



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: Midtown Center- 8137 Mayo Drive, 1833, 1859 Waldorf Boulevard, 8134, 8110 Mid-Town Road, 1902 Carns Drive

Application Type: Amendment to a PD(GDP) and New SIP – Initial/Final Approval is Requested

Legistar File ID # [58530](#)

Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Rick Wessling, Urbanworks Architecture LLC, Minneapolis, MN

Project Description: The applicant is seeking approval of a Planned Development-General Development Plan-Specific Implementation Plan (PD-GDP-SIP) for a development with three multi-unit apartment buildings. The proposed buildings will be five to six stories in height and include a total of 265 units and 355 parking stalls (255 structured and 100 surface). The remainder of the Mid Town Commons block was previously approved and is now built out as two residential buildings sit to the northeast of the subject site. Note, the request has been revised and the applicant has eliminated a commercial component that was on the original drawings.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an informational presentation on December 11, 2019.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this item on March 23, 2020.
- The Common Council is scheduled to review this item on March 31, 2020.

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. As with any **Planned Development**, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code sections 28.098(1), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval.

Summary of Design Considerations

Planning staff requests that the UDC review the comments from the Dec. 11, 2019 Informational Presentation feedback and provide specific feedback on the **PD approval standards** including the staff comments noted below.

Planning Staff also request that the Commission provide feedback on how the proposed development fits within the larger Mid Town Commons General Development Plan (GDP) as well as the context of the neighborhood and the Amended [High Point- Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan](#).

In summary, that plan recommends a combination of “Neighborhood Mixed-Use” and “Housing Mix 4” development for the subject site. Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas are generally recommended at a height of up to four stories, noting that the density of these mixed-use areas may exceed that what is recommended in Housing Mix 4. This recommendation is specifically located along Waldorf Boulevard, corresponding to the “Main Street” mixed-use area approved in the original General Development Plan. The removing of the commercial space makes that aspect of the request less consistent with the adopted plan.

The balance of the subject site is recommended for Housing Mix 4. Such areas are primarily located near larger mixed-use nodes and transit corridors and are intended to support the development of neighborhood-oriented businesses that will create an engaging focal point for neighborhood activity and convenience shopping. It

includes multi-family buildings and larger development forms. The plan generally recommends heights up to four stories and densities up to 50 dwelling units per acre.

Staff requests the UDC provides feedback on the following points:

- Concern regarding some larger blank wall conditions, including Building A & B's western (Waldorf Blvd.) elevations.
- Concerns regarding building elevations with street-facing Wal-Pak/HVAC units and louvres.
- Discuss the amount and suitability of usable open space across the site.
- Note, portions of the buildings appear to be taller than the height than recommended in the High Point Raymond Neighborhood Development plan, particularly Building B.
- Provide feedback regarding the proposed projecting balconies-versus a more in-set solution.
- Provide more information on large retaining wall details and materials.

December 11, 2019 UDC comments:

- It looks nice, there's a lot of restraint in both the site layout and architecture. As the landscape develops, I hope it doesn't become this swoopy bedline very much like the organization and cleanliness you have here.
- It's a good use of grade and when you're on Waldorf looking east, is there a big retaining wall behind the truck?
- I like how you did the parking entries, it works well.
- The entrance to the underground parking off of Mid-Town, it's a large amount of paving. Does it need to have that much paving or can you have more green going down into that area?
- The view at Mayo Drive looking east, those are really large broad expanses of flat panels. To my eye, I fear that the average person looking at that is going to find it rather institutional looking. There's nothing going on at all, it could be more different than the ones across the street. Look at landscaping placement to soften that.
- As people pull in to the U-Haul spot, there's a neat design opportunity there with the walls and focal point. Whether it's lighting, something artistic, or landscaping cascading it could be a unique entry feature.