



Project Address: 1902 E Johnson Street, 2010, 2030-2034, 2076 Pennsylvania Avenue

Application Type: Informational Presentation for a New Mixed-Use Development in Urban Design District (UDD) 4
UDC will be an Approving Body

Legistar File ID #: [91174](#)

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Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Joey Wisniewski, New Land Enterprises

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the phased redevelopment of the former Hooper Corporation site that is situated along the 2000 block of Pennsylvania Avenue. The proposed development is comprised of two phases; the first phase, on the northern portion of the site, multi-family residential development with structured parking. Future phases include the adaptive reuse of the Scanlan Morris building and the existing wood-truss warehouse building creating commercial, office and retail space, as well as the construction of pedestrian plaza space and an iconic statement building across from the Madison Public Market.

Approval Standards: The UDC will be an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 4 ("UDD 4"), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in [MGO Section 33.24\(11\)](#).

Adopted Plans: The project site is located in the [Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan](#) (the "Plan") planning area. As noted in the Plan, the project site is recommended for Community Mixed Use land uses. Generally, Community Mixed Use development is a *"...high-intensity Activity Center that integrates residential, retail, office, institutional and civic uses to serve the larger community."* Development in this area should create a walkable node or corridor and be located near transit.

In addition, the Plan goals also speak to creating mixed-use, transit-oriented development, including high-density residential and employment uses; create walkable, urban streets, including along Commercial Avenue; and carefully select and design uses at the intersection of Coolidge Street and Packers Avenue to serve as a highly visible entry to the mixed-use center.

As noted in the Plan, the planning area was broken down into corridors and areas as a way of organizing urban design and height recommendations. The project site is located in the Pennsylvania Avenue Corridor, where heights of 2-8 stories are recommended and where urban design goals including locating parking so that it is setback from the right-of-way or behind buildings, minimizing building setbacks and encouraging active uses and building entries at the street, incorporating landscaping and screening along pedestrian pathways, etc. are recommended.

Zoning Related Information: The project site is zoned Regional Mixed Use (RMX). The Zoning Code outlines design standards that are applicable to all new buildings the mixed-use and commercial zoning districts ([MGO 28.060](#)), including, but not limited to those related to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, design of street-facing facades, door and window openings, and materials.

In addition, the project site is in the Transit Oriented Development Overlay (TOD) zone. New development within the TOD Overlay is subject to the requirements as outlined in [MGO 28.104](#), including those that speak to:

- Maximum principal building setbacks – At least 30% of the primary street facing façade (Pennsylvania Avenue) shall be setback no more than 20 feet,
- Entrance orientation – Principal building entrances shall be orientated towards the primary abutting street (Pennsylvania Avenue) and be located within the maximum setback (20 feet),
- Minimum number of stories – A minimum of two stories is required for a minimum of 75% of the building footprint, and
- Site standards for automobile infrastructure.

Staff note that ultimately, the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with Zoning Code requirements, which, as a permitted use project, will occur as part of the Site Plan Review process.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests the UDC's feedback on the proposed phased development, focusing primarily on the Phase 1, multi-family residential, regarding the aforementioned standards including comments related to the design considerations noted below.

Compared to other concepts that have shown the demolition of the existing buildings on site, this concept includes the adaptive reuse of some of the buildings on site. Staff commend the applicant team for integrating the existing buildings into the overall redevelopment of the project site.

- **Overall Development Concept Plan - Surface Parking and Loading.** UDD 4 "*Off Street Parking and Loading Areas*" requirements and guidelines generally speak to locating parking so that it is behind buildings, fully screening parking and service areas, as well as integrating the parking and loading areas into the overall site development – recognizing that the relationship to the building and the street should receive careful consideration.

Consideration should be given to the future surface parking/structured parking building and how that will be integrated into the overall development as a whole, especially as it relates to connectivity and design.

