

ITEM #: 28  
DATE: 08-26-25  
DEPT: P&H

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: HEARING ON REZONING PROPERTY AT 3220 CAMERON SCHOOL ROAD FROM (AGRICULTURAL) TO (CONVENIENCE GENERAL SERVICE) AND (FLOATING SUBURBAN MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) ZONE WITH MASTERPLAN**

**BACKGROUND:**

**Friedrich Land Development Company is requesting to rezone property located at 3220 Cameron School Road from “A” (Agricultural) to “CGS” (Convenience General Service) and “FS-RM” (Suburban Residential Medium-Density) Zone with a Masterplan (See Attachment A- Location). The land is located near the corner of Cameron School Road and GW Carver Avenue. The land is currently part of The Bluffs at Dankbar Farms subdivision as Outlot ZZ, which was platted in 2023.**

The site encompasses 21.02 acres of undeveloped land. The site is adjacent to existing residential development to the south and rural homes to the west along Cameron School Road. Christ Community Church is to the north and in the County. To the northeast is the Irons Subdivision and to the east is land that is currently being annexed to the City known as the Borgmeyer Farm. Additional residential development is planned to the west as part of the Bluffs at Dankbar Farms project.

The proposal calls for 6.79 acres of CGS zoned land directly abutting Cameron School Road and GW Carver Avenue and 14.23 acres of FS-RM zoned land abutting GW Carver south of the proposed commercial land. The two zoning areas will be divided by a planned public street extension of Columbus to GW Carver. **The developer's primary goal is to allow for an Independent Senior Living facility with assisted living and memory care and for commercial use including a convenience store/gas station.**

**An Independent Senior Living facility in the FS-RM zone requires a Special Use Permit issued by the Zoning Board of Adjustment because of the unique allowances of no building size or density limitations, reduced parking rates compared to household living, and the unique operation aspects of such a facility. If the assisted living facility was not to be permitted, a limited density of household living residential dwellings would be allowed for the site. A Masterplan in this case would address use limitations from prior agreements and the integration of the commercial and medium density uses into the planned development of the area (See Attachment B- Proposed Rezoning).**

A Masterplan would be required by the City for any new growth areas with FS-RM zoning. The Masterplan includes the CGS land in this case. The Masterplan most importantly identifies allowed uses and in this case some site planning elements for the orientation of the planned future convenience store, including pump location and front yard landscaping separation. The specific details of the masterplan are discussed in the Addendum below. **The Developer will be updating the Masterplan document to reflect City Council's direction on proposed rezoning and ultimately include a Zoning Agreement that will have language requiring**

**these items prior to approval on third reading (See Attachment C- Masterplan).**

The proposed FS-RM zone includes allowing for an Independent Senior Living use. This facility would include Independent and Assisted Senior Living along with Memory Care. Although listed as Independent Senior Living, assisted living and memory care uses have been previously permitted within this use classification.

The Masterplan indicates a total buildout of 88 assisted living and memory care units and potentially for 17 independent senior living dwellings on the site, a maximum of 105 units in total. An assisted living use has not been proposed within an FS zoned area of the City for 10 years due to the unique findings for such a use with approval of a Special Use Permit by the ZBA, including a unique finding regarding the potential effects of such a use on emergency services. **There is a more in-depth discussion of the proposed use within this report than is commonly addressed with rezoning for standard housing developments due to Fire Department response goals of the City.**

### **FIRE COVERAGE:**

The proposed Assisted Living and Memory care use at this location on the northern edge of the City provides challenges for the Fire Department related to their performance measures. The challenges stem from the combination of the location and high-call volume from an assisted living facility. A complete explanation from the Fire Chief is included in the addendum.

As the City continues to expand to the north it became apparent that a 4th fire station in North Ames will be needed in order to meet the current fire response performance measure. City Council originally reviewed this issue with Plan 2040 scenario analysis for all the growth areas. **With this knowledge of eventual need for a facility, typical low call volume uses have been approved in North Ames. Additionally, the issue of fire response was addressed by a prior City Council in 2012 where Council reviewed department response goals, which were different than today, and ultimately approved a similar use with an assisted living project in the north Ames as well, which ultimately became the Northridge Living facility.**

As described by the Fire Chief, with current conditions of the City, this site will have lower response times due to its distance from a station and is projected to then lower our city-wide response average. While such a project is not currently in the five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP), the City Council recently has included in its future projects list planning for a 4th station or smaller facility to meet fire response performance measure. The combination of need and timing have highlighted this issue for the rezoning request as City Council has control of whether to allow for the use or not with the rezoning.

The Dover corporation, developer of the proposed assisted Living and memory care facility, has been in discussions with staff about the proposed use and their experience operating nearly 50 assisted living facilities. They have locations across the country and have not had concerns about delayed response times. Staff's research with Dover's assistance indicates this site would result in one of the longest response times within their portfolio. However, **Dover believes that with their 24/7 skilled nursing staffing, the quality of service for residents at this site will be typical of their other communities they serve without requiring any changes to City Fire Department resources.**

## **INFRASTRUCTURE:**

At the time of annexation of the Dankbar farm land, two primary infrastructure requirements existed related to sanitary sewer capacity and transportation impacts. The proposed uses that can be permitted under the proposed new zoning designations can be served with the existing sanitary sewer capacity and meet the transportation requirements as outlined in the Masterplan Zoning Agreement for Dankbar farms approved in 2023. City staff have reviewed the sanitary sewer supply capacity and determined that no additional usage is expected beyond what has been designed for and projected in this area and agreed to at that time. **Therefore, there is adequate capacity in the sanitary sewer to meet the demands of the proposed uses. The zoning agreement will reflect the usage limitations regarding available sanitary sewer service.**

The developer is also responsible for widening of Cameron School Road and GW Carver to create turn lane improvements. These improvements will occur prior to development of the site. The developer has previously made a fair share contribution to a planned traffic signal. No other traffic improvements are required in relation to the proposed rezoning.

**It should be noted that the developer, independent of the rezoning, has requested the City consider \$1.2 million of development incentives for these road improvements. This request is not part of the rezoning discussion and is part of a future Council discussion of developer incentives on a citywide basis.**

## **ZONING AGREEMENT:**

As part of a Masterplan, a Zoning Agreement will be required which will outline the stipulations of the Masterplan that the proposed future uses must meet in the rezoned area. **The Developer will be required to provide an amended Masterplan with the specific development and design requirements listed on the Masterplan prior to Third Reading by City Council.**

As of the date of this writing the rezoning agreement and updated Master Plan have not been finalized with the developer. Staff will finalize the Master Plan and Zoning Agreement language with the developer prior to the Third Reading of the rezoning Ordinance.

## **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION:**

At the August 6th Planning & Zoning Commission meeting the Commission reviewed the rezoning request. Five Commission members were present. Staff presented the proposed request for commercial and assisted living and the consistency with scenario analysis of Plan 2040 where it was known that a northern station was needed at some point to improve emergency response for North Ames. Council had previously understood this with discussion of the growth areas and the incremental growth of standard residential and commercial development. Staff described the unique issue of the concentration of emergency response calls for assisted living facilities compared to other planned growth. This was relevant because of the future Special Use Permit process that would apply to assisted living.

Commission members discussed the issue of emergency services and the need for housing, specifically related to seniors. Four of the Commission members spoke in favor of moving

forward with the rezoning to include Senior Living despite the projected Fire Service issues. One member spoke in favor of making sure adequate fire response goals were being met first before proceeding with the project. .

The Commission voted 4-1 to recommend City Council approve the rezone request with the Senior Living Facility use in the FS-RM zoned area and an updated Master plan with rezoning agreement.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can approve on first reading the Rezoning the property at 3220 Cameron School Road from "A" Agricultural to "CGS" Convenience General Service and "FS-RM" Suburban Medium Density Residential Zone with a Masterplan and to finalize a Zoning Agreement for the Master Plan prior to third reading of the rezoning ordinance.
2. The City Council can deny approving Assisted living as a use for the site and approve a Master Plan for Rezoning the property at 3220 Cameron School Road from "A" Agricultural to "CGS" Convenience General Service and "FS-RM" Suburban Medium Density Residential Zone with an updated Masterplan and Zoning Agreement prior to Third Reading of rezoning ordinance.
3. The City Council can deny the proposed Master Plan and direct the property owner to apply for a rezoning that includes a Planned Unit Development Overlay to allow for City Council approval of Allowable Uses and Site Development Plans.
4. The City Council can deny the Master Plan for Rezoning the property at 3220 Cameron School Road from "A" Agricultural to "CGS" Convenience General Service and "FS-RM" Suburban Medium Density Residential Zone if it finds the Master Plan is not consistent with the policies of Ames Plan 2040 and the RN3 and NC land use designations.
5. The City Council can refer this matter back to staff or the applicant for more information.

### **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Proposing a rezoning to residential and commercial with a master plan is consistent with the underlying RN3 and NC land use designations in Ames Plan 2040. The unique element of the request is for assisted living and memory care uses with the allowance of an Independent Senior Living Facility allowed use. Staff's focus has been on sewer infrastructure for support of the proposal, design compatibility of the commercial site, and the service needs of the assisted living use in relation to emergency services.

Consideration of the fire response issue at this time with the rezoning is because the base zoning of FS-RM requires approval of a Special Use Permit process by the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a Senior Living Facility will require a finding related to impacts of providing emergency services to a the use. Staff believes understanding this issue now and setting Council's expectations early in the rezoning process will greatly assist in the future review of the facility.

If Council proceeds with Alternative 1 or 2, staff will finalize details of the Master Plan requirements as outlined in this report in conjunction with a rezoning agreement and will have

an updated Master Plan and rezoning agreement prior to the Third Reading of the rezoning.

If the City Council believes that the fire response and service issues are not of concern given the fact that the Council is considering a 4th fire station in the future the Council should support Alternative #1.

However, if the City Council believes the fire Response and service issues do not support allowing the Assisted Living use at this location at this time due to the lack of a 4th fire station in this area, the Council could support Alternative #2 which approves rezoning without Assisted Living.

Alternative 3 is a unique approach of utilizing the PUD Overlay process to establish site design and use approval via City Council approval. Alternative 3 would require restarting the rezoning process to include a PUD Overlay with a specific site plan for the Assisted Living Facility. **This Alternative grants approval by the City Council, rather than deferring approval of the Assisted Living Facility to the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a Special Use Permit.**

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

[Addendum](#)

[Attachments For Location Map, Zoning, Plan 2040.pdf](#)

[3220 Cameron School Rd Rezoning Ord.docx](#)