



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 2007 Roth Street – Lot 2 of Proposed Certified Survey Map
Application Type: Alder Referral – Multi-Family Residential Building
Advisory Recommendation is Requested
Legistar File ID #: [73565](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Kevin McDonnell, Lincoln Avenue Capital | Marc Ott, JLA Architects | Kraft Heinz Food Company

Project Description: The applicant is seeking an advisory recommendation for the construction of a seven-story, 303-unit multi-family housing building and a wrapped parking structure with approximately 429 parking stalls.

Project Timeline:

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation on September 21, 2022.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal on December 12, 2022.

Approval Standards: This application is before the UDC for an **advisory recommendation** at the request of Alder Abbas. As noted in Section 33.24(4)(a), MGO, the Urban Design Commission shall make recommendations to the City Plan Commission, Common Council and any other concerned commission on all matters referred or assigned to it under the provision of this ordinance and other City ordinances.

As part of the Commission’s review, the Commission is requested to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission related to the applicable Conditional Use review and approval criteria pursuant to Section 28.183, MGO, more specifically subsection 28.183(6)(a)(9), which state:

Conditional Use Standard #9: *“When applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an addition to an existing building the Plan Commission shall find that the project creates an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose for the zoning district. In order to find that this standard is met, the Plan Commission may require the applicant to submit plans to the Urban Design Commission for comment and recommendation.”*

Conditional Use Standard #12: *“When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in the district, the Plan Commission shall consider recommendations in adopted plans; the impact on surrounding properties, including height, mass, orientation, shadows and view; architectural quality and amenities; the relationship of the proposed building(s) with adjoining streets, alleys, and public rights of ways; and the public interest in exceeding the district height limits.”*

Adopted Plans: The project site is located within the [Northport Warner Park Sherman Neighborhood Plan](#), [Emerson East Eken Park Yahara Neighborhood Plan](#), and [Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan](#) planning areas.

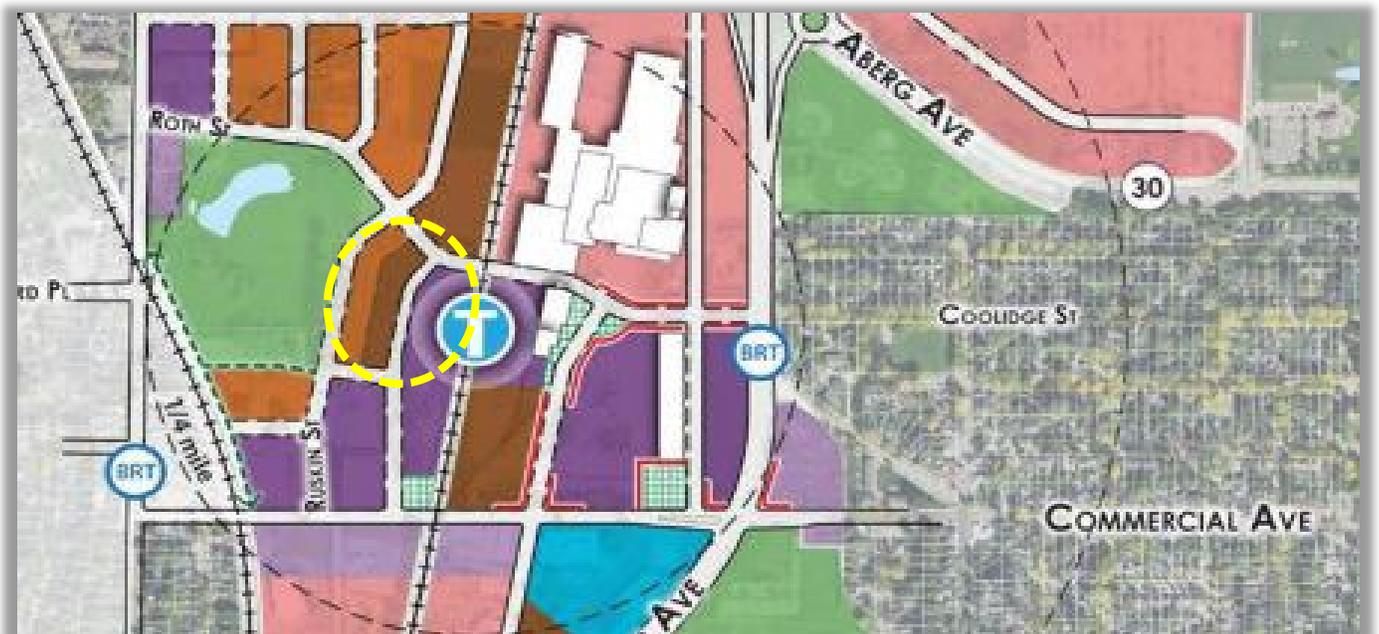
Within the Northport Warner Park Sherman Neighborhood Plan (2009), Key recommendations include:

