PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Redeemer Lutheran Church Rezone

Petition #400-06-49: A modified request to rezone a portion of an abandoned stretch of Hillcrest Avenue from Open Space to Institutional October 24, 2007



Planning and Zoning Division Department of Community Development

Applicant:

Redeemer Lutheran Church and School

Staff:

Nick Britton, Principal Planner 535-7932 nick.britton@slcgov.com

Tax ID:

16-21-430-002-0000

Current Zone:

OS

Master Plan Designation:

N/A (not shown)

Council District:

Council District 7 Søren Simonsen

Acreage:

0.74 acres

Current Use:

City park

Applicable Land Use Regulations:

- 21A.32.080: I (Institutional District)
- 21A.32.100: OS (Open Space District)

Attachments:

- A. Proposed Property Line
- B. Proposed Legal Descriptions
- C. Original Proposed Property Line (1987)
- D. Original Deed (1989)
- E. March 14, 2007 P.C. Minutes
- F. Photographs

REQUEST:

Redeemer Lutheran Church and School is requesting that the City rezone a portion of their property from Open Space (OS) to Institutional (I). The subject parcel is an abandoned stretch of Hillcrest Avenue that runs from Preston Street to the northwest corner of the intersection of 2000 East and Stratford Avenue. The applicant has requested the zone change so that the church and school can expand their current facilities and add a recreation facility to their campus.

The subject parcel was closed by the Salt Lake City Council in 1987, but in January 1989 the entire parcel was mistakenly deeded to Redeemer Lutheran Church and School. Approximately one-half of the right-of-way was intended to remain with the City and become part of Hillcrest Park. The applicant paid for approximately one-half of the right-of-way but the wrong legal description was provided with the deed and as a result, the entire property fell under the ownership of Redeemer. The property was effectively used as intended as there has never been a clear delineation between the properties owned by the City or by Redeemer Church.

This matter, as originally proposed (a rezone of the entire right-of-way), was heard by the Planning Commission on March 14, 2007 and tabled due to confusion stemming over the property lines. Planning staff worked with Property Management and the City Recorder's Office to determine the root of the confusion and discovered the incorrect deed. After numerous meetings with representatives for Redeemer Church, Planning staff arrived at a solution with the applicants that not only allowed them to develop their property as originally planned but also allowed Salt Lake City to recover the land that was originally intended to be incorporated into Hillcrest Park.

This modified request consists of a zoning change for only a portion of the original rezone request as identified in Exhibit A. Redeemer Church would deed back to Salt Lake City a portion of the street closure now under their ownership and the portion of the abandoned street that they will retain would be rezoned from "OS" to "I" under this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a positive recommendation to the Salt Lake City Council regarding the modified rezoning request of a parcel generally located 1955 East Stratford Avenue from Open Space (OS) to Institutional (I). Staff recommends the following conditions:

- The applicant transfer to Salt Lake City the land originally intended to be retained by Salt Lake City as identified in this staff report.
- The current irrigation system must be modified at the applicant's expense so that the irrigation system for Hillcrest Park will still remain intact and useable after the proposed expansion.
- 3. Revision of the current use agreement between Redeemer Lutheran Church and the City as to public access and public parking use, which reflects the adjusted property boundaries and the future site expansion of the church.
- 4. The future church expansion project must meet all applicable City code and zoning requirements, or receive relief from appropriate boards in subsequent public processes.

Vicinity Map:



Comments:

Department/Division Comments

The application material was routed in January 2007. The comments received from pertinent City Departments/Divisions and the Community Council are summarized below.

A. Airport (Allen McCandless)

Mr. McCandless noted that the subject parcel is not in an airport influence zone and does not create any observed impacts to airport operations.

B. Building Services Division (Larry Butcher)

Mr. Butcher noted that parking setbacks must be 20 feet from front or corner side yard property lines and that for the future development, the applicant must document that the 40 percent open space requirement will be met. Furthermore, Mr. Butcher remarked that the proposed expansion may constitute a 50 percent square footage increase which would require landscaping upgrade as per Section 21A.48.170 of the Zoning Ordinance. Finally, parking calculations must be provided at the time of building permits application showing that the proposed parking meets the regulation of one stall per five seats in the main auditorium as per Table 21A.44.060F of the Zoning Ordinance).

