



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: Pleasant View Road, Springs at Pleasant View
Application Type: Residential Building Complex as part of a General Development Plan (GDP)
Informational Presentation
Legistar File ID # [60067](#)
Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Robert McCaigue, Continental Properties Company, Inc., Continental 479 Fund, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is providing an informational presentation for a new Residential Building Complex. The current site addressed as 3306 CTH M (aka South Pleasant View Road, Town of Middleton) would be attached to the City of Madison prior to formal consideration of this request. The project includes the development of 300 apartment homes in 15 buildings with a townhouse design in a mix of studio, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom units. The development will also feature a clubhouse, pool and sun deck for residents.

Project Schedule:

- The development team is planning to submit a land use application in the future.

Approval Standards:

While staff does not know the exact zoning that will be proposed, staff anticipates the UDC will be an advisory body on this request as this will be considered a residential building complex.

Summary of Design Considerations

The development is within the Amended [High Point- Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan](#). That Plan recommends a combination of Housing Mix 2 and 3 for the subject property. The former includes two unit developments, townhouses, and small apartment buildings. The plan advises against large areas of a single development type. The latter is a more intensive district, which recommends similar building types, recognizing buildings may be larger and taller than those found in Housing Mix 2. Both districts recommend heights up to three stories.

In regards to the proposed development, Planning staff requests that the UDC provide feedback on the exterior design and appearance of the building and site layout, including improved internal pedestrian circulation, parking layout, and landscaping.

Planning Staff also request that the Commission provide feedback on how the buildings could better orient toward the streets and hold the corners, especially on the northern portion of the site where there are additional grading issues. The site includes approximately 80 feet of grade change, and the proposed site plan includes multiple tall retaining walls to facilitate the current layout. The applicant has been exploring different designs and configurations and staff requests that the UDC comment the current concept. Note, staff understands that the proposed development forms represent the developer’s typical development plans, which do not currently include buildings taller than two stories or buildings with underground parking. Finally, staff recommend that the applicant comment on the elevated stormwater areas, which are currently under discussion with City Engineering staff that who will ultimately need to approve the design.

UDC Informational Review Comments

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| Project Name: | Pleasant View |
| Site Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a word - problematic. As noted in their first presentation to us, the substantial grade changes and the solutions (extreme use of retaining walls and water retention ponds) seem really challenging both engineering-wise as well as aesthetically. • Modestly improved from first presentation. More green space, less dense to N by 1 building; slightly more varied building placement to S. However, steep retaining walls still present huge safety and design issues. How is safety being handled? What are these huge walls (some 20' high and very long) being made of and is there any design, texture or green relief? These are <i>major</i> design elements. • Some of the units seem to face nice green space, some units seem to look out into a sea of parking and pavement. Site Plan appears heavily oriented to parking and cars. Will there be more pedestrian connection within the site to get to the pool and Clubhouse? Some of the retaining walls are very tall – it's difficult to understand the site contours. Walking along a 20' retaining wall would not seem desirable, nor to be the lower unit next to a retaining wall standing between 8 -18' high. Will there be additional barrier at a retaining wall on the upper side to ensure people don't fall (looking at Section Detail B on the Overall Section A)? Who has access to the enclosed yards? Is the landscape prototype drawing applicable on this site – where is a unit block that doesn't have garage access on at least one side? • The site is admittedly difficult due to change of grade in both directions. The design super-imposes a cookie-cutter grid better suited to a flat site, with not much success. Retaining walls and the buildings' relationship to them will result in guard rails to ensure pedestrian safety. Location of pet areas and trash enclosures seem to be an afterthought. |
| Architecture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The buildings are handsome enough, but the sameness of 15 of them in structure and color is what I always find sad and boring in these size developments. The front elevations' first floors are a wall of garage doors. The clubhouse is easily the most interesting architecture in here. • Appears to be only one design with two color schemes. As an individual building, design is unobjectionable to me. But repeating exact same design 15 times on one site IS objectionable. Even public housing in Madison is not that repetitious. That lack of design variation seems destined to degrade quality of whole development quickly over time. • Nothing wrong with the architecture, but it doesn't have much uniqueness to it that places it as anything special that particularly belongs to Middleton or Madison. The amount of detail is appreciated. • 5 – Design of the buildings doesn't respond to orientation or their relationship to retaining walls/views. Too many materials. |
| Landscape Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a lot of detail provided, but if this goes forward I'd like to see a lot of effort in plantings that would break up and soften the retaining walls, more trees along the main roads, and substantial landscaping around the ponds, particularly the two northernmost that are between buildings. • How will detention ponds be treated – not indicated in landscape plan. They look engineered, not naturally-shaped. Does water volume meet proposed |

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| | <p>new storm water standards? Since these ponds are now more numerous, they have become major landscape features so they need to be treated as such.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems like this site might be an appropriate site for more natural landscaping – might give the site more of a sense of place. Could there be tall grasses that help cover retaining walls, or a more natural way to screen retaining walls or address slope changes? • 6 – for plant selection. |
| Site Amenities/Lighting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the car care/ package delivery buildings but it seems like you need one on each side of Mansion Hill. Would you consider putting electric vehicle charging ports in these, particularly if the private garages aren't wired for that? • Addition of pet park and slightly more green space is good. No comment on lighting. Trash location on S side is very visible – how will it be treated architecturally? • 5 – Amenities are there but aren't thoughtfully located or interconnected. |
| Signs – if shown, do they complement the architecture? (<i>sign approvals will be a separate application.</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comment at this time. |
| Pedestrian/Vehicle Circulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all of your maps presented seem to show the same layouts but the most prominent one looks like good vehicle circulation given the constraints of the topography. Some of the sidewalks seem to inexplicably stop on their way to connecting with Mica Road sidewalks. • Pedestrian circulation seems limited to unit and club house access. There's no walking paths around ponds or the larger site. Granted, there will eventually be a park across the street, but some site foot circulation might also be nice. Regarding vehicles, the steep site grades make it hard to visualize exactly how asphalt-intensive this site will seem. From aerial view, it's still a lot. Are <i>four</i> access points to N part of site all necessary? Seems excessive. • 4 - Very auto-centric layout. |
| Urban Context | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This development is creating its own context, and I worry that it's one that will quickly decline into a concentrated suburban low-income neighborhood due to its lack of variety and interest. • This seems like a large development focused on car access. Doesn't address the pedestrian experience too much. • 5 – While there are similar buildings of this size & style in the area, its response to the topography needs work. |
| Overall Rating (1-10)* | 6, 4, 5.5, 4 |

*Individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10. The scale is: 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding.