

CITY OF OLYMPIA
Olympia Design Review Board

COMBINED DESIGN REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October, 25, 2018

Case Number:	19-2860
Applicant / Rep.:	Real Estate Equities Development LLC / Marty McCarthy
City Staff Contact:	Nicole Floyd, Senior Planner, 360-570-3768 nfloyd@ci.olympia.wa.us
Site Address:	4920 Henderson Boulevard
Project Description:	New 67 unit senior housing development. The structure will be approximately 130,000sf, three stories of residential units and one floor of partially underground parking.
Zoning District:	Professional Office/ Mixed Residential (PORM)
Design Criteria:	Multi-Family Residential
Comprehensive Plan:	Professional Office / Multi-Family
Scenic Vista:	Not Applicable
Critical Areas:	Wellhead Protection Area
Notification:	Notice of the Design Review Board Meeting was sent to all property owners within 300', Recognized Neighborhood Associations, and parties of record on July 19, 2019.
Board Responsibility:	The Design Review Board will review the project to determine compliance with the applicable design criteria and make a recommendation to the Site Plan Review Committee regarding the adequacy of the projects design. The Community Planning and Development Director makes the final decision. Conceptual Design Review involves the major design elements of a project as they relate to the general project design and how they comply with the specific design criteria of the design district. Detailed Design review involves all the detailed design elements of a project which include the materials, colors, and final architectural elevations, the final landscape design including the required lighting plan, and the sign program as they relate to the applicable Design Requirements. This is a combined review, therefore both concept and detail review will be addressed.

Staff Provided Assistance:

City staff evaluated the project based on the applicable design standards and prepared a variety of support materials including design review checklists to assist in the Board's assessment of this project (see attached). This report focuses on issues that staff recommends for Board discussion. Suggested conditions of approval have been provided for the Board's review and recommendation.

Project Context / Existing Site Conditions:

The project is located at the intersection of Henderson Boulevard and Yelm Highway, a prominent intersection at the edge of the City limits. Henderson Boulevard is within the Tumwater City jurisdiction and Yelm Highway is in Olympia's jurisdiction. The site was previously used as the Tsuki Nursery and has recently been re-zoned from single family residential to Professional Office Mixed Residential (PO/RM). The rezone reflects the commercial nature of this busy intersection and the adjacent Briggs Village as well as the newly remodeled grange building now occupied by a Starbucks Coffee Shop. The two parcels to the east were also re-zoned to the PO/RM zoning.

The site includes two parcels occupying approximately 5 acres. The project proposal occupies the northern part of the site, with the intention to sell the remaining land for future development. To do this, the application includes a short subdivision to modify the property boundaries. The application before the Board is for Phase I, which includes the senior housing development only. Future use and development for Phase II is not under review at this time, but will require City review and approval once a project is proposed.

A neighborhood meeting was held for this project where several citizens attended and were primarily concerned about the proposed street connection associated with the project. Plans identify the new street as Palomino Court, however this name is already in use in the adjacent residential development across Henderson Boulevard. The new street is a City requirement to implement the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies for connected streets. The proposed connection will allow for future connection when the properties to the east develop. Henderson Boulevard is within the Tumwater City jurisdiction therefore coordination with the City of Tumwater is necessary to determine the level of improvements necessary at the intersection of the new street and Henderson Boulevard. It is likely that frontage improvements will be required that are not identified on the current project plans.

The applicant has stated that their co-op style of senior housing has been highly successful in the Midwest and have been expanding west for several years. There is another similar project the company has under review in the City of Puyallup.

Review of Design Criteria:

This project is required to comply with the Multi-Family Design Criteria (OMC 18.170). Staff has reviewed the project for compliance with these criteria and has provided a

detailed analysis within the attached Design Review Checklist. The checklist identifies areas of compliance and deficiency. Recommended conditions of approval are provided for the Board's consideration.

Staff has found that the project design addresses many, but not all of the criteria within the code. The following identify the key issues that staff suggests the Board pay specific attention to. A more detailed analysis of each is provided in the design review checklists:

Pedestrian Orientation – Overview:

This is the last site to develop at the intersection of Yelm Highway and Henderson Boulevard. Despite the high level of traffic, the existing development pattern has placed a clear and deliberate emphasis on pedestrian orientation. The site is on the edge of the Briggs Village, which by design includes a high emphasis on pedestrian activation and requires that buildings include orientation towards the pedestrian, rather than automobile. The proximity of the site to the YMCA, extensive walking trails in the Briggs Village, and the adjacent Starbucks in the historic grange building lend this site to tapping into the existing pedestrian active street frontage. Instead, the project appears to have its back turned away from the intersection and instead oriented towards the vehicular parking lot behind the building.

The building generally meets the setback and development standards for this zone, and is not within the Briggs Village Master Plan. While not required to meet the elevated standards of the Briggs Village, the project is required to meet the design criteria of OMC 18.170. This chapter places a strong emphasis on the building scale and character of the district and asks the project to take cues from the adjacent development patterns.

One of the key reasons the building does not orient towards either Yelm Highway or Henderson Boulevard relates to the, parking garage located beneath the building. The applicant has opted to use the parking calculation for multi-family housing, rather than the reduced rate typically applied to senior housing developments. Had they chosen to use the senior housing parking rate, the surface parking proposed would adequately address code requirements and the parking garage would not be necessary. The applicant contends that their parking demand is more in line with that of the multi-family housing demand; therefore, they need the additional parking. If the garage were located entirely underground, many of the pedestrian orientation related issues would be significantly easier to resolve.

Several design criteria overlap in terms of requirements. Combined they indicate that in order to meet the design criteria, the project will need to be revised to place a stronger emphasis on the pedestrian environment along the frontage. The following sections address several of these overlapping criteria:

Building Orientation and Entries (OMC 170.100):

The code requires that a clearly defined building or courtyard entry must be provided to the building from the primary street. As both Henderson Boulevard and Yelm Highway are arterial streets, they are both considered primary building frontages. The proposed street connection is a neighborhood collector street and is not one of the primary frontages. Ideally, the frontage facing both Henderson Boulevard and Yelm Highway would provide building entries, however the requirement only requires one of these frontages to include an entry. Plans will need to be revised to show compliance.

Staff recommends the applicant modify the Henderson Boulevard frontage to include a prominent pedestrian entry because this façade already proposes a covered patio and outdoor area associated with the main lobby. Enhancements could include similar distinctive architectural elements and materials shown on the entry facing the parking lot. The new entry would need to include a wide sidewalk, pedestrian scaled lighting, and pedestrian amenities along the pathway connecting to Henderson Boulevard. The area could tie into the community garden area and could include a terrace or other pedestrian amenities that would enhance the required community space.

Alternatively, the applicant may opt to provide an entry along the Yelm Highway frontage instead. This would likely require significant modification to the project design such as reducing/eliminating the parking garage. While a more significant design change, this approach would help achieve several other design criteria as it would allow for ground level residential units and facilitate incorporation of pedestrian features similar to those found in the Silver Leaf Residences.

Condition of Approval: Plans shall be revised to provide a clearly defined building entry towards the primary street frontage. The entry shall include distinctive elements and materials to clearly indicate the building entry. Pedestrian access from the street frontage shall be included in the design (OMC 18.170.100, orientation).

Neighborhood Scale and Character OMC 18.170.110:

This section requires the proposal to reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood through use of related building elements. Generally, the project does not reflect the character of development projects recently completed that are in close proximity to this proposal. The adjacent Silver Leaf s senior housing project places a strong emphasis on the pedestrian environment by locating buildings at the street edge and by providing a variety of architectural elements along the façade. The subject project proposal includes an approximate 10' building setback on this frontage, which is similar to that of Silver Leaf, but in contrast, the ground floor is occupied by a 10' tall brick wall associated with the partially underground parking garage. While the use of brick is consistent with the adjacent buildings, it does not provide other design elements of the senior housing complex directly across the street. The level of façade articulation / modulation, building detailing and roof form of the adjacent development should be more closely emulated.

Proposed Conditions of Approval:

- Detail Design plans shall reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood through replication of roof forms, window patterns, building materials etc. (OMC 17.170.110 Character).
- Submit an analysis with the detail design application that address how the project reflects / takes cues from the character of the existing development pattern within 300' of the site (OMC 17.170.110 Character).

Building Modulation (OMC 18.170.120):

This section asks for building modulation at least every 30 feet to reduce the appearance of large building masses. The building uses a variety of features to break up the building, however several sections exceed the 30' minimum for modulation. Many stretches of façade are 40' in length and some are in excess of 50'. Where modulation occurs through use of recessed or protruding building facades, the depth of the modulation is sometimes relatively minimal measuring at approximately 1.5'. In most cases, the building is broken up through use of balconies and material changes. The ground level façade along Yelm Highway is concerning as it includes a 10' tall brick façade that appears to run the length of the building providing little to no modulation at the pedestrian level.

Proposed Condition:

- Revise plans to include building modulation at intervals of no less than 30' on all portions of the building (OMC 18.170.120 modulation).
- Revise plans to incorporate consistent façade treatments to the base of the building along the primary street facades, such as Yelm Highway and Henderson Boulevard to ensure the ground level ties into the building façade (OMC 18.170.120 modulation).

Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation (OMC 18.170.020):

This development standard requires that the project be integrated into the existing neighborhood through pedestrian and vehicular connections. The proposed design does not lend itself to pedestrian connections to the street frontages along Henderson Boulevard or Yelm Highway. Sidewalks from the building entry in the parking lot do connect to Yelm Highway. However, this pedestrian route requires crossing the vehicular entrance to the parking garage. At a minimum, additional information regarding the pedestrian crossing and safety features anticipated for the vehicle entry / exit of the garage should be provided. The project does not show any pedestrian access from Henderson Boulevard to the building aside from the sidewalk along the side street. Ideally, additional access points from the building to the street should be provided.

Staff Recommendation:

- Detail design plans shall include additional information about safety and traffic calming features anticipated surrounding the entry / exit of the parking garage (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).

