



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 2101-2115 E Springs Drive
Application Type: Residential Building Complex Consisting of Four, 4-Story Multi-Family Apartment Buildings
Legistar File ID # [69543](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Dan Schmidt, Signature Pointe Apartments, LLC | Ulian Kissiov, Architect

Project Description: The applicant is providing an Informational Presentation for the development of four, 4-story multi-family apartment buildings with a total of 500+/- dwelling units (~34.5 du/acre) located northeast of East Towne Mall, on the east side of East Springs Drive. Onsite parking will be comprised of both surface and underground parking. All first floor units will have active unit entrances and pedestrian connections to the surrounding street and/or the surface parking areas. Exterior building materials are comprised of fiber cement siding and metal panels.

Approval Standards: The UDC will be an **advisory body** 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.”*

Summary of Design Related Plan Recommendations: The project site is also located within the [Greater East Town Area Plan](#) (the Plan) planning area. The Plan recommends Medium Density Residential land uses for the project site while adjacent properties are recommend to remain in either open space or general commercial uses. No public streets are recommended through the subject site. The goal and intent of the Plan recommendations is to encourage development of “complete neighborhoods” where residents have convenient access to goods and services needed for daily life. The Plan goes on to define “complete neighborhoods” as providing a mix of housing types, costs, a network of well-connected parks, streets, blocks, paths, etc. The site abuts the Starkweather Creek corridor, for which the Plan recommends a 200-foot buffer from the edge of the creek.

Also as noted in the Plan, there is planned infrastructure and natural features that will impact development of the project, including a planned off-street bike path that runs from East Springs Drive through the project site to the interstate, as well as the Starkweather Creek corridor, associated wetlands and buffers that are located adjacent to the project site on the south.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC provide feedback on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards related to the items noted below. As part of this review, staff recommends feedback be provided on the following elements:

- **Parking and Pedestrian Circulation.** Due to the shape and depth of the site, and the limited public street frontage, there are some potential challenges in providing pedestrian circulation to the public sidewalk, especially for buildings setback further into the site. Vehicular access is proposed through a linear double-loaded parking lot that largely runs along the entire eastern boundary with the abutting commercial site.

From a pedestrian circulation standpoint, there is a sidewalk along the edge of the parking lot that connects to East Springs Drive. Currently, though there is no median or separation between the parking lot and sidewalk. Staff requests UDC's feedback on the adequacy of pedestrian connections and whether design modifications could enhance the pedestrian connections, especially along the parking lots, by creating more a complete street-like character for this private drive and parking area.

- **Building Mass and Scale.** The proposed concept includes four large buildings, all of which are estimated to be in excess of 300 feet in length, including Building A, fronting on East Springs Drive. Staff requests the UDC provide comments on the overall concept and whether modifications to building size/footprint or any reconfigurations of the buildings or application of the materials could result in improved pedestrian circulation and scale, or open space connectivity.
- **Wall Packs.** As noted on the elevations, it appears that there are some wall pack units proposed on street facing elevations. It has been the current practice to not locate wall packs on street facing facades, though they have been approved in some situations when found to be well integrated into the façade's design. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the integration of the wall packs with the overall building design and materials.
- **Buffer and Screening.** Given the site's proximity to the railroad and I-90/94, consideration should be given to providing adequate buffer and screening along the site's south side. Staff requests the Commission's feedback and direction on providing an adequate buffer/screen, including plantings and spacing, fencing, walls, berms, or a combination thereof, etc.
- **Starkweather Creek Setback.** Staff notes the plan recommends a 200-foot development buffer from the edge of the Creek. It appears some elements of the building may be set slightly closer to the creek than generally recommended.