



TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Subject Property: 1151 Blue Hills Avenue

Application Type: Zone Map Change and Related Master Plan

Prepared by: Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building & Land Use



Proposal Summary

The First Baptist Church of Hartford (First Cathedral), in partnership with Grow America, has submitted an application for a Zoning Map Amendment and accompanying Master Plan for the 40.5-acre property located at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue. The applicant is requesting to rezone the site from its current split PO (Professional Office District) and R-15 (Residential) designations to the Design Development Zone II (DDZ-II) to support a coordinated, multi-phased redevelopment of the underutilized areas of the Cathedral campus.

The purpose of the proposal is to expand the Cathedral's community-focused mission beyond religious programming by introducing affordable and mixed-income housing, a licensed daycare facility, and a workforce empowerment center, while preserving existing worship facilities and improving pedestrian connectivity. The proposed plan repurposes the largely unused auxiliary parking lot and athletic fields to create a more balanced campus that integrates residential, childcare, employment support, and worship uses within a master-planned development framework.

The project is organized in four phases, beginning with affordable housing development and followed by the mixed-use daycare/residential building, a church addition for workforce counseling and training, and a Cathedral storage/overflow parking facility. All work is designed to remain outside protected wetland and conservation easement areas.



Design Development Zone (DDZ) and (DDZ-II)

Zoning Regulations Sec. 5.6

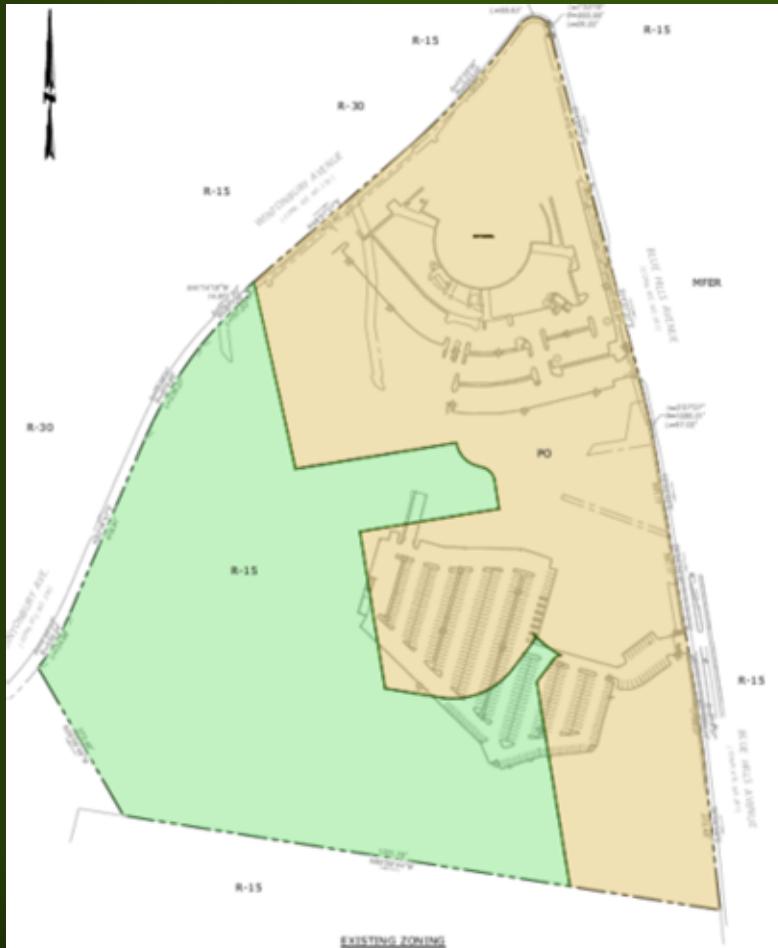
Purpose

- Intent: The creation of a combined work, service, shopping, retail and residential environment that promotes the maintenance of quality open space, reduces the traffic generation that occurs when the uses are separated, enhances the quality and proximity of facilities to employees and retains the character of an area and its suitability for particular uses is beneficial because it will reduce traffic, pollution and congestion which would arise from disparate and piecemeal development and will provide an enhanced living and work environment for the residents of the Town.

