

City of Augusta, Maine
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

AUGUSTA STATE AIRPORT
CODE ENFORCEMENT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ENGINEERING
FACILITIES & SYSTEMS
PLANNING

Memo

To: City Council
Bill Bridgeo, City Manager

From: Matt Nazar, Director of Development Services

Date: September 16, 2013

Re: Rezoning off Leighton Road for new MDOT Maintenance Garage

Attached to this memo please find a schedule of uses for the Planned Development, or PD, zoning district. At this time, the MDOT plans to use the site they already own with the site they have under contract as a maintenance garage, paint shop, sign shop, etc. So while the PD zone has many possible uses, the uses the property will be put to are fairly well known due to our knowledge of who the owner is.

I understand there was some potential concern about MDOT changing their mind after the rezoning and selling the parcel, resulting in possible unknown uses off Meadow Brook Road. First, in a conversation with Dale Doughty, the Director of the MDOT Maintenance Division, MDOT has committed to a closing date on the Industrial Drive building for September 24. That's a \$2 million dollar commitment on a parcel that wouldn't be easy to flip if they changed their mind. The building has been on the market for quite some time and for a state agency to commit that kind of money to a project, it's fairly safe to say that they have no intention of backing out.

Additionally, the difficulty of using Meadow Brook Drive as an access point to the wooded parcel for other uses is significant. There's a large gully and brook between Leighton Road and the developable land, plus a private road with other private parties that have an interest in the road. Finally, the city owns a much more attractive development lot just barely south of this parcel that is already permitted and ready for development – the Quimby Lot. If anything in this area could be expected to develop, it would be that parcel due to the ease of developing it. Developers look for the path of least resistance because it's the path of least risk and greatest possible return. The Quimby Lot is a turnkey site, pre-approved by the city and ready to go. The property off Meadow Brook Road has many possible pitfalls and risks for development if it were to be accessed from Meadow Brook Road rather than Industrial Drive as MDOT plans.

Finally, I understand there are some concerns about the uses that will occur at this site and particularly the possibility of it being a 24 hour operation in the winter. The MDOT has their operations facility on Bog Road where winter maintenance vehicles, sand, and salt are stored. That