo; a more detailed description can be found within the Downtown Review Board Staff Report.

The subject property is found on the southwestern edge of Downtown south and east of the Cimarron and I-25 gateway area. The property was previously utilized as a foundry and similar industrial uses associated with the Metso Minerals Company. The site was cleared for redevelopment in 2006 and has remained vacant since. In 2007 the site was designated as part of the CityGate urban renewal area. In 2009, the site was rezoned from M-1 (Light Industrial) to be within the southern portion of the Form-Based Zone's Central Sector which covers the bulk of the City's downtown core area. In 2013 the City of Colorado Springs initiated the City for Champions effort to utilize over $120 million awarded by the Colorado Economic Development Commission through the Regional Tourist Act. After initial struggles to define and progress the sports and event center project, a concept began to take shape in 2018 to bifurcate the project into two separate but related venues. These applications have been submitted to implement the outdoor stadium component and serve as the new home for the Colorado Springs Switchbacks Football Club.

The Downtown Colorado Springs Form-Based Code (FBC) was adopted by City Council in 2009 after extensive planning, professional consultation, and stakeholder involvement. The FBC requires a Conditional Use permit for "any convention center, arena, or sports stadium, whether indoor or outdoor." The Code indicates that such a review may be necessary due to "the fact that the proposed structure does not adhere to one of the Code's approved building types." The additional public process and decision making process can better account for the unique issues of such a significant project.

The plan illustrates the creation of an 8,157 seat outdoor soccer stadium covering the vast majority of the 4.9 acre site. The facility is also designed to include: a 4,360 square foot hospitality space with an attached "skyclub" space seating roughly 240 guests; a roughly 4,000 square foot restaurant space at street level on the Cimarron and Sierra Madre corner; and roughly 2,650 square feet of sports medicine clinic space.

The stadium is designed with seating on all four sides of the artificial turf soccer field. The field itself is someone sunken below much of the adjacent right-of-way, becoming largely level with the adjacent public space only at the Sierra Madre and Moreno corner, the lowest portion of the site. The stadium is wrapped by an internal concourse that is typically five to ten feet higher than the adjacent public sidewalk. The concourse is separated from the public sidewalk by structures on the east and west sides of the site, with the primary structural components being a three story building along the entire west side of the stadium. Both the north and south edges of the stadium will include canopies providing shade for fans and netting extending roughly 40 feet high to prevent off-target soccer balls from exiting the facility. The northeastern corner of the site has been designed with an eye-catching artistic entry feature conceptually shown with a large (roughly 25 foot diameter) orb and two even larger ring elements extending nearly 40 feet into the air and as much as 75 feet horizontally.

The plan illustrates that the southern edge of the site will be developed as a pedestrian plaza that will one day provide a high quality space between the stadium and the planned apartments just south of

the site. While the details of the roughly 40 foot wide plaza are to be determined and constructed with the adjacent residential project, the plaza is a key element for the long-term success of the stadium project

Beyond the design and development of the stadium itself, the proposed plan illustrates significant public improvements along the west, north and east sides of the project. The plan illustrates new curb and gutter with pockets of parallel parking on the Sierra Madre and Sahwatch sides of the site. Wide sidewalks typically between eight and ten feet wide are planned to provide adequate pedestrian comfort both during events and daily use. Street trees with tree grates, raised planters, bike racks, benches, trash cans, lighting and specialty paving are all included in the detailed streetscape sheets within the plan. Special care was taken to design the fan entrance at the corner of Sahwatch and Cimarron to allow for adequate queuing between the roadway and the ticket taking and security areas.

As described above, the proposed stadium doesn't fit cleanly into any of the seven standard "building types" within the Form-Based Code. A conditional use review helps address this issue by providing an additional layer of review and consideration. That said, all Form-Based Code standards were evaluated for the stadium using the "civic building" building type. Modest relief was needed on a number of physical standards including: building envelopes, building height, building frontage, block standards, and public space standards. The Downtown Review Board staff report provides more detail and analysis on each of these issues.

A significant issue of consideration for this project are parking and traffic both of which were studied and evaluated within a separate study produced by Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig. The study goes into great detail to estimate the likely traffic increases, parking demand, and parking supply issues for the proposed project at maximum capacity. The study finds that just under 2,400 vehicles will be traveling to the facility specifically for a sold-out Switchbacks game. The study also documents that this parking demand can be met within a 10-minute "walkshed" using a combination of on-street parking, off-street parking lots, and public parking structures which are found at the outer edges of the walkshed. The study acknowledges that parking restrictions such as time-limited meters a couple blocks to the east and future parking restrictions that may be implemented in the Mill Street neighborhood to the south could effect on-street parking supply for games and other larger events. The study also indicates that specific plans and strategies would be needed to accommodate the "large events" that are occur up to four times a year and could include as many as 15,000 attendees by using a portion of the playing field for seating or assembly space.

