

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

April 26, 2023

PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION



Project Address: 702 N Midvale Boulevard, 401 N Segoe Road & 320 Price Place
Application Type: Planned Development-Specific Implementation Plan (PD-SIP), Hilldale Phase 3
UDC is an Approving and Advisory Body
Legistar File ID #: [75717](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Brian Munson, Vandewalle & Associates | 401 N Segoe, LLC & Hilldale Shopping Center, LLC

Project Description: The applicant proposing the next phase of redevelopment activities at Hilldale Shopping Center. This is labeled as "Phase 3" in the submitted materials and includes the 200, 300, and 500 buildings.

Project Schedule:

- UDC received an Informational Presentation on February 1, 2023.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal on May 8, 2023.
- Common Council is scheduled to review this proposal on May 16, 2023.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request in regards to its location within Urban Design District 6 ("UDD 6"). Under those standards, the Urban Design Commission shall review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(9).

The UDC is also an **advisory body** on the PD request. As with any Planned Development, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code sections 28.098(1), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval (PD Standards Attached).

Summary of Design Considerations

Planning Division staff requests that the UDC make findings related to the aforementioned standards and guidelines for UDD 6 related to the items noted below:

- **Building 500 - Ground Level Activation.** Staff continues to have concerns regarding the adequacy of the ground level activation along pedestrian pathways, especially as it relates to Building 500. Some of the sidewalks adjacent to this building appear to abut relatively large blank walls, particularly those on street facing sides of the building. Staff requests UDC review and make findings related to the street level activation and the treatment of blank wall expanses giving consideration to the UDD 6 guidelines and requirements and PD standards, which generally speak to avoiding large blank wall expanses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area.
- **Building 500 – Design and Composition.** As noted by the Commission in their initial Informational Presentation comments, consideration should be given to the overall 'institutional' design of this building, including materials and color, as well as the treatment of blank walls. While the applicant has certainly made positive refinements to the overall building design, incorporating additional materials and colors, staff requests the UDC make findings related to the building design, giving consideration to the UDD 6 guidelines and requirements, and PD standards.

- **Landscape and Screening.** As noted by the Commission in their initial Informational Presentation comments, consideration should be given to the landscape treatment within and the screening of the surface parking area adjacent to Building 500, including providing an ample buffer from vehicular overhangs, additional landscape/yard space to soften the hardscape, provide additional room for staging at building entries, etc., as well as employing landscape design to really soften blank walls. Staff requests the UDC make findings related to the proposed landscape plan as it relates to providing adequate year-round landscape and screening.
- **Lighting.** While light levels appear to be consistent with MGO 29.36, the applicant is advised that additional review and approval is required for some fixtures with regard to cutoff shielding requirements, specifically fixture L5. Additional information may be required as part of the Site Plan Review process to confirm shielding and cutoff requirements are met.
- **Signage.** While signage is not part of this application request, potential sign locations are shown on the elevations, including locations at the highest point on the building on the rooftop mechanical screen. Staff requests the UDC review the proposed sign locations and provide feedback related to the UDD 6 guidelines and requirements, including those that speak to scale, integration of signage with architecture, and quantity, so as not to create clutter.

Summary of Informational Presentation Comments

As a reference, the Commission's comments from the February 1, 2023, Informational Presentation are provided below:

- The staff report requested we address ground level activation, the 500 Building at Vernon and Price Place where sidewalks abut large walls, feedback on yearlong color and screening of the back of house features, and ultimately the PD standards. Thirteen months ago this Commission approved the GDP and remarked on concerns about the views from the apartment building, questioning what will be done with that loss of parking.
- I think the street activation is the best part of the project. When you look at the first part I think the architecture is nice, simple, and somewhat sexy. When you start to let people personalize things like the storefront entries you start to take away from the architecture and attractiveness of the building. A consistent canopy color or design supports the project better. I get the detailing with the brick on the residential building but I think it is still somewhat flat and almost institutional. Abandon all of those precedents, do something timely that supports this modern development. It works at the ground level, the glazing works but once you get above that, it gets really bland even with the detailing. I would challenge you to rethink how you support that model or massing. This is a project in a unique area that wants to be more dynamic and interesting. I like the landscaping that will support more of the activation of the pedestrian views once it matures.
- It is really nice to see such refined visuals and renderings, it's exciting. I agree on the opportunities and the importance of this area. As much as I appreciated the explanation of the residential building design, I had a similar reaction that the human experience of those fine details may not come through. It's dark and really gray, I wonder if some warmth is needed. Have the mechanical penetrations been thought through yet?
 - You can see the venting penetrations for the units. The intent is to organize those and create a systematic approach to those.
- It's smaller than we usually see.
 - We do not have thru-wall mechanicals.

- It's great to see the detail, thank you for bringing that for informational. Could you elaborate on the objectives for the PD application, which of those this project is really focused on.
 - The balance of the property was already in a PD. Mixed-use coordinated approach of the BMO site into the overall project. There will be some additional detailing of how we meet those components as we refine the parcel.
- PD standards with regard to neighborhood consistency and neighborhood plans, suitable open space, etc.
 - As we develop the full packet we will certainly address each of those components. This is grounded well in the approved GDP that is compatible with the neighborhood plan. We see this as building the framework as we move around the west of the mall for the transition point of bringing the neighborhood into the site and creating a more walkable site.
- I agree that the exhibits here are really nice and helpful. My reaction overall is very positive, there are a lot of things here that are nicely detailed and exciting, especially through the lens of a public realm and landscaping. The woonerf is a great idea. The simplicity of the forms you have used are well organized and will be a great place for programming. At the central green, as we've seen with previous phases of Hilldale those trees in an urban setting benefit from a Silva cell element. The Price Place blue steel trellis is a nice, simple element that adds to the streetscape experience, but it could use a little bit of design refinement. If it is just structural steel it might be too simple, I would encourage you to do small subtle things to refine the design of that as it is very public.
- The renderings are indicating some sort of green roof, I would advocate for at least a semi-intensive profile, ideally something that can get you natives, capturing stormwater in this neighborhood is huge, all the more reason to use something more deeply rooted. A semi-intensive profile would be highly encouraged. I love the bioretention zone as a demonstration at the edge of the streetscape, that's awesome.
- The corner as you pull in on Vernon off of Segoe, there's gymnastics with the grade to get 12 parking stalls. Parking is important but it seems like a lot for very little benefit, they come really close to the sidewalk, with not much, if any landscape buffer at the head of the parking stalls; I question if that is the best configuration for that corner.
- In general, Building 500 is squeezed in there pretty tight and there are some big walls here, especially as you move up the hill. We'll be looking for some detailing on how the landscaping can work to soften those big walls with trellises, vertical plantings, etc. I recommend you address that very intentionally with your landscape and plant material.
- For the most part I am really enthusiastic about most of the retail and the greenspace. I like the geometries of the buildings. Building 500 is a tight site, and it looks like bland color on top of bland color, the materials should shine through, you could simplify and brighten it a little bit. Part of the issue is also the railing design, you have the penetrations for mechanical coming right through a nice vertical brick pier, it's interrupted and you're going to see those vents. Maybe choose a different place for them to come out or a different expression for their backdrop. On top of that having all the pavement in front starts looking even more severe and is such a stark contrast to what is just on the other side of the building. If there is any way to get some greenspace with the ability to have some taller trees and shrubs along that edge of the building? Perforated metals, something that would add interest to those rather than compounding the institutional look would make it look less severe and more inviting. I love the brick detailing on the horizontals, maybe do that on the lower portion above the first floor punched openings where it engages the pedestrian a little more. Nice project, look forward to seeing how it's developed.
- Wonderful presentation to look at. I appreciate a circle in architecture, it doesn't happen enough. There is something about Hilldale that has a sense of exclusivity to it. I'm really happy to hear some Commissioners say the word color. To be inclusive, especially on the residential building, it matters a lot what colors you're using. I might even debate about keeping things consistent in the retail, because I don't have an answer but this project runs the risk of not feeling completely accessible to the entire community around there. There's quite a range of income and people walking to these stores. I would agree with the color options that have come up, it might speak more to being viable in the neighborhood and more inclusive.

