

Combined Design Review

Date: June 25, 2020 – DRB Meeting Date

CITY OF OLYMPIA
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
Chapter 18.170

18.170.010 Grading and tree retention

A. REQUIREMENT:			Incorporate existing topography and mature trees in the project design to the extent feasible.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Minimize encroachment into areas of site containing steep slopes.
- When grading is necessary, minimize impacts to natural topography through use of contour grading.
- Locate buildings so that rooftops do not extend above the natural bluff.
- Minimize encroachment into areas of site containing mature tree stands.
- To facilitate stormwater infiltration, minimize disturbance of natural open space areas.
- Design buildings with continuous perimeter foundations; avoid cantilevering large portions of the building over slopes.

STAFF RESPONSE: The required number of tree units will be planted on Lot B, and Lot A will retain all trees and remain the Vegetation and Soil Protection Area (VSPA) for both lots – meeting City requirements for tree retention. The parcel slopes moderately from west to east; a drop in elevation of approximately 20 feet from Ketner Place to Alta Street. Grading and construction of the buildings and parking lot requires retaining walls to support site development and storm drainage design. The buildings themselves are designed with continuous perimeter foundations.

18.170.020 – Pedestrian and vehicular circulation

A. REQUIREMENT:			Integrate the project with the existing neighborhood through pedestrian and vehicular connections. Provide attractively designed pedestrian and vehicular connections to adjacent public rights-of-way, including any existing or planned bus stops. Provide adequate pedestrian and vehicular access to site features such as mailboxes and other shared facilities.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Mark pedestrian pathways with vertical plantings.
- Distinguish pedestrian pathways through use of surface material such as colored concrete or special pavers.

- Provide internal pedestrian connections (apart from public rights-of-way) between project and adjacent properties.
- Provide barrier-free pedestrian access to all shared facilities such as mailboxes, recreation centers, and open space areas.
- Provide parking and bicycle parking at shared facilities.

STAFF RESPONSE: Currently the only way for pedestrians and vehicles to access the site and surrounding vicinity is through a single driveway from 6th Avenue. Sidewalks are provided internally but should provide continuous connections through the site, such as from the main entrance to the clubhouse, or from Building A to the picnic and play area. Additionally, the parking lot should have walkways in the form of surface markings/patterns or distinct hardscape, for example, that allow clear and safe passage through the parking lot to building entrances and amenity areas.

There are no access points through the retaining walls that would provide direct connections to the adjacent streets and sidewalks, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project. Options to meet this requirement might include extending a walkway from the clubhouse to Capital Mall Drive; providing a walkway from north of Building A to 6th Avenue, and providing openings in the walls that align with the building’s open air stairways – direct walkways to the sidewalks. The project could take cues from the development to the west and north, and from multifamily residential projects in the vicinity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Provide highly visible, safe on-site walkways through the parking lot to site structures and amenity areas. The pathways shall be made of alternate materials, colors, and shall be raised when crossing drive aisles to ensure high visibility. Such routes shall be provided to all site structures and amenity areas including the playground, clubhouse and bicycle parking.
- Provide openings in the retaining walls that allow direct accessible connections to the street frontage, sidewalks, and transit stop.

18.170.030 – Parking location and design			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Reduce the visual impacts of driveways and parking lots on pedestrians and neighboring properties by constructing parking facilities with materials that match or complement the building materials.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Break-up large parking lots by designing significant landscape areas with walkways for pedestrian access.
- Share driveways with adjacent property owners.
- Minimize width of driveways linking the project to the public right-of-way.
- Landscape areas along all driveways and drive aisles that are visible from the street.
- Limit parking lots on street frontage to thirty (30) percent of the street frontage.
- Screen parking lots or structures adjacent to residential properties with a landscape area at least ten (10) feet wide.

STAFF RESPONSE: The parking lot will not be seen from pedestrian or neighboring properties because it is in the interior of the site, elevated above the sidewalk and blocked by buildings and the retaining walls. Enclosed long-term bicycle parking for 84 bicycles is located in the northeast corner of the site near the mail kiosk. Nine (9) short term bicycle parking spaces are proposed in two locations in the schematic design (Sheet A1.01), however in the Landscape Plan (Sheets L1.1-7) plantings are shown in those same locations which is in conflict with other provisions of the Municipal Code. Wherever short-term bicycle parking is ultimately located each set of racks shall provide overhead weather protection, adequate space for each bicycle, and racks shaped and sized so that two points of the bike can be secured to the rack.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Locate and short-term bicycle parking closer to building entries for shelter and convenience.
- For long term bicycle parking provide signage that informs the user of where to find the storage structure(s).

18.170.040 – Usable open space		
A. REQUIREMENT:		
Complies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide usable open space for use by residents of the development that is not occupied by buildings, streets, driveways, or parking areas. Usable open space shall include a minimum dimension of ten (10) feet with an overall grade of less than ten percent (refer to each zoning district for specific open space requirement).		

B. GUIDELINES:

- Situate playground areas in locations visible from residential buildings.
- Provide a mix of passive and active recreation areas. Active recreation areas may include facilities such as sport courts or swimming pools.

STAFF RESPONSE: The project includes active open space options such as a clubhouse with lobby and office areas, and a playground and picnic/grill area. Many if not all of the residential dwelling units have private covered balconies. The underlying zoning district, Professional Office/Residential Multifamily (PO/RM), does not require specific open space amounts for this type of development.

18.170.050 – Fences and walls		
A. REQUIREMENT:		
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Minimize the use of fences that inhibit pedestrian movement or separate the project from the neighborhood. Front yards shall be visually open to the street. Where fencing is used, provide gates or openings at frequent intervals. Provide variation in fencing to avoid blank walls.		

B. GUIDELINES:

- Provide variation in fencing though use of setbacks, or stepped fence heights.
- Provide variation in texture, color or materials to add visual interest.
- Provide landscape screening to break up expanses of fencing.
- Repeat use of building facade material on fence columns and/or stringers.
- Provide lighting, canopies, trellises, or other features to add visual interest.

STAFF RESPONSE: The physical characteristics of the two retaining walls that wrap around the development site are:

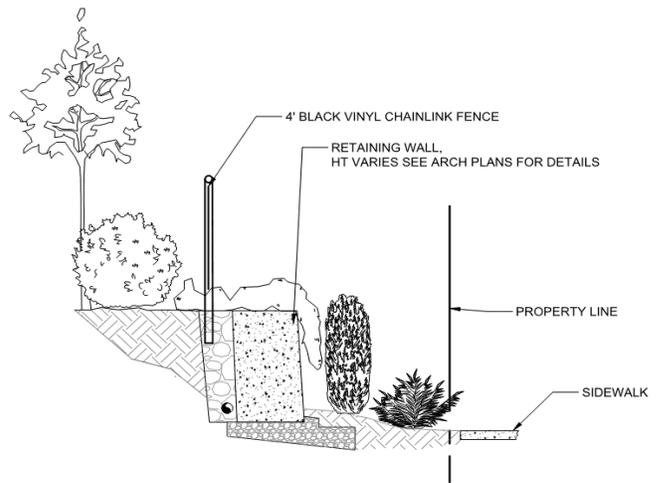
- Ketner Place Frontage: approximately 430 linear feet, ranging in height from approximately 1 to 9 feet in height at the tallest point.
- Alta Street Frontage: approximately 500 feet in length, ranging from 1-6 feet in height at the tallest point.

A 4-foot tall chain link fence will sit atop the walls and landscaping will be installed as shown on Sheets L1.0-L1.6. Gates or openings in the retaining walls that would allow connections to and from the site to adjacent streets, to the community park north of the site, and to the transit stop south of the site adjacent to Capital Mall Drive, are missing. As currently designed, some residents will need to walk over 1,000 feet from the south end of the development to the driveway access north on 6th Avenue, then south again to the catch a bus on Capital Mall Drive. The project should include openings through the walls, either to each frontage, or every 300 feet that allows direct accessible connection to the street frontage, sidewalks, and transit stop.

