



# City of Aurora

44 East Downer Place  
Aurora, Illinois 60505  
www.aurora-il.org

## Legistar History Report

**File Number: 21-0362**

**File ID:** 21-0362

**Type:** Petition

**Status:** Draft

**Version:** 2

**General  
Ledger #:**

**In Control:** Building, Zoning,  
and Economic  
Development  
Committee

**File Created:** 05/11/2021

**File Name:** VCA Aurora Animal Hospital / 2600 W. Galena  
Boulevard / Conditional Use

**Final Action:**

**Title:** An Ordinance approving a Plan Description Revision to the Conditional Use Planned Development, to change the underlying zoning district for a portion of the property from R-1(C) One family Dwelling District to O(C) Office District located west of Hanks Road, south of Galena Boulevard, east of Blackberry Creek, and north of Raven Drive (VCA Aurora Animal Hospital - 21-0362 / SG24/2-21.112-CU/Rz/Fsd/Fpn - JS - Ward 5) (PUBLIC HEARING)

**Notes:**

**Agenda Date:** 06/23/2021

**Agenda Number:**

**Sponsors:**

**Enactment Date:**

**Attachments:** Land Use Petition and Supporting Documents -  
2021-05-07 - 2021.112, Plat of Survey - 2021-05-07 -  
2021.112, Exhibit A - Legal Description, Exhibit B -  
Plan Description Revision, Findings of Fact Sheet

**Enactment Number:**

**Planning Case #:** SG24/2-21.112-CU/Rz/Fsd/Fpn

**Hearing Date:**

**Drafter:** sodaroj@auror.il.org

**Effective Date:**

**Related Files:**

### History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
2	Planning and Zoning Commission	06/16/2021	Forwarded	Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee	06/23/2021		Pass
<b>Action Text:</b> A motion was made by Mr. Cameron, seconded by Mrs. Owusu-Safo, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee, on the agenda for 6/23/2021. The motion carried.							
<b>Notes:</b> See Attachment for Items 21-0362, 21-0364 and 21-0365.							

Aye: 6 At Large Cameron, At Large Elsbree, At Large Gonzales, At Large  
Owusu-Safo, At Large Tidwell and Chairperson Bhatia

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Attachment for Items 21-0362, 21-0364 and 21-0365:

21-0362      An Ordinance approving a Plan Description Revision to the Conditional Use Planned Development to change the underlying zoning district for a portion of the property from R-1© One Family Dwelling District to O© Office District located west of Hanks Road, south of Galena Boulevard, east of Blackberry Creek and north of Raven Drive (VCA Aurora Animal Hospital – 21-0362 / SG24/2-21.112-CU/Rz/Fsd/Fpn – JS – Ward 5) (PUBLIC HEARING)

Mr. Sodaro said the subject property is currently zoned R-1(C) One Family Dwelling District with a Conditional Use for a Planned Development. The property is already developed as an office use. Give me one second and I will share my screen for you. This is the Aurora Animal Hospital. It is currently split into 2 parcels down the middle. One is zoned R-1(C) and the other one is zoned O(C) per the Plan Description. This Ordinance is meant to modify the Plan Description and remove any recommendation or any mention of residential from the Description. Originally it was zoned this way as there was supposed to be a small residential subdivision down on the southern part of the site. However, with the construction of a home on Hanks Road it was no longer feasible to do that without displacing people, so they are just formalizing that it will not be developed as residential.

Mr. Sieben said Jake, if I could just clarify. What you see on the screen is not accurate. The R-1 zoning is about the southern, I believe it's 5.2 acres of the site, so Jake if you could move your arrow kind of left to right where that line is. It is just south of the building and parking lot, so that southern area is actually the R-1 area. Everything north of that line is actually zoned office. The reason it shows this way is because with our GIS it matches a parcel, so the zoning district is different than the parcel. The area that we are rezoning tonight would be that southern 1/3 of the campus and it would bring that R-1 zoning of the southern 1/3 into the O Office zoning of the rest of the campus to allow for their expansion. So just to clarify.

Mr. Sodaro said as Ed also clarified, this entire area will now be zoned for O Office use as opposed to any portion being zoned for residential. Also within this plan, is the Final Plat. As you saw, the parcels are currently split up, the zoning lots are currently split up dividing the VCA Animal Hospital in half. Obviously, that is not case there. There are not 2 separate buildings. It is 1 building on 2 different lots. The Petitioners are formalizing that and making it 1 large lot for the entire property. The main reason all of this is being done is for the approval of a Final Plan. As you can see, we have a roughly 16,000 square foot building addition to the southeastern part of the property. The current building is not enough for the services that the Aurora Animal Hospital provides, as well as future uses that I believe the Petitioners will be kind of able to go into a little bit more detail of later. Also within this proposal is a large expansion of the parking lot. They currently have roughly 125 spaces. They will be going up to 205 spaces with this current proposal. We are aware that this property borders residential. We do have them complying with the 50 foot setback to the residential and per the landscape plan there is a buffer area with berming and several trees to mitigate any light concerns or any sort of interference of the main primary use of the lot. We do have a photometric plan as well. We have received many calls from the neighbors. We don't have anyone with us tonight to discuss it, but there were some concerns raised about lighting. This is actually a much better way to display the information with a rendering. It shows

an artist's depiction of what the proposed lighting will look like. There were concerns from the public about the lighting of the signs, but obviously that's not going to extend too far south beyond the vacant part of the property, and it won't be affecting the southeastern part of the property. I believe that I have covered everything that I was looking to cover. If you have any questions of staff...

Mr. Sieben said Jake, can you go back to the Final Plan for a second? Jake, could you point out that grey line, the dashed line? That's the actual zoning line. Where Jake is doing his hand across, south of that line it is R-1, so that's the area south of that that we are rezoning to Office. That's to allow some of that expansion of the parking and then they are also expanding also the detention at the west end. You can see the majority of that area will just remain in grass like it is now adjacent to many of the homes.

Ms. Tidwell said Jake could you go back to that. Could you just use your cursor and show where the northernmost house is on the east side?

Mr. Sodaro said so this is the northernmost house on the east part along Hankes Road that you can see where I'm circling.

Chairman Pilmer said Jake, can you clarify, the berm is new then, correct?

Mr. Sodaro said yes, there will be new berming installed along with 24 evergreen trees along this area as well.

Chairman Pilmer said and the height, any idea of the height?

Mr. Sodaro said I don't know the height off hand. That might be something that the Petitioner would be able to answer.

Chairman Pilmer said any additional questions of staff?

Mr. Cameron said what's the allowable buildable footage on the remainder of the site that's not developed at this point in time? Has there been any of those calculations done for future impact on both those houses that are backing up against from the east end and also from the south?

Mr. Sodaro said we are waiting on the Final Engineering for the submittal and that is a contingent we will be putting on the Final Plan and Plat for the review of the Final Engineering, but I do believe there are some issues with detention and potentially wetlands on the property, so I wouldn't be able to speak to what the overall buildable portion of this will be.

Mr. Sieben said Mr. Cameron, with the Final Plan, the city would be approving what you see. Any expansion in the future would have to come back for approval of a Final Plan Revision.

Mr. Cameron said right, I understand that, but I just was wondering what the potential future impositions of the building and development might be on that site. I realize it is dependent upon Engineering.

Mr. Sieben said we could maybe let the Petitioner speak to that.

Mr. Cameron said the Petitioner might want to speak to that please.

Chairman Pilmer said any additional questions of staff? Hearing none, at this time we're going to ask the Petitioners to come forward. I notice that there are 4 representatives that have registered to potentially speak. Those that are registered on behalf of the Petitioner, I will swear you in virtually.

The Petitioners were sworn in.

My name is Todd Roberts with MeritCorp. I'm the Civil Engineer for the project. Here with me this evening is Richard Renschen, who is the architect for the project, with MV Architects. Also, Lorrie Nimsgern, who is the Senior Regional VP with VCA. I think staff did a pretty good job of presenting what we are proposing here this evening. I can speak to a few of the questions that you had, one in particular with regard to the proposed berm area. The trees that are being placed in that area will be 6 feet high at the time of planting. They are evergreen trees and, of course, they will grow to a similar height. If you are familiar with the area around Hanks, the whole east property line is bermed and has evergreen trees in it, so it will grow into that same type of screening that you see there along the west side of Hanks, so it will be a nice screening for the residents that will be east of the proposed parking area. The other question that was brought up is with regard to the development in the area that we are rezoning. Would it be possible for me to share my screen or Jake can you share your screen again?

Mr. Sieben said you can try. I'm not sure if you can Todd.

Mr. Roberts said I'll give it a shot.

Mr. Sieben said okay, we've got it.

Mr. Roberts said the floodplain in this area is this dashed line that you are seeing here and kind of wraps around here and comes back up in here and through this area here, so the only portions that are out of the floodplain in that area is this area right here and this happens to be a ridge as well. So this is floodplain, that's floodplain, this is upland and this is upland. There are no future plans currently to expand into this area, but of course, if any expansion was to be done in that area we would have to address the floodplain in those areas as well. We can certainly have the other two folks that are on the line here with me this evening do a short presentation on the operations at the facility here and what will be involved with the new expansion, what kind of services they will be providing and also a quick run through on the building itself if that is helpful.

Chairman Pilmer said I think that would be helpful to the Commission. If you have a few minutes to cover that, that would be great.

Mr. Roberts said Lorrie, would you kind of go over operations at the facility and what the new facility will bring to the city?

Ms. Nimsgern said sure, thank you for having me speak. There are a few things that would happen with the expansion. First, something that is brand new for the facility, is we would add physical rehabilitation. The hospital would be able to add an underwater treadmill and a therapy area for dogs that are recovering, not a pool, but just an underwater treadmill, recovering from surgical and neurological issues. We already have a doctor that's certified in that. The ICU would be moved more in the center of the building instead of the outer wall and it would be expanded. Right now, there are so many large dogs that need housing. We need to have the best environment for them and so we need some larger runs, some extra large runs built with quiet wards. We've ended up getting some extremely critical pets in the facility. They just need a quieter area and more room, especially when they are immobile and flat out. We are also going to move the surgery and add a sterile corridor and some bigger surgery rooms, so that is going to be in part of the addition. One nice thing that hopefully is nice for the city is the mobile MRI trailer is going to be moved inside, which all of you living Illinois like I do know that it has never been the most pleasant running pets out to the trailer outside. So that won't be out in the parking lot anymore. That will be brought inside and be part of our CT area. Those are the primary things. We are also adding a conference room just because we have more doctors then can fit in the conference room now for their morning rounds to discuss patient care. We are adding more restrooms because the staff has grown quite a bit, and a larger breakroom for the staff. Those are the primary things. I may have missed some little areas or something like that, but that's the highlights. That's probably what I would say is primary.

Chairman Pilmer said thank you.

Mr. Roberts said Richard, is there anything you want to add about the facility itself?

Mr. Renschenn said I'd just like to say that as far as the architecture of the building, we are basically adding another linear wing that matches the existing building, so we are not coming in and doing something completely different. The architecture will be the same. We have an outdoor dog walk area that's encompassed within that, so that will be virtually unseen by any of the neighbors. I think Lorrie gave a good description of the operations of what's going to happen there.

Mr. Roberts said just a few other things regarding the site plan. We will be utilizing the existing points of ingress and egress to the site. There are two driveways along Hanks Road. One is a one-way entrance and the other is a one-way exit. The other driveway is off of Galena Boulevard and that's a two-way entrance and exit. The existing parking area that's north of the building is just going to be slightly reconfigured and expanded. There is going to be a new drop-off area to the front of the building. As you can see, the other proposed parking area is along the front of the building where the handicap parking is and on the east side of the building that we previously discussed. I'd be happy to answer any other questions that this Commission may have with regard to the site plan.

Mr. Cameron said I have a question. You said on the trees on the berm that they will be planted at 6 foot height and I didn't really catch what the full growth is. Are they 12 feet or 18 feet?

Mr. Roberts said they are probably going to be in that 20 foot plus range, similar to what's out there currently.

Mr. Cameron said okay. Then we talked about the berm, but we still never got a figure on the height of that berm.

Mr. Roberts said the berm height is, I believe, 4 feet high.

Mr. Cameron said so you have basically 4 foot with a gap at 5 to 6 foot. Will that block the line of sight from the parking lot and car headlamps? What works in that area? Four foot is not really all that high.

Mr. Roberts said certainly the berm would capture all the headlamps that are pointed in the direction of the residential areas and most cars are not taller than 5 feet, except for pickup trucks that would extend up higher than that, but they are generally less than 7 feet because they do fit in parking garages. I think it would do a very nice job of screening both the vehicles, the lights and also noise.

Mr. Cameron said the noise is questionable. What is the change, or the expected change, in head count for the facility between non-addition and the addition?

Ms. Nimsgern said so additional staff that we would need to hire is probably another 30 employees would be my best guess. It's the employees who park over there. They work pretty long shifts. The clients that are coming and going would still be in the front where they are now. It would be more the staff that's parking along there. Of course, our night staff tries to park as close to the building as possible for safety reasons. I would imagine probably a good 30 employees for sure.

Mr. Cameron said and that's in relation to current count.

Ms. Nimsgern said in addition to. We have about 170 employees. Of course, we are open 24 hours. They work the different shifts. I could easily see it going from 170 employees to a good 200.

Mr. Cameron said thank you.

Chairman Pilmer said but just to clarify, I think the additional parking you are adding, the spaces you are adding, a good portion of that would be on the Raven side and for employees.

Ms. Nimsgern said correct. The clients wouldn't be parking there. They would need to stay in the front area or right at the emergency entrance.

Chairman Pilmer said any additional questions of the Petitioner? Thank you. This is a public hearing. We did have one individual registered to speak before the Commission. I'm not certain if they want to speak at this time. If they are in the audience and would like to speak, they may do so at this time. It doesn't appear they are here, so at this point we will close the public hearing and turn it back to staff for a recommendation.