C. Engineering (Lynn Curt)

No comments were received from Engineering originally. Lynn Curt helped Planning determine the new property line and drafted the new legal descriptions in September of 2007; see attachment "B" for the revised legal descriptions as prepared by the city surveyor.

D. Fire Department (Wayne Leydsman)

The Fire Department had no objections to the proposed rezoning or addition. Mr. Leydsman requested updated site plans as the project progressed so that the Fire Department could review potential impacts to water mains and fire hydrants.

E. Police Department

No comments were received from the Police Department.

F. Property Management (John Spencer)

No comments were received from Property Management originally. Through the research effort, John Spencer provided Planning with the necessary documents to determine how and when the deed error occurred.

G. Public Services (Rick Graham, Val Pope)

Planning Staff met with Rick Graham and Val Pope to discuss the potential impacts to the City-owned Hillcrest Park to the north of the subject parcel. Public Services did not have any objection to the rezoning of the subject parcel (the abandoned portion of Hillcrest Avenue) but requested certain conditions on the recommendation for approval. Those conditions included:

- The church will allow for pedestrian access to the park from both Stratford Avenue and Preston Street and an allowance for public parking in the new parking lot.
- A modification, at the expense of the applicant, to the current irrigation that irrigates both the park and the private property so that Hillcrest Park's irrigation remains intact and useable.
- A modification to the current agreement or a new agreement between Redeemer Lutheran Church and School and Salt Lake City regarding access to and use of portions of the subject parcel.

H. Public Utilities Department (Jason Brown)

Public Utilities had no issues with this request, but they will require the applicant to submit plans for the future expansion.

I. Transportation Division (Barry Walsh)

Mr. Walsh noted that the proposal would have no impact to the existing transportation corridors of Preston Street, Stratford Avenue, or 2000 East. The proposed expansion is subject to improvement requirements noted in the DRT review regarding public way improvements and upgrades.

Community Council Comments

Representatives for Redeemer Lutheran Church and School presented their proposal to the Sugar House Community Council (SHCC) on February 7, 2007. The community council did not vote to forward a recommendation to the Planning Commission. A number of people expressed a concern with traffic cutting through the proposed parking lot from Preston Street to Stratford Avenue. There was also a concern about the applicant placing a fence on their property between the church and the park. There was some confusion regarding who owned the parcel in question and the extent to the agreement between the church and the City and how it impacted the size and extent of Hillcrest Park. It was explained to the community council that Redeemer Lutheran Church and School owned the parcel and that the agreement specified that Salt Lake City could use and maintain the subject parcel but it did not transfer ownership. Based on the confusion, the SHCC

voted to invite Redeemer Lutheran Church and School back to the March meeting and asked them to notify the neighbors of their proposal (see Exhibit E).

Planning staff presented the modified proposal to the SHCC on September 5, 2007. Staff also explained the nature of the deed mistake and how it happened while explaining how the modified proposal would now benefit both parties. There was some concern over the protection of existing open space, but members of the community council were generally supportive rezoning to reflect the modified parcel boundaries as per the modified proposal. At the request of trustees, Planning staff provided the proposed legal descriptions at a later date.

Analysis:

Background Information

In the early 1980s, both Redeemer Lutheran Church and School and the Sugar House Community Council (SHCC) petitioned for the City to close a segment of Hillcrest Avenue. Redeemer Church wished to expand their facilities at a later date and SHCC wished to incorporate the land into a proposed park (Hillcrest Park). The street was closed by the City Council on October 13, 1987 (Ordinance No. 74 of 1987). Redeemer Church purchased approximately one half (0.359 acres) of the street and the remainder of the street was retained by the City. The property lines agreed upon did not travel down the center of the closed right-of-way, but rather jogged in a number of places to ensure the park could be accessed from Stratford Avenue and Preston Avenue (see Exhibit C); however, when the quit-claim deed was recorded on January 31, 1989, the incorrect legal description was used as the exhibit on the deed. The entire street was deeded to Redeemer Church, and because the abandoned portion of Hillcrest Avenue never existed on the ground, the land was used more or less as intended, mostly as green space associated with the park and by the school for outdoor activities.

On September 26, 1994, Redeemer Church and Salt Lake City entered into an Agreement for a License in Real Property, allowing the City to use and maintain Redeemer Church's half of the abandoned street for use as part of Hillcrest Park. This agreement reinforced the prior property line agreement from 1987, but did not fix the mistake made on the quit-claim deed. As a result, Redeemer's half of the street has been used and maintained as part of the park, but the remainder of the street has mistakenly remained under Redeemer's ownership.

In 1995, when the zoning lines were redrawn to reflect large-scale zoning ordinance changes, the street parcel, owned by Redeemer, was zoned Open Space (OS). There is no way of knowing whether or not this was a result of the parcel's use as part of Hillcrest Park or if it was simply a mistake, but this zoning designation further solidified the mistake made in the quit-claim deed in 1989, and if the proper legal description were attached to the quit-claim deed, Redeemer would already have a similar piece of land to use for their expansion. While this proposal changes the 20-year-old agreement, it still meets the intent of the agreement and approved street closure, while reflecting the Church's change in plans. The proposal, presented in this staff report, would allow the City to reclaim the land it should have retained as part of the 1987 street closure, and it would allow Redeemer Lutheran Church and School to expand with their current plans.

Master Plan Specifications

There are two applicable master plans for this area; the first is the Sugar *House Master Plan* adopted in 2001, and the subject parcel appears as an open street, but does not appear as a parcel on the future land use map. The parcel to the north (the city-owned Hillcrest Park) has a future land use of "Parks and Open Space" and the parcel to the south (the church and school) has a future land use of "Institutional and Public Lands". The plan also refers to Hillcrest Park in the Mini Parks section and suggests improvements, including: additional

benches, drainage improvements, landscaping, and concrete walkways. The second applicable master plan is the *Salt Lake City Open Space Plan*, adopted in 1992. This open space area, which includes Hillcrest Park, is identified as a park site that should be retained to provide access to the Parley's Creek Corridor.

Standards of Review

The Planning Commission will need to review the request to rezone a parcel from Open Space to Institutional using the Standards for General Amendments, found in Section 21A.50.050 of the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance.

21A.50.050: Standards for General Amendments

A decision to amend the text of this title or the zoning map by general amendment is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the City Council and is not controlled by any one standard; however, in making its decision concerning a proposed amendment, the City Council should consider the following factors:

A. Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives, and policies of the adopted general plan of Salt Lake City.

Discussion: As noted above, in the Sugar House Master plan, the future land use map shows the vacated Hillside Avenue as the dividing line between Open Space uses and Institutional. The Sugar House Master Plan text also identifies potential improvements for Hillcrest Park. If the rezoning is approved and the City purchases part of the applicant's property near the eastern half of the park, access will be improved and there is potential for some of the master plan suggested improvements to be realized. The current modified proposal retains the park entrances as originally defined in the 1994 agreement.

The other master plan applicable to the subject property is the Open Space Plan adopted in 1992. The city-owned portion of Hillcrest Park will remain in City ownership and the user agreement between Redeemer Lutheran Church and School and Salt Lake City ensures public access to the park and the Parley's Creek Corridor. Staff does not find that approval of this petition will substantially affect the inclusion of Hillcrest Park in the Parley's Creek Corridor system.

Finding: The requested rezoning is consistent with the *Sugar House Master Plan* and the *Salt Lake City Open Space Plan*. The proposal, as modified, will be different than the original agreement from 1987, but is consistent with the intent and goal of that agreement by dividing the closed street between Redeemer and Salt Lake City.

B. Whether the proposed amendment is harmonious with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.

Discussion: Currently, the church occupies a large parcel at the northeastern corner of Stratford Avenue and Preston Street and is surrounded on the north and east sides by open space, which includes Hillcrest Park. There are four duplexes and a single family home to the west across Preston Street and an LDS Church across Stratford Avenue. To the east there are single family homes across 2000 East. The amount of total open space will decrease somewhat as a result of this proposal, but the existing amount of open space is the result of a mistake and does not reflect the original intent of the 1987 street closure approval by the City Council. This proposed modification will reflect the intended amount of open space and the intended amount of church property.

The proposed expansion may distribute church-related traffic differently between Preston Street and Stratford Avenue, but neither the use nor the intensity of the use will change as a result of this rezoning; however, the size of the church's campus and orientation of its parking lot will change.

Finding: The proposed zoning map amendment is harmonious with the character of the existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.

C. The extent to which the proposed amendment will adversely affect adjacent properties.

Discussion: The use and the intensity of the site will not change as a result of this proposed rezone. Staff does not foresee any impacts, adverse or otherwise, on the surrounding residential properties or the LDS church across the street. This rezoning will have a perceived impact on the size of Hillcrest Park because the amount of landscaping adjacent to Hillcrest Park will be reduced. The amount of City owned open space; however, will *increase* and reflect the original intent of the agreement from 1987. Furthermore, this proposal will allow the City to correct the mistake and it will provide an opportunity to maximize and improve Hillcrest Park. The applicant stated that they are willing to revise the previous agreement with the City to allow pedestrian access to Hillcrest Park, and to also allow for public parking in their new parking lot.

Finding: The proposed rezoning will not have an adverse impact on any adjacent properties.

D. Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the provisions of any applicable overlay zoning districts which may impose additional standards.

Discussion: The subject property is in the Groundwater Source Protection Overlay District. There are no additional standards relevant to this rezoning request.

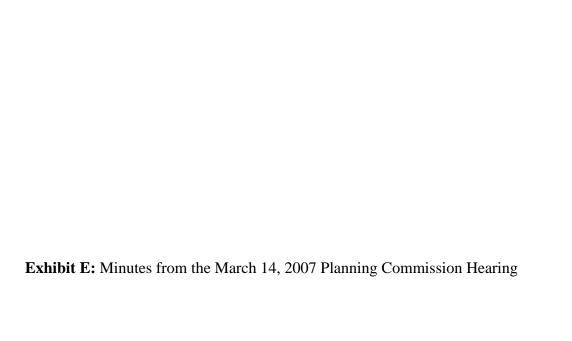
Finding: The proposal meets this standard.

E. The adequacy of public facilities and services intended to serve the subject property, including but not limited to roadways, parks and recreational facilities, police and fire protection, schools, storm water drainage systems, water supplies, and waste water and refuse collection.

Discussion: Applicable City departments and divisions were given the chance to review and comment on the proposed rezoning and preliminary site plans for the proposed expansion of church facilities. While various departments requested plans in the future when the expansion begins, no immediate deficiencies were noted as part of the review process. There is no evidence that the rezone and subsequent expansion will dramatically increase the amount of traffic in the neighborhood or require additional public facilities that are not already present at the site.

Finding: The current public facilities and services intended to serve the subject property are adequate, and any necessary modifications and changes to facilities will be identified upon application for building permits. The applicant will also be required to submit their plans to the Public Utilities Department and the Fire Department for review at that time.

Exhibit D: Original Quit Claim Deed (1989)



SALT LAKE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING In Room 326 of the City & County Building 451 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah Wednesday, March 14, 2007

Present for the Planning Commission meeting were Vice Chair Matthew Wirthlin, Tim Chambless, Babs De Lay, Robert Forbis, Susie McHugh, Prescott Muir, Kathy Scott, and Mary Woodhead.

Present from the Planning Division were George Shaw; Planning Director, Doug Wheelwright, Deputy Planning Director; Nick Britton, Principal Planner; and Cecily Zuck Planning Commission Secretary.

A roll is being kept of all who attended the Planning Commission Meeting. Chairperson McDonough was excused from the meeting and Vice Chair Wirthlin acted as Chairperson. Chairperson Wirthlin called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m. Audio recordings of Planning Commission meetings are retained in the Planning Office for an indefinite period of time.

A field trip was held prior to the meeting. Planning Commissioners present were: Tim Chambless, Susie McHugh, Kathy Scott, Matthew Wirthlin, and Mary Woodhead. Salt Lake City Staff present were Doug Wheelwright, and Nick Britton Principle Planner.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

(This item was heard at 6:37p.m.)

A request by Redeemer Lutheran Church and School at 1955 Stratford Avenue to rezone one of their parcels located at approximately 1955 Stratford Avenue from Open Space (OS) to Institutional (I). The applicant has requested this rezone so they may expand their current facilities.

Vice Chair Wirthlin recognized Nick Britton as Staff representative.

Mr. Britton noted that the applicant was requesting the rezone to expand their facilities and reorient their parking. He noted that part of the property was an abandoned portion of Hillcrest Avenue, which was closed in 1987 and purchased by the applicant in 1988. He noted that one of the main conditions of the petition was that public access would still exist via pedestrian and vehicular traffic to Hillcrest Park.

