



Agenda Item #: 5

Project Title: 1 & 15 Ellis Potter Court - Mixed-Use Development Located in Urban Design District (UDD) 2. (District 19)

Legistar File ID #: 80582

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Wendy von Below, Marsha Rummel, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Jessica Klehr, and Christian Harper

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of January 10, 2024, the Urban Design Commission granted **FINAL APPROVAL** of a mixed-use development located at 1 & 15 Ellis Potter Court in Urban Design District (UDD) 2. Registered and speaking in support was Kevin Burow. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Scott Kwiecinski, and Julian Walters.

Building #2 orientation now locates the garages along the northern section to screen the storage units and provide greenspace. The townhomes have been rotated for view corridors through the site and to the greenspace. Building #1 has remained in its original design. This preserves some of the existing trees near the terrace. Parking has been rotated for parallel parking with no headlights into any of the units. The senior building does not have the same sidewalk connections due to security and safety considerations.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- The staff report mentioned our last discussion and having an entry on Building #1 closer to the street corner. It looked like you could take one of those corner two-bedroom units and put it toward the end, and bring the amenity spaces and some other support uses there. I remember the Commissioners commenting on it, having that corner connection with the convenience store across the street would certainly strengthen the project.
 - We looked at it, our concern was connectivity with the parking, which is why we moved that entry further to the east, closer to the parking.
- I was thinking you could still keep your public connection at the parking lot where it is, you'd have to go down a corridor to get to the clubroom, but still keep your entry lobby exactly where it is on the parking side.
 - We could take a harder look at locating the clubroom in that corner to provide an access point and more pedestrian connection.
 - There is an entry point facing Schroeder Road right next to the clubroom.
- Strengthening the corner with those kind of public functions and activities was what we were suggesting in terms of the ground floor of the building.
- You mentioned looking at Building #2 with some revisions to that end unit; if you were to wrap that porch around and tie it into that bump out that building could be enhanced by having more of a street facing porch. It could help the orientation a little bit.
 - I agree with you on that.
- Those townhome units facing the interior, they have no access out the back to the garages? You would have to walk all the way around to access the garages?
 - We have introduced sidewalk on the eastern side. When you exit the unit you would walk around the building to your garage stall.

- That seems like a long trek to get to your vehicle. Was there a particular reason, a space issue, there's 11 townhouses but just 10 garage spaces?
 - Yes, it was a space concern and we wanted to get some greenspace for a potential outdoor play area.
- There was a staff comment about that northeast corner and potential playground, those three spruce trees being potentially in the middle of that space. Is that something you could rethink and create a more usable space there?
 - We also saw that, that was an oversight. Those were intended to be more in the corner to frame the area and provide a sense of privacy while still providing view to the east.
- The existing trees on the site, the landscape plan notes three existing trees you are potentially saving. Two of those are pretty close to the building and noted as potentially Maples, I would question whether those two closest to the building could really make it, especially if you do the wrap around porch idea. Could you explain the existing trees and if you took a closer look?
 - Yes, we had our landscape architect walk it as well. We are trying to preserve as many as possible. While we can't guarantee preservation of any trees it will be top of our mind as we work through the plans and construction. Since we cannot guarantee, I did not want to show it for sure.
- Do you know the species of those?
 - Unfortunately, I don't off the top of my head.
- If they're Norway Maples, they aren't that worth saving. A large sugar or red maple, that's a different story.
- They look like Honey Locusts to me but I'm not a landscape architect.
- There is a good size Oak tree on the plan and in the photo. Is that the same strategy, you don't want to promise saving it but you'll try to?
 - Yes, that is the case.
- It's a really nice looking tree that seems about 30-feet from the building.
- I agree with you, now I see it on the site map. That would be the one to save if it's in good health.
- It's a nice looking oak. They're probably more finicky than Honey Locust in terms of digging around them.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I think the orientation of Building #2 is good, even with less street presence. It's good to disguise and block the view of those self-storage units, it's not an urban area and the buildings across the street aren't great architecture. I would like to see more of a corner public entrance expression than tucked away by the east side of the site up along Schroeder Road.
- I would agree, certainly the move of the garages to the north end is a stronger site plan than previously. I still feel like the site plan isn't capturing the amenity of that natural area long the east property line; sounds or sights or ambience of that much natural area next to you. Overall, the site plan is better. The pocket in Building #1, other than seeing some landscape and two trees in that space, might be good to think about how that greenspace functions and what amenities are in it. There's not a lot of large, contiguous green space and this might be a good landing spot for the people who live here or are visiting here. The landscape plan, the foundation planting beds have really irregular, curved, funky bedlines, that should be cleaned up a lot. On a building like this it is much stronger to establish a nice, clean edge, this seems a little too unreasoned back and forth. Tied to that, there are areas of the foundation that are far too sparse; you have a single shrub and nothing within 10-feet of it. There needs to be more substantial massing of the plant material to make an impact, otherwise there is a whole lot of mulch.
- Agree with wrapping the porch to strengthen the corner, moving public functions to the corner. Appreciate having the open space for a potential play area on the northeast. Staff asked us to look at lighting, the lighting plan levels seem to be focused at the parking area without information from an architectural perspective. When we get to a motion, it would be great if we could include that as a condition to have it reviewed at the staff level.

Action

On a motion by von Below, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission granted **FINAL APPROVAL**, with the following conditions:

- On Building 2, the front porches shall be extended to wrap around to the street.
- Adjust the floor plan of the Building 1 to shift the shared amenity space and common building entry closer to the corner of Ellis Potter Court and Schroeder Road.
- The landscape plan shall be modified to shift the landscape outside of the play area to create a more usable open space.
- The landscape plan shall be revised to include additional plantings along the foundation of Building 1, as well as clean-up the curvilinear planting beds.
- The lighting plan shall be revised to include light levels throughout the site, including architectural lighting. Subsequent review of lighting can be completed administratively.

The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).