



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Planning Division

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**TO:** Urban Design Commission

**FROM:** Chris Wells, Planner

**DATE:** June 28, 2017

**SUBJECT:** ID [46932](#) (UDC); [47238](#), [46971](#) and [46974](#) (Plan Commission) – Approval of a request to rezone property located at 3601 Cross Hill Drive, 17th Aldermanic District, from A (Agricultural) District to CC (Commercial Center) District and TR-U2 (Traditional Residential - Urban 2) District; approval of a conditional use for a residential building complex containing 189 apartments in three buildings and a clubhouse; approval of a 2-lot Certified Survey Map; and an amendment to the Nelson Neighborhood Development Plan.

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The applicant, John Lancaster, is requesting approval to construct a residential building complex at 3601 Cross Hill Drive. The development will consist of three three-story apartment buildings with 189 total units, and an attached one-story clubhouse and pool. Residential building complexes are conditional uses in the proposed TR-U2 (Traditional Residential–Planned) zoning district, which require approval by the Plan Commission following a recommendation on the design of the project by the Urban Design Commission. As stated by Section 33.24(4)(c), the Urban Design Commission shall review the exterior design and appearance of all principal buildings or structures and the landscape plans of all proposed residential building complexes.

The subject site is an undeveloped approximately 6.8-acre parcel bounded on the south by Cross Hill Drive, on the east by undeveloped land, on the north by Wilde East Towne Honda, and on the west by High Crossing Boulevard.

### **Design Considerations for the UDC**

The Planning Division asks for feedback from the Urban Design Commission on the following design-related issues:

#### *The Transitions to the Neighboring Parcels*

- Staff requests feedback on how the subject site will transition to the neighboring parcels, particularly to the west and north. While the applicant will be required to meet the screening requirements outlined in MGO §28.142(8), Staff requests the Commission comment on how these transitions and required screening – from a dense residential use to auto-oriented uses to the west and north – can be optimally designed.

### Urban vs. Suburban Feel of the Drive Aisles

- For several recent large apartment complexes, staff has recommended that interior drives are created with an urban street-like character compared to a parking lot character. (e.g. lining the sidewalks with benches, trees, streetlights, etc.). To that end, the Planning Division asks the UDC to give consideration to the applicant adding parallel parking stalls along the entire inner ring of the drive aisle and widening the adjacent sidewalks to accommodate the car door swing.
  - Ten parallel stalls could be added along the western elevation of 'Building A' (to offset the nine perpendicular stalls that would be removed) and six parallel stalls could be added along the eastern elevation of 'Building B' to offset the ten perpendicular stalls\*) (\*As the applicant is now proposing 139 surface parking stalls, which is four more than what was shown at their Informational Presentation, the net number of stalls would remain the same).

### Four-Sided Architecture

- Staff also remains concerned with the expanses of blank walls along the northern "ends" of 'Buildings A & B' (particularly the windowless fourth levels) as well as the western "end" of 'Building C'.

### The Internal Courtyard

- With all of the topography on the site, Staff requests the applicant walk the Commission through the details related to how the central patio area is both accessed (both from the building as well as the parking areas) and programmed.

### UDC's Recommendation to the Plan Commission

- Staff requests the UDC reiterate their comments related to the architectural style as well as the overall site plan (which was primarily covered during the applicant's prior informational presentation) when making their recommendation to the Plan Commission.