

Transcript—City Council hearing, Nov. 16, 2023

ZD 73-23—Carrollton and Willow, LLC—conditional use for expansion of Chevron gas station.

Video here (timestamped for beginning of issue):

<https://www.youtube.com/live/j3wYgcTct2E?si=CS98OShrwOIBKAwH&t=16969>

LORA JOHNSON (CLERK OF COURT): On top of page 15. A legislative grouping. Zoning Docket 73-23, Carrollton and Willow LLC, requesting a conditional use to permit a gas station in an HU-B1 (Historic Urban Neighborhood Business District) and an HUC (Historic Urban Corridor Use Restriction Overlay District) on Square 181, Lots 1–4 or 1–3, and an undesignated Lot and Lot 25; or Lots 25 and 26 in the Seventh Municipal District bounded by South Carrollton Ave., Willow St., Dublin St. and Jeannette St. Municipal address: 1400 South Carrollton Ave. The recommendation of the City Planning Commission being for approval, subject to three waivers and eight provisos. We have Motion M-23-533 by Councilmember Giarrusso approving and granted the applicant’s conditional use request on Zoning Docket 73-23 for the property located at 1400 South Carrollton Ave., subject to eight provisos and three waivers contained in the City Planning Commission report.

JOE GIARRUSSO (DIST. A COUNCILMEMBER): Thank you, Madam Clerk. Mr. Kroll?

STEPHEN KROLL (PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR, LAND USE—CPC STAFF):

Councilmember, this is an application affecting the property on the corner of Carrollton Ave. and Willow Street. It is to expand an existing gas station. The existing gas station is a non-conforming use at this location and thus can’t be expanded except with conditional use approval. The proposal is to construct a three-unit retail structure that kind of wraps the side and rear of the site. That’s generally consistent with the purpose of the zoning to accommodate retail as well as services such as gas stations. The Planning Commission does recommend a waiver of a few setback requirements which are needed to accommodate the fact that you’ve got the canopy in front which forces the building to the rear of the site. I will note that there will be some site

design requirements—changes that must be required by proviso. That’s reducing the number of curb cuts leading to the site from four to two; and then limiting the width of those to 24 feet, which will improve site design—improve the relationship to the pedestrian. But all in all, the Planning Commission finds this to be appropriate and recommends approval.

GIARRUSSO: Thank you, Mr. Kroll. I think there are two online comments.

CITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL: Yes, the first one is from Stephanie Emmerling. She says: “This development is in a family neighborhood. As with other developments of its kind that have been allowed to open in primarily family neighborhoods, it erodes the integrity of the neighborhood by opening a bar disguised as a gas station. These developments belong on Tulane and Loyola’s campuses, not in our neighborhoods. Along with the adult atmosphere they create, they discourage family-oriented businesses from opening. When voting on this and motions like it, please think about whether you would allow this type of business in your neighborhood.”

And the other comment is from Susan Johnson with the Town of Carrollton Watch. She says: “First, the owner, Mr. Mohammed, has explicitly agreed to prohibit the sale of lottery tickets and alcohol. (See page 41 of the staff report.) Will he also prohibit the sale of cannabis products, nitrous oxide products and vaping products? Second, a restriction on food preparation and food sales in any part of the site was requested at the NPP meeting in May 2023 (page 63). An answer to this request is not discussed in detail in the CPC staff report. Instead, the developer, Spectrum, states only that the owner does not anticipate leasing office spaces to restaurants (page 49 of the report). In fact, ‘small food manufacturers’ are listed as a permitted use for mixed-use low density, which is indicated for this site (page 14). Next, what will happen to the restrictions at this site when Mr. Mohammed sells the business? That is, is it possible to place a use restriction on the property against the sale of lottery tickets, alcohol and other intoxicants? And food

preparation and sale? Finally, at the NPP meeting, neighbors requested that a pylon sign should not be used. In response, Spectrum said the company would conform to ‘parish specifications’ (page 49). Does HDLC allow a pylon sign on the full control historic corridor of South Carrollton Avenue? I’m asking Mr. Giarrusso and the applicant to please address these questions.”

That’s it for the online comments.

GIARRUSSO: Thank you very much. This is a Chevron station that’s been at that intersection for a long time. As Mr. Kroll pointed out, it is a non-conforming use and can’t be expanded without a conditional use. He explained also about how it will be restructured. I just want to point out the applicant has been a good steward of the community and has the support of the nearby neighbors. And if I remember correctly, this has been delayed for a fairly long time in order to really meet the needs of the near neighbors and make sure that they’re asking for was acceded to. It’s an improvement to the corner of Carrollton and Willow. And they’re not asking for any alcohol to be sold here, either. So I move for approval of M-23-533, grant the conditional use subject to 8 provisos and 3 waivers in the CPC report. Seconded by Councilmember Green. Five yeas; no nays. Thank you. [End.]

LINKS

1400 South Carrollton Avenue on Property Viewer:
<https://property.nola.gov/?geopin=41135136>

Agenda here:
https://cityofno.granicus.com/GeneratedAgendaViewer.php?event_id=735a79ff-5909-4c1c-8609-7f0d855f1301

Motion M-23-533:
https://cityofno.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&event_id=23571&meta_id=661807

CPC Staff Report:
https://cityofno.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&event_id=23571&meta_id=661809