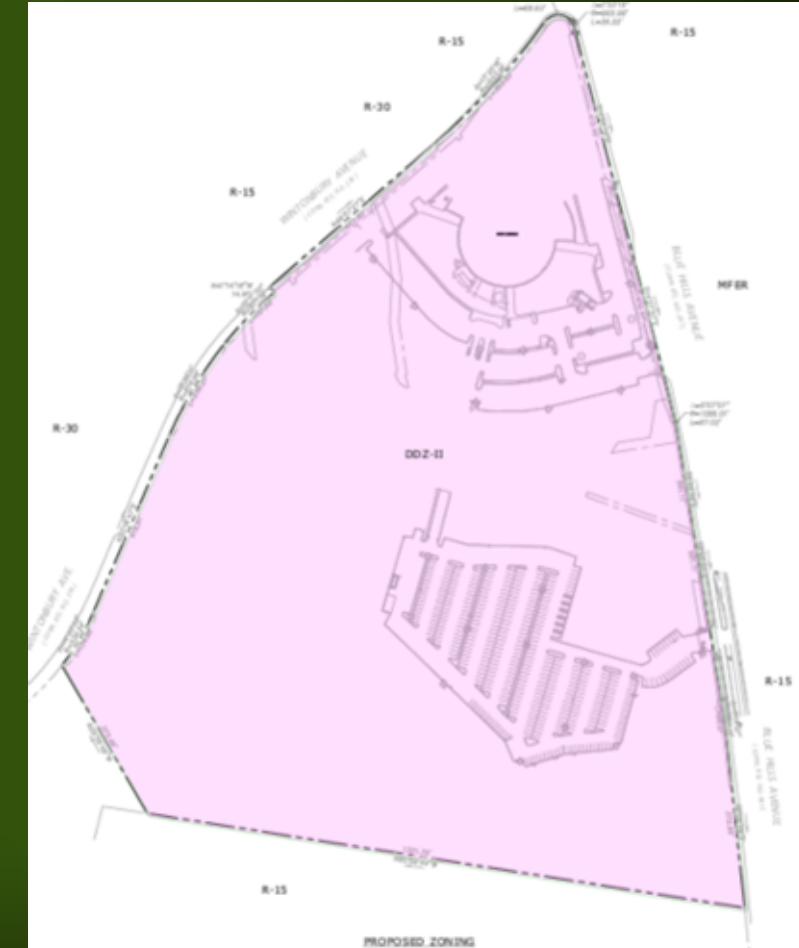


Proposed Zone Change

Existing Zone (R-15 & POD)



Proposed Zone (DDZ-II)





Related DDZ-II Master Plan

LAND USE AREA		(ACRES)
1		25
2		10
3		3
	TOTAL	40

5.6 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT ZONE (DDZ) and (DDZ-45) (547-170)

5.6.1 Purpose

1. Intent: The creation of a **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT ZONE** (DDZ) is a planning, review and **zoning** mechanism that controls when the uses are implemented, determines the **style** of development, and provides for the character of an area. The DDZ is suitable for particular uses is beneficial because it will reduce traffic, pollution and unnecessary noise. The DDZ also allows for the development of areas that are well suited for an enhanced living and work environment for the residents of the Town of Goshen. This tool, accompanied by a **Design Plan** at the discretion of the Zoning Board of Appeals, will be used to regulate the use of the **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT ZONE** as a Zoning Map Amendment, subject to a public hearing, and the terms and conditions of these requirements. The Master Plan requires certain facility, and development of the area, but only the DDZ will regulate the use of the area. The DDZ will be subject to the same review and public hearing procedures as the original Zoning Map Amendment. The DDZ and DDZ-45 will succeed at preventing zoning, and any development in the corner property we be subject to the new district.

5.6.2 Bulk Requirements.

DISTRICT	LOT WIDTH	LOT LENGTH	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	BUILDING
DDZ	20' min	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50%
DDZ-45	100' min	100' min	100' min	100' min	100' min	100' min	100' min	100' min	100%

5.6.3 Protection Uses and Structures (547-170)

1. **Authorized Without a Zoning By-Staff:** The following uses and structures are authorized without the issuance of a Zoning By-Staff:

- a. Public utility substation, pursuant to the Connecticut State Council.

2. **Authorized by Zoning By-Staff:** The following protection uses and structures may be authorized by the issuance of a Zoning By-Staff, subject to the requirements of Section 5.1:

- a. Name

3. **Protected Uses Only:** The following principal uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Plan, approved in accordance with Section 5.4:

- a. Category 1 Land Use Type - uses as permitted in the Zoning District.
- b. Category 2 Land Use Type - uses as permitted in the Zoning District.

4. **Protected Uses and Structures:** The following principal uses and structures are permitted upon the issuance of a Zoning Plan, approved in accordance with Section 5.4:

- a. Category 3 Land Use Type - theater or place of assembly, for amusement, assembly, exhibition, performance, or entertainment, including, but not limited to, theater and pent theater, and non-operated general game and dances, are permitted when installed in a permitted use, cultural, medical, or similar, conserving, technical, research, or educational, institutional, or other, building, or structure, or in a permitted use of land, or building, or structure, with food consumed on the premises or within the Zoning District.
- b. Category 4 Land Use Type - health and medical, medical, medical, dental, dental facilities, golf course and other indoor or outdoor recreation (not passive) and active, professional, medical facilities.
- c. Category 5 Land Use Type - churches, schools, daycare facilities, government and quasi-governmental facilities.
- d. Category 6 Land Use Type - telecommunications, service and facilities, including, but not limited to, cellular, telephone, television, and radio facilities.
- e. Category 7 Land Use Type - industrial, dwelling units, provided that the

LAND USE TABLE					
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT ZONE (DDZ-II) (SEC. 5.6)					
LAND USE AREA	AREA (ACRES)	AREA (SQUARE FEET)	PERMITTED LAND USES	MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT (F)	PARKING REQUIREMENTS/ CRITERIA (D)
1	25.784	1,132,8774	CATEGORY 3, 5 AND 8	40,000 SF STORAGE BUILDING	DRIVING: 1 SPACE PER 3 RENTS MEDICAL: CLINIC 5 SPACES FOR EACH UNIT OF GROSS FLOOR AREA
2	11.478	865,7338	CATEGORY 7	100 UNITS: 1 LOT	MULTI-PURPOSE UNITS: 1 SPACE PER UNIT; 2 SPACES FOR 2 OR MORE BEDROOM UNIT
3	3.128	135,8678	CATEGORY 5 AND 7	40 UNITS: DAYCARE FACILITY	NO CHILD DAY CARE CENTER NO HOMESTEADERS AND STAFF ARE ESTABLISHED WORKERS
TOTAL	40.384	1,734,6186			MULTI-PURPOSE UNITS: 1 SPACE PER UNIT; 2 SPACES PER 2 OR MORE BEDROOM UNIT

