



Project Address: 7401 Mineral Point Road

Application Type: Planned Multi-Use Site, New Two-Story Commercial Building with Double Drive-thru
UDC is an Advisory Body

Legistar File ID #: [90918](#)

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Sarah Allen, Raising Canes Restaurants, LLC | Dorothy Parks, DPC Real Estate

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the construction of a two-story commercial building with double drive-through on a vacant parcel that is part of an existing Planned Multi-Use Site (West Towne Mall area).

Project Schedule:

- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal at the January 12, 2026, meeting.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. Section 28.137(2)(e) of the Zoning Code requires 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 note that while not part of the UDC's purview, a conditional use is required for the proposed use. The Plan Commission is charged with evaluating the proposal for consistency with the conditional use standards, including those that speak generally to design. More specifically, Conditional Use Standard No. 9, which states,

*"...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. In order to find that this standard is met, the Plan Commission may require the applicant to submit plans to the Urban Design Commission for comment and recommendation."*

Staff believe that that the UDC could reference this standard as part of the Commission's evaluation of the proposal and ultimately the body's recommendation to the Plan Commission.

Adopted Plans: The project site is located in the West Area Plan planning area (the Plan) planning area. The Plan includes design guidelines for the prominent retail and employment destinations, including the West Towne Mall area. Generally, those design guidelines speak to:

- Minimizing setbacks to create a consistent, engaging, and walkable street frontage,
- Incorporating changes in plane where materials transition,
- Minimizing blank walls, incorporating design elements to enhance the visual and pedestrian character of the street,
- Maintaining a positive building orientation to the street by locating main entrances so that they face the street and locate parking behind the building, and
- Encourage active uses at the ground level, including outdoor patios, dining, awnings, and display windows.

Zoning Related Information: The project site is zoned Regional Mixed Use (RMX). Within the mixed-use and commercial zoning districts there are general provisions related to building and site design that are intended to foster high-quality development. These standards are outlined in [Section 28.060](#), including those that speak to building and entrance orientation, façade articulation, door and window openings, and building materials.

In addition, the project site is located in the Transit Oriented Development Overlay (TOD) zone. New development with 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 (Mineral Point Road) shall be setback no more than 20 feet,
- Entrance orientation – Principal building entrances shall be orientated towards the primary abutting street (Mineral Point Road) 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. Staff note and the applicant is advised that as proposed the building **does not** appear to meet this requirement. Adjustments in the building footprint or second floor, floor area will need to be made to do so, and
- Site standards for automobile infrastructure.

Staff note that ultimately the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with the Zoning Code requirements, as part of the Site Plan Review process.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommend that the UDC provide feedback and make findings on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards as it relates to the design considerations noted below.

- **Building Design and Composition.** The project site is located along Mineral Point Road at a shared main entry point into a planned multi-use site that ultimately connects to the larger West Towne Mall Area. As such, the site and building will be visible on all sides and will have multiple “fronts”. Given the high level of visibility, consideration should be given to the overall design and composition in terms of creating one cohesive architectural expression. As reflected in the elevation drawings, there are multiple variations in the height of the roofline, building articulation/modulation and proportions, and varying levels of design and detail across all four elevations. Staff requests the Commission’s feedback and findings as it relates to the overall building design and composition.
- **Building Materials.** As indicated on the elevations, while materials are not clearly labeled, the material palette is comprised of powder coated steel, composite lumber Trex siding, EIFS and various masonry materials. Given the limited scale and size of the building, consideration should be given to whether simplifying the material palette would result in a more cohesive architectural expression. Staff request the UDC review, provide comment and make findings related to the proposed exterior building materials.

Staff note that pursuant to MGO 28.060(2)g, exterior materials table, EIFS is only allowed as a trim/ accent material or at the top of buildings. It is not permitted within three feet of the ground or used in heavily trafficked pedestrian areas or where high pedestrian traffic is anticipated. While the Zoning Administrator will ultimately evaluate Zoning Code compliance, the applicant is encouraged to work with Zoning Staff to confirm that the proposed materials are code compliant.

- **Landscape and Screening.** As reflected on the landscape planting plan and plant schedule, it is primarily comprised of ornamental scale trees and shrubs/ground cover. As part of the Commission’s review,

consideration should be given to providing adequate year-round screening for the parking, drive-thru and refuse areas, including as it relates to providing a combination of both evergreen and deciduous species, as well as the size at the time of planting and quantities. Staff request the Commission's feedback and findings on the proposed landscape plan and plant list.

Staff note and the applicant is advised that the proposed landscape plan **does not** appear to be consistent with MGO 28.142, "*Landscaping and Screening Requirements*," including as it relates to development frontage and interior parking lot landscaping. Ultimately, the Zoning Administrator will determine Zoning Code compliance.

- **Site Planning Considerations.** While the site plan reflects a building-forward design that is well-connected to the street with active entries, patio and direct pedestrian connections, the site also remains auto-oriented. As such, consideration should be given to the internal site connectivity and providing safe, direct pedestrian pathways from the parking areas to the building.

Staff note that while not shown on the Site Plan, there is an existing sidewalk that extends along the west side of the site, along the shared main site entrance. Staff note, and the applicant is advised, that maintaining this sidewalk will be noted in the Traffic Engineering comments.

In addition, consideration should be given to reducing the site paving as much as possible, which could result in additional landscape opportunities, including along the north, south and west side of the site where screening of vehicular uses would be beneficial. Such opportunities to reduce paving include removing drive-thru entrance lane that is separated by a fence (which staff note that is noted in the Traffic Engineering comments), and utilizing an alternative parking layout for the parking island that is located in the center of the site, including shifting this parking to be head-in parking along the two-way access drive.

The applicant is encouraged to continue to work with Traffic Engineering and Planning staff to explore ways to minimize the site paving as much as possible, as well as address the comments noted above. Staff note that in doing so, there may be changes to the site layout as well as landscape.

- **Lighting.** While a photometric plan was included in the submittal materials, staff note and the applicant is advised that additional information is needed to complete the review of lighting, including average maximum, minimum and uniformity ratios for the pedestrian areas (i.e., sidewalks), parking areas, and vehicle use areas (i.e., drive-thru, driveways, etc.). Staff note that the continued review of lighting will occur as part of the Site Plan Review process. The applicant is encouraged to work with Building Inspection Division Staff to ensure compliance with [MGO 29.36](#), "*Outdoor Lighting*".
- **Signage.** Staff note and the applicant is advised that while signage is shown on the elevation drawings, signage is not a part of this review nor subsequent approvals. A separate review is required. As proposed, the signage **does not** appear to comply with Sign Code requirements related to quantity and placement. The applicant is encouraged to work with Zoning staff to confirm whether the proposed signage complies with the [Sign Code](#).