

STAFF EVALUATION

To: Planning Commission

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Case No.: Rezoning Application No. 18-00009

Date: December 20, 2018

General Information

Description

This rezoning is intended to be adopted along with a series of zoning ordinance amendments that are the culmination of an effort to develop the appropriate zoning regulations for the commercial core of Phoebus in order to facilitate the type of land use and development envisioned in the Phoebus Master Plan (2007, as amended). While Phoebus has a single special district, it is apparent that the district does not adequately address the variation in the historic, existing, and desired development patterns along Mellen and Mallory Streets. The three proposed districts are the Urban Core (PH-1), Phoebus Town (PH-2), and Commercial Transition (PH-3). These districts are largely focused on form as each permits the same uses. They effectively move from a small but compact scale to a more suburban development pattern.

This staff report is for the application of the middle district (PH-2) to certain properties. This district is most similar to the current PH-1 district. It only includes parcels that are currently zoned PH-1. However, three parcels are currently split zoned and are requested to have their entirety included within the new PH-2 boundaries.

Generally this district:

- Limits uses to those appropriate for a pedestrian-oriented commercial district. These uses will be the same uses that are currently permitted in the PH-1 district.

Development standards:

- Newly created lots will have to have a minimum depth of ninety (90) feet and connect to an alley or similar adjacent right-of-way if available.
- There will be a maximum seventy-five (75) foot building width for building with ground floor commercial uses and maximum 175 foot building width for townhouse and multifamily buildings.
- The maximum footprint of the building will be limited to 7,000 square feet.
- Structures with residential uses on the first floor will be required to have a first finished floor at a minimum of thirty (30") inches above grade.

Setbacks:

- Setting a build-to line at the front property line for commercial development to establish a consistent street frontage
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- Modest setbacks are attainable if amenities that enhance the pedestrian experience, such as seating, courtyards and porches, are provided.
- Buildings must take up at least 75% of the lot width within the front setback area.

Signage:

- Permitted signage would generally be scaled for pedestrians and slower speeds.
- Monument and pole signs typical of higher speed roads would not be permitted.
- As with PH-1, this Phoebus district includes unique signage opportunities such as signs painted on buildings, relatively short roof top signs, and neon signs.

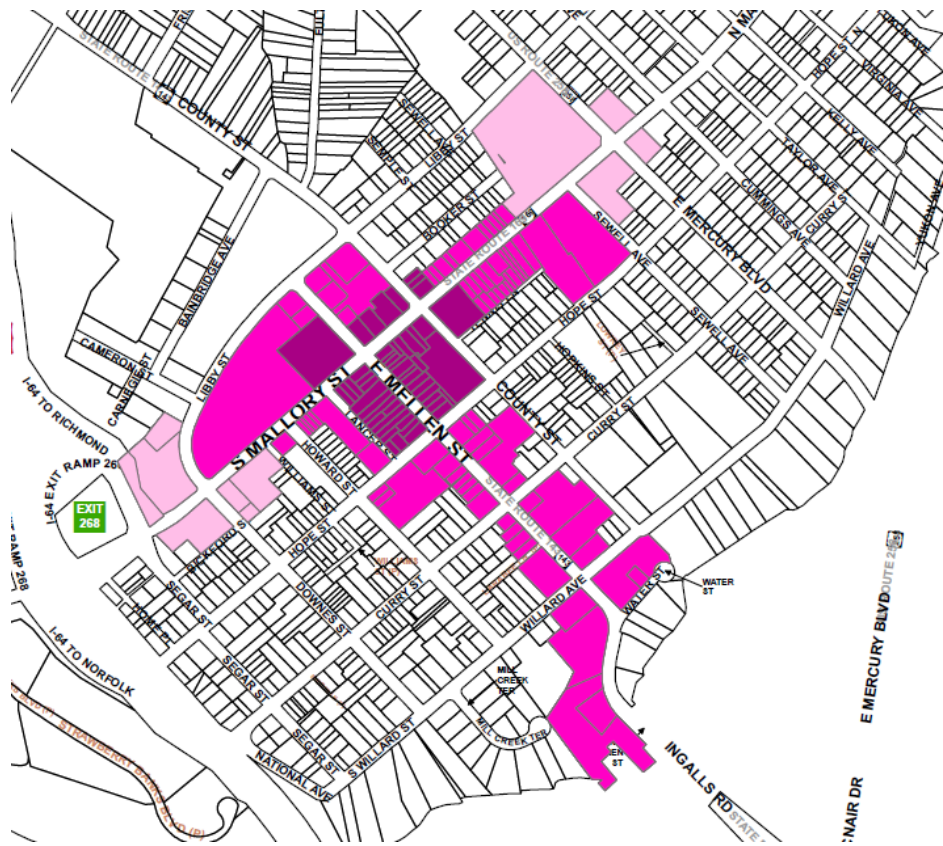
Building height:

- All buildings shall be a minimum of 18' and a maximum of 50' in height.

Parking:

- Parking requirements for most commercial uses would be waived up to the first 5,000 square feet.
- Places of assembly, i.e. theaters and religious facilities, would meet the standard requirements of the zoning ordinance.
- Multifamily residential units are exempt from the guest parking space requirement.

Only the properties to which PH-2 is directly applied will be affected by the proposed ordinance changes. In the future, property owners could submit a rezoning application in an effort to have the district applied to their property or have a property already in the PH-2 district rezoned into another district. As with all rezoning applications, staff would review the proposal against the adopted policies, including the Phoebus Master Plan (2007, as amended), and deliver a recommendation to Planning Commission and City Council as to whether or not the proposal furthers the City's policies. Planning Commission would vote on a recommendation to City Council, and City Council holds the authority to decide whether or not the proposed change is granted.



Proposed Zoning district, Phoebus Business (PH-2) District, highlighted in middle pink.

Plans and Policies

In 2013, City Council adopted an update to the Phoebus Master Plan (2007, as amended). Generally, the Plan was reaffirmed during the update process. This area is identified as having the potential to develop into a regional attraction. Amendments to the plan provide greater clarification on the appropriate form of development for the commercial core and also highlight the importance of the commercial main streets of Phoebus as gateways to Fort Monroe.

Development regulations in the historic, mains street area of Phoebus should work to maintain the remaining historic structures, which form the backbone of the community, while leading to appropriate infill development supportive of the pedestrian friendly atmosphere and character of the neighborhood. Due to the way the commercial district evolved over time, there are single family residential buildings, many of which were converted to commercial uses, in addition to the traditional mercantile mixed-use buildings. While these varied forms exist, traditionally, the development pattern places parking at the rear of the property and leaves the front of the development free to pedestrians.

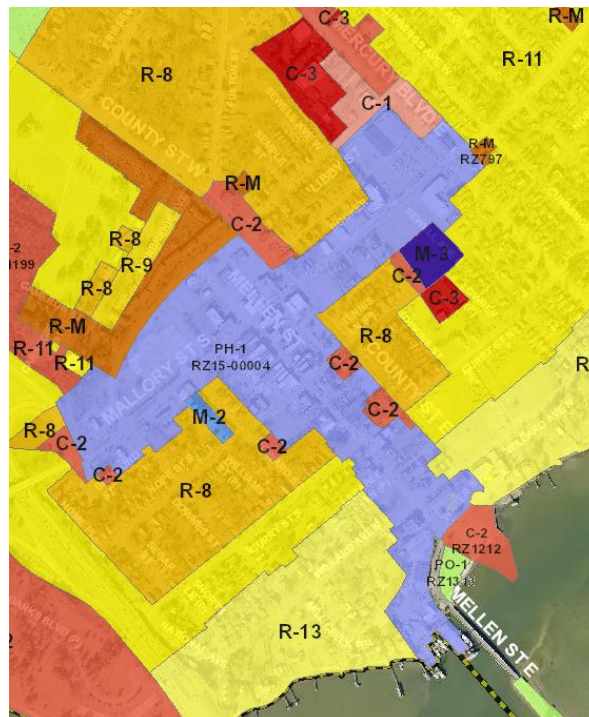
Three distinct subareas also exist. There is a denser core from the key gateway of County and Mallory Streets, the more suburban and auto-oriented areas near the interstate interchange and the intersection of Mercury and Mallory Streets, and a third segment that offers an opportunity to expand the urban core with pedestrian oriented development while maintaining and enhancing certain historic elements, like the post office and New American Theater. The following images are taken from the Phoebus Master Plan and depict this middle

area and the appropriate scale and pattern of potential redevelopment should it occur.



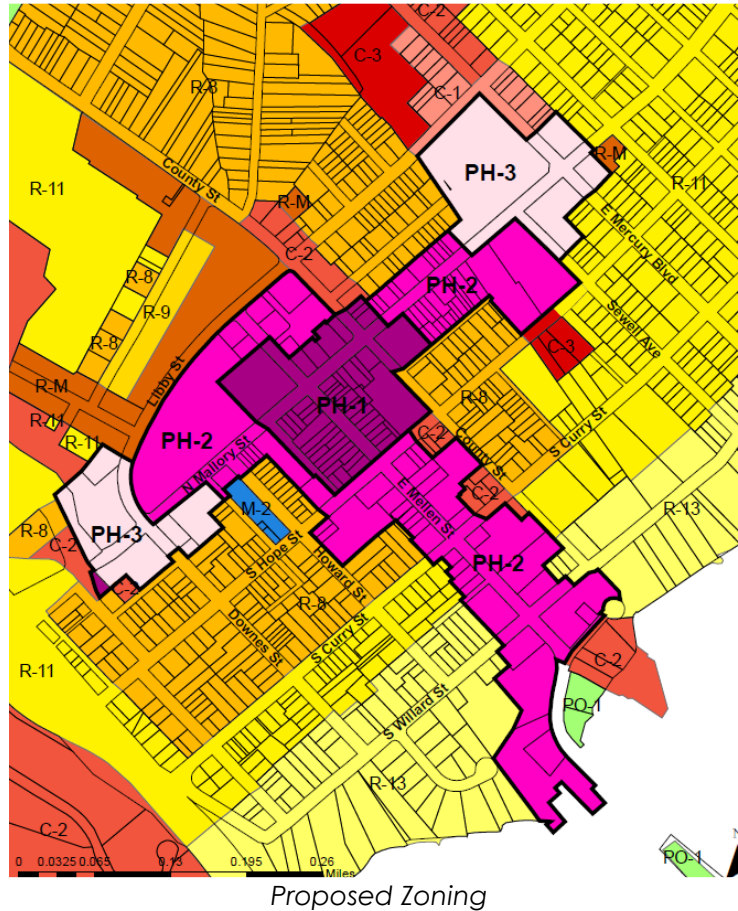
Existing Regulations

The vast majority of property is currently zoned Phoebus Business (PH-1) District. However, three properties have a portion zoned Heavy Manufacturing (M-3) District or Limited Commercial District C-2. The properties which currently contain some amount of C-2 or M-3 zoning are owned by the City of Hampton or the City's Economic Development Authority.



Existing Zoning

Analysis



When the update to the Phoebeus Master Plan was adopted in 2013, a series of action items was produced. Topping the list of action items was the analysis of existing zoning and development of appropriate zoning regulations for the commercial core of historic Phoebeus. Zoning Ordinance Amendments No.167-2015 and 171-2015 through 175-2015 along with Rezoning Application No.15-00004 were the culmination of those efforts.

While the existing PH-1 district is a good start, with the privilege of hindsight, which includes hearing from the community, seeing new investment, and receiving development inquiries, the City brings forward a series of Zoning Ordinance Amendments as well as two rezonings to refine the zoning of the commercial center of Phoebeus. One district does not serve to provide the varied opportunities for development envisioned and appropriate along Mellen and Mallory Streets. There is a relatively dense urban core, a more auto-oriented and suburban development pattern near the interstate interchange and the intersection of Mallory and Mercury. Then there are the areas between the core and the edge as well as the core and the waterfront. It is these properties in the middle for which the City proposes the adoption of PH-2, Phoebeus Town District. Please see the attached map for more specificity.

The Phoebeus Master Plan recommends supporting the historic center of Phoebeus while enhancing and expanding more urban and mixed-use development in the area proposed for PH-2. This area of Phoebeus is intended to be an active area for shopping, dining, entertainment, and other services for residents of Phoebeus but also residents of Fort Monroe and attractive to visitors as well. While not necessarily as dense as the urban core, the development pattern should facilitate people parking once and making multiple stops, window shopping, and generally having an

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experience that makes them feel as though they are within and a part of the town center. This is an opportunity to better implement the Master Plan's call to build upon the authenticity of Phoebus; a form of mixed-use development many newer, large scale developments seek to replicate.

In order to achieve the vision for this segment of Phoebus, regulations need to encourage mixed-use development, limit required parking on individual sites, place parking to the rear of buildings, require a substantial portion of the first floor along the sidewalk to provide eyes on the street, limit setbacks, support pedestrian activity, and stay within the overall scale of historic Phoebus while embracing increased residential density. The new PH-2 district is drafted to better achieve this purpose and further the community's efforts to implement the Phoebus Master Plan. This rezoning would put those new standards into effect.



Staff recommends approval of Rezoning No.18-00009.