



**Project Address:** 575 Zor Shrine Place  
**Application Type:** Advisory Recommendation on a Planned Residential Building Complex  
Final Approval is Requested  
**Legistar File ID #** [65583](#)  
**Prepared By:** Kevin Firchow, Acting UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Robert Gorsuch, Zor Shrine Shriners International | Mark Laverty, Saturday Properties

**Project Description:** The applicant seeking final approval for a Residential Building Complex containing 479 residential apartment units in two buildings with underground parking. The Plan Commission approved the demolition and conditional use (to which the UDC is advisory) and the Common Council approved the related zoning change to TR-U2 Traditional Residential-Urban District.

### Project Schedule:

- The UDC granted initial approval on June 30, 2021.
- The Plan Commission approved this proposal on July 12, 2021.
- The Common Council approved the rezoning on July 20, 2021.

### Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. Section 28.151 of the Zoning Code requires that Residential Building Complexes are 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 and Recommendations

Planning Division staff requests that the UDC provide findings and recommendations as required by the Zoning Code and conditioned by the Plan Commission.

As part of their previous advisory recommendation to Plan Commission (PC), the UDC recommended the following points: 1) Increase green space areas within the site including minimizing parking to the minimum required; 2) Address the orientation of buildings by rotating one or both of the buildings to create a more enclosed courtyard approach or improved amenity space utilization. Staff notes that building orientation was discussed at the Plan Commission meeting, and based on the PC's action, the project was approved subject to not reorienting the building(s). In effect, that eliminates point 2 raised by the UDC. The Plan Commission's specific approval condition states that:

- That the applicant receive final approval of the residential building complex from the Urban Design Commission based on the current project plans and site layout.

While the Plan Commission's action precludes the UDC from approving a different layout, the UDC has been asked to grant final approval on other aspects of the plan. This could include landscape related-comments as discussed during UDC's original review of the project. The current packet includes modified landscape plan and additional perspective information for consideration by the UDC.

## Summary of Previously Provided UDC Commissioner Comments

As a reference, staff refers the Commission to their comments from the June 30, 2021 discussion at which the UDC ultimately granted initial approval.

- What's the target population, no plans or thoughts for larger bedroom units?
- Tickled by the landscape goals. You have a driveway going right through the zones you articulated. Wonder if the design team thought about trying to get the landscape zone for occupant benefit between the circulation or to create an environment that includes that circulation.
- You could create a more desirable plaza experience, choice of materials for the paving, going really aggressive to something permeable or turf based.
- Appreciate the density of what we're looking at as a whole relative to what exists currently. Great job with the tree inventory, I don't see any major issues with what you're proposing. The Sugar Maple along the east boundary, I'm not clear whether it's staying or being removed; make a note to keep that one if there's no reason to take it down (Tree 51). The Ash trees, if not being treated should be removed.
- Love the landscape narrative but can't help but see lots of surface parking. By count it seems an excess largely driven by the north parcel which will become a City right-of-way. There's potentially 80 stalls surface parking stalls that aren't really required by code. Can that parking lot to the north can be used in some sort of shared agreement? Agree the parking around the perimeter doesn't feel like good urban design or a streetscape. This feels more like two buildings surrounded by a parking lot, especially that center spine seems problematic. Without some of that materiality it's hard to justify that. Love the outdoor spaces you do have. If those were all inward facing to a central open space this may be more successful.
- Within the narrative of your different landscape zones, if there was some terracing of that landscaping against the wall instead of just a wall coming down to grade, it might help break up that space and ease the transition of the vertical wall.
- This was previously a relatively small building on a large parcel with lots of trees, an underutilized space. We've gone from that to every single available space within those property lines with buildings and a parking lot. Better than average landscaping around the buildings and amenity areas to be acknowledged, but it's a lot of hard surface area. Wondering what the team has looked at in terms of stormwater management guidelines to follow but any consideration to green roofs, dealing with water in these parking lots, permeable areas, rain garden areas. Future plantings look to shield the building from the Beltline at some point; I'd like to see more shielding of that.
- The properties on either side, to the right you're up to the property line showing a row of trees, it doesn't look like there's much of a planting areas between those properties. Concerned on that aspect of the landscaping, drainage and water issues. What are you doing to address these issues?
- Orientation and maximizing space. Trying to address the Beltline, privacy, those greenspaces are commendable but by mirroring the buildings and making a courtyard it would make those spaces nicer and provide more of a buffer on that spine. That's an opportunity for the team.
- Is there any opportunity to turn surface bike parking to greenspace and put more parking under the building?
- I like the design, it's a nice addition to the City and giving us more needed housing. I like the punches of the fiber cement that add texture.
- Could the team help us understand, I think there were some great ideas discussed here about the rotation of buildings that's a huge opportunity. I appreciate your thoughts on future development but I question making design choices around that uncertainty. Is rotating the buildings on the table?
- Building articulation was pretty well received. Orientation and open space at issue.