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Town of New Castle
450 W. Main Street
PO Box 90
New Castle, CO 81647

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Agenda

New Castle Town Council Work Session
Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 6:15 PM

[Discussion](#): Town-Owned Property



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Memorandum

To: Mayor & Council
From: David Reynolds
Re: Council Workshop – Discussion of Town Owned Properties
Date: 1-21-19

Purpose:

The purpose of the Jan 21th Council Workshop is to discuss possible uses for, or the possible sale of, Town owned property at the west end of Main Street. Parcels of land to be discussed are the empty lot on the corner of 6th and Main Street, the Kamm Lot (parking lot) at the corner of Kamm Ave and Main Street and the current Furniture Store / old ambulance garage at the west end of the Kamm Lot.

The “Downtown Plan” which was adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 2019 sites the importance of development in the area of the 6th, Kamm Ave and Main. This area is seen as a possible West End anchor to Main Street and is identified as a key site for a mix of commercial and residential possibilities.

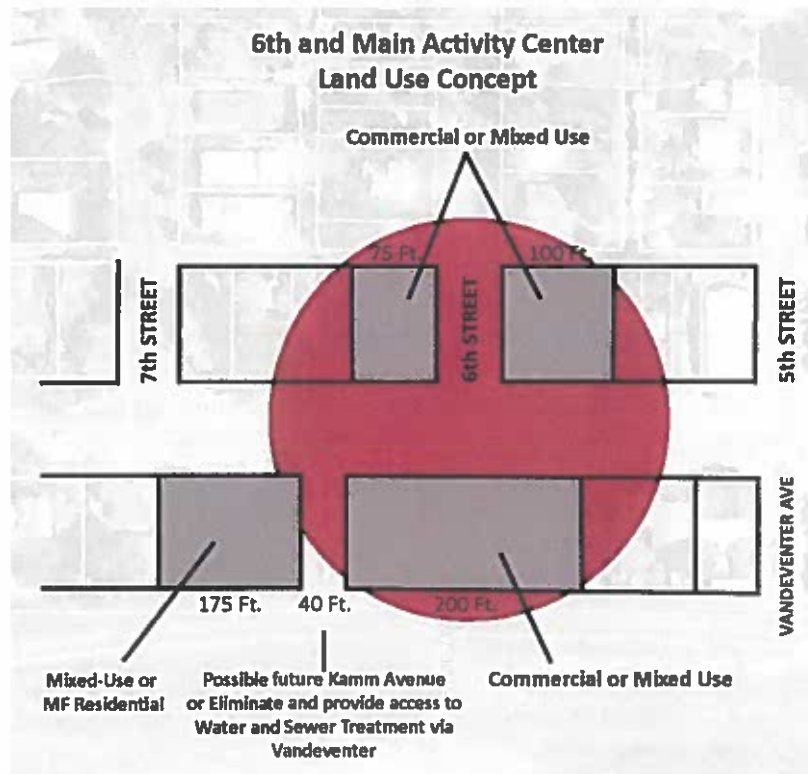
In the Council Meeting held 1-7-20 it was determined that a discussion by Council regarding this area would be an important first step in setting a direction for these properties. The use of a consultant, real-estate appraiser, real-estate agent or other outside professional may be a follow up to this workshop depending on the discussion and conclusions.

Attached please see pages 19-21 of the Downtown Plan “West End of Main” for reference to possibilities for the west end of Main Street.

b. West End of Main

Today, there is very little reason to walk beyond the 5th Street intersection. Beyond this point, there is little to no commercial, entertainment, or cultural value. The old Livery Stable building is a testimony of the community's past, but it is used only for storage. It is unlikely that a developer will attempt mixed-use development west of the Texaco property now, as those properties are now too detached from Downtown. Standalone residential project is possible beyond 6th Street today, but commercial or mixed-use might be problematic without a specific strategy for addressing the future of the Texaco property. This may be the one property that the Town should consider acquiring to promote the type of redevelopment activity described in this Plan.

There are significant opportunities to bolster economic activity and interest in the west end of Downtown long-term. At 6th Street and Main, there is the equivalent of about 16 standard-size properties on the south side of the street, from the Texaco property to the west edge of the Kamm/Machine shop properties, which are currently underutilized or vacant. This amounts to roughly 415 feet of Main Street frontage; just over 40,000 gross square feet of developable/re-developable property. On the north side of the street, underutilized and vacant properties create 175 feet of frontage, or about 17,500 gross square feet of additional development potential.



