



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 301 S Westfield Road
Application Type: Residential Building Complex
UDC will be an Advisory Body
Legistar File ID #: [93474](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Steven Murphy, RFA | Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the construction of a Residential Building Complex, comprised of three buildings on the northern portion of a larger project site. The Residential Building Complex includes three multi-family residential buildings; two five-story buildings and one four-story building. The development will be served by both surface and underground parking, as well as first floor courtyard amenity spaces.

Staff note that while the applicant is proposing a larger-scale redevelopment, only the Residential Building Complex located on the northern portion of the larger site falls within the UDC’s review purview as currently proposed.

Approval Standards: The UDC will be an **advisory body** to the Plan Commission on this request. [Section 33.24\(4\)\(c\)](#), MGO states that:

*“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 Plan Commission.”*

Adopted Plan Recommendations: The project site is located in the [West Area Plan](#) planning area. The West Area Plan identifies the project site as Community Mixed Use (CMU) land use category (2-6 stories and general densities of less than 130 dwelling units per acre) and building heights of up to eight stories. As proposed, the development **appears to be** consistent with the adopted plan recommendations, although additional intensity would be supported by the plan.

Zoning Related Information: While the project site is currently zoned Planned Development, it is staff’s understanding that the applicant will be seeking to rezone the project site to Commercial Corridor – Transitional (CC-T). The Zoning Code outlines design standards that are applicable to all new buildings in the City’s mixed use and commercial Zoning Districts ([MGO 28.060\(2\)](#)), including, but not limited to those related to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, design of street-facing facades, door and window openings, equipment and service area screening, and building materials. Staff notes that ultimately, the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with Zoning Code requirements.

The project site is also located in the Transit Oriented Development Overlay District (TOD Overlay). The TOD Overlay allows for heights of up to 6 stories/90 feet by-right. In addition, new development with the TOD Overlay is subject to the requirements as outlined in [MGO 28.104](#), including those that speak to:

- Maximum principal building setbacks – At least 30% of the primary street facing façade (S Westfield Road) shall be setback no more than 20 feet,

- Entrance orientation – Principal building entrances shall be orientated towards the primary abutting street (S Westfield Road) and be located within the maximum setback (20 feet),
- Minimum number of stories – A minimum of two stories is required for a minimum of 75% of the building footprint, and
- Site standards for automobile infrastructure.

While as proposed the development **appears to meet** these requirements, staff notes that a complete Zoning analysis will be conducted as part of the Site Plan Review process. Ultimately, the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with all applicable Zoning requirements.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff request the UDC's feedback on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards as it relates to the design considerations noted below.

- **Street-Level Activation.** The project site is situated within a block of Mineral Point Road, a BRT station, multi-use path, and within walking distance of retail and commercial amenities. All of which encourage the use alternate modes of transportation to the personal vehicle. In addition, the site layout reflects more of an urban infill development, with an internal access drive serving as a "street". As such, consideration should be given to maintaining a strong building orientation to the street, both internally and externally to the site, including:
 - Emphasizing the design of common building entries so that they are clearly identifiable,
 - Using building design techniques that frame or accentuate internal and external street corners,
 - Incorporating individual walk-up unit entries that connect to pedestrian pathways and amenity spaces, both internal and external to the site, and
 - Exploring using more complete streets design principles along the internal access drives, including angled or parallel parking, wider, protected sidewalks, terraces and landscaping, etc., especially along the north/south drive.

Staff request the Commission's feedback on the overall street-level activation and building orientation to the street.

- **Building Design and Composition.** While many design details are not known at the Informational Presentation stage, staff request the Commission's feedback on the overall building design and composition. Consideration should be given to creating a collection of buildings that are complementary to each other and the context, but that may also be unique and identifiable in their individual expressions.

Such considerations may include introducing variation in some of the design elements and materials between buildings, including defining building components (top, middle base) differently, integrating changes in plane or variations in accent colors where materials transition, using a different finish treatment at the top of each building, introducing a true variation in the roof line versus false front elements, integrating different proportions or rhythms in vertical and horizontal articulation, etc.

- **Exterior Materials.** While the exterior materials are not identified on the elevation drawings, they appear to be comprised of masonry as a base course material, and a variety of composite siding and/or panels (either fiber cement or metal), including faux wood. Consideration should be given to using a palette of materials that is both durable and contextually appropriate. Staff request the UDC's feedback on the proposed material palette.

- **Architectural/Mechanical Louvers.** While architectural or HVAC louvers do not appear to be shown on the elevation drawings, they are commonly associated with underground parking and multi-family residential development. It has been the current practice to not locate architectural/mechanical louvers on street-facing or on highly visible facades, although they have been approved in some situations when found to be well-integrated into the façade's design. Staff request the UDC's feedback on the design and finish detailing of any architectural or HVAC louvers.
- **Landscape and Screening.** As indicated on the site plan, the project site is adjacent to lower intensity development on the north and commercial uses and surface parking to the east. In addition, the proposed amenity spaces are primarily hardscaped areas above structured parking.

While a conceptual landscape plan was not provided, staff request the Commission's feedback on potential future landscape considerations related to providing adequate transitions/buffers between uses of differing levels of intensity, providing effective year-round screening, and softening hardscape areas.