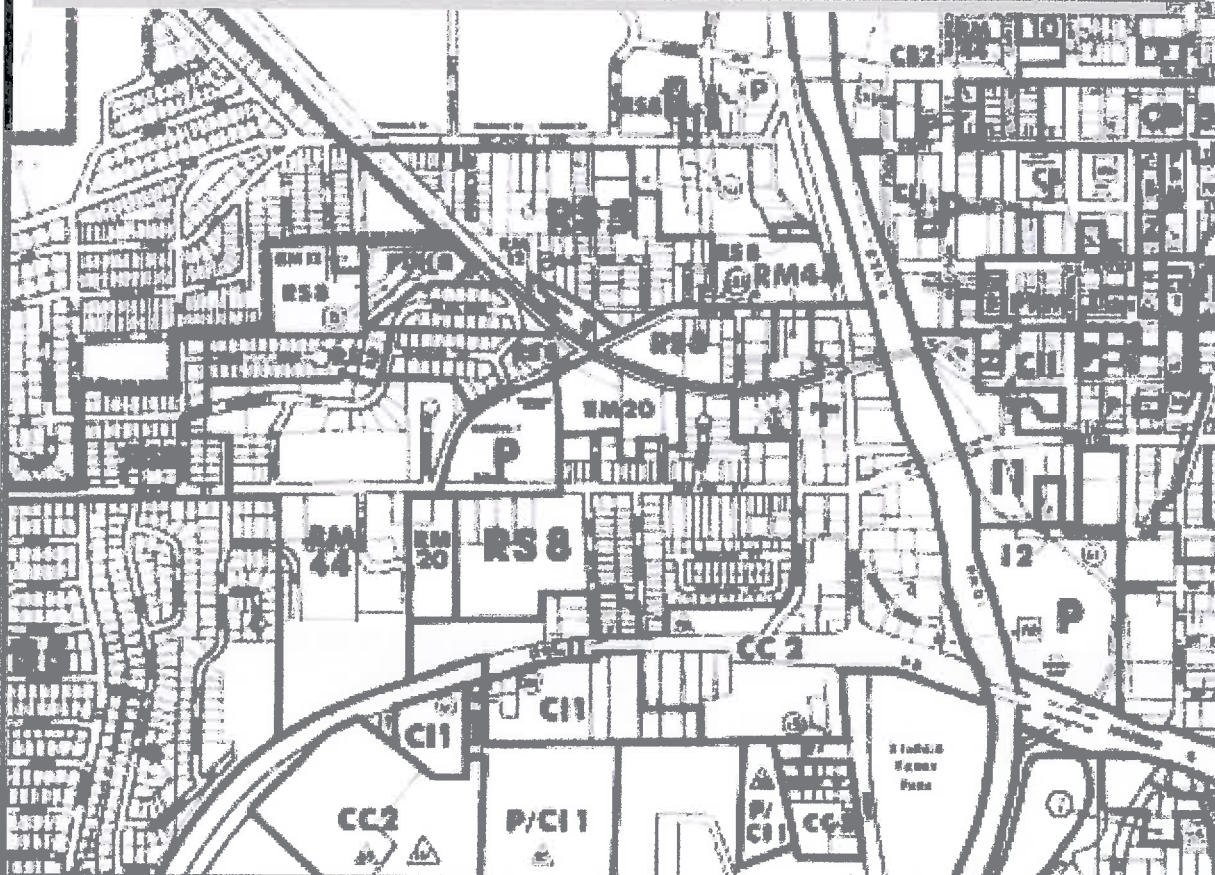


Iowa City Planning & Zoning Commission

Formal Meeting
Thursday, December 3, 2015
7:00 PM

Iowa City Public Library – Meeting Room A
123 S. Linn Street



Department of Neighborhood
and
Development Services



CITY OF IOWA CITY
UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE

Staff Reports

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Thursday, December 3, 2015 - 7:00 PM

Formal Meeting

Meeting Room A

Iowa City Public Library

123 South Linn Street

AGENDA:

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Public Discussion of Any Item Not on the Agenda

D. Rezoning Item

Discussion of an application submitted by Allen Homes, Inc. for a rezoning from Public (P-1) zone to Central Business Support (CB-5) zone for approximately .98 acres of property located south of Iowa Avenue between Gilbert Street and Van Buren Street. (REZ15-00022)

E. Code Amendment Item

Discussion of amendments to Title 14, Zoning Code, to allow residential uses on the ground level floor in CB-2 and CB-5 Zones located south of Jefferson Street and west of Van Buren Street, provided certain form-based zoning standards are met to ensure a high quality living environment.

F. Consideration of Meeting Minutes: November 19, 2015

G. Planning & Zoning Information

H. Adjournment

Upcoming Planning & Zoning Commission Meetings

Formal: December 17 / January 7 / January 21

Informal: Scheduled as needed.

STAFF REPORT

To: Planning and Zoning Commission Prepared by: Bob Miklo
Item: REZ15-00022 Iowa Avenue, Gilbert Date: December 3, 2015
and Van Buren Streets

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Applicant: Allen Homes, Inc.
P.O. Box 3474
Iowa City, IA 52244
(319) 530-8238
allenhomesinc@gmail.com

Contact: Ron Amelon
1917 S Gilbert St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 351-8282
r.amelon@mmsconsultants.net

Requested Action: Rezoning from P-1 to CB-5

Purpose: Development of mixed-use project including townhouses, apartments, parking ramp, commercial space and fire station addition.

Location: South side of Iowa Avenue between Gilbert and Van Buren Streets.

Size: .98 acre

Existing Land Use and Zoning: Parking Lot (Fire/Police and City Hall parking) P-1

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning: North: Mixed use – CB-5
East: Mixed use - CB-5
South: City Hall - P-1
West: Former Unitarian Church and commercial and parking - CB-5 and CB-10

File Date: November 12, 2015

45 Day Limitation Period: December 27, 2015

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The applicant is requesting approval of a rezoning from the Public (P-1) zone to Central Business Support (CB-5) zone, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the area, and to allow the transfer of portions of the property for private development in conjunction with redevelopment of a portion of the Unitarian Universalist Church property, which is currently zoned CB-5. This property is governed by the IC2030 Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Downtown and Riverfront Crossings Master Plan. The applicant has submitted a concept plan that illustrates development of this property would

include residential townhouses along Iowa Avenue and Van Buren Street, a parking structure in the center of the block with three floors of apartments above and a mixed-use building with 6,000 square feet of office space, and space for the Iowa City Fire Station. The concept plan also shows redevelopment of that portion of the Church site recently demolished and the Unitarian Church being preserved.