It is recommended that the Town of New Castle work with private property owners and potential developers toward the creation of the 6th Street Activity Center. The sketches

below intend to show the concepts that should be pursued in this area. Mixed-use buildings that are at least two stories are desired. The goal should be to promote ground floor commercial and above-ground floor residential uses in this area. The residential density will likely be needed for two reasons. First, it will help add life to Downtown, particularly after 5 PM and on weekends. Second, the residential use will likely be needed to make the commercial space financially feasible until a strong commercial market develops and commercial space is rented at a better rate. While one-story buildings might be acceptable in some instances, the Town should promote buildings of at least two-stories here.

In terms of general design concepts, buildings should frame this important intersection with indoor and outdoor gathering spaces. Public art and entertainment should be present. The intersection should be animated with lights, banners, and window transparency and nature should be infused into the activity center.



Development primarily two-stories preferred framing the intersection

Consistent with the goals for Downtown, the most desirable uses in this activity center are those listed below. This does not mean that only these uses should be permitted, but that targeting and attracting the desired uses should be a priority for the Town.

- i. Dining, restaurant and bar, with or without outdoor dining/beer garden;
- ii. Sidewalk cafes;
- iii. Brewery, Distillery and tasting room;
- iv. Niche/specialty retail;
- v. Bicycle shop;
- vi. Coffee shop;
- vii. Ice cream/yogurt;
- viii. Deli and Bakery;
- ix. Galleries, performing arts (indoor and outdoor);
- x. Entertainment clubs, including music, teen, comedy and similar activities;
- xi. Theater;
- xii. Community events;
- xiii. Child play area and discovery center;
- xiv. Short-Term rental accommodations;
- xv. Above ground-floor residential;

xvi. Professional offices



Public gathering, entertainment and commercial activity

3. Residential Anchors

A healthy downtown must attract people to live, work and play. Housing plays a key role in this formula for success. Nationally, market-rate residential development has been a powerful force in bringing new life and economic support to downtowns. Attracting more people to live in and near Downtown will improve the base of support for those businesses, retailers and other shops located there. Furthermore, more people living Downtown will help to generate activity and life during the evening hours.

Today, Downtown New Castle includes a limited amount of housing. To the extent that the Town can promote and incentivize market-rate housing Downtown and in the Old Town neighborhood, the better off will be the community's heart and soul.



Long-term option for standalone market-rate multiple family housing west of the Relocated Kamm Avenue

While it is recommended that the Town actively promote the idea of a west end activity center, composed of at least two-story mixed-use buildings, a standalone housing development at the westerly edge of this activity center is also acceptable (see Framework Plan map on page 46). For example, Kamm Avenue could be relocated to the west, allowing a larger commercial/mixed-use development assemblage on the south side of the 6th Street intersection. Depending on the precise relocation of Kamm, another parcel created immediately west of the new Kamm Avenue alignment (in the C-1 zone district) makes an ideal place for a standalone market-rate, multi-family housing project. The Town should be prepared to promote this idea. Furthermore, the Town of New Castle should check the permitted and conditional uses of the C-1 zone district to make sure that these development options are possible, with a simplified process for a developer, should the right opportunity arise.

Similarly, the Town should promote a similar concept for the East End Activity Center. As noted above, there are two long-term options for developing market-rate housing on the east end, those being the rehabilitation of the existing school housing building or the redevelopment of that property to expand Burning Mountain Park and promote a standalone market-rate multi-family housing on the far east end of the property. The latter is the recommended approach is believed to produce the best long-term outcome for Downtown.

4. Old Town

More than half of the respondents to the Comprehensive Plan survey reported that affordable housing is needed in New Castle. In general, it seems that respondents supported private sector affordable housing, as opposed to the Town developing such projects.

The Comprehensive Plan establishes various densities for the potential annexation areas to the east of Town.

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Planned Urban Center | 15 to 25 units per net acre |
| Mixed Use – Residential Focus | Up to 10 units per net acre |
| Low Density Residential | 4 units per net acre |

By comparison, there are now about 125 dwelling units in that part of the Old Town that is north of Main Street and between Elk Creek and North “B” Avenue. This is about 4.7 units per net acre. While the Comprehensive Plan did not give specific recommendations about areas like Old Town, this neighborhood’s density falls into the lower density ranges identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Old Town is now one of the more affordable neighborhoods in the community. However, it is relatively low density and Downtown needs more residential support. Increasing density in the Old Town neighborhood, within reason and where appropriate, might be a proper step for several reasons. The Town Code allows Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a conditional use in Downtown. These can allow residents to care and support for aging family members or provide rental space creating extra income. ADUs also serve renters with