Mr. Sodaro said before the recommendation, staff would like to just briefly go over the Findings of Fact that are required for Conditional Use petitions. One, the establishment, maintenance or operation of this Conditional Use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health. Two, the Conditional Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the surrounding area. Three, the establishment of the Conditional Use will not impede the normal and orderly development of the surrounding property as there is no further room for development at this time. Four, the necessary utilities, access roads and drainage have been provided to this location already. Five, the proposal takes adequate measures to minimize traffic to public streets, as there is no proposed increase to the amount of access points on the property. Six, the Conditional Use conforms to all necessary and applicable regulations for the district it is located in. Staff would recommend approval of the Ordinance approving a Plan Description Revision to the Conditional Use Planned Development, to change the underlying zoning district for a portion of the property from R-1(C) One family Dwelling District to O(C) Office District located west of Hanks Road, south of Galena Boulevard, east of Blackberry Creek, and north of Raven Drive.

Mr. Cameron said I have an additional question of staff. Jake, is the city happy with both the height and plantings on that berm? Is that 4 foot adequate?

Mr. Sieben said Mr. Cameron, we did work with the consultants. As Todd can confirm, at our first DST meeting we wanted that berm, which is on Hanks, wrapped around and then on the west side of those lots, so we do feel it is sufficient with the multiple evergreen trees, which is the majority of what's being planted. We feel that they will cover what you had gone over and then with the additional growth it will match what's to the north.

Mr. Cameron said okay. I just wanted to make sure. To me, that's a potential problem.

Mr. Sodaro said and I will say also we did have the public notices go out for this as this was part of a Conditional Use and we did receive calls from some of the neighbors regarding the lighting and after reviewing the plans, some came in to view them and some viewed them online, they determined that there were no potential issues at this time.

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Mr. Cameron

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mrs. Owusu-Safo

AYES: Mr. Bhatia, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Elsbree, Mr. Gonzales, Mrs. Owusu-Safo, Ms. Tidwell

NAYS: None

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Will the establishment, maintenance or operation of the Conditional Use be unreasonably detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare?

Ms. Tidwell said it will not.



2. Will the Conditional Use be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted or substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood; factors including but not limited to lighting, signage and outdoor amplification, hours of operation, refuse disposal areas and architectural compatibility and building orientation?

Mrs. Owusu-Safo said no, it will not.

3. Will the establishment of the Conditional Use impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district?

Mr. Cameron said it should have no effect.

Chairman Pilmer said correct, and there is no further development planned.

4. Will the proposal provide for adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities as part of the Conditional Use?

Mrs. Owusu-Safo said these are already existing or it will be included in the addition.

5. Does the proposal take adequate measures, or will they be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets?

Mr. Cameron said the ingress points are already in place.

6. Does the Conditional Use in all other respects conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may in each instance be modified by the City Council pursuant to the recommendations of the Commission?

Ms. Tidwell said yes, it will.

Mr. Sodaro said this will next be heard at the Building, Zoning and Economic Development Committee meeting on Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall.

21-0364      A Resolution approving the Final Plat for the property located at 2600 W. Galena Boulevard (VCA Aurora Animal Hospital – 21-0364 / SG24/2-21.112-CR/Rz/Fsd/Fpn – JS – Ward 5)

Mr. Sodaro said as I said, our Engineering Department has not gotten ahold of the Final Engineering Plans that are required, so staff would recommend conditional approval of a Resolution approving the Final Plat for the property located at 2600 W. Galena Boulevard with the condition that Engineering Plans shall be provided to the Engineering Department prior to building permit issuance, which shall be contingent upon Final Engineering approval.

MOTION OF CONDITIONAL APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Mr. Elsbree

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mrs. Owusu-Safo

AYES: Mr. Bhatia, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Elsbree, Mr. Gonzales, Mrs. Owusu-Safo, Ms. Tidwell

NAYS: None

Mr. Sodaro said this will next be heard at the Building, Zoning and Economic Development Committee meeting on Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall.

21-0365      A Resolution approving a Final Plan for the property located at 2600 W. Galena Boulevard for an Animal Hospital (2720) Use (VCA Aurora Animal Hospital – 21-0365 / SG24/2-21.112-CU/Rz/Fsd/Fpn – JS – Ward 5)

Mr. Sodaro said staff would recommend conditional approval of the Resolution approving a Final Plan for the property located at 2600 W. Galena Boulevard for an Animal Hospital (2720) use with the condition that the Engineering Plans shall be provided to the Engineering Department prior to building permit issuance, which shall be contingent on Final Engineering approval.

MOTION OF CONDITIONAL APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Ms. Tidwell

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mr. Elsbree

AYES: Mr. Bhatia, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Elsbree, Mr. Gonzales, Mrs. Owusu-Safo, Ms. Tidwell

NAYS: None

Mr. Sodaro said this will next be heard at the Building, Zoning and Economic Development Committee meeting on Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall.