



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 2902 Dryden Drive
Application Type: Planned Multi-Use Site – Initial/Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID # [64505](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC | Alan Steinhauer, Prism Development, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is seeking Initial/Final approval for a 4-story multi-family development as the second phase of the Prism Apartments approved on July 31, 2019 at 2830 Dryden Drive (Legistar #[56090](#)).

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation on March 31, 2021.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review the Demolition Permit and Conditional Use requests on March 7, 2022.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. Section 28.137(2)(e) of the Zoning Code requires that Planned Multi-Use Sites be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission pursuant to the provisions in Section 33.24(4)(e) which states: “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.”

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

Planning Division staff recommends that the UDC review the project’s design elements and make an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission as required by the Zoning Code. As part of this review, staff recommends consideration be given to the following:

- **Site Plan Considerations.** Staff requests the UDC’s feedback regarding the building’s relationship with the adjacent first phase of the development and the adequacy of its street orientation. Staff notes contextual considerations including the intensity of Northport Drive and the DOT setback. Staff is requesting the Commission’s review and comment on the overall site plan as it relates to building orientation and footprint, the location of active unit entries along Northport Drive, pedestrian connectivity and accessibility, and open space amenities.
- **Screening and Buffering.** Staff is requesting the Commission’s feedback on the proposed landscape planting palette both along the west and north property lines with regard to providing an adequate year-round vegetative screen and buffer from the adjacent commercial activities and vehicular traffic.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

As a reference, the Commission’s comments from the March 31, 2021, Informational Presentation are provided below:

- This neighborhood has tons of families, I'm curious as to the addition of more 1 and 2-units, if possible families can be serviced here and if the neighborhood is interested in that.
- (Ald. Abbas) That question is really valid, that question was asked. People really want to see affordable three-unit and I had that discussion with the owner of the building. The one thing about the previous building is they kept the rent according to the surrounding area, so I will personally encourage the developer and I've already required at least a couple of three-bedroom units.
- I like the project, you're staying true to the Prism 1 and there's a nice cohesiveness between the two. I'm curious about the roof deck location, why at the back of the building? I'm questioning if that's really the view you'd want for people.
- With regard to the siting of the building, if we look at the patterns of development along Northport Drive, do we really want to shove this thing right up against a six lane highway when the driveway between the two is a proposed street? Maybe by bringing the building closer to Building 1 that could actually be a better living environment for the tenants. Flip the site plan and so the buildings have a better relationship and the living units are off that six lane highway.
- I had a similar thought about the traffic on Northport. The sidewalks going to porches or decks, do you see a main entrance to these porches or is that just a conveyance to get out onto the sidewalk? I do think there would be a huge benefit to pushing that away from Northport, there's also then an opportunity for mature trees on Northport.
- Sometimes these urban design edicts aren't one-size-fits-all.
- Northport is a highway with one of the more ignored speed limits around town. I'm not sure stretching it out to 50-feet is really aesthetically going to make a huge difference.
- I was pleased to see that they followed up our suggestion of planting a row of fast growing evergreens that in pretty short order will make a nice green wall so Prism 1 residents won't be looking out at dumpsters. Keep that in mind for Prism 2.
- Moving the building back and having the parking lot in front is very interesting. For us to think how we design the highway into more pedestrian friendly, same as Packers Avenue. I've seen having the buildings close to the road and creating that congestion and narrowness stop people from driving much faster. We should also think about future buildings on a highway, working with Traffic Engineering to work on design to promote slowing down.
- I wouldn't want parking between Northport and the building, maybe a rectilinear building and not an L-shape.
- In light of that I would be more inclined to pull it closer to Phase 1 so they don't have to walk across a parking lot and it feels more like a community amenity.
- Shift the roof deck over to Dryden south of the main building, have the parking line up to keep the L-shape but now you've got parking where the roof deck was.
- Trying to reduce the exposure to Northport by going long, but parking on the west side is probably more realistic. It might be that the curb cut has to stay where you're showing it. Trying to get that common amenity closest to both the buildings, especially with our cold weather.
- I see this future street and the two buildings facing each other and having more of a direct relationship to each other than facing the building on Northport being best for the residents long-term.
- There was a lot of discussion on that north façade with Phase 1 with the horizontal element.
- Put in a consideration for putting that building where it is. The City has put up a fence in the median between the lanes of traffic because there's a sizable population of people walking across Northport at this area. If it could be slowed down because a building is closer to the corner and this acts as a place for people to land it would be a good addition. It's so unfriendly for pedestrians in this area.