ANALYSIS:

Current and proposed zoning: This property is currently zoned Public (P-1) to reflect the City's ownership and use of the property for parking serving the City Hall. The purpose of the Public Zones is to provide reference to public ownership and use of land. The Public zones serve a notice function to those owning or buying land in proximity to publicly owned land.

The purpose of the Central Business Support Zone (CB-5) is to allow for the orderly expansion of the Central Business District in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan; to serve as a transition between the intense land uses located in the Central Business District and adjoining areas; and to enhance the pedestrian orientation of the central area of the city. This zone is intended to accommodate mixed land uses, but at a lower intensity than permitted in the CB-10 District. The mixture of land uses permitted in this zone requires special consideration of building and site design. To control traffic and provide for the most efficient use of land and parking facilities, special consideration of the amount and location of parking areas is also required. To encourage developments that contain features providing a public benefit, a bonus in floor area ratio or dwelling unit density may be granted.

Both the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown and Riverfront Crossings Master Plan support preservation of historic buildings. The regulatory incentive to support preservation of historic buildings in the CB-5 Zone is a Floor to Area (FAR) Bonus at a ratio of 3:1 (the Floor Area of a proposed building may increase by 3 SF for every 1 SF of a historic property which is preserved). Based on the applicant's concept plan, the Unitarian Church property would be preserved, and the FAR bonus provision would be used on the structure proposed to be developed. Therefore, staff recommends as a condition the Unitarian Church property be designated as historic landmark prior to a building permit being issued.

The proposed concept plan showing residential uses on the ground floor is currently not allowed in the CB-5 zone. Commercial uses are required for the ground floor. Staff, however, supports an amendment to the zoning code to allow residential uses on the ground floor in certain situations like this and an amendment to the zoning code to apply design standards similar to those in the Riverfront Crossings form-based code.

Comprehensive Plan: This property is included in the Downtown and Riverfront Crossings Master Plan, which contains policies and goals intended to guide development. In the 'Strategic Infill' section of the Downtown District Section, the Plan states: *In order to reinforce the existing fabric that currently exists in Downtown Iowa City, new development should be mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented in nature. In addition, it should follow a list of very basic rules that are consistent with the existing character of downtown. The following guidelines were developed following a thorough analysis of the patterns and framework that make downtown special. These include:*

- *New development should be located on sites that do not contain historic buildings.*
- *Active uses, such as ground floor retail (and not blank walls) should front onto the street frontages and the City Plaza.*
- *Upper floors should contain office, commercial, and residential uses.*

- *Buildings should be built to the property line.*
- *Corner locations should be reserved for taller buildings, creating a block structure with taller buildings on the corners and lower scale historic buildings between them.*
- *The taller buildings on the corners should have a lower base consistent with [any] adjacent historic buildings to make them 'feel' contextual with the rest of downtown, while also limiting the perceived height of towers.*
- *Parking should be located both on-street and behind storefronts in parking structures*

The proposed CB-5 zone and the development concept plan are generally consistent with these policies. In addition to these policies, the Downtown and Riverfront Crossings Master Plan contains land use and height maps. The land use map shows this area as appropriate for mixed use development. The proposed combination of public, office and residential uses is consistent with the plan map. The proposed 4 story townhouses and mid-block 6 story building are also consistent with the building height map which is intended to encourage taller buildings be located mid-block away from Iowa Avenue.

The general Comprehensive Plan as well as the Downtown and Riverfront Crossings Master Plan contain policies which encourage the preservation and reuse of historic buildings. Tools to help implement these policies, including the transfer of development rights and bonus square footage for adaptive reuse, and the reduction of parking requirements, are contained in the zoning code. By preserving the Unitarian Church as a historic landmark, the proposed development allowed by this rezoning would meet the historic preservation goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Floodplain: Most of this property is located within the 500-year floodplain of Ralston Creek. The Floodplain regulations require that habitable space be elevated at least 1 foot above the floodplain. The concept plan illustrates compliance with this requirement.

Other Considerations: Because the City owns the property, development may not proceed unless the City reaches an agreement with the developer regarding transfer of property and air rights for the residential uses, construction and operation of the parking facility, construction of the fire station addition, use of Tax Increment Financing or other public funds if any, conditions regarding affordable housing and final design. This agreement does not require Commission review, but will require City Council approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of REZ15-00022, an application to rezone .98 acres of land located south of Iowa Avenue between Gilbert and Van Buren Streets from P-1 to CB-5 subject to the general conformance with massing and scale shown on the concept plan and the Unitarian Church Building located at 10 S. Gilbert Street being rezoned as an Iowa City Historic Landmark prior to issuance of a building permit for the property currently being rezoned.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location Map
2. Concept Plan

Approved by: _____


John Yapp, Development Services Coordinator,
Department of Neighborhood and Development Services

REZ15-00022

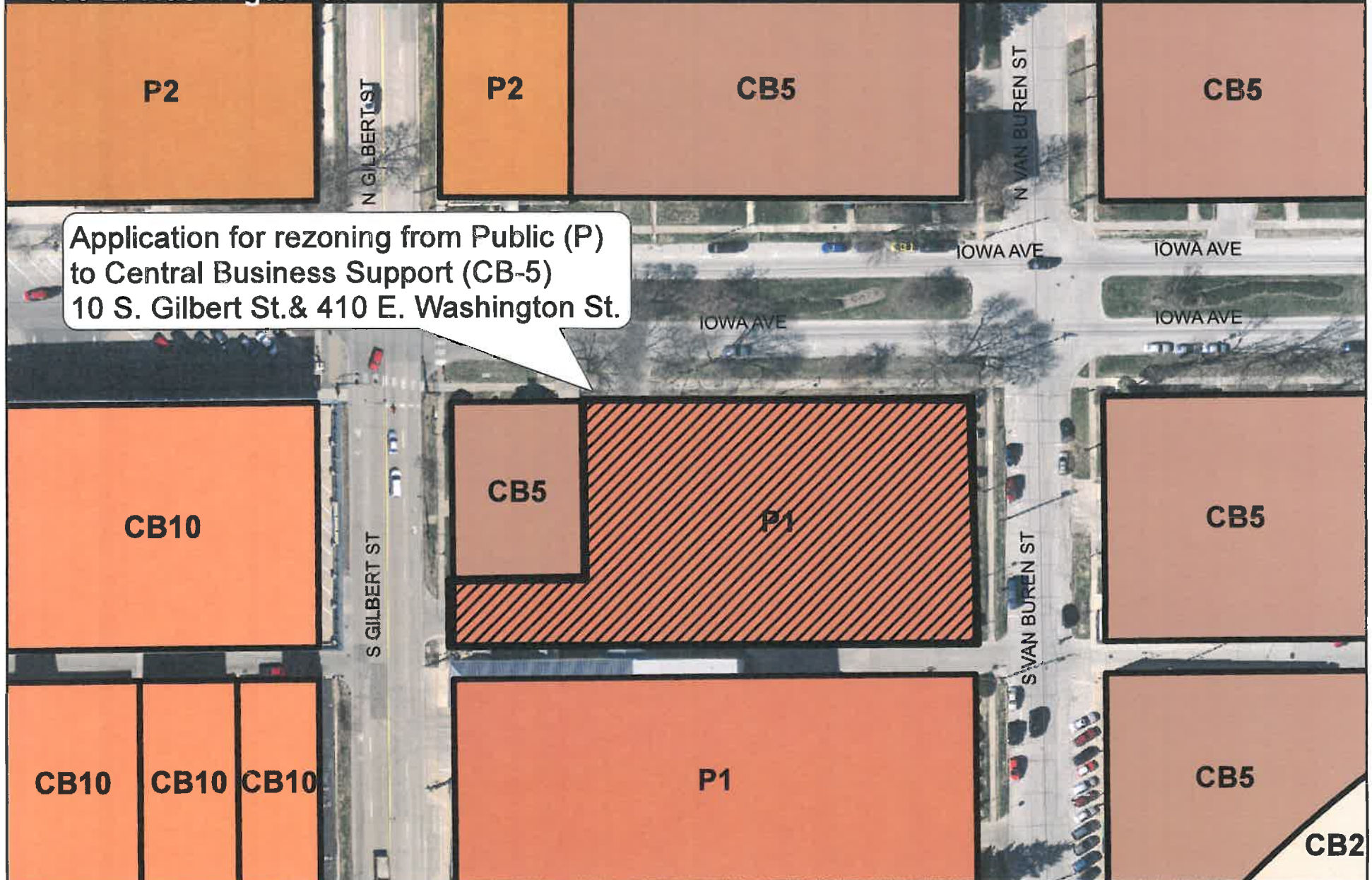
10 S. Gilbert St. and
410 E. Washington St.



0 60 120 Feet



Prepared by: Marti Wolf
Date Prepared: October 2015



REZ15-00022

10 S. Gilbert St. and
410 E. Washington St.

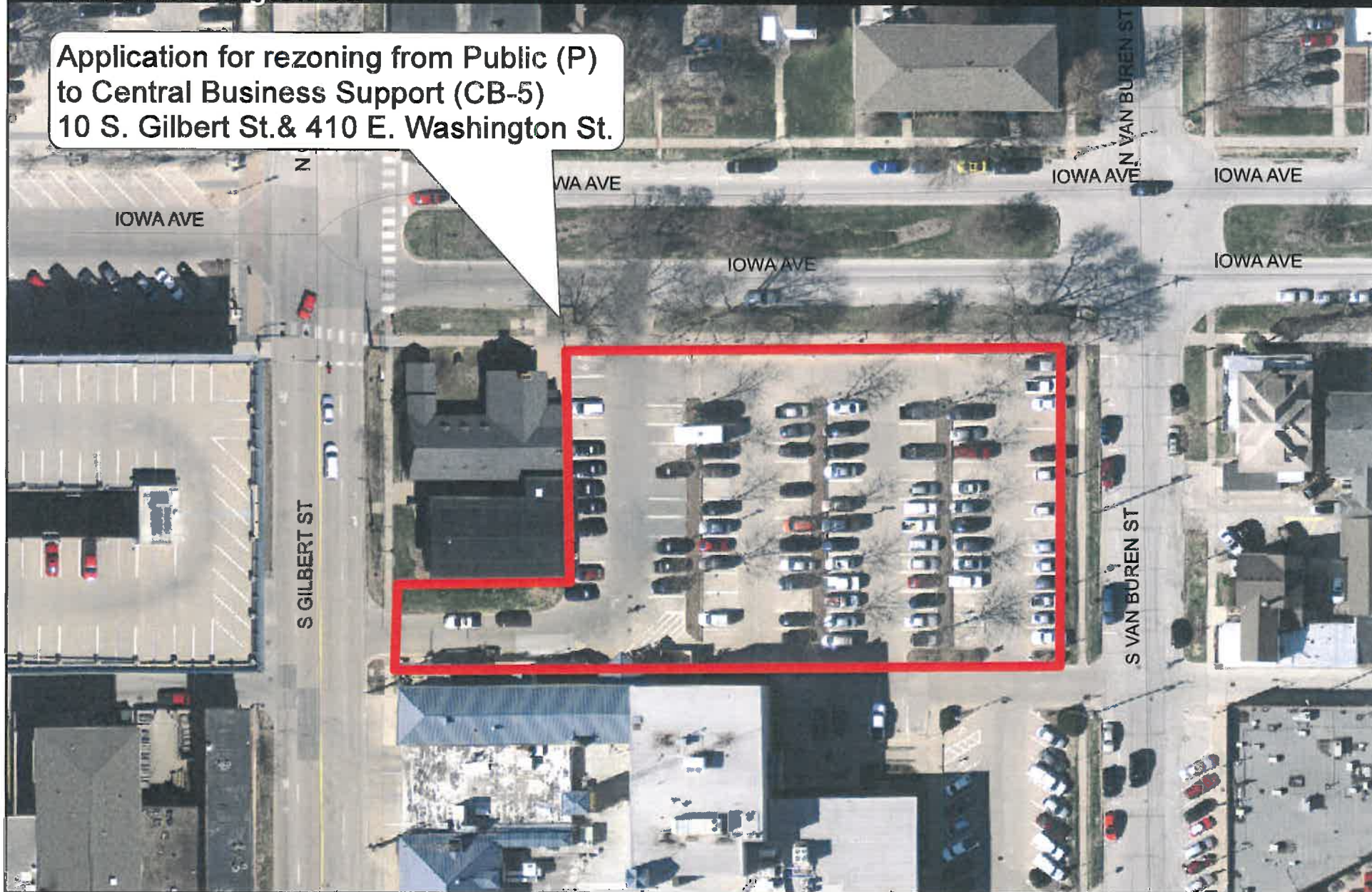


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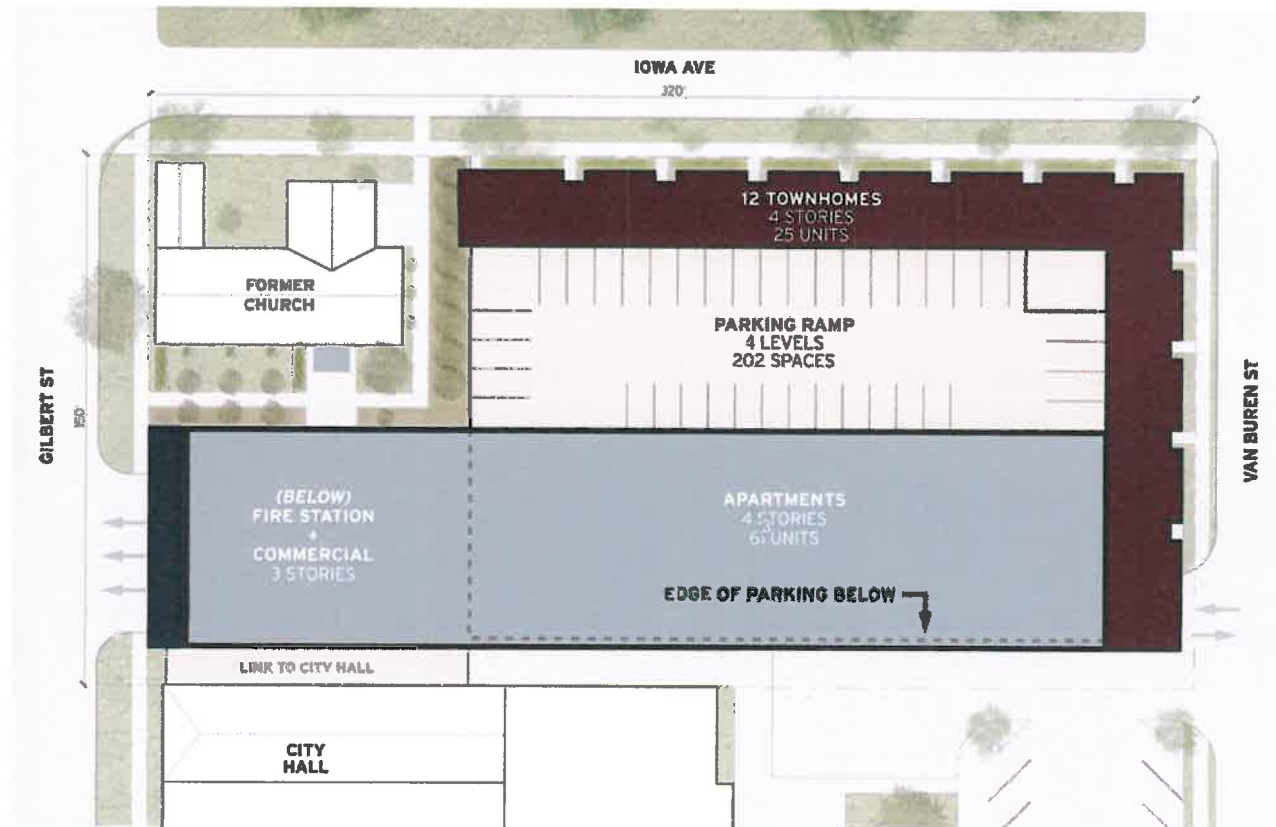


Prepared by: Marti Wolf
Date Prepared: October 2015

Application for rezoning from Public (P)
to Central Business Support (CB-5)
10 S. Gilbert St. & 410 E. Washington St.



SITE PLAN



VIEW – NORTHWEST (Intersection of Gilbert St. and Iowa Ave.)



