



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 2007 Roth Street – Lot B  
**Application Type:** Alder Referral – Multi-Family Residential Building  
Informational Presentation  
**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 providing an Informational Presentation for the construction of a six-story, 300-unit multi-family affordable housing building and a wrapped parking structure with approximately 500 parking stalls.

**Approval Standards:** 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. This application is before the UDC at the request of Alder Abbas. As such, the UDC will be an **advisory body** in their review and action to the Plan Commission

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 states:

*“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” (Am. by ORD-14-00030, 2-18-14).*

**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), the project site is identified as Key Area Five/Six: Northgate – Kraft/Oscar Mayer. In the neighborhood plan two mixed-use design concepts (see image below, project site circled in red) were included that share major planning and design goals for redevelopment of the area, including:

- 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. 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 development appears to be consistent with these standards.

## Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC evaluate the development proposal for consistency with the aforementioned plan design guidelines and recommendations, and Conditional Use review and approval criteria, and provide comments related to the items noted below:

- **Building Massing, Form, and Siting.** The surrounding context of the project site is marked by an area that is in transition with a variety of both nonresidential and residential land uses. Given the transitional context of the project site and that the proposed development is expected to set the tone for future redevelopment within the area, consideration should be given to the overall building form including height, mass, and scale. Staff requests the Commission also provides feedback on the building and site design as it relates to providing adequate transitions (i.e. stepbacks/setbacks) and buffers/screening to surrounding development, open spaces, and the railroad.
- **Building 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 provide feedback 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.
- **Building Design and Materials.** As proposed, the material palette is primarily comprised of fiber cement siding and masonry veneer. Staff requests the UDC's feedback on the adequacy and appropriateness of materials, 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.
- **On-Site Open Spaces.** As noted on the site plan, there three at-grade courtyard amenity spaces. Consideration should be given to the treatment of these spaces, especially as it relates providing both active and passive recreation opportunities, mitigating noise, ensuring privacy for units located adjacent to the public spaces, providing shade and softening the hardscape, and designing landscapes to provide year-round color and texture.
- **Pedestrian Connectivity.** Providing enhanced pedestrian connectivity was identified as a development goal that was enumerated in the adopted plans. As such, consideration should be given to incorporating enhanced pedestrian connectivity and the design of pathways, not only internal to the project site, but external connections as well, including to open spaces. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the overall site connectivity, both internally and externally, as well as the design features of the pedestrian elements.