As it relates to surface parking, such considerations include whether potentially utilizing more of a "complete street" design character would positively impact the overall site design. Such considerations include utilizing a different striping pattern (i.e., parallel or angled parking) to limit vehicle overhang into pedestrian pathways, detached sidewalks with terraces or wider sidewalks to accommodate both pedestrian circulation and vehicle overhang, utilizing a combination of compact and standard stall sizes which could result in less paving and more landscape or open space, and/or providing enhanced pedestrian amenities (striped crossings or alternative paving, benches, wider sidewalks, etc.) throughout the development as a whole, as well as providing connectivity to the future bike path.

Alternatively, as it relates to structured parking, such consideration includes maintaining a similar design aesthetic that is reflective of its context, as well as UDD 4 guidelines and requirements.

In addition, consideration should also be given to the location of loading and back-of-house operations.

Staff note and the applicant is advised that the “20-foot Bike Trail Easement” is shown off site and its location will need to be updated to be shown on the project site. This may result in changes to the surface parking layout.

Staff request the Commission’s feedback on the overall development concept plan, especially as it relates to the design and integration of parking and loading areas.

Phase 1, Multi-Family Residential Development

- **Massing, Building Design, and Composition.** While the project site is generally located at the intersection of N First Street and E Johnson Street, the Phase 1 building primarily fronts on E Johnson Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The UDD 4 Building Design guidelines and requirements generally speak to designing buildings with a sensitivity to context, avoiding large unbroken facades, utilizing four-sided architecture, etc.

In addition, as noted in the adopted plan, walkability, design, and visibility are identified as key design concept considerations that speak to redevelopment in this area. Consideration should be given to exploring ways to incorporate these concepts into the design and composition of the proposed building.

Related to both the key concepts noted in the adopted Plan and UDD 4 guidelines and requirements, staff request the UDC’s feedback as it relates to the following design-related considerations:

- Mass and Scale. While the building mass has a significant above-grade separation at the third floor, the building is 600 feet in continuous length along the lower two levels, which is just over a city block. Consideration should be given to utilizing design techniques that will help to maintain walkability and create an enhanced pedestrian environment, as well as further breaks down mass and scale of the lower two levels (i.e., material changes, increased setbacks, or other techniques).
- Parking Structure Design - Blank Walls. While the majority of the parking structure is wrapped with residential units, the west elevation remains primarily blank walls. As an elevation that is located along an internal pedestrian pathway, consideration should be given to exploring design solutions to minimize the blank wall and maintain a human scale, including incorporating articulation or design detailing, changes in materials or colors, and landscape, for example.
- **Materials.** The exterior material palette is primarily comprised of a brick veneer and fiber cement materials with metal panel accent materials. UDD 4 Building Design guidelines and requirements state that exterior materials shall be low maintenance and harmonious with those used on other buildings in the area. Staff request the UDC’s feedback on the overall building materials palette.
- **HVAC/Architectural Louvers.** While HVAC/architectural louvers not indicated on the elevation drawings, they are commonly associated with residential units and structured garages. Staff note that while it has been the current practice to locate louvers so that they are not on street-facing or otherwise highly visible facades, they have been approved in some situations when found to be well-integrated into the façade’s design.

Staff request the Commission provide feedback on the finish design and details of HVAC/architectural louvers, including as it pertains to the finish design and detailing to ensure integration with the overall building design and materials.

- **Long Views.** The project site is located at a highly visible location adjacent to multiple street frontages and will be the tallest building in the area. Given the overall scale of the proposed building, careful consideration should be given to the building's overall design impact relative to the surrounding context and viewsheds, especially as it relates to creating a strong corner elements and gateway into the mixed-use center at Coolidge Street and Packers Avenue, the design and articulation of the parking structure walls on the Oscar Avenue side of the building, and utilizing a richer level of design and detailing.
- **Site Amenities and Landscape.** As noted in UDD 4 guidelines and requirements, "*Landscaping shall be used for functional as well as decorative purposes, including...screening unattractive features and views along roadways...and complementing the architecture of the building.*" Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the overall Proposed Site Plan as it relates to the location and design of the proposed amenity spaces, as well as potential landscape design within these areas, and along street frontages. Consideration should be given to encouraging plantings that provide year-round color, texture, and screening, help break-up mass and scale, as well as add interest at the pedestrian level.