The proposed stadium requires the vacation of two different sections of public right-of-way in order to move forward. The vacation plat submitted as part of the project illustrates the full vacation of W. Moreno Ave. between S. Sierra Madre St. and Sahwatch St. This is necessary to not only allow the necessary north/south dimension of the field and stadium, but also to allow for the future creation of a pedestrian plaza that will improve the area between the stadium and the planned apartments to the south. This 400 foot long stretch of W. Moreno has actually been the subject of two prior ROW vacations. Ordinance No. 4684 vacated the northern 15 feet of W. Moreno Ave. and was approved by City Council in April of 1973. Ordinance No. 74-162 vacated an additional 28 feet of the same section of W. Moreno ROW; this ordinance was approved by City Council in December of 1974. Both ordinances reserved public utility and drainage easements. Should City Council approve the proposed ROW vacation, Staff is recommending that public utility and drainage easements be retained in order to protect and service the infrastructure in the area.

The second portion of the proposed vacation application is to vacate the western 30 feet of the Sahwatch St. right-of-way between W. Cimarron St. and W. Moreno Ave. Again, this application was submitted to allow adequate space for the proposed field, seating, concourse, and associated project improvements. Should City Council approve the partial vacation of Sahwatch, the remaining ROW would total 70 feet wide, which is adequate for the proposed three lane roadway cross section (one northbound lane, one southbound lane, and one center turn lane), as well as on-street parking, and comfortable sidewalk and amenity zone improvements. The proposed vacation will retain enough right-of-way for public transportation, parking, utility and drainage needs, while also allow for adequate stadium and pedestrian way design. The applicant has discussed temporary closure of Sahwatch between Cimarron and Moreno during games to create additional festival space; this aspect of the project would be reviewed via the City's Special Event Permit process.

Staff has closely reviewed the project for consistency with the required conditional use criteria, the right-of-way vacation criteria, the Experience Downtown Master Plan, and the City's newly adopted comprehensive plan - PlanCOS. Significant discussion and analysis of the required criteria and applicable plans is found within the Downtown Review Board staff report, but City Council should know that ultimately that Planning Staff has concluded that the necessary criteria are met, that the project is well aligned with the applicable planning documents, and therefore recommends that City Council approve the applications.

Previous Council Action:
City Council has taken action that affects this site on multiple occasions. Portions of the adjacent public right-of-way were vacated in 1973 and 1974. The site was designated by City Council as an urban renewal area 2007. The site was included in the downtown-wide zone change to Form-Based Zone in 2009.

Financial Implications:
N/A

City Council Appointed Board/Commission/Committee Recommendation:
On October 2, 2019 the Downtown Review Board voted unanimously (7 - 0 with Board members Gullixson and Heggem absent) to approve both applications.

Stakeholder Process:
The stakeholder involvement for this project was significant. In addition to the developers' noteworthy efforts to engage surrounding property owners, businesses, and residents, the City participated with and led multiple public meetings. On July 16th and 17th of 2019 the project proponents held meetings with businesses, restaurants, and retailers in the area (the 16th) as well as the general community (the 17th) to formally present the proposed project. A thorough discussion of the physical and operational components of the project took place at both meetings. While some attendees expressed some concern about parking and traffic management, the overall response from the community was largely positive.

At the time of application submittal, the City mailed notification postcards to roughly 123 owners of property that falls within 1,000 feet of the subject property. Those postcards included information about the proposed project including details of the three specific applications. The notices also announced a City-led public meeting which was held on August 21, 2019. Roughly 75 people attended this meeting. While some questions were still raised about parking and traffic, the feedback from attendees was very positive. Staff received written input from three individuals during the

internal review stage of this project and one additional communication from the Downtown Partnership prior to the DRB hearing. At the Downtown Review Board hearing representatives of the Downtown Partnership and the Convention and Visitors Bureau spoke in support of the project; there were no comments from the public in opposition to the project. The site will be posted and new postcards mailed prior to the City Council public hearing.

The application was reviewed by all standard City agencies including, Public Works, Traffic Engineering, Colorado Springs Utilities, Water Resource Engineering, the Parking Enterprise, the Urban Renewal Authority, and others. All reviews support the project; any remaining technical concerns are included as Technical Modifications at the end of this report.

Alternatives:

1. Uphold the action of the Downtown Review Board;
2. Modify the decision of the Downtown Review Board;
3. Reverse the action of the Downtown Review Board; or
4. Refer the matter back to the Downtown Review Board for further consideration.

Proposed Motions:

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Approve the Conditional Use Development Plan based on the findings that the Conditional Use criteria found in Section 7.5.704 of the City Code will be met once the following technical modifications are addressed:

Technical modifications to the Conditional Use plan:

1. Finalize approval of the project's drainage report
2. Confirm street addresses for the building and add them to the plan.
3. Document the percent glazing for the west building elevation.
4. Add the proposed legal description to sheet 1 of the plan.
5. Clarify proposed streetscape details including curb type, phasing, pedestrian ramp locations, and what elements are by the developer versus by others.
6. Modify the plan to illustrate an adequate and comfortable pedestrian way along the Sierra Madre side of the site.
7. Clarify presence of existing easements confirming where easement vacations are underway.
8. Update the landscape sheet to document the location and detail of structural soil to ensure tree health.
9. Revise the plan to ensure that all public space improvements are fully ADA compliant.

N/A

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