



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 304 Lakota Way
Application Type: Residential Building Complex – Advisory Recommendation is Requested
Legistar File ID #: [73566](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Ryan McMurtrie, United Financial Group, Inc. | Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC | Ziegler at Elderberry, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is seeking an Advisory Recommendation for five, 2-story buildings containing four townhome-style units each.

Approval Standards: The UDC is 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.”*

Adopted Plans: The project site is located within the Elderberry Neighborhood Development Plan (the “Plan”) planning area. The Plan recommends Housing Mix 1 (< 8 du/ac) land uses for the project site, which includes single-family, duplex, four units, townhome housing types with buildings up to two stories in height.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests that the UDC review the proposed development and provide findings and recommendations based on the aforementioned standards for residential building complexes, as well as the comments noted by the Commission in their Informational Presentation comments:

- **Materials and Composition.** The materials palette is relatively simple and consistent cross all five buildings; comprised of two types of masonry and composite siding. Staff requests the Commission’s feedback on the building materials and architectural detailing.
- **Landscape.** Staff commends the development team for reconfiguring the building footprints resulting in a more positive building orientation to the street, as well as a reduction in the onsite paving and increase in landscape and open spaces. As shown on the landscape plan, there are robust, circuitous planting beds screening and framing patios and porches. Consideration should be given to the location of the beds in relationship to the building, as well as providing pedestrian pathways through the beds. Staff requests the UDC provide feedback and make findings related to the overall landscape design and plant schedule with regard to providing year-round color and texture and privacy.

As noted above, the UDC is an advisory body on this request. Staff recommends the Commission’s findings and recommendations to the Plan Commission be framed as a motion based on the applicable review criteria, including the conditional use review and approval criteria. Additionally, while the UDC utilizes the Initial/Final Approval framework in certain situations, as an advisory recommendation, staff believes it would be procedurally preferable to provide a singular motion with the Commission’s findings and recommendations.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

As a reference, the Commission's comments from the September 21, 2022, Informational Presentation are provided below:

- Have you considered townhouses with more of an alley in the back to avoid these deep drives with all that paving? Almost every single porch has a view of a parking spot, why not simplify the whole thing? This is a lot of complicated rooflines.
 - Our focus is to provide another variety of offering for this development. We wanted to create another scale for the residents.
- I like the scale of each little building but it detracts from a lot of the outdoor experience you're trying to create with those porches.
- Quite simply I'm going to echo that. They're attractive little structures, the use of masonry, but the parking thing, I'm trying to think of how you could reconfigure this. Looking from Lakota Way it appears like each unit facing the street has a two-car garage; does it have to be two-car? Even one car per unit would really help, you can park on the street and you'd gain significant greenspace and curb appeal, the front of your home wouldn't be just big garages.
- The dominance of the garage doors on the street is the big concern. Buildings 1 and 5 from Lakota Way are more desirable.
- It's so nice to drive through a neighborhood that doesn't have garages facing the street. These are being built for a specific purpose here, they're not owner-occupied. This neighborhood is building lots of different types of buildings, nice house-looking three bedroom apartments, most people given the choice want a two-car garage. I'm happy at least the two end ones have a front yard on Lakota that don't have a driveway. Despite the double driveways, the buildings are attractive with nice touches with the arches over the main entryway. This one at least shows some of the gutters.
- The colors and repetition of the street rendering is something to think about, it's very suburban. The strip between the driveways and between the driveway and sidewalks, where do people put their snow? They're not going to take care of those little green strips; that is something to think about. I really enjoy your use of color and this is looking really safe, maybe you don't have to be so safe.
- I wonder if there's an opportunity to have a slight angle to these, breaking up the uniformity of these houses from that long view and giving relief between the properties to free up some exterior greenspace. Any relief for setbacks, a more linear form and the garage actually took over more of that driveway space.
- It's a handsome rhythm, it's just dominated by garages. You've got street parking and a driveway, consider eliminating the visitor stall, it may not be necessary.