



REPORT TO:
STILLWATER PLANNING COMMISSION No. FBC21-01
ISSUED BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT - STILLWATER,
OKLAHOMA

Date of Meeting: April 20, 2021

Subject: Form-Based Code Warrant: 201 N Knoblock Street

Purpose of Report: The applicant requests review and approval of a Form Based Code Warrant to adjust setback and parking standards for property located at 201 N Knoblock in the Transect 5 (T5) district.

Background: The property is located at the northeast corner of N Knoblock Street and W Miller Avenue. The church building is currently located on the west side of the lot adjacent to N Knoblock Street and W Miller Avenue. The site also contains the surface parking lot for church activities and the church student center. OSU Athletics occupy the remainder of the block to the north and currently uses it as surface parking. The main OSU campus is to the west of the site.

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing structure and replace it with a new building immediately east of the existing building. New surface parking would be placed on the west side of the new building.

The site is within the Form-Based Code Transect 5 (T5) area which contains detailed architectural and site design standards for parking lot screening and location requirements.

This item was deferred to this meeting from the March 23, 2021 meeting for additional discussion and research regarding ownership of Knoblock, infrastructure alignment, and related issues. The week prior to the April 20th Planning Commission meeting, the Church and their representative met with a member of the Planning Commission along with City Staff to discuss the proposed placement of the new church. Concerns about how the placement of the new church would impact the OSU campus along with impacts to the pedestrian environment were discussed. The Church was open to making sure the proposed sidewalks were consistent with sidewalks on campus along with the installation of trees along Knoblock Street that are consistent with the OSU Campus Master Plan.

Application Processing Information:

Applicant – St. John’s Catholic Church and Student Center
Owner – Same
Notice – Notice published in the NewsPress
Assigned Planner – Rian Harkins, Senior Planner

Processing Track:

Submittal Date – February 17, 2021
Planning Commission – April 20, 2021

Project/Site Design Data/Details:

Zoning – Form-Based Code, Transect 5 (T5)
Existing Use – Church/Student Center and surface parking lot

Proposed Use – Church/Student Center and surface parking lot

Lot Size– Approximately 1.71 acres

Parking – Existing on-site surface parking that is proposed for reconfiguration

Adequate Public Facilities Findings/Improvements:

- Streets/Traffic: The property is located at the intersection of Miller and Knoblock
- Transit Facilities/Bike Lanes or Trails/Sidewalks: Sidewalks are located along both Knoblock and Miller
- Water Service: City water service is available
- Sanitary Sewer Service: City sewer service is available
- Electric: City electric service is available
- Engineering/Drainage: N/A

Applicable City Plans/Policies:

Corridor Redevelopment Plan: Medium to high-density mixed-use buildings, entertainment, civic and cultural uses. This mix of uses is also noted in the C3 Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion: The applicant is requesting the approval of a Form-Based Code Warrant as part of the redevelopment of the site as shown in the attached site plan. The warrant request, which functions as a variance from the standards prescribed in the form-based code, allows the applicant to deviate from specific standards. Site constraints include: The site fronts onto three streets, N Knoblock, N West and W Miller and contains a sanitary sewer line running north and south on the western half of the lot.

Two warrants are requested:

Warrant #1 – Table 3

**Setbacks: Front: 5-feet minimum/15-feet maximum
Side: 0-feet
Rear: 20-feet**

1. Warrant to deviate from the setback requirements of the T5 district. The applicant desires to alter the proposed setbacks as part of the construction of a new church and student center located on the site. The new building would be situated on the east side of the lot, adjacent to N West Street with a new surface parking lot located along N Knoblock Street. The proposed warrant will allow the building to be located beyond the maximum front setback of 15-feet, due to existing utility constraints.

The proposed setback along W Miller Avenue will be 15-feet and the proposed setback along N Knoblock Street will be around 128-feet.

Warrant #2 – Table 3

Surface Parking: Surface lots are not allowed to abut or face the primary street. On secondary street frontages for corner lots, surface parking lots must have landscaping and low decorative fencing to screen the surface parking lot from the right-of-way.

2. Alter the parking lot design location requirements and allow it to be placed at the north east corner of N Knoblock and W Miller due to the location of utilities on the site. Table 3 of the Form-Based Code does not allow surface parking lots to abut or face a primary street. The requirement for landscaping and low decorative fencing or screening on secondary streets will be followed.

Additional Discussion

This item was previously tabled from the March 23, 2021 meeting in order to facilitate discussions with Oklahoma State University, City Engineering, and Legal Staff regarding the status of Knoblock; which indicate that while the ownership cannot be determined, it has functioned and continues to function as a public way, and as such functions as a public street. Further discussions with the applicant show that the building is proposed to be oriented on an east-west axis to take advantage of the views west onto the OSU campus.

Additionally, city staff met with the applicant and staff from Oklahoma State University to discuss concerns about the overall site plan as a way maintain the pedestrian friendly character along Knoblock that the Form Based Code envisions. Some potential mitigation steps are:

- Widen the sidewalk along Knoblock Street to 10-feet wide and attach it to the back of the curb, to reflect OSU's standard sidewalk design and Master Plan
- Alter the sidewalk along Miller Avenue to make more pedestrian friendly
- Plant a series of trees along Knoblock Street to reflect OSU's Master Plan
- Build a short wall around the parking lot to screen the cars and to create a short wall for people to sit on
- No drives along Knoblock Street, access drives are along Miller Avenue
- Design the parking lot so that it can be closed off easily and used as an extension of the churches front yard open space along Knoblock Street

Findings:

1. The Land Development Code allows for a warrant in the T5 zoning transect.
2. The warrant will allow for redevelopment of the site while adhering to the general intent of the form-based code, particularly if concerns about the parking areas are addressed.
3. The other aspects of the Form-Based Code (i.e. – landscaping and architectural design standards) will still be adhered to.

Alternatives:

1. Accept findings and approve the warrant request as presented.
2. Accept findings and approve the warrant as amended with identified changes.
3. Find that the warrant is not an appropriate use for the property based upon the impacts to the surrounding vicinity and do not approve the request.
4. Find that additional information or discussion is needed prior to making a decision and table the request to a certain date.

Prepared by:	Rian Harkins, Senior Planner
Reviewed by:	Lanc Gross, Planning Manager
Date of Preparation:	April 13, 2021
Attachments:	Area Map, Site Plan, Warrant Letter, Draft Renderings
Map Designation:	NW