URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING REPORT

November 30, 2022

Agenda Item #: **10**

Project Title: 6604 Odana Road - Planned Multi-Use Site. 19th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 74229

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Christian Harper, Shane Bernau, Juliana Bennett and Amanda Arnold

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of November 30, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item to the December 14, 2022, meeting and requested additional contextual information to make an informed recommendation. Registered and speaking in support were Randy Christianson and Marc Ott, representing Walter Wayne Development. Registered in support and available to answer questions were John Kastner, representing Walter Wayne Development; and Bruce Bosben. Registered and speaking in opposition were Clare Boulanger and Colleen Robinson. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was Kristin Chambers.

The proposed development involves demolition of the existing Market Square Theater to construct a six-story mixed-use building. The development team has met with City staff and the Alder, and had a neighborhood meeting this past July. The theater has been closed for a couple of years and there isn't a use for a theater building at this location. Circulation is part of an existing cross access easement with the neighboring properties, which determined the siting of the building. The building is proposed at six-stories with some commercial facing Yellowstone Drive, two levels of parking with two garage entries, an entry sequence and lobby area for tenants at the center of the building, a community space, and rooftop spaces on the second and sixth floors. Stepbacks and private roof areas for some tenants create articulation. Building materials include fiber cement siding in different orientation and colors, gray brick at the bottom, hung balconies on majority of the building, some covered roof decks in some carved back areas, amenity roof space on sixth floor with some covered seating and a fire feature.

Clare Boulanger, a resident of the neighboring senior housing development, Normandy Apartments, spoke in opposition. She pointed out that the theater has not been closed for two years, but rather a few months. She stated she did not know which neighborhood meetings the team referred to, no residents of the Normandy Apartments have been included or listened to during discussions. This building doesn't consider the neighborhood, there is plenty of housing development already built, being built or proposed in this area, and none of them has immediate residential being affected. There is the equivalent of a two-lane road between them and this proposed building. As seniors they did not anticipate this type of development virtually at their doorstep. This will bring an incredible amount of cars and activity, noise and dust to their doorstep. In lieu of not building this at all, at least consider the height and proximity to the Normandy.

Colleen Robinson spoke in opposition, noting the impact on surrounding properties and that the proposal is too high for the Odana Area Plan. This will shadow the entire Normandy Apartment building and completely eliminate the view from an entire side of that building. The impact on the surrounding property with regard to increased traffic that close to that building seems quite significant. The ownership of this whole area is Market Square Complex, why couldn't an apartment building go along Yellowstone and Odana? It seems more accessible than putting it in the middle of a parking lot. There could be more flexibility about the placement on a property that has common ownership. She echoed the

statement that the theater was running until just a few months ago. This is an area where people are active and using these commercial spaces, it's really too close to Normandy Square.

The Commission discussed the following:

- We're at a disadvantage of making any recommendations without any context. Can we ask for more drawings and consider this at the next meeting?
- We can't determine the effects of shading, the difference between a five or six-story building. It's very difficult to recommend a conditional use for an additional floor when we don't have the context nailed down.
- I agree. I had to go to a Bing map, even Google maps didn't show the Normandy Apartments yet. I do recall when we approved that one, I feel like if there was any kind of master planning, there was some kind of intent for what Normandy Square was going to be facing to the south. It would have a significant shading factor because it is facing south. Aside from that, it does seem too tall for the placement of the building on the site. Eventually we do have to look toward in time when the rest of Market Square will be redeveloped, this seems a little foreign to be smack dab in the middle and have six stories. The way it's presented makes it look taller even than the six stories. I don't think it warrants the bonus story if that's what it's asking for, it looks kind of heavy, the base seems to rise up and give it a weight and height that is less desirable in this area.
- This is technically not bonus stories, but a conditional use makes it possible to go to six stories. This is a Planned Multi-Use Site, I don't see the plan. We didn't even get an overall site plan to really understand the full context of circulation. A lot of that comes into play whether we think the building should be closer to the street or have a single row of parking in front of it. We got just a razor thin glimpse of the apartment building next door but can't really judge its context. We're a little handcuffed here, an advisory recommendation might just ask for more information.
- (Secretary) It sounds like the Commission has reservations about making any sort of recommendation based on the level of information provided.
- They're in the queue to go to the Plan Commission, but we would like to make an informed decision. We don't want to penalize either the neighbors or the developer.
- (Firchow) As a practical matter, if you don't make a recommendation, the Plan Commission can't act. Referral to the next UDC meeting, from a timing standpoint it's a more direct route. The code says the Plan Commission cannot act without a recommendation from UDC.
- Any chance they could come back in two weeks with more information vs. waiting for six more weeks?
- (Firchow) If the Commission refers it to the next meeting, and the team can get the context information.
- UDC doesn't have enough information to make an informed decision. Would like to see more contextual renderings, with surrounding buildings including Normandy Apartments. If one exists, an overall redevelopment plan of Market Square to see how this will fit into the future. Highly recommend that the developer does a shade study.
- Not just surrounding models of the buildings and shade studies, but knowing what the master plan of that area would be would really help. My initial reaction is not a huge fan of six stories surrounded by drive lanes like a moat. Some constraints with easements, but if that was not long-term, that changes my perspective and would be good to see.

Action

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Bernau, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item to the December 14, 2022 meeting. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (5-0).

As part of the Commission's motion for referral, the Commission requested the following:

- Renderings of the proposed building,
- Renderings of the proposed buildings within the context (i.e. including the adjacent development),

- A comprehensive site plan for the whole existing planned multi-use site,
- If known, any future planned development master plan. If there is not a future master plan, it is acceptable to note that. If that is the case, the suggestion of overlaying the proposed site plan on the Odana Road Area Plan could be beneficial, and
- A shadow analysis (which specifically addresses conditional use standards related to the evaluation of requests for additional height).