On February 8, 2007 the Sugar House Community Council asked the applicant to hold a public Open House for the neighbors surrounding the general area. He noted that the Sugar House Community Council was supportive of the rezone with the condition that public access to the park remained in the future.

Commissioner Muir noted that the parking situation seemed unimaginative and inquired if Staff had suggested that the applicant create more green space.

Mr. Britton noted that a landscape buffer of ten feet from the property line needed to exist according to the zoning.

Commissioner Scott noted that assuming the parking lot configuration might change someday, should the Commission be discussing the traffic ingress and egress into the area.

Mr. Britton noted that a new agreement would be worked out, which would address parking on the new lot, as well as pedestrian access from both corners of the lot.

Commissioner Chambless inquired if there were plans to extend the physical footprint of the structure onto the area that is currently the parking lot.

Mr. Britton noted that the building would not be able to locate closer to the property line, and eventually the church planned to put a recreational facility where the parking lot currently exists.

Commissioner McHugh noted that a better parking entry was being added so she did not see how parking problems would increase.

Commissioner Muir inquired why the Commission had not received any input from the City's Open Space advisory committee.

Mr. Doug Wheelwright noted that there was only a committee that was in charge of the bond funds.

Commissioner Muir inquired if they would address land use and rezoning of open space.

Mr. Wheelwright noted that Staff would inquire about that.

Chairperson Wirthlin invited the applicant to the table.

Lori Briesacher (Representative of Redeemer Lutheran Church and School) noted that there were 130-150 member households in their congregation. She noted that the church ran a day school with a current enrolment of approximately 160 children in grades Kindergarten through eighth. She noted that discussion was held on how to further meet the needs of their aging congregation and school and learned that a different zoning was required to make any improvements to the lot.

Mark Grabl (Architect) noted that a number of studies had been performed to see how to improve the lot, but the different zoning that exists on the property was creating an artificial boundary.

Commissioner Woodhead inquired about how the applicant planned to proceed in respect to public access to the park and parking for this area.

Ms. Briesacher noted that the church currently liked the open relationship with the public and would like to keep it this way. She noted that she had met with Planning Staff to rewrite the public access agreement.

Commissioner Muir inquired if the parking was based on need or was it a product of meeting the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Grabl noted that he thought it was based on the sanctuary profile, and was actually higher than the actual need and noted that the parking count could be reduced.

Chairperson Wirthlin opened the public portion of the meeting.

Philip Carlson (Sugar House Community Council Chair) noted that the Sugar House Community Council supported the Redeemer Lutheran Church and School in their request to rezone the parcel from Open Space to Institutional. The Council also requested that the public easement that existed at this property should not be removed. He noted that most of the trustees felt that the church had fulfilled all the instructions and requirements in applying for this change.

Mr. Carlson noted that it was possible for the Parleys Canyon trail to be aligned in this area and could become a great access point for the trail. He noted that the parking lot position would greatly improve the access for the children to get from the park to the school.

Commissioner Chambless inquired if there would be occasions when the parking might spill out onto the street because of high congestion, for example, weekend uses.

Mr. Carlson noted that the park itself would never require parking to access it.

Sarah Carlson (1917 East 2700 South) noted that she went around the community to inform neighbors of this project and summarized their thoughts about the project. She noted that of those that she had spoken to, seventeen were opposed, three were undecided, and there were many concerns about congestion issues.

She noted that in 1983 the Sugar House City Community created Petition 400-121 to turn the whole parcel into a park. In 1985 the City worked with Redeemer Lutheran Church & School on Petition 400-392, which was issued to approve the easements. She believed that the previous petitions were to preserve the park as open space and not to rezone it into a parking lot or industrial space.

Commissioner Scott inquired if the petitions had been heard by the Planning Commission.

Ms. Carlson noted that they had been approved by the Commission, and served to function as an agreement for a parking lot which had to serve the public as well as the church to access the park. She noted the agreement in 1994 came about because the community raised \$9,000 and the church donated \$1,000 to build the park and the City had agreed to maintain it, once it was in place.

