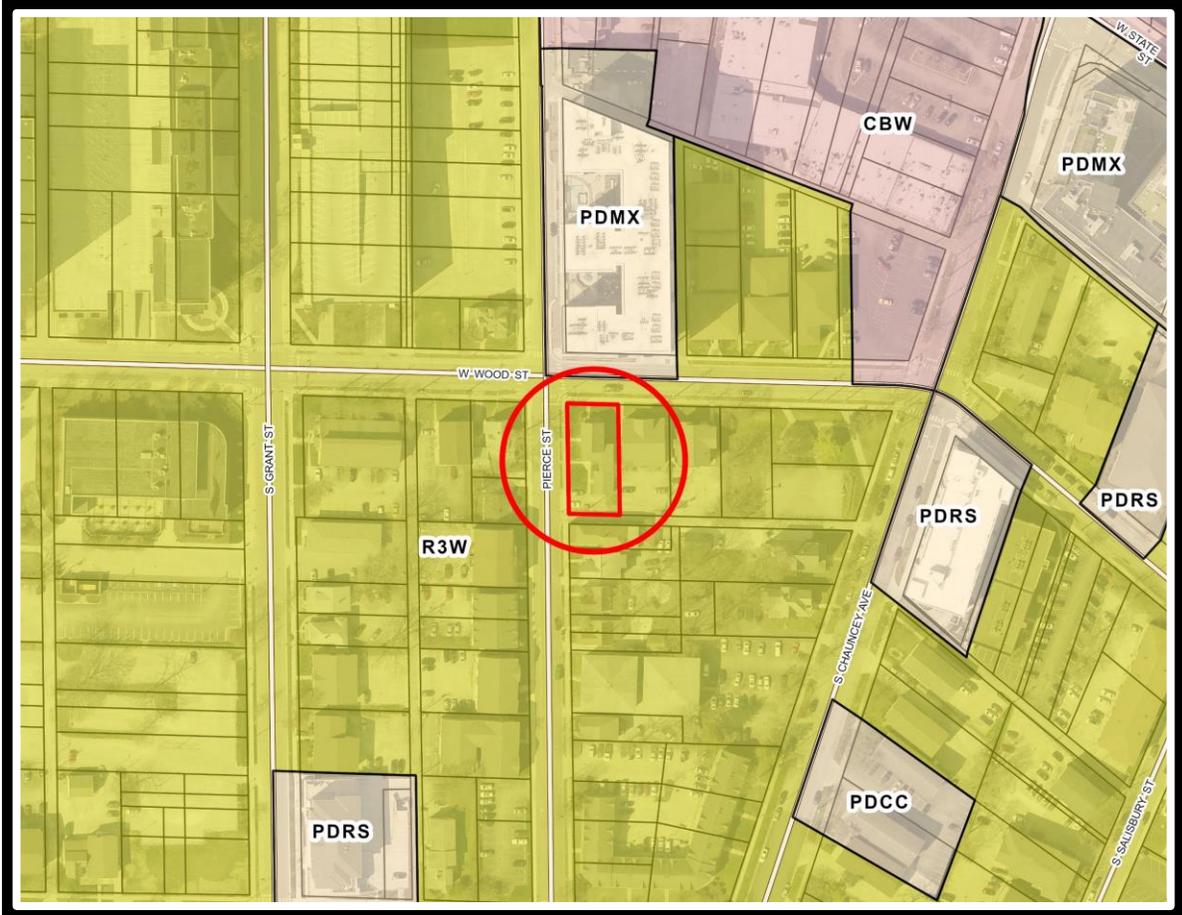

Z-2804
MEZZANINE 7, LLC
(R3W to R4W)

STAFF REPORT
September 10, 2020



REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, who is the property owner, represented by attorney Daniel Teder, is requesting rezoning of the southeast corner of W. Wood Street and Pierce Street, more specifically, 202 W. Pierce Street in West Lafayette, Wabash 19 (SE) 23-4. Petitioner plans to raze the existing structure and build a three-story student apartment building with 12 studio units.

ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

The zoning for the most part dates back to the overall City of West Lafayette zoning map that was adopted by city council in 2000 after the adoption of NUZO. The site in question is in a large area of R3W zoning intermingled with planned developments. During the last 20 years, there have been 20 rezones filed (including this request) in this part of West Lafayette. 18 of those requests were for PD zoning; two were for R4W zoning.

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

With the campus of Purdue University a short walk away, this part of the city has dramatically changed over the decades largely driven by Purdue's housing policies. What once was a single-family neighborhood became a neighborhood of large houses divided into student apartment rentals that eventually led to three-story apartment buildings. Today this part of West Lafayette is characterized by a mix of student residence types, co-ops and sororities, that now includes high-rise apartments.

The site currently has a house originally constructed in 1938 that has been converted into student apartments. Similar houses are to the south; 2 1/2 story student apartment buildings are to the east; the high-rise Campus Edge apartments are to the north across Wood Street.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

Both Wood and Pierce Streets are classified as urban local arterials by the adopted *Thoroughfare Plan*. According to petitioner's representative, the planned apartments would be 466 square feet in size. This would mean the apartments would be what the ordinance names, "Type D units" (under 470 square feet). Type D units in the University Proximate part of West Lafayette are required to provide 1.1 parking spaces per unit. Therefore, 14 parking spaces would be needed to meet the ordinance parking standard.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

City utilities serve the site.

STAFF COMMENTS:

West Lafayette has only had a handful of requests for R4W zoning over the years. The only difference between R3W and R4W zoning is the density cap. Currently, the R3W zone caps density at 15 units per acre; because this density cap is found in Chapter 2 of the ordinance, it is not variable by the ABZA. (Staff has for years thought it best to eliminate the density cap in the R3W zone and by extension, eliminate the need for an R4W zone.) Any development with a higher density must be either rezoned to the R4W zone which has no density cap or go through the planned development process. Most developers have chosen the PD route to circumvent this density cap rather than rezoning to R4W.

Based on the density cap formula found in Section 2-10 of the UZO, 12 Type D apartments located on this 0.18-acre lot (60' x 130') would have a density of 18.6 units per acre. The density would be only slightly above the R3W limit of 15 units per acre. In comparison, the PDMX zoned Campus Edge high-rise across the street from this site has a density of around 140 units per acre.

This corner lot is included in the recently adopted *West Lafayette Downtown Plan* which is part of our Comprehensive Plan. The lot is within the "Chauncey Village" area and classified as "Downtown Village" which "is primary designed to transition to and from the Downtown Core classification. It supports a diverse mix of residential and non-residential uses..." The Plan supports higher density zoning at this location.

This part of our community is our most densely populated area. For several blocks in all directions, Purdue students are housed in either apartment buildings or converted single-family homes. Staff and the *West Lafayette Downtown Plan* encourage multi-family developments catering to Purdue students be located close to campus and this area south of State Street is clearly a prime location for denser student housing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval