

SUBDIVISION INFORMATION (where applicable)

Subdivision Name:

No. of Lots Proposed:

No. of Lots Approved: 0

Variances Requested:

S/D Name Change:

OTHER INFORMATION (where applicable)

Other Bus./Ord. Amend.:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Planner In Charge: Michelle Portier

Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the request for new 70-ft tall light poles, subject to 2 conditions:

Staff Recomm. (Full):

1. Meeting the requirements of the City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance, Article 10.2, Exterior Lighting.
2. Meeting all applicable requirements of the City of Knoxville Department of Engineering.

With the conditions noted, this plan meets the requirements for approval of light poles above 65 ft in height and the other criteria for approval of a use on review.

Comments: Per Section 10.2.C.3.a of the City of Knoxville zoning ordinance, recreational field lighting may be a maximum of 65 feet. Lighting any taller than 65 feet must be approved as a special use. This request is a for 70-ft tall light poles for a soccer field at the Sansom Sports Complex at 234 Dale Avenue.

The existing light poles on fields 1 and 2 are 70-ft tall. The proposed light poles would match the height of the poles already on the site, which were installed before the adoption of the new zoning ordinance.

The Exterior Lighting Section of the City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance has an exemption provision for recreational fields [10.2.C.3] due to their unique requirements for nighttime visibility and limited hours of operation, provided they meet certain criteria:

1. Maximum height: 65 feet; luminaires taller than this can only be approved via special use permit.
2. All lighting must be directed onto the field.
3. Recreational field lighting must be extinguished 45 minutes following an event.
4. Lighting must comply with 10.2.B (Lighting Standards) to facilitate patrons leaving the facility, cleanup, nighttime maintenance, and other closing activities.

STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING A SPECIAL USE (ARTICLE 16.2.F.2)

The planning commission, in the exercise of its administrative judgment, shall be guided by adopted plans and policies, including the general plan and the One Year Plan, and by the following general standards:

1) THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICES, INCLUDING THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE ONE-YEAR PLAN.

A. The One Year Plan and Central City Sector Plan both designate this site as MU-SD, CC10 (Mixed Use-Residential District, Gateway Corridor). That mixed use designation is bounded by the interstate to the north and by the railroad tracks to the south. The sector plan describes the parcels along this path as underutilized and recommends a mix of uses designed to increase economic development in this area.

B. The parcel housing the soccer fields was zoned I-3 (General Industrial) prior to the adoption of the new zoning ordinance on January 1, 2020 and was reassigned to the OS (Open Space) zone. The OS zone is not one of the recommended zones for the MU-SD, CC10 designation, so the zoning is not in compliance with the sector plan or One Year Plan. This should be investigated during the Central City Sector Plan update to align the land use designation, zoning, and existing land use. For example, the I-MU zone would be compliant with the Central City Sector Plan, the One Year Plan, and would allow outdoor amusement facilities.

C. The light poles are not a land use, and the fields are in existence, so this is not an extension of the primary use of the property. Therefore, staff concludes that the applicant should be allowed to install the new light fixtures as the fixtures will not cause any adverse impacts.

2) THE USE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS ZONING CODE.

A. The City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance describes the OS (Parks and Open Space) Zoning District as intended to create, preserve, and enhance public open space to meet the passive and active park

and recreational needs of the City. The OS District provides for both improved and unimproved park and recreation lands. Facilities may include, but are not limited to, structures or other active, play-oriented facilities such as playgrounds, recreational fields, ball-fields, sport courts, dog parks, marinas, cemeteries, golf courses, cultural facilities such as museums and libraries, and associated accessory facilities such as recreation and community centers, park administrative offices, and restroom facilities.

B. The existing soccer fields would be classified as "Amusement Facility – Outdoor." The Use Matrix does not list this use as a permitted use within the OS zone. However, the above description of the OS zone clearly states that recreational fields, ball fields, and sport courts are allowed uses in the zone. Staff has concluded the matrix is in error and Amusement Facilities – Outdoor should be an allowed use in the OS zone.

C. Proposed light fixtures are full cutoff and meet ordinance requirements.

D. The proposed light poles are located over 140 feet from the nearest residential dwellings (the minimum distance required is 15 feet).

3) THE USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE IT IS PROPOSED, AND WITH THE SIZE AND LOCATION OF BUILDINGS IN THE VICINITY.

A. This special use request is for recreational field lighting for existing soccer fields. The light poles are in character with what would be expected at a recreational field complex and are of the same height as the poles in the neighboring fields.

4) THE USE WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INJURE THE VALUE OF ADJACENT PROPERTY OR BY NOISE, LIGHTS, FUMES, ODORS, VIBRATION, TRAFFIC, CONGESTION, OR OTHER IMPACTS DETRACT FROM THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT.

A. The site is an existing use, so this request will not add to traffic congestion or noise levels.

B. There will be no impact on utility requirements in the area.

C. Proposed fixtures are full cutoff, minimizing glare from light fixtures.

D. Proposed luminaires utilize LED lighting, which provide more control of illumination with less spill than other lighting types.

E. Recreational field lighting must be extinguished 45 minutes following an event, which minimizes light trespass in residential areas after events.

F. Existing light poles in neighboring fields are 70-ft tall, so the special use would allow more uniform lighting and uniform fixture height.

G. The distance between the parcel housing the soccer fields and the parcels with residential uses measures approximately 143 feet at field 3, across the railroad tracks and Grand Avenue from residential dwellings. This is well above the minimum required in Article 10.2.B (Lighting Standards).

5) THE USE IS NOT OF A NATURE OR SO LOCATED AS TO DRAW SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC THROUGH RESIDENTIAL STREETS.

A. Additional traffic will not be drawn through residential streets because Dale Avenue is a major collector and because the soccer fields are an existing use and operate during non-peak hours.

6) THE NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS NOT SUCH AS TO POSE A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO THE PROPOSED USE OR TO CREATE AN UNDESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PROPOSED USE.

A. There are no known uses in the area that could be a potential hazard or create an undesirable environment for the proposed uses within the development.

Action: Approved

Meeting Date: 4/8/2021

Details of Action:

Summary of Action: Approve the request for new 70-ft tall light poles, subject to 2 conditions.

Date of Approval: 4/8/2021

Date of Denial:

Postponements:

Date of Withdrawal:

Withdrawn prior to publication?: **Action Appealed?:**

LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Legislative Body: Knoxville City Council

Date of Legislative Action:

Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:

Ordinance Number:

Other Ordinance Number References:

Disposition of Case:

Disposition of Case, Second Reading:

If "Other":

If "Other":

Amendments:

Amendments:

Date of Legislative Appeal:

Effective Date of Ordinance: