



PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

August 12, 2019

PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

Project Address: 609 Vera Court (18th Aldermanic District - Ald. Kemble)
Application Type: Conditional Use
Legistar File ID #: [56583](#)
Prepared By: Sydney Prusak, Planning Division
Report Includes Comments from other City Agencies, as noted
Reviewed By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

Summary

Applicant & Contact: Rodney Tapp; Meridian Group, Inc.; P.O. Box 620800; Middleton, WI 53562-0800

Property Owner: Future Madison NorthPointe, LLC; P.O. Box 620800; Middleton, WI 53562-0800

Requested Action: Approval of a Conditional Use to allow a residential services office for an existing residential building complex at 609 Vera Court.

Proposal Summary: The applicant proposes to formally establish an on-site management office for the existing NorthPointe Residential Building Complex. No exterior changes are proposed.

Applicable Regulations & Standards: This proposal is subject to the Approval Standards for Conditional Uses, MGO §28.183(6)), as MGO §28.032 lists *office, residential services* as a conditional use in the SR-V1 (Suburban Residential – Varied 1) Zoning District.

Review Required By: Plan Commission (PC) and Urban Design Commission (UDC). The UDC Secretary reviewed this request on behalf of the UDC.

Summary Recommendation: The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the Conditional Use Standards are met and **approve** the request to allow a residential services office for an existing residential building complex at 609 Vera Court. This recommendation is subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The 36,915 square-foot (0.85-acre) property is located near the end of Vera Court, which is located off of School Road. It is located within Aldermanic District 18 (Alder Kemble) as well as the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Existing Conditions and Land Use: The property is currently developed as a residential building complex, which includes two residential buildings for a total of 16 dwelling units. There are adjacent apartment buildings that are managed by the same company, but are located on separate lots. The office is located within a two-bedroom apartment in an eight-unit building. The property is zoned Suburban Residential – Varied 1 (SR-V1).

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North: An eight-unit apartment building included in the residential building complex, zoned SR-V1, with Mendota Elementary School, zoned Suburban Residential – Consistent 1 (SR-C1) beyond;

East: Multi-family residential under the same management, zoned Suburban Residential – Varied 1 (SR-V1);

South: Multi-family residential under the same management, zoned SR-V1; and

West: The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad with multi-family residential, zoned SR-V1 beyond.

Adopted Land Use Plan: The [Comprehensive Plan \(2018\)](#) recommends Low Medium Residential (LMR) for the subject site, which is defined as seven to 30 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The [Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan \(2009\)](#) includes the subject site within a Primary Housing Rehab Zone. The Plan recommendations state: “Explore and consider neighborhood stabilization options for emerging neighborhood areas including Brentwood, Karstens, Kipling and **Vera Court**; include landlord training, property inspection and maintenance and local hiring of residents for property management or neighborhood improvement activities.”

Zoning Summary: The property is in the Suburban Residential – Varied 1 (SR-V1) District

Requirements	Required	Proposed
Lot Area (sq. ft.)	2,000 sq. ft./d.u. (16) = 32,000	36,915 sq. ft.
Lot Width	60'	258'
Front Yard Setback	25'	Existing no change
Side Yard Setback	10'	Existing no change
Rear Yard Setback	30'	Existing no change
Usable Open Space	500 sq. ft./d.u. (16) = 8,000	Existing no change
Maximum Lot Coverage	60%	Existing no change
Maximum Building Height	3 stories/40 feet	Existing no change

Site Design	Required	Proposed
Number of Parking Stalls	1/d.u. (16) = 16	Existing no change
Accessible Stalls	1	Existing no change
Loading	No	No
Number Bike Parking Stalls	1 per unit up to two-bedrooms, ½ space per add'l bedroom; 1 guest space per 10 units	Existing no change
Landscaping	Yes	Existing no change
Lighting	Yes	Existing no change

Other Critical Zoning Items:	Urban Design (Residential Building Complex), Utility Easements
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Table Prepared Jacob Moskowitz, Assistant Zoning Administrator

Environmental Corridor Status: The subject site is not located in a mapped environmental corridor.

Public Utilities and Services: This property is served by a full range of urban services, with Metro Transit Routes #21, #22, and #29 serving the site.

Project Description, Analysis, and Conclusion

The applicant, Meridian Group, Inc., proposes to formally establish an on-site residential services office to serve an existing residential building complex and surrounding buildings under common ownership. The approximate 0.85-acre property has been operating as a residential building complex, with an accessory management office, since 1993. According to the applicant, a first-floor two-bedroom unit within an eight-unit building in the complex is used as a management office to meet with tenants, sign paperwork, process applications, collect rents, submit maintenance requests, meet with members of the neighborhood resource team, and other general office activities. City Building Inspection was recently made aware of this operation, which was previously not an allowed use in the Suburban Residential – Varied 1 (SR-V1) Zoning District. At their June 18, 2019 meeting, the Common Council voted to amend MGO §28.032 to allow residential service offices as conditional uses in the SR-V1 Zoning District, so long as the supportive service space is for residents of that owner’s residential dwelling units located within 1,250 feet of the office as measured from lot line to lot line.

This conditional use application is intended to bring the property into compliance with the Zoning Code requirements. According to the letter of intent, the hours of operation for the office are Monday through Friday 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. The applicant is not requesting any changes in operation and wishes to continue as a legal conditional use.

In regards to the approval standards, the Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the City’s adopted plan recommendations, design guidelines, and finding that all of the conditional use standards of MGO §28.183(6) are met.

Staff believes that this proposal is compatible with both the [Comprehensive Plan \(2018\)](#), which recommends Low Medium Residential (LMR) for the subject site, which is defined as seven to 30 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and the [Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan \(2009\)](#), which includes this site in a Primary Housing Rehab Zone. As stated earlier, the Plan recommendations state: “Explore and consider neighborhood stabilization options for emerging neighborhood areas including Brentwood, Karstens, Kipling and **Vera Court**; include landlord training, property inspection and maintenance and local hiring of residents for property management or neighborhood improvement activities.” Staff believes that formally approving this residential services office to serve the tenants on site furthers these recommendations. Additionally, since this unit has been used as a management office since the complex was established, this request will not eliminate any residential units on site.

Given that this office has been operating for two decades, staff does not believe that this conditional use will result in new impacts or diminish the uses, values, and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood; nor will it impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

In conclusion, the Planning Division believes that the Conditional Use Standards can be found met. At the time of report writing, staff did not receive any public comment on this proposal.

Recommendation

Planning Division Recommendation (Contact Sydney Prusak, (608) 243-0554)

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the Conditional Use Standards are met and **approve** the request to allow a residential services office for an existing residential building complex on a property

zoned Suburban Residential – Varied 1 (SR-V1). This recommendation is subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies.

Recommended Conditions of Approval Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

Engineering Division - Mapping Section (Contact Jeff Quamme, (608) 266-4097)

1. The site plan shall reflect a proper street address of the property reflected by official City of Madison Assessor’s and Engineering Division records. The correct address is 309 Clyde Gallagher Avenue #1.

Zoning (Contact Jacob Moskowitz, (608) 266-4560)

2. Sec. 28.151: Office shall only serve the owner's residential dwelling units located on a lot within 1,250 feet of the office as measured from lot line to lot line.

Fire Department (Contact Bill Sullivan, (608) 261-9658)

3. MFD recommends the installation of a fire sprinkler system in all remodeled areas of the building.