



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

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TO: Urban Design Commission
FROM: Timothy M. Parks, Planner
DATE: March 22, 2017
SUBJECT: ID [45165](#) (UDC) and [46314](#) (Plan Commission) – Creating Sections 28.022–00270 and 28.022–00271 to amend a Planned Development District and approve an Amended General Development Plan and Amended Specific Implementation Plan to construct mixed-use building containing 26,350 square feet of office space and 182-room hotel at 4601 Frey Street; 11th Ald. Dist.

The applicant, Raymond Management Company, is seeking initial or final approval from the Urban Design Commission of an Amended Planned Development–General Development Plan and Specific Implementation Plan to construct an eleven-story mixed-use building containing 26,350 square feet of office space and 182-room hotel at 4601 Frey Street. The Urban Design Commission previously reviewed the project on an informational basis at its November 30, 2016 and February 22, 2017 meetings.

Background Information

The approximately 1.0-acre site is currently developed with an 88-stall surface parking lot. The property is characterized by approximately 20-25 feet of grade change across the entire site from the western property line to Sawyer Terrace. Mature vegetation is present along both the western and southern property lines, with the latter straddling the property line shared with the Segoe Terrace Apartments and West Madison Senior Center. The proposed eleven-story building will be built into this slope.

The layout of the proposed building calls for the 182-room hotel to occupy space on the ground, first, and fifth through eleventh floors. The office tenant and a mechanical room for the building will occupy the fourth floor, with parking for the complex located on the second and third floors. Two driveway entrances are proposed from Frey Street to serve the parking, which will be connected by a series of internal ramps. A small loading zone, receiving area, and trash room are located at the southeastern corner of the ground floor facing Sawyer Terrace. The building will be clad in two-toned brick, metal panels, and EIFS, with fiber cement panel fills proposed to enclose portions of the parking levels on the west and south. As plans for the project have developed, the building profile has narrowed somewhat on the upper floors in an attempt to address concerns raised early on about impacts on views from units in the adjacent Weston Place Condominiums.

Staff believes that project is consistent with the Community Mixed-Use (CMU) development and Transit-Oriented Development recommendations in the [Comprehensive Plan](#) for the area bounded by N. Segoe Road, University Avenue, N. Midvale Boulevard, and Regent Street, including Hilldale Shopping Center and the subject site. IN CMU districts, commercial buildings, employment, retail and service uses serving both adjacent neighborhoods and wider community markets are recommended. Generally, buildings in CMU districts should be at least two stories in height and should be compatible with the scale and intensity of the district as a whole and the context of the surrounding neighborhood. Specific

standards for height, gross square footage of commercial buildings or establishments, and floor area are recommended to be established in neighborhood or special area plans. The subject site is located within the boundaries of the 2015 University Hill Farms Neighborhood Plan, although that plan makes no land use, bulk, or transportation recommendations specific to the site. Staff does not believe that the proposed scale is out of character with its surroundings and that it is consistent with the context that has emerged in the area generally west of Hilldale over the last 15 years, which is likely to continue becoming denser and more intensively developed over the next decade as other nearby properties redevelop, including the Hill Farms State Office site one block west across N. Segoe Road.

Approval Standards

The Urban Design Commission's role is to make a recommendation to the Plan Commission on whether the proposed eleven-story mixed-use building meets the design-related standards for the Planned Development zoning district (MGO Section 28.098(1) and (2)).

Summary of Design Comments

As the Urban Design Commission considers its recommendation to the Plan Commission on this project, the Planning Division recommends that the Urban Design Commission make specific recommendations with regard to the following:

- The appearance of all four sides of the eleven-story building need to be very well executed given the prominence it will have both up close and at a distance. On the west side of the building facing the similarly tall Weston Place, the use of fiber cement panel fills on the second and third floors should be studied. While the impermeability on that wall is appropriate given the parking it screens, staff asks the applicant and UDC to consider whether the use of spandrel panels instead of fiber cement in combination with the proposed landscaping might soften the appearance of this portion of the façade, especially from units on the lower floors of Weston Place.
- The proposed building will be very visible above Hilldale Shopping Center, particularly from the east and north, and the detailing of those facades should be particularly well-executed. On the eastern façade, staff recommends that the metal-clad center section of the tower be revisited. It appears to lack articulation at the second and third floors while looming above the ground and first floors. Given how visible this façade will be for the foreseeable future from across Hilldale, the final details of this façade should be carefully considered to ensure its enduring quality.
- Along the northern façade, staff recommends that the ground and first floor entries meet Frey Street to the greatest extent possible. This could be accomplished by emphasizing the two pedestrian entrances similar to their adjacent vehicular entrances by extending the proposed canopies over them and ensuring that the private walks from the building are as flush with and perpendicular to Frey Street sidewalk as possible. In particular, the "birdcage" at the western pedestrian entrance should be eliminated if possible. The raised terrace at the corner of Frey and Sawyer should also meet the public sidewalk as graciously as possible to lessen the dominance of those walls at that corner. The final details of the terrace (plans, elevations, and renderings) should also be synced as part of final UDC approval.

- Finally, it appears that the existing tree line along southern property line will be impacted by construction of the building. To the extent possible, the existing vegetation on this lot line, which is shared with the adjacent apartments, should be preserved throughout to effectively screen the lower floors of the southern façade, with any trees to remain on the properties shown on the landscaping plan. Where vegetation will be removed to accommodate the building, staff recommends that any replacement planting be more varied by type, species and planting height than the juniper and arborvitae proposed, and that additional plantings be considered on the adjacent property if agreed upon by the owners of the two properties.