

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

July 29, 2020



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 8355 Mansion Hill Avenue
(Previously seen as 3306 CTH M (Pleasant View Road) [58529](#))

Application Type: Residential Building Complex – Final Approval is Requested

Legistar File ID # [60816](#)

Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Robert McCaigue, Continental 479 Fund, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is seeking final approval for a residential building complex with 300 units within 15 residential buildings, including a clubhouse and pool, car care area, pet wash station and exterior playground amenities.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC granted initial approval on July 1, 2020.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal on July 27, 2020.
- The Common Council is scheduled to review this proposal on August 4, 2020.

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. Section 28.151 of the Zoning Code requires that Residential Building Complexes be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission pursuant to the provisions in Section 33.24(4)(c) which states: “The Urban Design Commission shall review the exterior design and appearance of all principal buildings or structures and the landscape plans of all proposed residential building complexes. It shall report its findings and recommendations to the City Plan Commission.”

Summary of Design Considerations

The predominant recommended land use within the [High Point Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan](#) Planning Areas remains residential, with the plan specifically recommending “Housing Mix 3” and “Housing Mix 4” for the subject property. The former generally recommends a mix of duplexes through apartment buildings, generally up to three stories in height. The plan recommends that the overall density be approximately 20 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), but individual developments may have higher densities up to 40 du/ac. The latter recommends more intensive development up to four stories with an overall density up to 35 du/ac with individual developments up to 50 du/ac. The surrounding area includes recommendation for parks and open space, employment and mixed-use development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Planning staff recommends that the UDC review the [High Point Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan](#), and provide comments related to the aforementioned standard that requires the UDC to review the exterior design and appearance of all principal buildings or structures and the landscape plans of all proposed residential building complexes.

Staff also recommends that the Commission provide comments regarding grades and retaining walls proposed, particularly for the portion of the site north of Mansion Hill Avenue and the pedestrian experience along both sides of Mica Road in terms of building orientation, wall heights, and landscaping.

Planning staff refers the UDC to the initial approval conditions and recommends they review the comments from the July 1, 2020 meeting minutes:

Approval Conditions:

- Provide more elevations or perspectives of a length of the retaining walls showing the terracing
- Provide additional full blown landscape plans with species identified for the retaining walls.

Review Comments regarding retaining walls:

- With the large amount of retaining walls being used, aesthetically, I don't care for the color or product you're showing. For example something like Ready Rock offers a much larger interlocking unit with the size and scale of these walls that larger module might look better.
- I do like how you've integrated stormwater as pockets into the development. You could still improve the shape of some of those to be less engineered and more a natural amenity to the community.
- Is there a landscape way to minimize the exposure of some of these retaining walls? Minimize it with some plantings? More of an effort to do that, more substantial green areas in front of the retaining walls. It's not very attractive.
- Consider in a safety barrier at the top near the drop off edge at the parking. Don't want a cable barrier.
- If the right selections are made for landscaping that would break it up.
 - There is no attempt to address breaking up those walls from the top side down with plants that would naturally grow and drape over the top. Some of that could be accomplished with trailing annuals.
 - A combination of the right vining plants coming up from the bottom, trailing coming from the top, and in the bases, deciduous plants and evergreen trees that would break up the continuity in the long views.