



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 6831 Odana Road
Application Type: New Restaurant in a Planned Multi-Use Site – Initial/Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID # [68352](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Lauren Downing, Arc Design Resources, Inc. | Aby Mohamed, Aby Groups | David Israel, Westland Plaza, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is seeking Initial/Final Approval for an alteration to an existing Planned Multi-Use Site to convert an existing surface parking area into a new single-story, 2,984 square-foot restaurant with drive-up service window.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC reviewed and referred this item on December 15, 2021.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review proposal on March 21, 2022
- The proposed signage package will return to the UDC for formal approval in the future.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **advisory** body on this request. The site is located in the Commercial Center (CC) zoning district and it is part of a Planned Multi-Use Site. [Section 28.137\(2\)\(e\)](#) of the Zoning Code states that, *“A planned multi-use site containing more than forty thousand (40,000) square feet of floor area and where twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet of floor area is designed or intended for retail use or for hotel or motel use, shall require Conditional Use approval following a recommendation on the design of any specific proposal by the Urban Design Commission.”*

Staff notes that the Conditional Use standards, that will be used by the Plan Commission to evaluate this request includes the following design-related standard, *“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.”*

Adopted Plans Design Considerations: The project site is located within the Odana Road Plan (the Plan) planning area. Staff notes that both the [Comprehensive Plan](#) and the recently adopted [Odana Area Plan](#) recommend building heights of at least two stories in this area. Other design-related considerations as noted in the adopted plans include avoiding blank street-facing walls and screening parking. The Plan also shows planned future street connections through this property, which the proposed plans do not appear to in conflict with the conceptual alignment. Ultimately, the Plan Commission will need to evaluate plan consistency considerations as they relate to the applicable conditional use standards.

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

As a reference, staff is including an overall aerial photo (right) of the entire shopping center for the Commission's reference. The subject site highlighted in yellow.

Summary of Design Considerations

As part of their advisory opinion, staff requests that the UDC include feedback related to the following design-related elements:

- **Plan Consistency and Building Height.** While the Plan Commission will ultimately need to evaluate plan consistency considerations related to the applicable conditional use standards, staff requests the UDC's feedback on height considerations recognizing the plan recommendation.
- **Site Plan.** While staff recognizes the improvements made to the site plan and circulation, staff request consideration be given to the location of the refuse area in terms of visibility and functionality, as well as minimizing pedestrian/vehicular conflicts on site. Staff question if there are ways the parking can be reconfigured to maintain the revised drive-thru circulation pattern and maintain the number of parking stalls, but continue to improve the pedestrian circulation.



In addition, for the Commission's consideration, two options for pedestrian connectivity from Odana Road are included in the plan set. Refer to the Layout Plan and the Alternate Pedestrian Access plan sheets. The Layout Plan provides a direct path with stairs and a railing from Odana Road. The Alternate Pedestrian Access, provides a switchback with retaining walls varying in height from two-seven feet. In working with City Traffic Engineering, they noted that while either route is acceptable, the shortest, most direct route is preferable. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the preferred pedestrian access.

- **Blank Walls.** Staff acknowledges the overall improved building design and materials palette, including the removal of EIFS. However, given the high visibility of the project site, consideration should be given the treatment of large blank wall expanses, especially those visible from the street, including the east (DT Elevation) and west (Side) elevations. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the treatment of blank wall expanses, regardless of signage shown on the plans.

Staff notes that the proposed signage reflected in the building elevations should not be included in the Commission's consideration at this time. A Comprehensive Design Review is anticipated and signage will be evaluated as part of that application request.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

Staff refers the Commission to their comments from the December 15, 2021, Informational Presentation:

- It's a really fun looking building, I don't have any issues with the building, my concern is with the site, the circulation of vehicles goes almost without exception completely around the building, making pedestrian traffic from the lot to the front door a bit dicey. Is there any consideration for queuing the vehicles along the south side and reserving that whole middle section for pedestrians?
- If you took that driveway entrance on the south and moved it further west, its 360 degrees surrounded by the drive-thru.
- People just take the bee-line, they don't tend to follow those paths.
- The EIFS shown, is an acceptable alternative material to use the brick throughout? We have limitations on EIFS.
- The brick material, it's called "brick fiber cement panels." Is this phony fiber cement with a brick texture printed on it? It looks like brick in the renderings but it's not brick.
- When you cut window openings and go around corners, does it ever look fake. Can you use a wood grain panel instead of brick?
- We don't like EIFS for the look, but also over time it doesn't perform well.
- When you turn corners, the door jams go in, it doesn't even come close to looking like brick.
- There's a chicken restaurant across Gammon Road that uses real brick in all their restaurants.
- For some of the detailing, either pick a different finish that would get the same design and look, or go with either brick or a CMU to get a better material.
- Doing a 180 in there is a dicey proposition. I don't know what could be worked out with traffic circulation, it definitely does not seem ideal.
- Props for going above and beyond what we would normally see in a fast food restaurant for landscaping. The plant list includes Lavender and roses, thank you for landscaping a restaurant nicely. At the entrance driveway and the island next to the handicapped parking you have two Chanticleer Callery Pears, we ask people not to use those trees as they're being banned throughout the country. Consider Horse Chestnut, Buckeye, Japanese Tree Lilac, or small Crab.
- Suggest review of where that ramp comes up from Odana Road that could be dicey.
- That's a switchback ramp, less than 1 to 20 or will it require handrails? Can you stretch it out, come in further west and come up 1 to 20? I'm going to see nothing but handrail from the street. I know you have to provide that access from the public right-of-way, it's a challenge for sure.
- If you can get a more gradual slope especially for people that are disabled it would be appreciated, not just aesthetically but accessible, not just meeting code.
- Hesitant to give initial approval with major site issues. I'd be comfortable with initial taking to heart all the site and building materials comments.
- If you give initial you are accepting the general configuration of the site plan.
- Our concerns remain with pedestrians crossing a 360 degree drive aisle. I'm not convinced moving it to the west is going to cause accidents, it's not a main street. Unless we see a memo from Traffic Engineering we have to go with our best judgment here. The site plan seems to have problems with regard to pedestrian and disabled access and convenience, it's mostly set up for the drive-thru and at that, there are hairpin turns to get through there. Some people won't be able to do it in one gesture, backing up, that gives me some concern.
- We went back and forth with the Portillo's site, with what Traffic wanted vs. circulation issues on site, trying to find that common ground between what Traffic is looking for in terms of access, but circulation

can sometimes be outside that purview. We would ask the Plan Commission to refer this back to UDC for a final review.