

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning  
Division  
Rezoning  
BZZ-5002**

**Date:** November 15, 2010

**Applicant:** Balance Properties, Attn: Morgan Luzier and Craig Helmer, 3550 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408, (612)290-5820

**Address of Property:** 2902, 2904 and 2906 Garfield Avenue South

**Project Name:** Balance Fitness Studio

**Contact Person and Phone:** Balance Properties, Attn: Morgan Luzier and Craig Helmer, 3550 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408, (612)290-5820

**Planning Staff and Phone:** Becca Farrar, (612)673-3594

**Date Application Deemed Complete:** October 19, 2010

**End of 60-Day Decision Period:** December 17, 2010

**End of 120-Day Decision Period:** On October 28, 2010, Staff sent a letter to the applicant extending the decision period to no later than February 15, 2011.

**Ward:** 6

**Neighborhood Organization:** Whittier Alliance

**Existing Zoning:** I1 (Limited Industrial) district, PO (Pedestrian Oriented) Overlay district

**Proposed Zoning:** C3A (Community Activity Center) district and maintain the PO

**Zoning Plate Number:** 24

**Lot area:** 14,440 square feet or approximately .33 acres

**Legal Description:** The south 32 feet of Lot 1, and all of Lots 2 and 3, Block 8 of Excelsior Addition to Minneapolis, together with the east half of the vacated alley lying north of the north line of Lot 4 in said Block 8, according to the recorded plat thereof, and situate in Hennepin County, Minnesota.

**Proposed Use:** Establish a minor sports and health facility.

**Concurrent Review:**

- Balance Properties has submitted a petition to rezone the subject properties located at 2902, 2904 and 2906 Garfield Avenue South from the I1 (Limited Industrial) district to the C3A (Community Activity Center) district in order to allow a minor sports and health facility on the premises.

**Applicable zoning code provisions:** Chapter 525, Article VI Zoning Amendments.

**Background:** The applicant proposes to rezone the properties located at 2902, 2904 and 2906 Garfield Avenue South from the I1 district to the C3A district in order to allow a minor sports and health facility within the existing building located on the premises. Minor sports and health facilities are permitted uses in the C3A district. Three of the four parcels upon which the existing building and associated site improvements are located, are zoned I1 with a PO. The fourth parcel, 2908 Garfield Avenue South is zoned C3A with a PO. The existing structure is situated on both 2906 and 2908 Garfield Avenue South. In order to relocate the business to the site, a rezoning is necessary.

Balance Fitness Studio offers small group and personal training services only; there are no “open gym” hours. The applicant proposes to relocate their existing operation at 3350 Lyndale Avenue South to the subject properties. At this time, the applicant does not propose to modify the existing building /site other than the addition of new signage and an operable window.

Staff has not received official correspondence from the Whittier Alliance or any neighborhood letters prior to the printing of this report. Any correspondence received after the printing of this report shall be forwarded on to the Planning Commission for further consideration.

## **REZONING**

### **Findings as Required by the Minneapolis Zoning Code:**

#### **1. Whether the amendment is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.**

According to *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the subject parcels are located within the boundaries of the designated Lyn-Lake Activity Center, a half block off of Lyndale Avenue which is a designated Commercial Corridor in this location, approximately a block from Lake Street which is a designated Commercial Corridor in this location as well as directly abutting the Midtown Greenway on the north side of the site, and the City of Minneapolis Garfield surface parking lot to the south. “Activity Centers support a wide range of commercial, office, and residential uses. They typically have a busy street life with activity throughout the day and into the evening. They are heavily oriented towards pedestrians, and maintain a traditional urban form and scale. Activity Centers are also well-served by transit.” According to *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the following policies and implementation steps apply to this proposal:

Land Use Policy 1.1 of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* states, “Establish land use regulations to achieve the highest possible development standards, enhance the environment, protect public health, support a vital mix of land uses, and promote flexible approaches to carry out the comprehensive plan.”

Land Use Policy 1.4 of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* states, “Develop and maintain strong and successful commercial and mixed use areas with a wide range of character and functions to serve the needs of current and future users.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.4.1) “Support a variety of commercial districts and corridors of varying size, intensity of development, mix of uses, and market served”; (1.4.2) “Promote standards that help make commercial districts and corridors desirable, viable, and distinctly urban, including: diversity of activity, safety for pedestrians, access to desirable goods and

amenities, attractive streetscape elements, density and variety of uses to encourage walking, and architectural elements to add interest at the pedestrian level.”