- Increasing density and utilizing transit oriented development design principles,
- Encouraging mixed-use redevelopment,
- Encouraging street-oriented, pedestrian friendly, aesthetically pleasing building and streetscape design
- Providing well-linked and well-designed street and pathway connections.
- Utilizing complete street design principles, and
- Preservation of open space as a community amenity.

In addition, the project site is also within the Emerson East Eken Park Yahara Neighborhood Plan (2015). The plan includes housing, development and land use goals that are intended to guide redevelopment within the planning area, including:

- Strengthen neighborhood identity, create a sense of place,
- Ensure new infill development is compatible with and sensitive to the existing context and forms,
- Provide additional affordable housing,
- Ensure new infill development along corridors incorporate traditional neighborhood design elements, including pedestrian-oriented features, and
- Encourage green building, compact site design, and the incorporation passive and active green spaces into development plans.

Most recently, the project site is also located in the Kraft/Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (2020) planning area which includes the City's most contemporary and detailed recommendations for the subject site. The plan recommends redevelopment of the project site include an inclusive high density, mixed-use activity hub, including multimodal transportation facilities. The future land use recommendation for the project site is Community Mixed Use High Residential, both of which include a generally high-intensity, larger-scale of development that supports the integration of residential, retail, office, institutional, and civic uses (see image at above-left, general project vicinity is circled in yellow).



The special area plan also includes Transportation (starting p. 34) and Urban Design (starting p. 40) recommendations impacting the project site including:

- The extension of Coolidge Street and Huxley Avenues
- Provide enhanced pedestrian connectivity to open spaces,
- Maximize building street façade coverage and transparency along the street, and
- Building heights of 3-5 stories along street frontage (west side), stepping back to 3-6 stories away from the frontage and up to 10 stories closest to the rail line (east side).

Related Zoning Information: The project site is zoned Traditional Residential – Urban 2 (TR-U2) district, which requires a conditional use for residential buildings in excess of 36 units. As noted in the TR-U2 development standards the maximum permitted height is six stories/78 feet, setback requirements include minimum 15-foot/maximum 30-foot front, 12-foot reversed corner side yard, and the lesser of 25% lot depth or 20-foot for the rear yard. A minimum of 40 square feet of useable open space is required per dwelling unit.

As proposed, the proposed building is considered seven stories under the Zoning Code as a result of the elevator and stair overruns providing access to the upper floor of the parking ramp. Conditional use approval is required for the buildings in excess of six stories/78 feet in height.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests that the UDC evaluate the development proposal for consistency with the adopted plan recommendations, and Conditional Use review and approval criteria as noted above, and provide an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission giving consideration to the items noted below:

- **Building Height, Massing, Orientation, and Street Activation.** As noted in the adopted plans, maintaining a strong building orientation to the street with pedestrian-scale design elements is desired. As proposed, the Huxley Street frontage is primarily comprised of building end walls and courtyard spaces, which leaves two large voids on the block face. Staff requests the Commission make findings and provide a recommendation on the overall building orientation and street level activation along the street facing elevations, and incorporating human-scale design elements in the building design at the street level. Considering the specific conditional use request regarding height in excess of what is allowed with the underlying Zoning, staff request UDC’s feedback on that element.
- **Building Design and Materials.** As proposed, the material palette is primarily comprised of fiber cement siding and masonry veneer. Staff requests the UDC make findings and provide a recommendation related to the adequacy and appropriateness of the materials palette, colors, transitions, horizontal/vertical articulation, residential detailing (sills, lintels, entryways, stoops, windows), etc. to breakdown the overall building mass and scale, as well as large expanses singular materials.
- **Landscape Plan.** Staff requests UDC review and provide a recommendation related to the overall landscape plan and planting schedule both as it relates to the courtyard amenity spaces, as well as the at-grade landscape. Consideration should be given to the landscape treatment of these spaces, especially as it relates to ensuring privacy for units located adjacent to the public spaces, providing shade and softening the hardscape areas, as well as providing year-round color and texture.
- **Lighting.** As shown on the photometric plan, light levels along pedestrian pathways, at building common entryways, and within courtyard spaces are primarily shown to be 0.0 footcandles. Consideration should be given to providing lighting along pedestrian pathways not only for safety, but also to add to the

residential character of the building. Staff requests the Commission provide feedback and a recommendation with regard to lighting.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

As a reference, the Commission's comments from the September 21, 2022, meeting are below:

- This is an exciting project, reminds me of the rhythm of the Sherman Terrace condos. I would encourage you to put in a lot of canopy trees, this could use a lot more of that. To the architecture, I like your palette, your articulation and how it's facing the green area. There could be more deliberateness with the change of materials, right now it looks very random. A change of planes or having a datum in your change of materials.
- I like how you've massed them in this direction to have as your highlight.
- I'm thrilled to see this project come forward, not only the location but the type of project it is. Your massings are working well, I appreciate giving balconies to units that have families. The devil will be in the details, particularly where you transition color and materials. Make the changes in depth noticeable to help this look like a quality building. I appreciate the varied outdoor spaces you have. What sustainable features are you incorporating?
 - We have an energy innovation grant from the State and are going through a study to figure out which renewable energy resources we can incorporate (solar, HVAC systems, green roofs).
- I am very supportive of the project and what you're doing here. The building orientation, street activation, pedestrian connectivity, on-site open spaces. Comparing that to your site plan and the arrangement of the buildings, it seems like a lot of the buildings are really intentionally designed to front to the courtyards more so than the street. I'm questioning whether that's the right move or if there should be more street frontage, especially facing to the west. Likewise with the open spaces then left as the voids. All these different uses are very separate, each courtyard has its own identity. In a different arrangement you would have the opportunity to create a continuous park space within your developable area with pedestrian links to the conservation and other off-site areas. I'm struggling to see whether that's the right building massing for the project, maybe with more detail I'll see it more.
- This is quite an institutional look.
- I'm loving what you're doing here as a project plan and glad we're finally getting to the point of housing. How you are categorizing the affordability piece?
 - This one is 100% of units at 60% of the county median, so it's a Federal 4% tax credit and not a competitive process focused on the workforce.
- I was a bit concerned with how the design looks in terms of shading, have you considered a C-shape design instead? And have you studied putting those outdoor spaces together? I like the building materials, but also think it's a cool opportunity to use something more playful, especially as a multi-family development. Other colors outside of neutral tones.
- Big changes like grouping the courtyards together, also thinking about a really nice solar experience of the sun, allowing it in the courtyard spaces, reorienting for a more southern exposure so there is a protected space in the cooler seasons that will still get sunlight. I'm encouraged by the plans related to sustainability, and point out we like to know if there are going to be any other penetrations in the exterior of the building for louvers and mechanical equipment.
- Its appropriate architecture from a window to wall ratio, you also have a simple architecture in terms of form with not a lot of big angles or modulations. The building envelope being a critical component to sustainability, the design supports those kinds of additional performance-based efforts that the project might consider.
- The height is somewhat limited, is there any potential for changes to the height of the building?

- No, unfortunately with how the construction works and when you need to change over, to add one more story changes the overall construction method, which blows the budget out of the water.
- One sustainability idea is to have a thoughtful place to dry clothing. If you can create an environment where people can naturally dry their laundry that is protected and out of sight, it's something we don't see often that could be thoughtfully done in these early stages of design. WHEDA has considered that in the past as a sustainability metric, they've credited that design element on a site.
- Yes, you could have one larger green area but I like the rhythm this creates on the street, I don't know if that institutional rhythm will be perceived as a pedestrian as it is from the sky. Consider potentially offering some areas for gardening for the tenants.
 - Some of those areas are still being programmed but there are garden beds in those areas.
- For people walking by this site, I don't see any porches or at grade entrances, I see irregular spacing as I'm walking by these six-story buildings with a side setback the same width as the building itself, then a suburban building with a porte cochere. I see windows along the front yard, but this is anything but urban. This is a brand new site, a brand new neighborhood, but this is anything but urban and a huge missed opportunity.