Liz Copone (1859 Hillcrest Avenue) noted she used the park on a weekly basis and could see there was a need to remodel and expand the churches facilities. She inquired if there was a type of variance that could be granted without doing a complete rezone of the whole area, and then in the future when there was funding to do the entire parking lot a rezoning change could occur contingent upon more permanent plans.

Jeannette Mason (1852 Hillcrest Avenue) noted she was against the rezone and felt that the parking lot would take up nearly half of the Open Space and the other half was a very forested and on steep inclines, which significantly decreases the usable space of the park. She noted that the church was proposing 86 parking stalls in addition to the expansion and she was also concerned about additional traffic increases.

Zachery Mason (1852 East Hillcrest Avenue) noted he never received any information from the church to inform the community of the project. He also noted that the project did not feel harmonious with the rest of the neighborhood.

Rawlins Young (2135 South 1900 East) noted that he was with the Sugar House Community Council in 1983, when Petition 400-121 was created to vacate the parcel and develop the park. He noted that shortly after the church put in a similar request for the same parcel property and in 1987 it was heard by the City Council, which moved to close the street and divide the land. He noted the recommendation of the city portion of the street was greater on the ends to provide access into the park. He noted that he thought that some of the confusion on the zoning map was that it did not reflect the actual ownership of the land.

Carol Mundinger (3808 South 500 East) noted she was in support of the petition.

Chairperson Wirthlin closed the public portion of the hearing.

Ms. Briesacher noted that the Community Council had suggested getting input from the neighbors. She noted that an Open House was held and she had hand delivered about 100 flyers to invite neighbors to the school to hear about the rezoning. Residents within 450 feet of the church were also invited to the Planning Commission meeting. She noted that the feedback she received from the neighbors was positive.

Mr. Grabl noted that the intent of the church was to have an indoor place for the children to play in. He noted if the zoning did not move forward then adding the indoor center was not a possibility.

Commissioner Scott inquired if the church had a gymnasium in the school now.

Ms. Briesacher noted that there was a 900 square foot room in the basement that served as a lunch room and an indoor play room for the children during bad weather.

Commissioner Scott noted that in the Staff Report it stated that the city may gain land from the church on the eastern end of the block to improve access to Hillcrest Park for public access and a thoroughfare for maintenance equipment. She noted that on the map it showed the city already owned that land.

Ms. Briesacher noted that the park was currently accessed for maintenance off of Hillcrest and the city had approached the church for ownership of 2000 East and Stratford Street, to place signage for the park and also to serve as an additional access.

Commissioner Muir noted that there seemed to be enough property to accomplish both aspects of reconfiguring the park, and accommodating the needs and expansion of the school. He noted that one solution could be that the city could obtain some land swaps to obtain a better ultimate result, and buy a little time rather than force the petition through. He noted that he thought the recreation hall should be built on the corner of 2000 East and Stratford, where it would not affect residents and would leave room to have a squared off vest-pocket park at the east end of Hillcrest.

Ms. Briesacher noted that she did not feel that anybody would be opposed to entertaining ideas that would allow the church to have what they needed for their facility and making the park a better fit. She noted she would be willing to get the community together to consider this and other options.

Mr. Wheelwright noted that the map that was passed around by Ms. Carlson was not how the property was divided; the entire street right-of-way was sold to the church. He noted that the city believed that a mistake was made when they mapped the city in 1995, because prior to that the whole area was zoned R-2 and churches were allowed in residential districts, and in 1995 it was zoned I (Institutional) because of the size. He noted that there was a lot of misinformation and lack of understanding regarding this petition and suggested that the Commission table the Petition for a month to allow

Staff to do additional research. He also acknowledged that there might be a better outcome if Commissioner Muir's suggestions were looked into further.

Commissioner De Lay made a motion to table the petition for one month Commissioner Forbis noted that he would second the motion, noting that there was too much confusion, not enough knowledge about the previous petitions, and there have been too many contradictions that have led to a ton of misinformation on the issue, and tabling the petition would be beneficial to let the parties have more time to work through the issues and allow staff to do some additional research.

Commissioner Muir amended the motion to encourage the city to look at possible land swaps to create a more usable plan for this petition.

All in favor voted, "Aye" the motion carried unanimously.



The northwestern corner of the subject parcel, used as a portion of Hillcrest Park



The southern edge of the subject parcel. Redeemer Lutheran Church and School can be seen to the far left.