

**Honorable City Planning Commission
Cincinnati, Ohio**

May 4, 2007

SUBJECT: A report and recommendation on a zone change request for property at 1713 and 1715 Westwood Avenue in the community of South Fairmount.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Owner/Petitioner: Interfaith Business Builders, Inc
1707 Westwood Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45214

Agent: Ray West, Executive Director
1707 Westwood Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45214

Request: A change of zoning for property at 1713 and 1715 Westwood Avenue in the community of South Fairmount from a RMX Residential Mixed District To a CC-M Commercial Community-Mixed District.

Staff Conference: On April 18, 2007, a staff conference was held to gather information for a recommendation on the requested zone change for the property located at 1713 and 1715 Westwood Avenue in South Fairmount. All in attendance spoke in support of the study and proposed changes. A summary of the conference is attached. Staff has received a telephone call from Elliott Ellis, president of South Fairmount Community Council supporting the establishment and operation of a business office at the location.

BACKGROUND:

Zoning History: On March 19, 2007, Ray West on behalf of Interfaith Business Builders, Inc petitioned to rezone the subject property from the RMX Residential Mixed District to CC-M Commercial Community-Mixed District. Rezoning this property to CC-M will allow the property owner to add and operate a commercial office on the first floor of a three-story building it has owned since 1993. Three residences currently occupy the said building with one family on each floor. The proposed offices will replace the tenant on first floor and the other two tenants will remain.

Previously the two parcels were zoned R-5 Multi-Family Low-Density for the vacant parcel at 1713 Westwood Avenue and B-4 General Business District for the parcel occupied by a building located at 1715 Westwood Avenue. The R-5 zoning did not permit office uses. The B-4 zoning permitted the proposed commercial use. The RMX-Residential Mixed District that is currently on the property prohibits the proposed uses.

FINDINGS:

Existing Use: The study area includes one building located at 1715 Westwood Avenue owned by the Interfaith Business Builders, Inc that is currently occupied by three residential units. Commercial establishments are on the north and west; single-family residences on the east; and multi-family residences on the south of the property. A map depicting the zoning and property layout is attached.

Proposed Use: The purpose of this request is to rezone parcels to allow the property owner to use the first floor of the building on the site for offices. The requested CC-M District accommodates larger scale retail and commercial services. The district will permit establishment of business offices including offices for a professional cleaning and job counseling business that are proposed by the petitioner. The Interfaith Business Builders, Inc. are conducting the same business operation at their adjoining property located at 1707 Westwood Avenue. Approval of the zoning request will facilitate relocation of the petitioner's operation into their building at 1715 Westwood Avenue, which is more suitable for Interfaith Business Builders operation. The current space used by a contractor is too big for its use since they are now much smaller than when they started conducting business in 1993 at 1707 Westwood Avenue.

An existing CC-M District adjoins the property on the north and provides additional justification for the requested rezoning. Staff considered other zoning designations including CC-P Commercial Community–Pedestrian and CN-P Commercial Neighborhood–Pedestrian but determined that the CC-M was the most appropriate zone.

PLANS:

The Coordinated City Plan, Volume 2: Strategies for Comprehensive Land Use dated December 1980 recommends residential use for the property. While the proposed zone change is not for residential use, the establishment of a new business office complements the existing uses on the entire site owned by Interfaith Business Builders. There are currently no other approved Plans for the South Fairmount community that encompasses or make reference to the property.

Justification:

Staff asserts that CC-M should be adopted since it is in keeping with the goals of the community, it will accommodate the proposed development and it is recommended by the South Fairmount Community Council. Furthermore, rezoning the area from RMX to CC-M will enhance the area resulting in greater compatibility with the existing commercial development sustained by Grand Avenue and Westwood Avenue, which are arterial streets. The staff supports the proposed zone change to CC-M for the following reasons:

1. All in attendance at the Staff Conference spoke in support of the study and proposed changes.
2. Staff has not received any communication opposing the recommended zone.
3. The South Fairmount Community Council supports the proposed business and rezoning to CC-M.
4. The property to be rezoned is adjoining an existing CC-M District to the north of the study area.
5. The property was previously zoned B-4 which allowed the proposed business office use.
6. The proposed Commercial Community-Mixed District will not compromise the area.

RECOMMENDATION:

The staff of the City Planning Department recommends that the City Planning Commission take the following actions:

Approve a zone change for property at 1713 and 1715 Westwood Avenue in the community of South Fairmount from RMX Residential Mixed District To CC-M Commercial Community-Mixed District.

APPROVED:

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Wuerstle, AICP, Chief Planner
Community Development and Planning

Felix F. Bere, AICP
Senior City Planner

Attachment