- If the units here include families, right now there's nowhere for families to spill out. When you're looking at the landscaping, particularly around the entrances, look at that. Curious about the swirls you show and textured metal panel on Building 200, the east elevation.
 - That is indicating a future graphic designed mural applied to the corrugated profile on that metal panel to soften that elevation and create visual interest. It is the same idea at the swirls on the other buildings.
- Absolutely, I really applaud that. It kind of changes the flavor from not being quite so tight.
- Those are great details to have on these buildings.
- Thinking about the design aspects of the vertical panels, the colors used don't say vibrancy. I like the circular design, the landscaping has people in mind. Now you have to think about how people will be looking at the space. As for the signage and canopies, I think it is fine for businesses to personalize it as long as it's tasteful, even more so important when the current design is kind of bland. I would highlight incorporating some vibrancy, different colors.
- Is the bus stop being removed?
 - The adoption of the BRT line removes the bus line currently on Heather Crest up to University Avenue and will no longer go through this site.
- Building 300 where it faces the parking lot on Segoe, are you anticipating having to use spandrel glass there?
 - Right now we're not planning on using spandrel, only to hide structures. Not for any tenant purposes. Around the green will be transparent. Some other zones will have to understand ultimate tenants and tenant needs to know.
- In the interest of summary, mostly it had to do with the apartment building expression being too institutional, dark and heavy, dark on dark, maybe some color. I didn't hear too much criticism with regard to street activation, however, a couple of us did talk about employing landscape design to really soften the north and south walls of the apartment building where they have shallow setbacks or parking against them. Refining of the Price Place trellis, Silva cells for trees, a semi-intensive green roof profile, strong support for the visual graphics on the buildings to liven them up, favorable comments on the simplicity and restraint of materials on the retail commercial buildings.
- The direction they are going, they're well on their way. Refinements of the residential building and addressing those elements, the project is going pretty good. We all look forward to seeing the refinements when they come back. I do like those artistic expressions on the building.
- Please show us what is permanent fixed Hilldale architecture and what could be temporary and changed as an administrative approval so we know what we're approving and what we're not.
- I would offer one additional comment regarding sustainable urban design, what's in our purview. The visionary approach to this project, the PD standards has an objective about sustainability. I would highly recommend seeking federal government funding to consider community geothermal as part of this project.

ATTACHMENT
PD Zoning Statement of Purpose and Standards

28.098 (1) Statement of Purpose.

The Planned Development (PD) District is established to provide a voluntary regulatory framework as a means to facilitate the unique development of land in an integrated and innovative fashion, to allow for flexibility in site design, and to encourage development that is sensitive to environmental, cultural, and economic considerations, and that features high-quality architecture and building materials. In addition, the Planned Development District is intended to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.
- (b) Promotion of integrated land uses allowing for a mixture of residential, commercial, and public facilities along corridors and in transitional areas, with enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and amenities.
- (c) Preservation and enhancement of important environmental features through careful and sensitive placement of buildings and facilities.
- (d) Preservation of historic buildings, structures, or landscape features through adaptive reuse of public or private preservation of land.
- (e) Provision of more adequate, usable, and suitably located open space, recreational amenities, and other public facilities than would otherwise be provided under conventional land development techniques.
- (f) Facilitation of high-quality development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.

28.098(2) Approval Standards for Project

The standards for approval of a zoning map amendment to the PD District, or any major alteration to an approved General Development Plan, are as follows:

- (a) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other base zoning district can be used to achieve a substantially similar pattern of development. Planned developments shall not be allowed simply for the purpose of increasing overall density or allowing development that otherwise could not be approved unless the development also meets one or more of the objectives of (1) above. Conditions under which planned development may be appropriate include:
 - 1. Site conditions such as steep topography or other unusual physical features; or
 - 2. Redevelopment of an existing area or use of an infill site that could not be reasonably developed under base zoning district requirements.
- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (c) The PD District plan shall not adversely affect the economic health of the City or the area of the City where the development is proposed. The City shall be able to provide municipal services to the property where the planned development is proposed without a significant increase of the cost of providing those services or economic impact on municipal utilities serving that area.
- (d) The PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands. A traffic demand management plan may be required as a way

to resolve traffic and parking concerns. The Plan shall include measurable goals, strategies, and actions to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at congested times of day. Strategies and actions may include, but are not limited to, carpools and vanpools; public and private transit; promotion of bicycling, walking and other non-motorized travel; flexible work schedules and parking management programs to substantially reduce automobile trips.

- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.
- (f) The PD District plan shall include open space suitable to the type and character of development proposed, including for projects with residential components, a mix of structured and natural spaces for use by residents and visitors. Areas for stormwater management, parking, or in the public right of way shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
- (g) The PD district shall include suitable assurances that each phase could be completed in a manner that would not result in an adverse effect upon the community as a result of termination at that point.
- (h) When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in Section 28.071(2)(a) Downtown Height Map, except as provided for in Section 28.071(2)(a)1. and Section 28.071(2)(b), the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans and no application for excess height shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The excess height is compatible with the existing or planned (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) character of the surrounding area, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.
 - 2. The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.
 - 3. The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the project and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.
 - 4. For projects proposed in priority viewsheds and other views and vistas identified on the Views and Vistas Map in the City of Madison Downtown Plan, there are no negative impacts on the viewshed as demonstrated by viewshed studies prepared by the applicant.
- (i) When applying the above standards to an application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks required by Section 28.071(2)(c) Downtown Stepback Map, the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans, including the downtown plan. No application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks may be granted unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The lot is a corner parcel.
 - 2. The lot is not part of a larger assemblage of properties.
 - 3. The entire lot is vacant or improved with only a surface parking lot.
 - 4. No principal buildings on the lot have been demolished or removed since the effective date of this ordinance