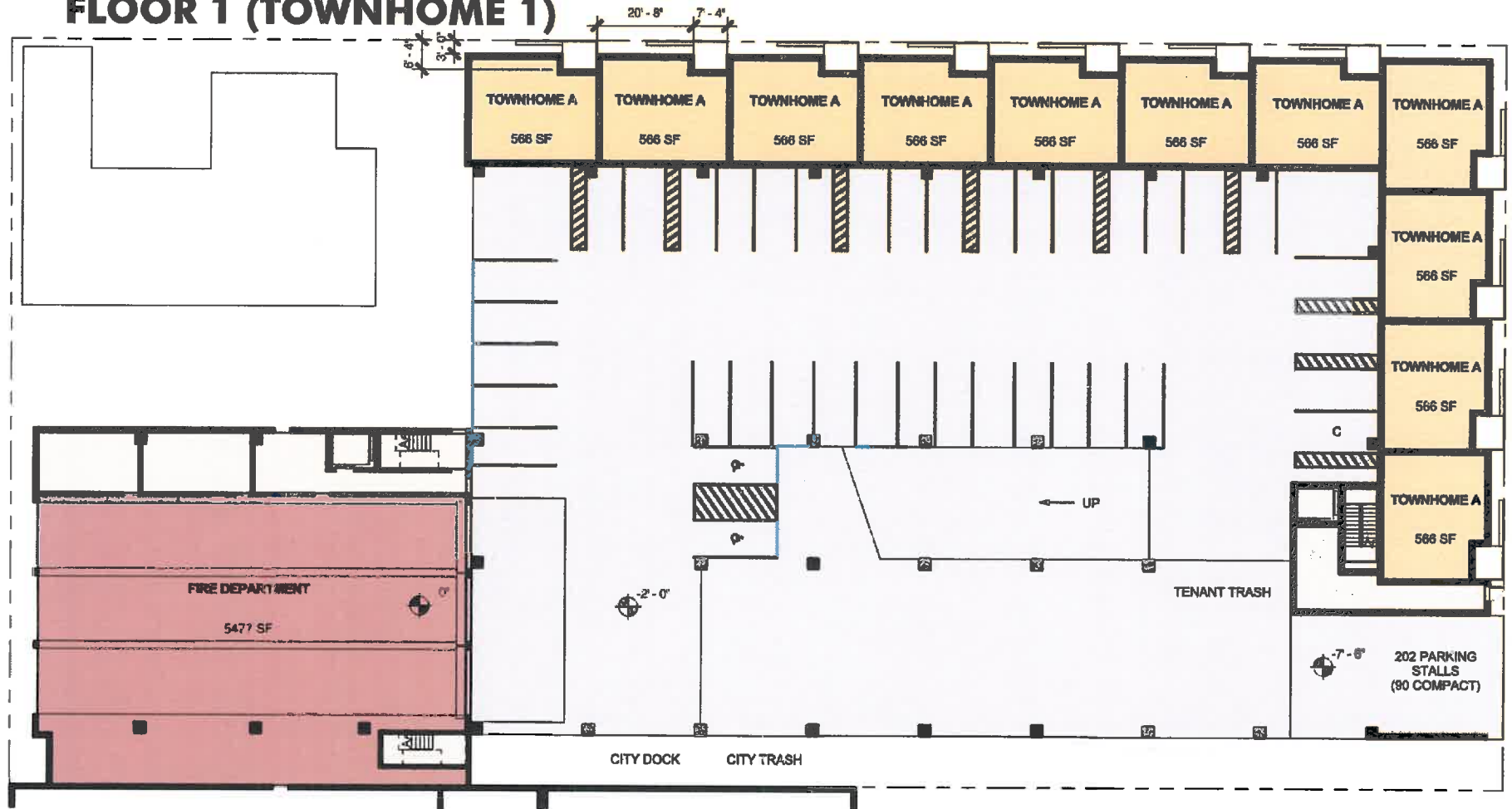
VIEW – NORTHEAST (Iowa Ave. and Van Buren St.)



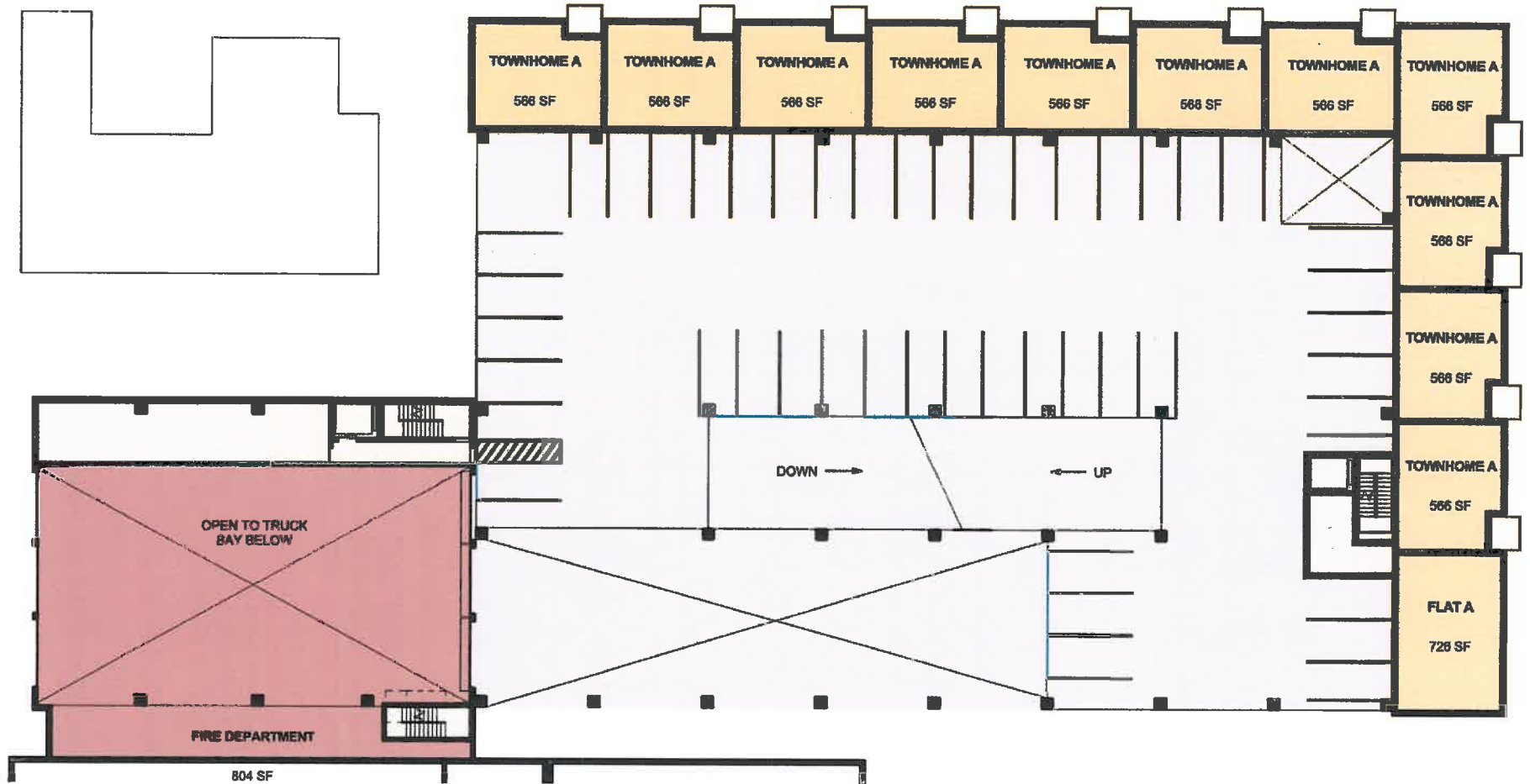
VIEW – NORTH ELEVATION (Along Iowa Ave.)