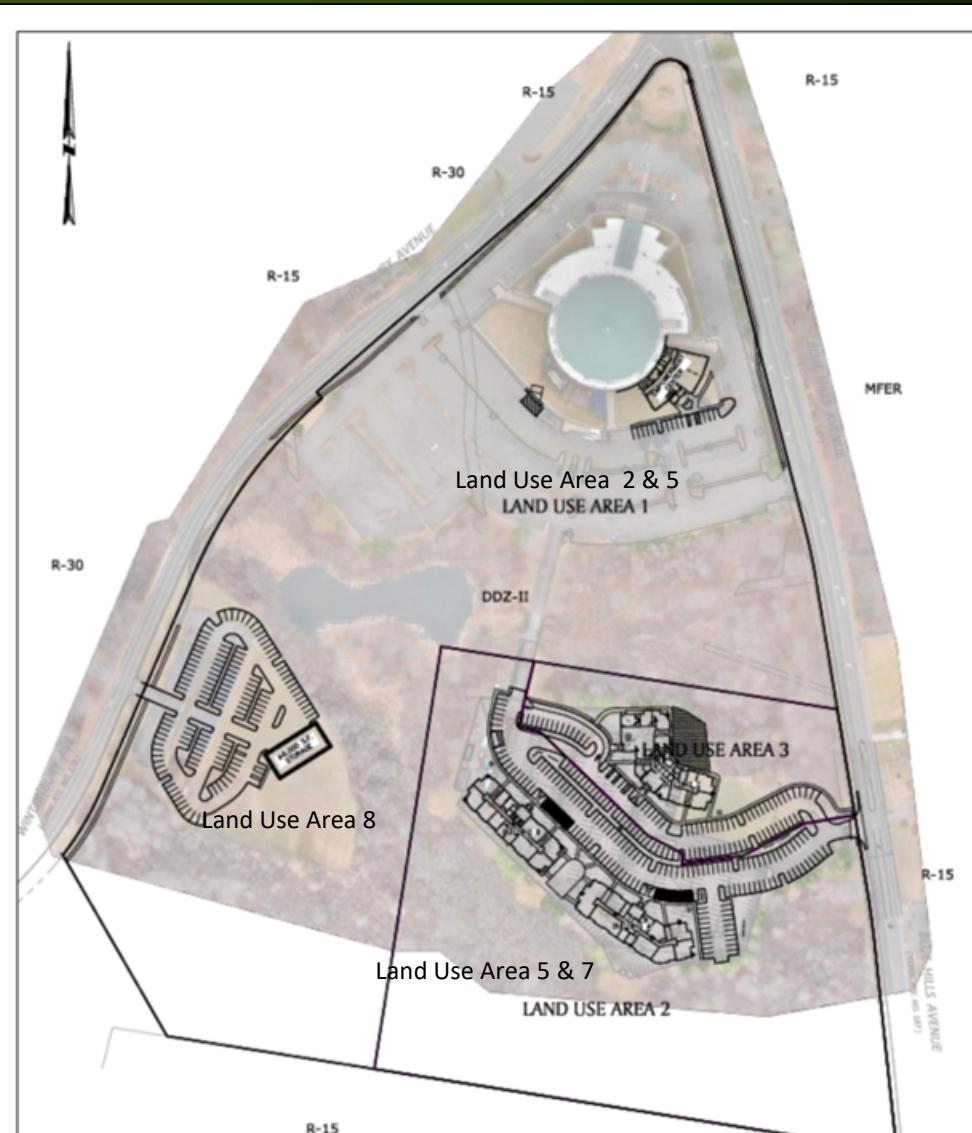
BUILDING USE TABLE					
LAND-USE AREA	BUILDING	GROSS AREA	LIVING AREA	NUMBER OF UNITS	PARKING SPACES
1	DETACHMENT (DET)	14,856 S.F.	-	-	74
1	DETACHMENT (DET)	46,000 S.F.	-	-	12
2	BUILDING A (DETACH)	70,242 S.F.	55,186 S.F.	31	84
2	BUILDING B (DETACH)	82,082 S.F.	44,363 S.F.	36	74 + 42 (TYP)
3	BUILDING C (DETACH)	86,838 S.F.	41,185 S.F.	40 (TYP)	84 + 22 (TYP)

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- 4. **Authorizations Without a Signing Statement.** The following cases and structures are authorized without the issuance of a Signing Statement:
 - a. Open Space
 - b. Public utility commissions, including the Comisión Federal de Electricidad
 - c. Authorizations for the issuance, holding, or transfer of power and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Signing Statement in accordance with Section 9.1. *Note:*
- 5. **Authorizations by Site Plan.** The following principal cases and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Site Plan, approved in accordance with Section 9.4. *Categoría 1:* Authorizations for the issuance, holding, or transfer of power and structures, including offices for public utility, banks, financial, educational, medical, printing, and publishing, restaurants, food service, service, sports, leisure, travel, printing, and publishing, restaurants, food service, service, sports, leisure, travel, and publishing.

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Applicable Land Use Type Zoning Regulations Sec. 5.6.C

Category 2

professional, business and insurance offices including offices for public utilities, banks, industrial, educational, charitable and civic organizations; retail stores, personal service shops, banks, printing, and publishing establishments, studios and sample rooms and similar uses; hotel, motel, conference center and banquet facility; radio and television broadcasting studio; **medical clinic or facility**; surgery center, research, data processing and product development facilities, including laboratories and light manufacturing and assembly associated with the same.

Category 5

churches, schools, **daycare facilities**, governmental and quasi-governmental facilities.

Category 7

multi-family dwelling units provided that the maximum number of dwelling units to be permitted is 16 per acre.

Category 8

accessory uses to those permitted above including, without limitation, storage facilities in permanent structures and garages associated with the permitted uses...



Phased Master Plan

Phase 1 – Affordable Housing (Southeast portion)

- Two **5-story** multifamily buildings
- **101 100% affordable units**, serving **30–50% AMI households**

Phase 2 – Mixed-Use Residential + Daycare

- One **5-story building**
- **45 residential units** (mix of affordable + market-rate based on funding)
- **Community daycare for 90 children (3 months–5 years)**

Phase 3 – Empowerment Center (Church Addition)

- **2-story addition** to Cathedral
- **Employment training + counseling center**
- Sidewalk extension along **Blue Hills Avenue** to **Wintonbury**

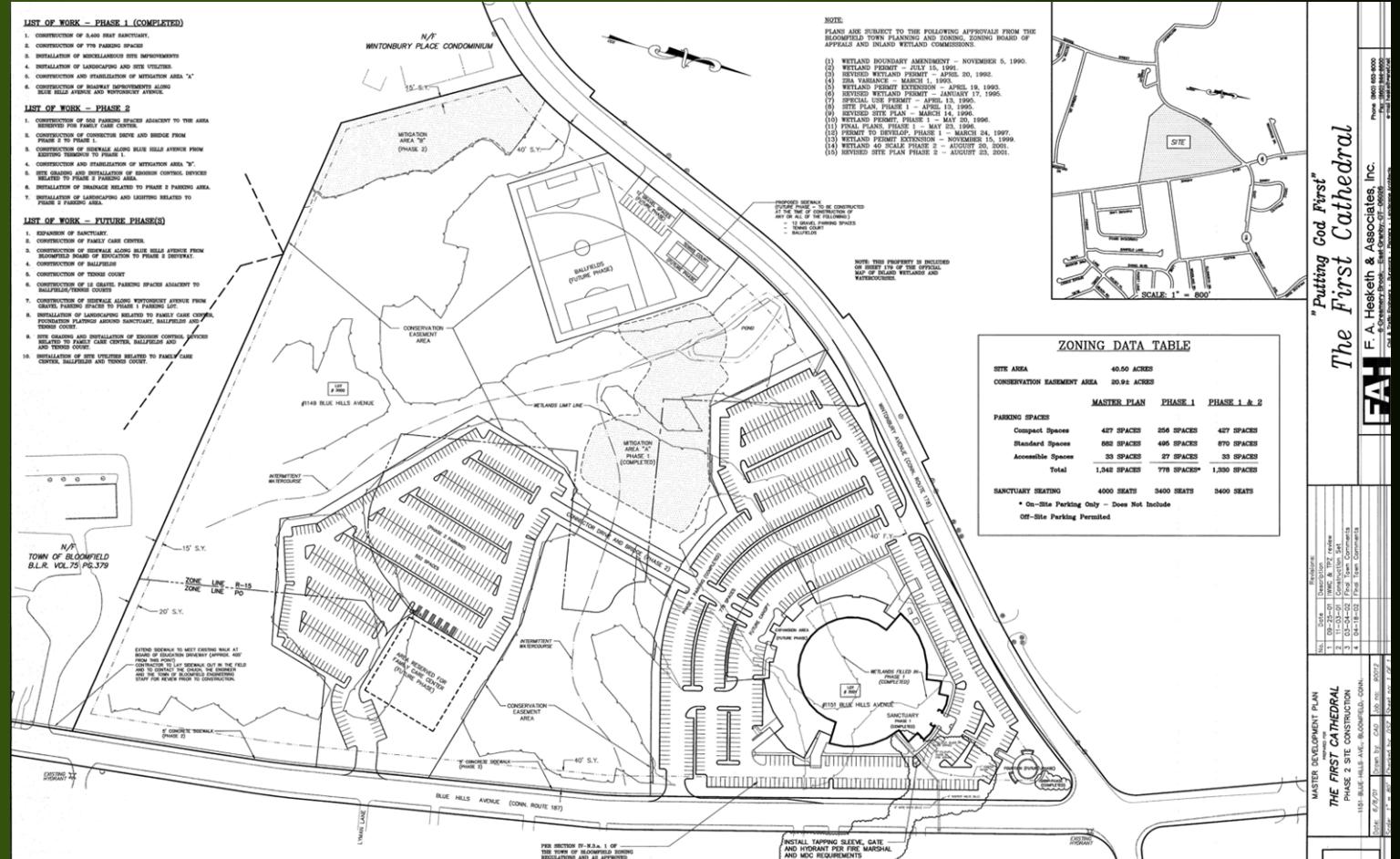
Phase 4 – Cathedral Storage + Overflow Parking (Southwest)

- **Private Cathedral storage building** for equipment and shuttles
- **138-space supplemental parking area** for major Cathedral events
- Additional sidewalk extension along **Wintonbury Avenue**



1151 Blue Hills Ave – Previous Land Use Approvals

- March 1993 – Zoning Board of Appeals granted a Front Yard Parking Variance on Wintonbury Avenue side (R-15)
- April 13, 1995 - TPZ approved a Special Permit and Site Plan for a church with related parking, and a family care center with related parking and accessory recreation
- May 23, 1996 - TPZ granted a waiver to allow parking in the front yard within 20 feet of the 40-foot required setback on, on portions of Wintonbury and along Blue Hills Avenue (POD)





Staff Comments

- 1151 Blue Hills Avenue meets the required characteristics to be eligible for the DDZ-II designation.
- Staff believes the proposal consistent with the goals of the existing and proposed Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) by encouraging new multi-family residential development and expanding affordable housing opportunities in Bloomfield.
- A Revised Final Master Plan shall be submitted with corrected Land Use Area Types, and a legible Table with DDZ-II bulk requirements, and proposed uses to include total amount of impervious surface in a land use area.
- All existing conservation easements shall remain unchanged.
- Staff recommends that the required sidewalks be implemented into Phase I of the project, not Phase IV.
- The Commission may want to inquire about the Phased Project Timelines.
- If this Zone Map Amendment and Related Mater Plan is approved by TPZ, the applicant shall submit all other required Land Use Approvals as required by the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission and Town Plan and Zoning Commission for each Phase of the project.



Suggested Motion for Approval

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission hereby move to approve the proposed Zoning Map Amendment from an R-15 and POD zoning districts to Design Development Zone II (DDZ-II) and the associated Master Plan for the property located at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue, submitted by the First Baptist Church of Hartford (First Cathedral), based on the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

Findings

- The proposal is consistent with the goals of the Town of Bloomfield Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), including the encouragement of new multifamily residential development and the preservation and expansion of affordable housing opportunities within the community.
- The Master Plan supports the POCD's emphasis on economic growth and community investment and enhances by incorporating residential, childcare, employment assistance, and institutional uses in a coordinated campus model.
- The phased development framework promotes orderly and sustainable growth, makes productive use of underutilized land, and preserves natural resources by avoiding disturbance to wetlands and maintaining conservation easement areas.
- The proposal provides community services and amenities that enhance quality of life for Bloomfield residents, including affordable housing, daycare, and workforce empowerment facilities.

Conditions

- Applicant shall revise the Master Plan to incorporate staff's comments/recommendations, and any additional changes as suggested by the Commission.
- Zone Change and Related Master Plan shall become effective upon filing in Land Records, and posting of the decision in the legal notice section of The Courant newspaper