



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: Midtown Center- 8137 Mayo Drive, 1833, 1859 Waldorf Boulevard, 8134, 8110 Mid-Town Road, 1902 Carns Drive

Application Type: Amendment to a PD(GDP) and New SIP – Initial/Final Approval is Requested

Legistar File ID # [58530](#)

Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Rick Wessling, Urbanworks Architecture LLC, Minneapolis, MN

Project Description: The applicant is seeking approval of a Planned Development-General Development Plan-Specific Implementation Plan (PD-GDP-SIP) for a development with three multi-unit apartment buildings (one of which will have some ground-floor commercial space). The proposed buildings will be five to six stories in height and include a total of 265 units and 355 parking stalls (255 structured and 100 surface). The remainder of the Mid Town Commons block is built out as two residential buildings sit to the northeast of the subject site.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an informational presentation on December 11, 2019.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this item on March 9, 2020.
- The Common Council is scheduled to review this item on March 17, 2020.

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. As with any **Planned Development**, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code sections 28.098(1), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval.

Summary of Design Considerations

Planning staff requests that the UDC provide feedback on the exterior design and appearance of the building and site layout, including pedestrian circulation, parking, and landscape concept, and comment based on the **PD Standards** and the UDC comments from the Dec. 11, 2019 Informational Presentation.

Planning Staff also request that the Commission provide feedback on how the proposed development fits within the larger Mid Town Commons General Development Plan (GDP) as well as the context of the neighborhood and the Amended [High Point- Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan](#).

That plan recommends a combination of “Housing Mix 4” and “Neighborhood Mixed-Use” development for the subject site. Housing Mix 4 is primarily located near larger mixed-use nodes and transit corridors and is intended to support the development of neighborhood-oriented businesses that will create an engaging focal point for neighborhood activity and convenience shopping. It includes multi-family buildings and larger development forms. The plan generally recommends heights up to four stories and densities up to 50 dwelling units per acre. The plan similarly recommends a general height of up to four story buildings, noting that the density of these mixed-use areas may exceed that what is recommended in Housing Mix 4.

Staff requests the UDC provides feedback on the following points:

- Concern regarding some larger blank wall conditions, including Building A & B's western (Waldorf Blvd.) elevations.
- Concerns regarding building elevations with street-facing Wal-Pak/HVAC units and louvres.
- Discuss the amount and suitability of usable open space across the site.
- Discuss the amount/location of first floor non-residential/commercial space primarily oriented towards Waldorf Blvd. without a presence on Mid Town Road.
- Note, the scale and height of the proposed buildings appear to be greater than the height than recommended in the High Point Raymond Neighborhood Development plan, particularly Building B.
- Provide feedback regarding the proposed projecting balconies-versus a more in-set solution.
- Provide more information on large retaining wall details and materials.

December 11, 2019 UDC comments:

- It looks nice, there's a lot of restraint in both the site layout and architecture. As the landscape develops, I hope it doesn't become this swoopy bedline very much like the organization and cleanliness you have here.
- It's a good use of grade and when you're on Waldorf looking east, is there a big retaining wall behind the truck?
- I like how you did the parking entries, it works well.
- The entrance to the underground parking off of Mid-Town, it's a large amount of paving. Does it need to have that much paving or can you have more green going down into that area?
- The view at Mayo Drive looking east, those are really large broad expanses of flat panels. To my eye, I fear that the average person looking at that is going to find it rather institutional looking. There's nothing going on at all, it could be more different than the ones across the street. Look at landscaping placement to soften that.
- As people pull in to the U-Haul spot, there's a neat design opportunity there with the walls and focal point. Whether it's lighting, something artistic, or landscaping cascading it could be a unique entry feature.