PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

November 6, 2024

PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: **1202 S Park Street**

Application Type: New Mixed-Use Building in Urban Design District (UDD) 7
UDC is an Approving Body

Legistar File ID #: 81072

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Ross Treichel, Sketchworks Architecture

Project Description: The applicant is proposing a five-story, mixed-use building with 44 residential units, office space and amenity spaces, including fitness room and rooftop patio. The site will be served by 17 tuck-under parking stalls.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation at their December 13, 2023, meeting.
- UDC granted Initial Approval at their August 28, 2024, meeting. The Commission's approval included conditions as noted below.
- The Plan Commission reviewed and subsequently approved this proposal at their September 9, 2024, meeting (Legistar File ID 84492).

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 7 ("UDD 7"), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(14).

As noted above, at the August 28, 2024, meeting, the Commission granted Initial Approval of this item with conditions that generally spoke to incorporating more articulation on the High Street elevation, providing more details related to the materials and application thereof, including vents and louvers, as well as transitions between materials, and meeting the glazing requirements of the district, as well as various landscape modifications. The Commission's subsequent review and continued evaluation of this item should focus on whether those conditions have been addressed.

Adopted Plans: The City's adopted Comprehensive Plan recommends the project site for Regional Mixed Use development, which includes existing and planned high-intensity centers supporting a variety of multifamily housing options and commercial activity serving the needs of the region. The Comprehensive Plan includes several design-related considerations, including buildings being placed close the sidewalk or street, providing pedestrian amenities, such as decorative paving, lighting, plazas, benches and landscaping, locating parking behind or under buildings.

The project site is also located within the South Madison Neighborhood Plan (the "Plan") planning area. While the Plan does not include specific recommendations for the project site, its general goals and objectives would apply including those that speak to increasing housing choice, supporting organizations addressing housing issues, and improving pedestrian and bicycle networks.

The project site is also located in the Wingra Creek BUILD planning area. As noted in the BUILD Conceptual Land Use Plan indicates the project site for commercial/mixed-use.

Finally, the project site is located in the Bay Creek Neighborhood Plan planning area. While this plan has not been updated since its adoption in 1991, it does outline six primary recommendations for action, including improving the image and visual quality of the neighborhood by emphasizing landscape amenities, enhance environmental and recreational resources, better meet the needs of the elderly, attract and retain businesses, maintain housing conditions, and improve traffic and safety, including improving pedestrian safety on S Park Street.

Zoning Related Information: The project site is zoned Commercial Corridor-Transitional (CC-T). As a reference, the design related zoning standards outlined in the CC-T zone districts are included as an attachment to this report, including, but not limited to those related to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, height, fenestration, and materials. Staff notes that, while the UDC generally reviews proposals for consistency with these requirements, ultimately the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with the zoning requirements.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests the UDC's continued review and evaluation of the updated plans for consistency with the conditions of approval as outlined below. The UDC's role is to ensure that these previously established conditions are met. The UDC cannot waive of change these requirements.

While staff recognizes that there have been several positive changes related to the site layout and building design, staff requests the UDC's continued feedback and findings on the following conditions:

- **Landscape Plan.**

  Condition: Revise the landscape plan to include additional plantings along the west elevation, including additional upright evergreens and columnar ornamentals to break down blank wall expanses, as well as additional ground plantings. These plantings should also wrap round the north side of the building to enhance the pedestrian experience.

  Staff notes that as a result of the relocation of the above-ground utility pedestal from S Park Street to High Street there have been additional refinements to the landscape plan. Although this is a positive change, staff requests the requests the Commission's continued review and findings related to the landscape plan, especially as it relates to incorporating upright evergreens and columnar ornamentals along the west elevation.

- **Building Design and Materials.**

  Condition: Provide a final materials board.

  Staff notes that a final materials board was provided in the submittal materials, which indicates that the NuCedar product has been replaced with a Nichiha material that is both textured and flat. As a result, the materials palette is primarily comprised of Nichiha panels and masonry materials. A second masonry color was also added to the palette, which is being used as a means of incorporating some ground-level articulation and detailing along the pedestrian pathway on the building's south elevation. As proposed, the alternate bricks are slightly recessed and the pattern appears to create window-like expressions. In addition, related more to design, a more formal decking/bottom rail has been added to the Juliette balconies, which appears as being the same color as the background material but the materiality of the element is unclear.

  As new elements, staff requests the UDC's review and findings of these details and materials giving consideration to the UDD 7 Building Massing and Articulation guidelines and requirements

that speak to avoiding blank walls, utilizing four sided architecture, as well as simplification in materials, and the UDD 7 Materials and Colors guidelines and requirements that speak to exterior materials being durable and high-quality, the use of brick, stone and terra cotta are the preferred primary materials for new buildings, color choices being complementary to the style and materials of the building's façade, and discouraging the use of faux masonry and sidings.

- **Wall Packs/HVAC Louvers.**

  Condition: Revise the building elevations to show the louvers/penetrations and finish details indicating how they are integrated into the building design.

  As indicated on the elevation drawings there are small HVAC-related penetrations associated with the residential units, and three larger louvers that appear to be for garage ventilation.

  While the elevation drawings note that HVAC-related penetrations will be painted to match the adjacent material, there is not a note indicating the treatment of the larger louvers associated with the garage ventilation, nor the material. Staff recommends the Commission include a condition of approval related to the treatment and finish of the larger louvers in the final action.

Staff believes the following conditions have been met:

- Revise the High Street elevation to incorporate articulation or changes in plane (i.e., 4-5" in relief) especially where materials transition, as well as adding windows in the stair well and/or adding canopies above entries.
- The landscape plan shall indicate bark mulch in all beds.
- Revise the landscape plan to show a dense ground cover on the north side of the building (i.e., low mow seeded product or a sedge) versus bluegrass type sod.
- The inconsistencies in the plan identified in the staff report shall be corrected.
- Revise the S Park Street elevation to meet the [UDD 7] glazing requirements (40%).

Summary of Initial Approval Discussion and Comments

As a reference, the Commission's discussion and comments from the August 28, 2024, Initial Approval are provided below.

Summary of Commission Discussion and Questions:

The Commission generally thought that this iteration was an improvements from the Informational Presentation.

The Commission expressed concerns about the High Street façade appearing like back-of-the-house and not part of a four-sided building. The applicant agreed to explore more glass along the stairwell, a canopy, and enhanced landscaping with upright evergreen plantings and taller ornamentals.

The Commission discussed the building's lack of undulation and depth on the High Street elevation and that adding push and pull (6-8 inches of plane change) would give it more interest. It may also help enhance what happens below at the pedestrian level.

The Commission also inquired about the glazing requirements and how the bus stop will be accommodated in the design. The applicant noted that the bus stop is driven by Metro. The BRT and how this location ties in is unknown at this time. This location was requested by Metro. There is seating but it is not extremely wide.

The Commission inquired about the reduced parking spaces in the garage and noted that the two parking stalls adjacent to the overhead door have limited turning movement. In addition, the Commission inquired about the Juliet balconies and whether the doors were sliding doors, and whether there was separation between the upper amenity space and the private residence.

The applicant noted that the parking stalls adjacent to the overhead door could be limited to compact stalls or require backing into those stalls. The applicant also confirmed that they are sliding glass doors. The intent was to provide light and ventilation without providing an actual balcony. The applicant clarified that there will be a short wall that separates the unit patio from the club patio.

Mechanical systems and louvers were discussed. The applicant noted there will be penetrations on the exterior walls, as well as possible smaller penetrations for each unit. The Commission requested that additional information regarding vents/flue penetrations be included in the next submittal.

The Commission inquired about the retaining wall and its materials as well as privacy fence. The applicant described the retaining wall as being poured in place concrete varying in height from 3.5 to 4 feet tall with a guardrail; the privacy fence is no longer proposed.

The Commission noted the egress door that opens into the pathway from High Street to Park Street with a 3-foot clearance; a safety barrier, paint marking or bollard should be considered.

The Commission inquired about the green roof and whether irrigation would be used. The applicant responded it will likely be irrigated.

The Commission suggested alternatives to the sod area on the north side of the building; a non-invasive ground cover could be used for lower maintenance.

The Commission noted that the High Street elevation will be a front façade for some. Consideration should be given to the man doors architecturally, like canopies, etc.

The applicant agreed that those are valid comments, adding light and glazing as well as a canopy would be possible.

The Commission discussed flipping the multi-use path as suggested in the staff report. The applicant responded it would be problematic to flip it, as it traverses along the parking and exit on the south, putting the traffic in front of the units there. Commissioner Asad asked why is that a bad thing; as a pedestrian you would prefer to walk past windows, and living on the ground floor you expect people to pass by your windows. The Secretary noted that a street was originally intended in this location however has been since moved to Olin Avenue. In light of that transition, Traffic Engineering still wants a connection between High Street and S Park Street as a public multi-use path. Continued review and coordination with Traffic Engineering is required to determine the best location on this site however.

The Commission complimented the use of color in the building materials.

The Commission discussed the UDD's 40% glazing requirement. The Secretary noted that while there is a level of flexibility that is permissible, it is up to the Commission to agree with the justification for relief from the guidelines and requirements as it relates to creating a better design by not adhering to the requirement or there

are limitations with the ability to do so. The Secretary noted the recent example of a similar situation with the recent Starbucks on S Park Street, though that was mainly because the building is being reused. This is a brand-new building. Commissioner Klehr noted it is subjective, but seems pretty packed with glazing. In terms of setting a precedent, she wouldn't object to saying they have to meet the 40% requirement.

The Commission noted that the project has progressed, but further information and refinements are needed for Final Approval. The building materials are great with the use of color and variation, but the tectonics can be more varied by incorporating 4-5 inches of relief. This Commission hasn't reviewed any projects with the NuCedar product, and will need to understand the details of how the boards are staggered, alignment of the seams and how it handles corner details. An alternative should be provided as part of the next submittal. In addition, additional information and design details need to be provided for the louvers. It was noted that the plantings shown on all four sides of the transformer won't be allowed by MG&E, so revisions are needed there, as well as the planting strip areas between the doors on High Street, which are areas of landscape that could be used to break up blank walls.

Action

On a motion by Asad, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion included the following conditions:

- Revise the High Street elevation to incorporate articulation or changes in plane (i.e., 4-5" in relief), especially where materials transition, as well as adding windows in the stair well and/or adding canopies above entries.
- Revise the landscape plan to include additional plantings along the west elevation, including additional upright evergreens and columnar ornamentals to break down blank wall expanses, as well as additional ground plantings. These plantings should also wrap round the north side of the building to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- The landscape plan shall indicate bark mulch in all beds.
- Revise the landscape plan to show a dense ground cover on the north side of the building (i.e., low mow seeded product or a sedge) versus bluegrass type sod.
- Revise the S Park Street elevation to meet the [UDD 7] glazing requirements (40%).
- Revise the building elevations to show the louvers/penetrations and finish details indicating how they are integrated into the building design.
- Provide a final materials board.
- The inconsistencies in the plan identified in the staff report shall be corrected.

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

28.060 GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR MIXED-USE AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS.

(1) Statement of Purpose .

Mixed-use and commercial districts are established to provide a range of district types, from the small neighborhood center to regional-level retail centers, while fostering high-quality building and site design and pedestrian, bicycle and transit as well as automobile circulation.

(2) Design Standards. The following design standards are applicable after the effective date of this code to all new buildings and major expansions (fifty percent (50%) or more of building floor area). Design standards shall apply only to the portion of the building or site that is undergoing alteration.

Figure D1: Entrance Orientation

(a) Entrance Orientation (See Figure D1). All new buildings shall have a functional entrance oriented to an abutting public street. Additional entrances may be oriented to a private street or parking area. For buildings with multiple non-residential tenants, a minimum of one (1) tenant space shall have a functional entrance oriented towards an abutting public street. Other tenant spaces shall be connected to the public street with a private sidewalk connection. Entries shall be clearly visible and identifiable from the street, and delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping, or similar design features. Barrier-free entrances are encouraged. (Am. by ORD-13-00113, 6-26-13)

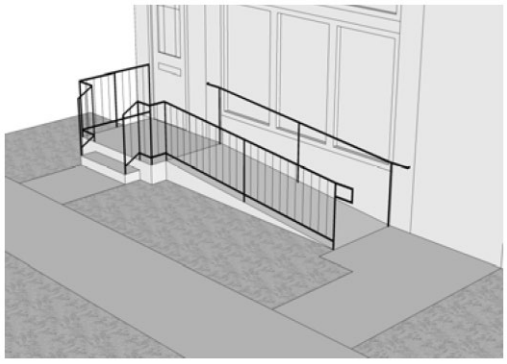

Figure D2: Barrier-Free Entrance Example

(b) Facade Articulation. Consistent with the design of traditional storefront buildings, new buildings of more than forty (40) feet in width shall be divided into smaller increments, through articulation of the facade. This can be achieved through combinations of including but not limited to the following:

1. Facade Modulation (See Figure D3) . Stepping back or extending forward a portion of the facade.
2. Vertical divisions using different textures or materials (although materials shall be drawn from a common palette).
3. Division into storefronts, with separate display windows and entrances.

Figure D3: Facade Modulation

4. Variation in roof lines by alternating dormers, stepped roofs, gables, or other roof elements to reinforce the modulation or articulation interval (See Figure D4).

5. Arcades, awnings, and window bays at intervals equal to the articulation interval.

(c) Design of Street-Facing Facades.

No blank walls shall be permitted to face the public street, sidewalks, or other public spaces such as plazas. Elements such as windows, doors, columns, changes in material, and similar details shall be used to add visual interest.

Figure D4: Variation in Roof Lines

(d) Door and/or Window Openings. For nonresidential uses at ground floor level, windows and doors or other openings shall comprise at least sixty percent (60%) of the length and at least forty percent (40%) of the area of the ground floor of the primary street facade. At least fifty percent (50%) of windows on the primary street facade shall have the lower sill within three (3) feet of grade.

For residential uses at ground level, a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the ground level of residential facades or side and rear facades not fronting a public street shall consist of windows and door openings. On upper stories, window or balcony openings shall occupy a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the upper-story wall area.

1. Glass on windows and doors shall be clear or slightly tinted, allowing views into and out of the interior. Spandrel glass that mimics the appearance of windows may be used for up to twenty percent (20%) of the required area of the openings. (Am. by ORD-13-00205, 12-10-13)

2. Displays may be placed within windows. Equipment within buildings shall be placed a minimum of five (5) feet behind windows. To preserve views, within three (3) feet of any window, not more than thirty percent (30%) of the view through the windows shall be blocked by merchandise, displays, shelving, or other obstructions.

3. Window shape, size and patterns shall emphasize the intended organization of the facade and the definition of the building.

(e) Equipment and Service Area Screening. If an outdoor storage, service or loading area is visible from adjacent residential uses or an abutting public street or public walkway, it shall be screened by a

decorative fence, wall or screen of plant material at least six (6) feet in height. Fences and walls shall be architecturally compatible with the primary structure.

(f) Screening of Rooftop Equipment. All rooftop equipment, with the exception of solar and wind equipment, shall be screened from view from adjacent streets and public rights-of-way. Rooftop equipment shall be screened from view from adjacent buildings to the extent possible.

1. The equipment shall be within an enclosure. This structure shall be set back a distance of one and one-half (1½) times its height from any primary facade fronting a public street.

    a. Screens shall be of durable, permanent materials (not including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials.

    b. Screening shall be constructed to a height of at least one (1) foot above the height of the equipment.

2. Exterior mechanical equipment such as ductwork shall not be located on primary building facades.

(g) Materials . Nonresidential or mixed-use buildings shall be constructed of durable, high-quality materials such as brick, stone, textured cast stone, or tinted masonry units. Table 28D-1 below lists allowable building materials. When applying these requirements, consideration shall be given to the use, amount, placement and relationship of each material as part of a comprehensive palette of building materials. All building facades visible from a public street or public walkway should employ materials and design features similar to or complementary to those of the front facade.

Table 28D-1.

	Allowable for use as/at:				
Building Materials	**Trim/Accent Material**	**Top of Building**	**Middle of Building**	**Base/Bottom of Building**	**Standards (see footnotes)**
Brick (Face/Veneer)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Smooth-Face/Split-Face Block	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
Wood/ Wood Composite	✓	✓	✓		
Fiber-Cement Siding/Panels	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Concrete Panels, Tilt-up or Precast	✓	✓	✓	✓	B
EIFS/Synthetic Stucco	✓	✓			C
Stone/Stone Veneer	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Metal Panels	✓	✓	✓	✓	D
Hand-Laid Stucco	✓	✓			C
Vinyl Siding	✓				E
Glass Curtain Wall System	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Reflective Glass/Spandrel	✓				F
Glass (Storefront)	✓	✓	✓	✓	

A - Shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials and shall not comprise more than 33% of any building wall adjacent to a public street or walkway.

B - Shall incorporate horizontal and vertical articulation and modulation, including but not limited to changes in color and texture, or as part of a palette of materials.

C - Shall not be within three feet of the ground or used in heavily trafficked pedestrian areas or where high pedestrian traffic is anticipated.

D - Shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials; shall be a heavy gauge metal, and; shall be non-reflective.

E - Shall be used in limited quantities due to its limited durability.

F - Shall be used in limited quantities as an accent material.

Figure D5: Compatibility with Traditional Buildings

(h) Compatibility with Traditional Buildings . (See Figure D5.) New development shall relate to the design of traditional buildings adjacent to the site, where present, in scale and character. This can be achieved by maintaining similar, facade divisions, roof lines, rhythm and proportions of openings, building materials and colors. Historic architectural styles need not be replicated.

Figure D6: Building Alignment

(i) Building Alignment . (See Figure D6.) Buildings shall be aligned with facades parallel with the street to create a well-defined street edge.

(j) Building Articulation . (See Figure D7.) Buildings shall have horizontal and vertical articulation, which may include dormers, cornice detailing, recesses and projections, stepbacks of upper stories, changes in roof types and planes, building materials, and window patterns. The base of the building shall relate to the human scale, including doors and windows, texture, projections, awnings, canopies, and similar features.

Figure D7: Building Articulation

(k) Ground-Floor Residential Uses . (See Figure D8.) Ground-floor residential uses fronting a public street or walkway, where present, shall be separated from the street by landscaping, steps, porches, grade changes, and low ornamental fences or walls in order to create a private yard area between the sidewalk and the front door.

Figure D8: Ground Floor Residential Uses