- Detail design plans shall be revised to include increased pedestrian access to the Yelm Highway Frontage of the project from inside the building. Consider revising the parking garage design to reduce impacts along Yelm Highway to achieve increased pedestrian circulation. If such access is found infeasible, an analysis shall be submitted identifying the ways in which infeasibility was determined (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).
- Detail design plans shall include pedestrian pathways from the lobby / dining area, through the courtyard and to Henderson Boulevard (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).
- Detail design plans shall show the alternative surface anticipated with the pedestrian walkways (not simply paint) where they are adjacent to vehicular circulation routes (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).

Usable Open Space (18.170.040):

This section requires usable open space for use by residents of the development. The PO/RM zone does not establish a specific numerical amount of space to be provided. The proposal includes a community garden area as well as passive recreation in and around the garden area. It is unclear what types of pedestrian features are intended. Staff recommends the Board request additional information regarding the design of open space features with the detail design review. The area between the proposed building and Henderson Boulevard would easily accommodate a variety of pedestrian amenities including pedestrian access to Henderson Boulevard, benches, and other pedestrian oriented features that could incorporate with the anticipated garden space.

Recommended Condition of Approval: Provide the specific design of the open space features, such as the type of materials to be used and structural components proposed and amenities to be included with the detail design review application.

Written Public Comments:

Although this Design Review Board meeting is open for public attendance, oral testimony or comments will not be solicited or permitted to be submitted at the meeting. Written comments related to project design may be submitted in advance of the meeting.

To date, a handful of comment letters have been received, only one directly discussing design related issues. The relevant comment letter has been provided as attachment 4. Comments generally address the following:

- Desire for the building to reflect a more northwest style with emphasis on wood rather than brick façade materials.
- Minimize the use of grass and other non-drought tolerant species for other more sustainable plants.

Any additional comments submitted must be submitted to the project planner before 4:00pm on the day of the meeting to allow for processing and distribution.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on review and analysis of the applicable Design Review Code Criteria, staff has determined that the project will require significant revision in order to meet the design criteria. As such, staff recommends the board conditionally approve the Concept Design and ask the applicant to bring the project back for an additional meeting rather than approving the combined design review packet as requested. This will allow the Board to review the revised design prior to a Detail Design Approval Recommendation. Staff recommends the Design Review Board to recommend approval of the Conceptual Design to the Site Plan Review Committee, with the following conditions:

A. Context Plan: Recommend approval.

B. Preliminary Site & Landscape Design: Recommend conditional concept approval as follows:

1. Provide a lighting plan with the detail design review application that demonstrates how the lighting for the parking lot has been designed to minimize impacts to the adjacent residences and includes the lighting for the community garden and other pedestrian pathways. (18.170.030 Parking Design).
2. Provide the specific design of the open space feature, such as the type of materials to be used and structural components proposed (OMC 18.170.040).
3. Revise plans to provide a clearly defined building entry from the building connecting to the primary street frontage. The entry shall include distinctive elements and materials similar to those found on the building entry facing the parking lot. Pedestrian access from the street frontage shall be included in the design (OMC 18.170.100, orientation).
4. Provide additional information about safety and traffic calming features anticipated surrounding the entry / exit of the parking garage (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).
5. Revise plans to include increased pedestrian access to the Yelm Highway Frontage of the project from inside the building. Consider revising the parking garage design to reduce impacts along Yelm Highway to achieve increased pedestrian circulation. If such access is found infeasible, an analysis shall be submitted identifying the ways in which infeasibility was determined (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).
6. Revise plans to include pedestrian pathways from the lobby / dining area, through the courtyard and to Henderson Boulevard (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).
7. Plans shall show the alternative surface anticipated with the pedestrian walkways (not simply paint) where they are adjacent to vehicular circulation routes (OMC 18.170.020 pedestrian circulation).

8. Plans shall be provided that clearly demonstrate the location of mechanical equipment and utility vaults. Proposed screening measures for such features visible from the public right of way shall be provided (OMC 18.170.070 Screening of Mechanical Equipment).

C. Preliminary Building Design: Recommend conditional Concept approval, as follows:

1. Incorporate similar building materials in all primary building entries. Show said features in revised plans (OMC 18.170.140 Materials).
2. The building shall reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood through replication of adjacent roof forms, window patterns, building materials etc. (Submit an analysis with the detail design application that address how the project reflects / takes cues from the character of the existing development pattern within 300' of the site (OMC 17.170.110 Character).
3. Revise plans to include building modulation at intervals of no less than 30' on all portions of the building (OMC 18.170.120 modulation).
4. Revise plans to incorporate consistent façade treatments to the base of the building along the primary street facades, such as Yelm Highway and Henderson Boulevard to ensure the ground level ties into the building façade (OMC 18.170.120 modulation).

Submitted By: Nicole Floyd, Senior Planner

- **Attachment 1:** This Staff Report
- **Attachment 2:** Design Review Checklist (Multi-family Residential)
- **Attachment 3:** Concept Design Review application and plans
- **Attachment 4:** Public Comment Letter