Land Use Policy 1.12 of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* states, “Support Activity Centers by preserving the mix and intensity of land uses and by enhancing the design features that give each center its unique urban character.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.12.1) “Encourage a variety of commercial and residential uses that generate activity all day long and into the evening.”

The subject site is also within the boundaries of two small area plans as well. One is the *Lyn-Lake Small Area Plan* which was adopted by the City Council on June 26, 2009. The plan is a vision for the business center focusing primarily on Lyndale Avenue between 26<sup>th</sup> Street and 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Lake Street between Bryant Avenue South and Blaisdell Avenue South. The vision for this specific area includes the city owned surface parking lot to the south of the subject parcels. The properties are identified as a potential redevelopment site that could include a centralized parking ramp for the area along with residential uses fronting the Midtown Greenway.

The second plan is the *Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan* which was adopted by the City Council in January of 2007. This plan set policy direction for possible future change along the Midtown Greenway corridor from the western city limits to the Mississippi River. This plan recommended future land uses and public infrastructure improvements. As a result of the approval of this plan, the City proposed to rezone numerous parcels along the Midtown Greenway in early 2010. The three parcels that are proposed to be rezoned as part of this application were recommended to be rezoned to the C3A district with the addition of the PO as part of that rezoning study. At that time, the Council chose not to alter the underlying zoning but did apply the PO. Planning Staff believes that the rezoning of the parcels to the C3A district is consistent with adopted policy.

**2. Whether the amendment is in the public interest and is not solely for the interest of a single property owner.**

A rezoning to the C3A district would be considered in the interest of both the property owner and the public interest as it would allow for a uniform zoning classification on the site that allows for the proposed facility. Further, it would allow an existing structure to be utilized for a minor sports and health facility while supporting adopted City policies which encourages C3A zoning within designated Activity Centers.

**3. Whether the existing uses of property and the zoning classification of property within the general area of the property in question are compatible with the proposed zoning classification, where the amendment is to change the zoning classification of particular property.**

The subject site is located within an area that is predominantly zoned C3A and I1 (the Midtown Greenway and a parcel to the north across the Greenway is zoned R1A). There is a pocket of R2B zoning located to the east. The uses within the area are varied and include various residential uses, commercial and industrial uses. Given the surrounding zoning classifications, the context and uses in the area, as well as adopted policy, Staff believes that the C3A zoning district would be appropriate and compatible in this location.

**4. Whether there are reasonable uses of the property in question permitted under the existing zoning classification, where the amendment is to change the zoning classification of particular property.**

While light industrial uses could be considered reasonable, industrial uses on this parcel are not consistent with adopted City policy. Planning Staff has included an attachment to the staff report which further details the differences between the existing and proposed zoning classification for the site. As previously mentioned, the City proposed to rezone the three parcels that are proposed to be rezoned as part of this application as part of the Midtown Greenway Rezoning Study. The parcels were recommended to be rezoned to the C3A district with the addition of the PO. At that time, the Council chose not to alter the underlying zoning but did apply the PO. Planning Staff believes that the rezoning of the parcels to the C3A district is consistent with adopted policy.

**5. Whether there has been a change in the character or trend of development in the general area of the property in question, which has taken place since such property was placed in its present zoning classification, where the amendment is to change the zoning classification of particular property.**

Under the 1963 Zoning Code, the subject property and the majority of surrounding properties to the north, south, east and west were zoned M1-2 (Light Manufacturing district). Properties located to the northeast were zoned R2B. There has been a very significant change in the character and trend of development within the immediate area. The area is in a midst of a transition away from the industrial land uses that once occupied the parcels abutting the Midtown Greenway to redeveloped areas incorporating new mixed-use and residential structures in recent years.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division for the rezoning:**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the rezoning petition to change the zoning classification of the properties located at 2902, 2904 and 2906 Garfield Avenue South from the I1 district to the C3A district.

**Attachments:**

1. Rezoning Matrix
2. Statement of use / description of the project
3. Correspondence
4. Zoning map
5. Plans – Site, floor plans,
6. Photos