



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 6303 Portage Road & 4821 Hoepker Road
Application Type: Informational Presentation – Residential Building Complex
UDC will be an Advisory Body
Legistar File ID #: [86617](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: MH Madison, LLC | Advenir Azora Development, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the construction of a collection of 200 single- and two-family units residential dwelling units on a roughly 27-acre parcel. The development will include private streets, detached garages, and a club house and pool.

Approval Standards: The UDC will be an **advisory body** on this request. Pursuant to MGO 28.151, residential building complexes shall 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.”*

As a Residential Building Complex, a Conditional Use is required. The Plan Commission will evaluate the request for consistency with the approval standards, including the following Conditional Use Standard No. 8, which is the primary standard related to project aesthetics. For reference, Conditional Use Standard No. 8 is noted below.

*“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.” (Emphasis Added)*

Adopted Plans: The project site is located in the [Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Development Plan](#) (the “Plan”) planning area. The Plan recommends both Housing Mix 1 (HM1) development, as well as Parks, Open Space and Drainage land uses for the project site. Housing Mix 1 is defined as Low Density Residential (0-15 dwelling units per acre) comprised of single-family detached homes, row/townhomes and duplexes. Overall, staff believes that the residential building forms proposed are generally consistent with the housing and relative density recommended for the HM1 land use recommendation. However, the majority of the property where the residential building complex is proposed is recommended for Parks, Open Space and Drainage given the existing natural features, which include an intermittent stream, woodland, and significant topography.

As another concern, the proposed development plan **does not** reflect the recommended street layout. As indicated in both the City’s Comprehensive Plan and the Plan there is series of east-west local streets intended to serve the areas recommended for HM1 development. In addition, the aforementioned plans do not include a street extending west to Portage Road as shown in the development plan, this in part is due to the topographical features present on that portion of the site.

In addition, as noted in the Plan, the development concept for Pumpkin Hollow envisions development that resembles Transitional Neighborhood Development design principles, including providing a variety of housing options, fostering a mix of land uses, appropriate land use transitions, a strong orientation to the street and encouraging an interconnected a “grid-like” street pattern.

Staff notes that while plan inconsistencies have been identified, the task of evaluating plan consistency and making related findings is part of the Plan Commission’s purview. In addition, staff notes that making the necessary revisions to the proposed development plan to incorporate the transportation connectivity recommendations in the Plan will likely result in significant changes to the overall site layout, including as it relates to overall connectivity, both vehicular and pedestrian, location of amenity spaces, building placement, etc. The applicant is encouraged to continue to work with staff to resolve these concerns related to the conflicts with the adopted plans.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC provides feedback and findings regarding the aforementioned standards, including comments related to the design considerations noted below.

- **Building Design and Materials.** As noted in the application materials the architectural design is intended to represent a heterogenous collection of cottage-style homes clad in materials and architectural details traditionally associated with single-family residential development, including timber brackets, balconies, porches, stoops, fiber cement siding, vinyl windows, etc. Staff requests the Commission’s feedback on the overall building design and materials.
- **Landscaping and Building Orientation Considerations.** As noted above, staff has identified concerns related to Plan consistency, including street network considerations. While many of these considerations will be considered by the Plan Commission, staff anticipates changes could impact design elements that will ultimately be before the UDC as part of the formal advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission.
 - **Building Orientation.** The proposed development is comprised of a seemingly “grid-like” network of public and private streets. As proposed, there are “holes” in the building rhythm along the north-south public street as a result of the proposed pool amenity and increased side yard setbacks. Consideration should be given to maintaining a stronger orientation to the street, especially as it relates to building placement, maintaining a consistent building rhythm, and building orientation and detailing (i.e., locating front porches, stoops, windows, landscape, seating amenities, etc.) along primary public streets, as well as pedestrian pathways. Overall, staff has concerns related to the site’s topography and how the proposed grading plan translates to/impacts building design, placement, and orientation.

In addition, consideration should also be given to the overall location/integration, as well as design of the detached garages into the overall development plan and streetscape, including minimizing blank walls, doors, and potential screening.

- **Landscape and Screening.** As indicated on the site plan, there is a maintenance and refuse collection area located in the southeast corner of the site. Consideration should be given to the landscape and screening of this area, especially given the proximity of the adjacent residences.

- Connectivity. Overall, the proposed development plan reflects some internal connectivity, including streets with sidewalks, and some with terraces, as well as parallel parking. Related to the UDC's review purview, staff requests the Commission's feedback on ways the building design and orientation, as well as landscape plan could improve such connections.

Staff notes that in addition to assuring there is adequate internal connectivity, staff and other review agencies will be giving consideration to external connectivity as well. This includes those transportation-related recommendations in the adopted plans, as well as the potential for additional mid-block east-west pedestrian connections on the north side of the development, especially those connecting this development to future development areas to the east. Staff further notes that the design of what is believed to be public streets does not appear to reflect the city standards, including those for detached sidewalks and terraces, and potential right-of-way widths.