

Planning Board Documentation of Deliberations

To: Denver City Council

Re: Official Map Amendment application # 2025i-00026, 3601 N Monaco Parkway

On February 18, 2026 the Denver Planning Board held a public hearing on the above referenced map amendment. While Community Planning and Development Staff recommended that the Board advise City Council to deny the application, the Planning Board unanimously recommended that City Council approve the proposed rezoning, finding that the proposed map amendment is consistent with the required criteria. Because Planning Board's recommendation was contrary to the recommendation of Staff, the Planning Board is providing this document to provide additional context to City Council.

While Planning Board members largely agreed that city-wide or neighborhood-wide discussions around changes of uses are beneficial and important, concerns were expressed at the pace of some of those discussions, including delays to the Unlocking Housing Choices project and recent indications that CPD would not be pursuing legislative rezonings following NPI plan adoption. Members indicated that individual rezonings to provide gentle increases in density remained an important tool to foster housing affordability and mitigate gentrification-related displacement through the development of smaller, more affordable housing units on parcels which might otherwise see the development of larger, more expensive single-family homes. Some members felt it was important to note that these individual rezoning applications are considered carefully based on merits of the individual requests and should not be seen as providing a precedent for other requests.

Staff's argument for denial relies upon *Blueprint Denver's* guidance on "Applying Residential "Low" Guidance to Proposed Rezonings," (p. 215). This section provides specific guidance on determining the appropriateness of rezoning requests to allow two-unit uses in Low-Residential areas such as this, indicating that "adopted small area plan guidance, neighborhood input, and existing zoning patterns" should be considered in evaluating these requests.

Adopted Small Area Plan Guidance

There is an adopted small area plan for the site, the Park Hill Neighborhood Plan. Staff does highlight an applicable overarching land use Goal from the plan (*Maintain the existing integrity of the residential character of Park Hill. Assure that continued growth and development in Park Hill results in a balanced and compatible mix of housing types and densities.*) as well as one of the specific land use recommendations of the plan (*LZ3- Create and maintain a mix of housing types that are attractive and affordable to a diversity of ages, incomes, household types, sizes and cultural backgrounds.*) and indicated agreement that the proposed rezoning is consistent with this goal and recommendation.

However, Staff also cite land use recommendation LZ5 to find that the request was not consistent with the plan guidance (*Initiate zoning amendments and policies to protect the single-family residential character in Park Hill. Specifically: identify and extend R-2 zoning to those Areas zoned R-3 that currently meet R-2 criteria. Similarly, consider rezoning The Park Hill campus of DU from R-3 to R- 5 or a similar zone.*)

Some Planning Board members indicated that Staff's focus exclusively on the language "*protect the single-family residential character,*" to recommend denial while ignoring the context provided by the second half of the recommendation ("*Specifically...*") was inappropriate. Planning Board members highlighted that this recommendation specifically addresses the downzoning of more intensive R-3 zoned areas into the R-2 district, and that the zoning of the subject property and its surrounding area at the time of the plan adoption had been R-2, a district which allowed multi-unit residential use. Thus rather than suggesting that only single-unit uses are appropriate, it seems to indicate that the multi-unit uses permitted under R-2, including the duplexes and triplexes prevalent in the area immediately surrounding the subject property, fall within the plan's use of "single-family residential character."

If properties are not permitted to rezone to a designation that aligns with the neighborhood context and permits a slight increase in density, the area will struggle to support Blueprint Denver's Growth Strategy, which calls for this neighborhood to absorb a portion of the city's residential growth. Specifically, the Growth Strategy aims for "all other areas of the city" to collectively accommodate 20% of new households by 2040, particularly in areas near transit and on arterials as exists in this case.

Neighborhood Input

Staff found that there was not "significant neighborhood support" for the application. Staff noted that there was a letter of support from one RNO and that one other had indicated that they would not "not take an official position unless all nearby neighbors are in agreement."

The applicant did detail significant outreach efforts, as well as providing some letters of support from adjacent property owners. Some Planning Board members noted that the Blueprint guidance cited required "significant neighborhood input," and felt that the applicant had met that bar.

Existing Zoning Patterns

While the subject property and its surrounding area are now E-SU-Dx, a district which does not permit new duplexes where they don't already exist, Planning Board members noted the large number of multi-unit properties surrounding the subject property (with 10 duplexes on the block alone) and noted that prior to the 2010 city-wide rezoning these used had been allowed under R-2 and that the 2010 rezoning is not consistent with the existing built pattern in the area. Planning Board members questioned whether residents had been sufficiently consulted concerning this significant change to the area's zoning pattern or if it the rezoning had been applied with a "broad-brush," and whether the zoning pattern in-place at the time of the last widespread neighborhood consultation, the aforementioned small area plan, should be considered as contributing to the "established zoning pattern."