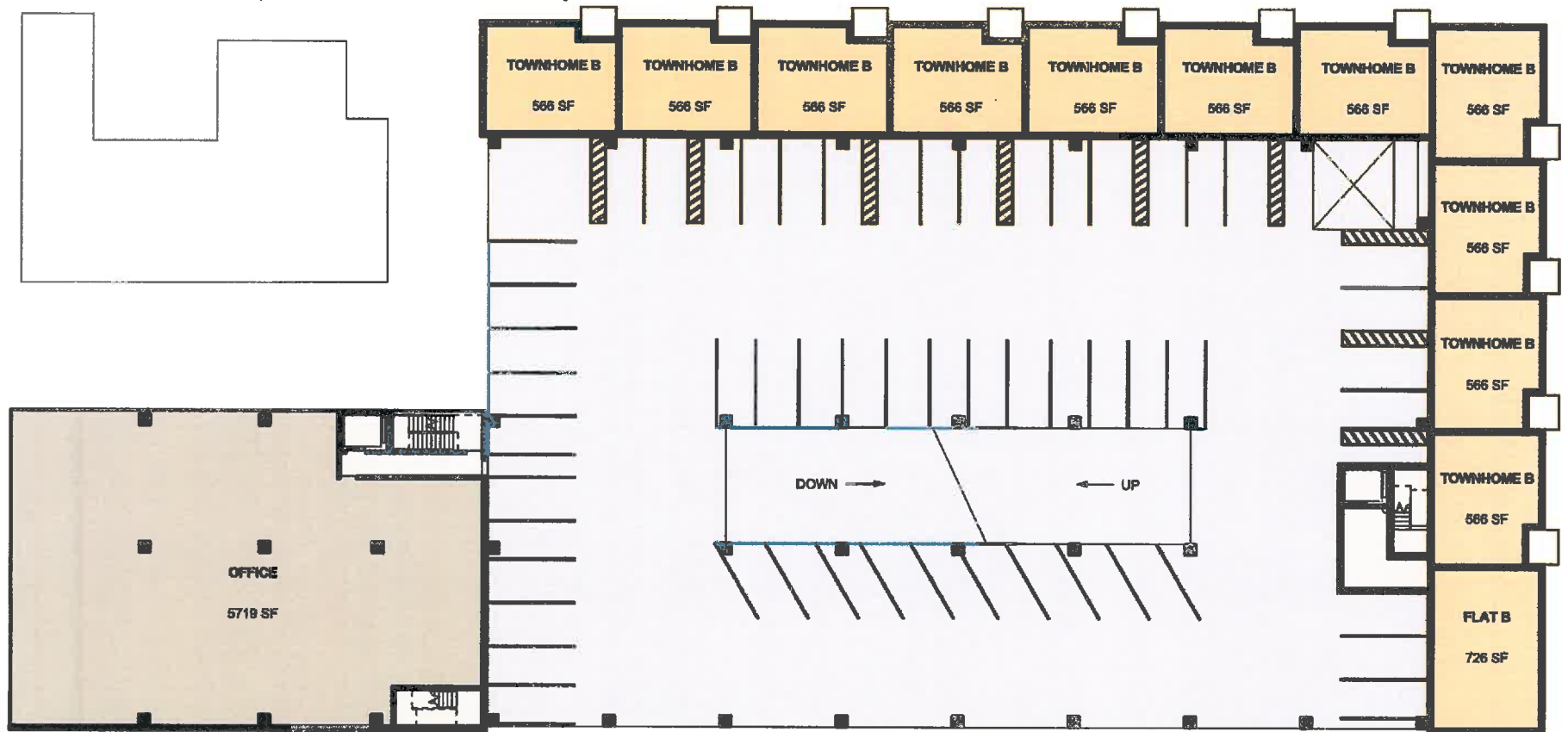
FLOOR 1 (TOWNHOME 1)



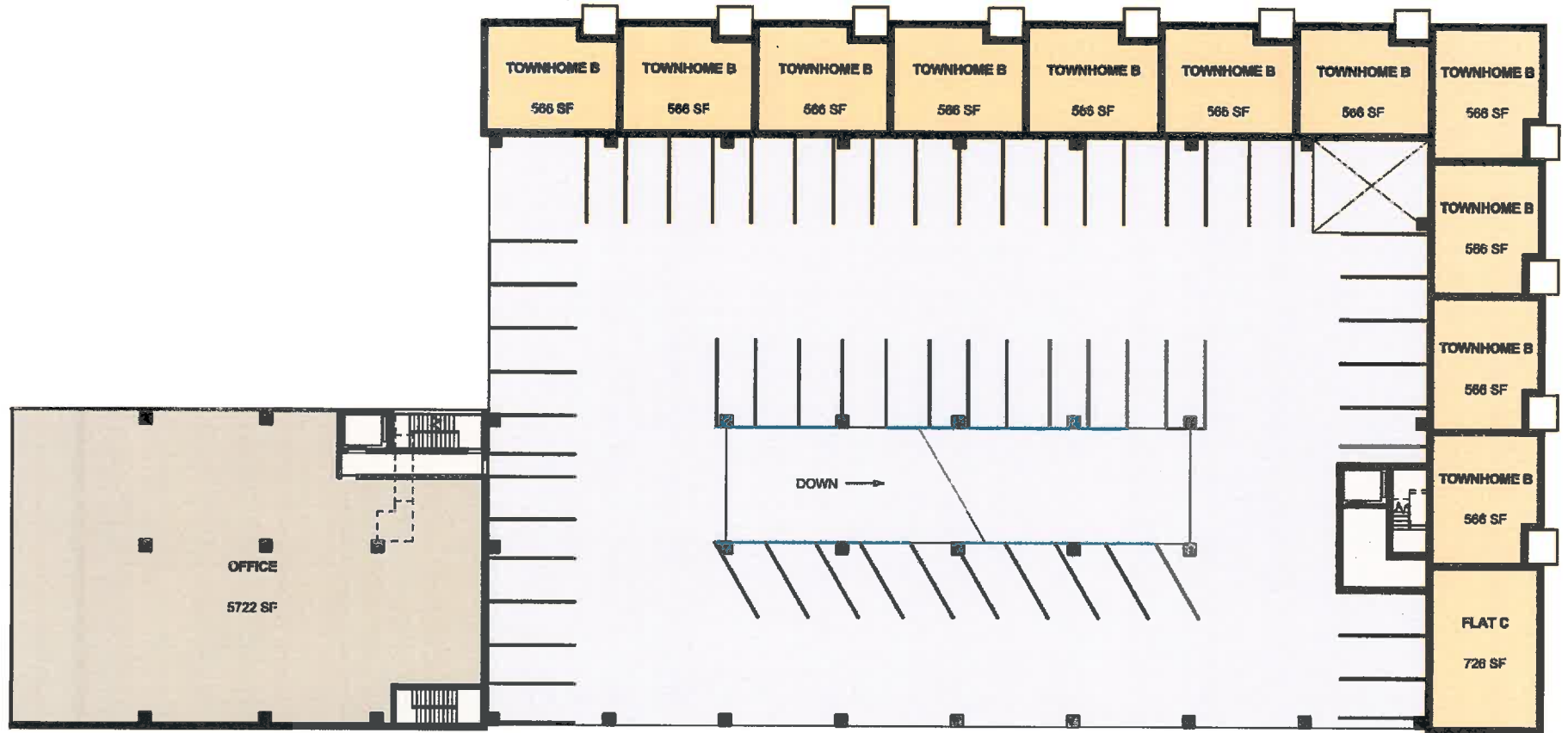
FLOOR 1 (TOWNHOME 2)



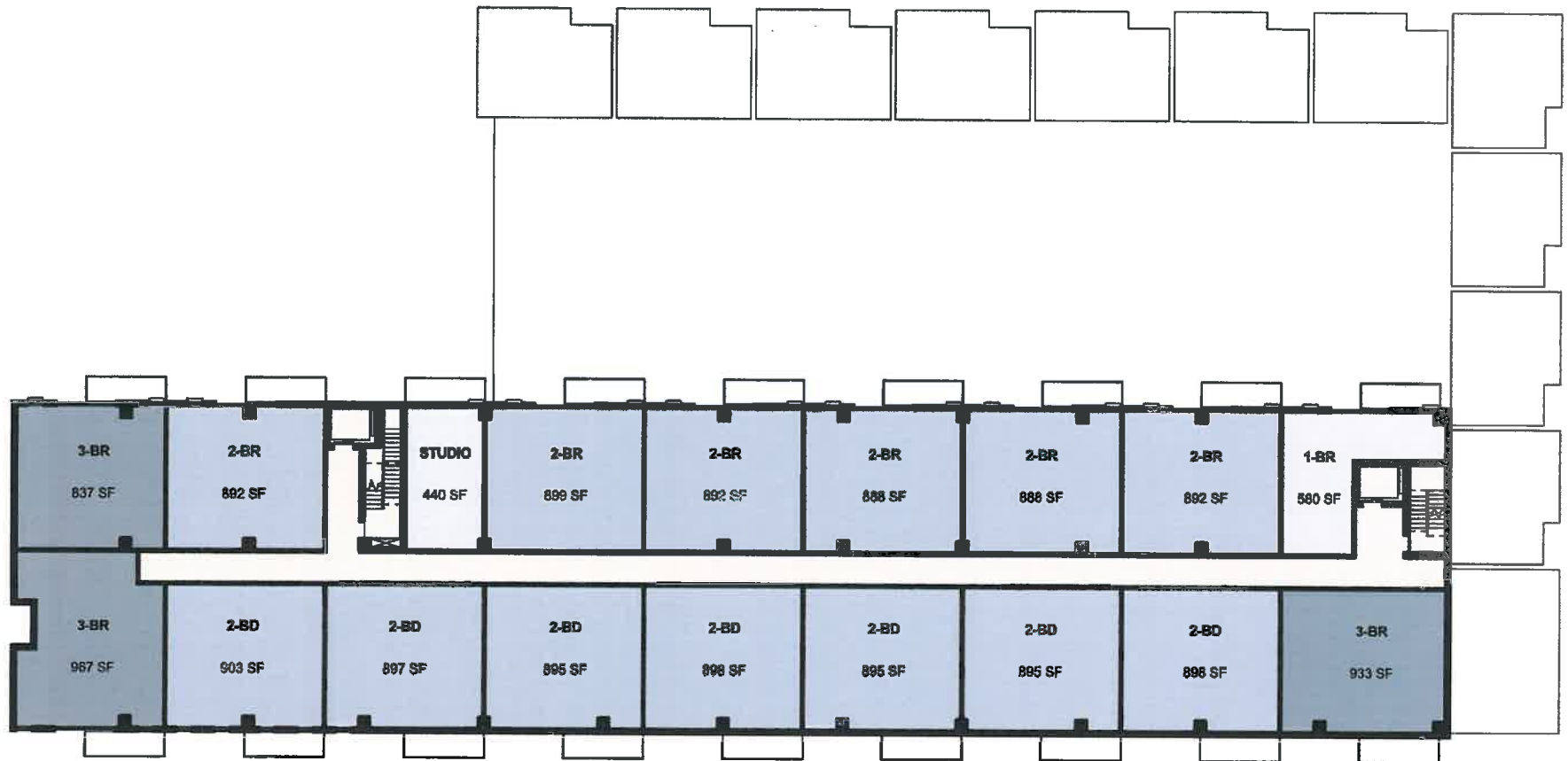
FLOOR 2 (TOWNHOME 3)



FLOOR 3 (TOWNHOME 4)



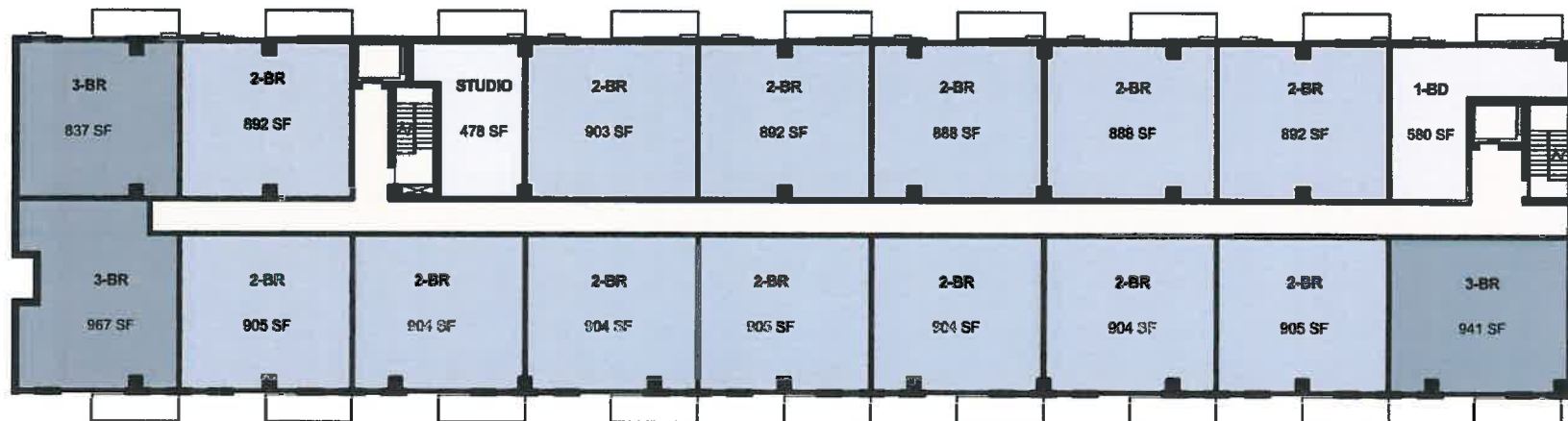
FLOOR 4



FLOOR 5



FLOOR 6





CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: November 25, 2015

To: Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Karen Howard, Associate Planner

Re: Zoning Code amendments to allow residential building types in certain CB-5 Areas

Background: When updating the Comprehensive Plan for areas east of Gilbert Street in the downtown area, the Commission discussed allowing residential building types on lots with Central Business zoning rather than strictly requiring ground floor commercial in every building. In other words, allowing the market to determine where commercial space would be most successful and allowing appropriately scaled residential buildings to be mixed in with small retail storefronts as the area transitions to the lower-scale residential neighborhoods to the east. This is similar to the flexibility built into the form-based zoning code for the Riverfront Crossings District.

Discussion of Solutions: With this discussion in mind, staff is exploring development of a new form-based zoning district for the areas currently zoned CB-2 and CB-5 located south of Jefferson Street between Van Buren and Johnson Streets. This area was added to the Central Planning District as a part of the Comprehensive Planning effort recently completed. Staff is currently drafting language for this new district, which will be submitted to the Commission for review in December or early January.

The area between Gilbert Street and Van Buren Streets was added to the Downtown District and is largely civic uses with some opportunities for public-private partnerships to encourage development on vacant lots and underutilized surface parking areas that will achieve public goals, which could include preservation of a historic church, construction of public parking facilities, creation of affordable housing, and encouraging commercial and recreational uses that will serve a growing residential population in and near downtown Iowa City.


Since the Unitarian church has decided to relocate and sell their property at the corner of Gilbert and Iowa Avenue and the City has received an application for a rezoning of the church property and the City's surface parking area north of City Hall, changes to the zoning code will be necessary to allow the mix of building types (liner building, civic building, mixed-use building) that are contemplated in conjunction with preservation of the historic church. Thinking beyond this site to other future opportunities for redevelopment in this area, such as the surface parking area east of the City's Recreation Center, staff believes that adoption of form-based zoning standards would provide the most flexibility for these complicated urban infill sites while ensuring high quality, appropriately-scaled buildings is the best approach to take. In reviewing the form-based zoning districts in Riverfront Crossings, the standards that apply in the South Gilbert Subdistrict seem uniquely suited and appropriately scaled to achieve the goals identified for CB-5 Zoned areas between Gilbert and Van Buren Streets.

The attached zoning code amendments will allow residential building types on properties zoned CB-5 in areas south of Jefferson Street between Gilbert and Van Buren Streets, provided that the standards that apply in the South Gilbert Subdistrict of Riverfront Crossings are met. The South Gilbert District has a maximum 6-story building height, with a required 10-foot façade setback above the 4th story, and building and parking placement standards similar to what is allowed in the CB-5 Zone. However, it also allows a number of residential building types not allow in the CB-5 Zone, including multi-dwelling buildings, liner buildings, and townhouses. Frontage standards appropriate to the building type would apply as well as the building design

standards, open space requirements, and building materials standards. Similar to the Riverfront Crossings District, to ensure that different building types will fit and function well in this urban context, Design Review will be required.

Recommendation: Staff recommends amending Title 14, Zoning, as indicated on the following page. Underlined text is new language proposed and the strike-through notation indicates language to be deleted.

Approved by: _____


John Yapp, Development Services Coordinator
Department of Neighborhood and Development Services

Amend 14-4B-4A-7a. Location (of Multi-Family uses in commercial zones), as follows:

- a. Location: The proposed dwellings must be located above the street level floor of a building, except as provided in subsections A7e. and A7f.

Add a paragraph 14-4B-4A-7f, as follows:

- f. In CB-5 Zones located south of Jefferson Street and west of Van Buren Street, residential uses are allowed on the ground level floor of buildings, provided the following conditions are met:

(1) The building must be designed as one of the following building types, as described in the form-based zoning standards in 14-2G-5, Building Type Standards:

- (a) Apartment Building;
- (b) Multi-Dwelling Building;
- (c) Liner Building;
- (d) Townhouse

(2) Building frontage must be designed to meet the requirements of 14-2G-4, Frontage Type Standards, as applicable for the chosen Building Type.

(3) In lieu of the Dimensional Requirements and Central Business Site Development Standards that generally apply in the CB-5 Zone, buildings must comply with the same zoning standards that apply to these building types in the South Gilbert Subdistrict of Riverfront Crossings as set forth in 14-2G, Riverfront Crossings Form-based Development Standards. If a Mixed-use, Commercial Building, or Civic Building, as defined in Section 14-2G, is proposed on the same lot as the residential building, the standards that apply to such non-residential building types in the South Gilbert Subdistrict shall also apply in lieu of the Dimensional Requirements and Central Business Site Development Standards of the CB-5 Zone.

(4) Buildings are subject to Design Review. Minor adjustments may be allowed by the Design Review Committee as warranted according to the provisions of 14-2G-7H.