



Agenda Item #: 8

Project Title: 302 Chaska Drive – Residential Building Complex. 9th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 72249

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Ald. Juliana Bennett, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Russell Knudson and Jessica Klehr.

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of August 17, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Residential Building Complex located at 302 Chaska Drive. Registered and speaking in support was Kevin Burow. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Ryan McMurtrie.

Burow reviewed updates to the plans for these two and one-half story townhouse developments in various buildings of 3, 4 and 6 units. The site layout has been maintained, and future parking has been removed to enlarge the greenspaces as much as possible based. Enhanced landscape plans created outdoor seating opportunities, gathering spaces, and visual areas with perennials, as the space is not large enough for recreation. The buildings are comprised of two color palettes: reddish brick with gray accents, and brownish brick with cream accents. Each unit has direct entries, concealed garages on the back side, and medians between each individual garages with plantings for a sense of place and separation. They are allocating some greenspace on the ends to provide for snow storage in the winter, but overall provided definition to this area.

The Commission discussed the following:

- It will be a pleasant surprise to see that big green area as you drive between the buildings, as well as looking down from upper windows when the landscaping matures.
- Much improved from the earlier iteration. I question the areas that look like they are intended for sitting, my experience is that most people don't want to sit out in full sun. I wonder if people will really sit out in this area, could there be a pergola or perhaps plantings that would be a bit closer and provide more shade? These trees shown aren't going to be close to this size for quite a while.
- I couldn't quite tell exactly what areas were intended to be bark mulch and which ones looked like stone mulch. Especially an island in the middle of a parking lot, it is already heat challenged, having stone mulch is upping the reflectivity and heat index in that area, and it also doesn't look great to have areas with different types of mulch. I'd encourage you to go with all bark mulch throughout, the plants will be happier and it will lower the temperature in the island for a more amenable space.
- You have a considerable amount of Barberry as foundation plantings around the buildings; Barberries are problematic and being banned in many parts of the country. I would point you towards Sun Joy Mini Maroon, a Proven Winner's plant that is reputed to be sterile and non-invasive. Some nice purple leaved upright sedums, Touchdown Teak would be a good replacement for that. I see places with isolated perennials, if there's room for one there's room for many. The extra cost is so minimal on a project like this.
- Based on what was said about people sitting under the sun, and it not being big enough to program any meaningful space, maybe just landscape the whole thing and not worry about seating. You could have a path cutting through there.

- I think it would be ok for just a greenspace with no seating. The flagstone areas would be much improved with flowering shrubs, flowering perennials or ornamental grasses.

Action

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Klehr, the Commission **RECOMMENDED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion passed on a vote of unanimous vote of (6-0).

The motion included the following conditions:

- The landscape plan shall be updated to incorporate the landscape comments, including:
 - Replacing Barberries with Sun Joy Mini Maroon or Touchdown Teak,
 - Incorporating additional perennials to bulk up the plantings, and
 - Utilizing bark mulch in all planting beds.
- The UDC noted that given the limited size of the central greenspace, if the development team chose to move forward with an unprogrammed greenspace, it would be acceptable provided the landscape plan is updated to include additional canopy trees to provide more shade in the parking area.