



PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

January 13, 2016

PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 841 Jupiter Drive and 818 North Star Drive
Application Type: Planned Development (PD) Rezoning
Legistar File ID # [40142](#) and [40958](#)
Prepared By: Kevin Firchow, Planning Division
Report includes comments from other City agencies, as noted.
Reviewed By: Jay Wendt, Principal Planner

The following summary report has been prepared to note design-related issues that the Planning Division has highlighted for the consideration of the Urban Design Commission (UDC). A full staff report will be prepared after the recommendation of the UDC for consideration by the Plan Commission. That report will include further information regarding density and unit-mix information.

Background Information

The project site consists of two properties. 841 Jupiter Drive is the site of the proposed "Fusion Apartments" (as referred to in the applicant's materials). It includes 54 dwelling units. 818 North Star Drive (referred to as "The View") is a five-story, 82-unit mixed-use building, currently under construction. As part of this request, the applicant proposes to increase the number of allowable dwelling units on 841 Jupiter Drive from 38 to 54 units. As part of the 2014 Planned Development (PD) zoning approval for "The View," the approved density was reapportioned between the two subject properties.

Approval Standards and Design Considerations

As a Planned Development, the UDC is required to make a recommendation to the Plan Commission with *specific* findings on the design objectives listed in subsections 28.098 (1) and (2) and the other requirements of that subchapter. Note that this includes Planned Development Standard 2(e), related to the coordination of architectural styles and building forms, which states:

The PD District Plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve a greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of this PD District.

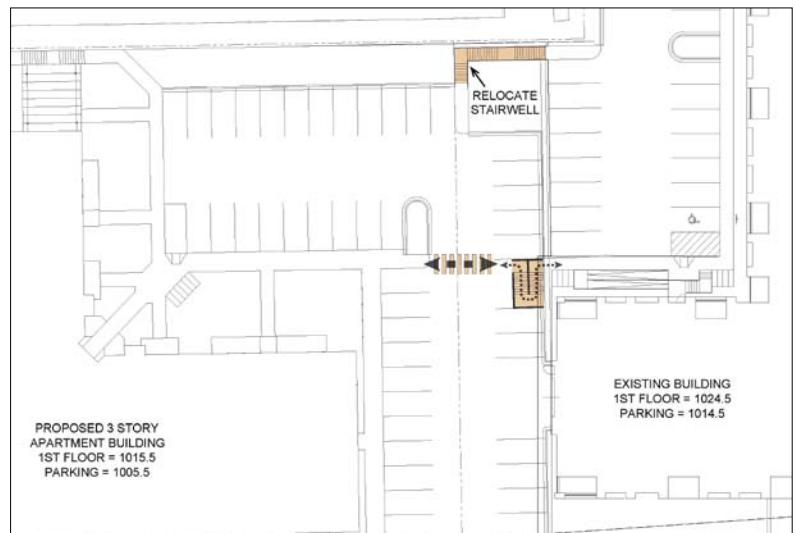
The Planning Division notes the following design-related issues:

- **Articulation of Lower Level West Wall.** The Planning Division remains concerned regarding the articulation of this wall. In the latest plans, a series of stainless steel trellis features will be installed perpendicular to the wall, planted with vines. This masonry-clad wall also includes three projections that provide some vertical variation. The Planning Division still encourages further articulation and requests that the UDC gives careful consideration to the need for additional features such as doors or windows or other architecturally integrated elements. Staff has previously recommended that the applicant consider a door at this level that could be utilized as an at-grade entrance for pedestrians and bicycles, similar to what was provided next door at 825 Jupiter Drive and at 5817 Halley Way, which faced similar grade challenges.

- **Articulation of East Façade Wall.** The Planning Division also recommends consideration be given to the articulation of the East Façade Wall, (specifically the “left” side of the façade as shown on sheet A-3). The Planning Division recommends that opportunities for additional/larger windows be considered. This could include the possibility of windows on the ground floor where there is currently a panel material and the possibility of smaller day-lighting windows in the upper floor closets or other options.
- **Pedestrian Route Between Buildings.** To achieve the desired unit-mix for the “Fusion Apartments,” the applicant requests that the two subject sites be considered together for the sake of evaluating unit mix and shared amenities. For such a consideration to occur, it is important that safe, convenient, and code-compliant pedestrian routes be established between the buildings.

If amenities are shared, City Building Inspection states that code requires there be an ADA accessible route between the buildings. Two connections are currently proposed, but neither appears to be an ADA-accessible route, based on the information provided at this time. The applicant has proposed establishing a crosswalk connection between the first floor of the “Fusion Apartments” and the underground garage level of “The View.” Building Inspection staff indicates that this route cannot be located down a drive aisle, which is the route believed to be contemplated within “The View’s” parking garage. The applicant should address ADA compliant solutions as this is critical to these sites being able to being considered together, as requested.

Further, the Planning Division does not believe the other connection, the stair connection at the back of the site, provides a safe or convenient path between the structures. Staff recommends that the rear stair connection be replaced with a different connection that aligns with the sidewalk behind the “Fusion Apartments” and the sidewalk in front of “The View.” (Graphic at the right shows staff-preferred location of a relocated connection.)



- **Façade Detailing.** In reviewing the material palette, the Planning Division recommends details on the brick façade be reviewed. The applicant proposes to utilize a utility size brick, however mortar details are not provided. The Planning Division believes that a matching mortar color is preferable to a contrasting mortar color when utilizing the larger brick.
- **On-Site Amenities.** The Planning Division requests that the applicant reviews the revised on-site landscaping and site amenities with Urban Design Commission. Consideration should be given to pedestrian-level amenities and lighting, especially on routes intended to provide on-site connections between the buildings.