



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 6114 Driscoll Drive
Application Type: Residential Building Complex
Legistar File ID # [60098](#)
Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Chris Ehlers, Veridian Homes/Brian Munson, Vandewalle & Associates

Project Description: The applicant is seeking final approval to construct a Residential Building Complex with 12 two-family twin homes (24 units).

Project Schedule:

- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this project on May 11, 2020

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. Section 28.151 of the Zoning Code requires that Residential Building Complexes be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission pursuant to the provisions in Section 33.24(4)(c). Section 33.24(4)(c), Residential Building Complexes, states: “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. It shall report its findings and recommendations to the City Plan Commission.”

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

The property is zoned TR-P (Traditional Residential-Planned District). Among the unique characteristics of this Zoning district is that it requires approval of a “Master Plan” by the Common Council. The Zoning Code does not require Urban Design Commission review of this Master Plan. This request is, however, before the UDC as it has been determined to be a Residential Building Complex. Residential Building Complexes are conditional uses that are decided by the Plan Commission, after an advisory opinion from the UDC, as described above.

Staff notes that a recently approved TR-P master plan amendment was approved by the Plan Commission in February 2020. Specific modifications included conversion of previously-approved four-unit buildings to a series of two-unit buildings. Part of the approved Master Plan shows the two-unit buildings to be “turned” with primary vehicular and pedestrian access from north-south courtyards, essentially allowing the sides of the buildings to face Milwaukee Street and Driscoll Drive.

While that general orientation was approved, the approved plans included no elevation or landscape plans, which staff understood would be presented in a future conditional use application. In reviewing this conditional use request, Planning Division staff have significant concerns regarding the lack of articulation for each of Milwaukee Street and Driscoll Drive-facing facades.

Below is Conditional Use Standard 9, which is among the standards that the Plan Commission must find met in order to approve a conditional use:

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.*

Considering the existing context and development pattern established in this and surrounding plats, plus other plan recommendations and zoning requirements that encourage and require street-orienting elements, staff does not believe that the current facades could be found to meet the above standard, as proposed. Staff acknowledges that the master plan allows for these to be side elevations, though believes consideration should be given to a variety of possible solutions to better articulate these side-elevations. Staff is not prescribing a specific solution, but suggest consideration be given to modifications such as additional larger windows, material changes, porch reconfigurations, building modulation, articulated garage service entries, or other elements.