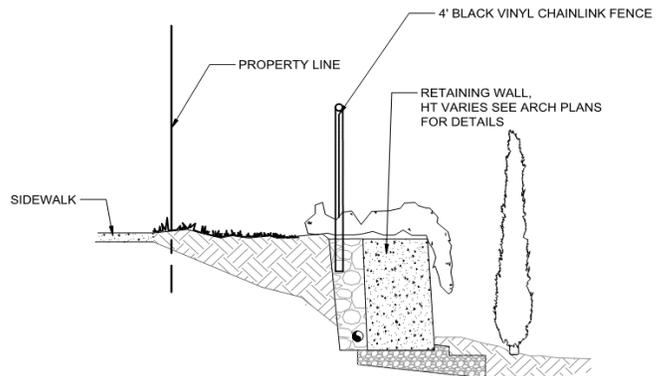
There are columns along the walls at 30-foot intervals, depicted in the architectural plan set and landscape plan (Attachments 3 and 4) but there are no design details of the columns or walls themselves such as materials, colors, or finish details.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Provide openings in the retaining walls that allow direct accessible connections to the street frontage, sidewalks, and transit stop. See also OMC 18.170.020.
- Provide designs of the retaining walls and columns including materials, colors, and finish details. OMC 18.170.050 and OMC 18.170.140.



ALTA ST. RETAINING WALL PLANTINGS



KETNER DR. RETAINING WALL PLANTINGS

18.170.060 Landscape plant selection

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies Conflicts N/A

Select plants that are compatible with available planting conditions. In particular, ensure that trees will be suited to the planting location at their natural mature size. Avoid use of species that have a high potential to invade or disrupt natural areas.

B. GUIDELINES:

- Provide visual continuity with the existing streetscape by coordinating tree and shrub species with established, healthy landscaping.
- When choosing a tree species, consider the size of the tree at maturity in relation to the dimensions of the planting area, the soil type and water holding capacity of the soil, and the depth of the planting bed.
- Create a natural appearance by using a limited number of plant species.
- Follow recommendations from the Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Program in regard to problem and noxious weeds.
- Choose native plant species for landscaping. When established in the appropriate location, native plants are drought tolerant and provide food and/or habitat for native birds and other wildlife.

STAFF RESPONSE: Native plants, drought tolerant plants, or climate adaptable Pacific Northwest plants are necessary and required both in this design code and in the City’s Landscaping and Screening Code, OMC 18.36. The plant schedule is shown on Sheet L1.0 but the percentage or quantity of native plantings is not clear. The landscape plan should also be comprised of hanging or draping plants, vertical climbing plants or other plants that establish well along walls.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Include in the planting schedule hanging or draping plants, vertical climbing plants or other plants that establish well along walls.

18.170.070 – Screening mechanical equipment

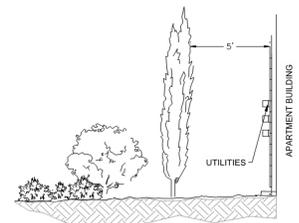
A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies Conflicts N/A

Screen mechanical equipment and utility vaults so that they are not visible from adjacent public rights-of-way, parks, or adjacent dwelling units. Screen roof-top mechanical equipment on all sides.

B. GUIDELINES:

- Locate mechanical equipment and utility vaults on the least visible side of the building and/or site.
- Screen at-grade mechanical equipment utilities with vertical plants such as trees, shrubs or ornamental grasses.
- Screen or paint wall-mounted mechanical equipment to match the building.



UTILITY PLANT SCREEN DETAIL
SCALE: NOT TO SCALE

STAFF RESPONSE: In addition to utility meters located on the buildings, the site plan and the landscape plan must depict all above grade

utility vaults and mechanical equipment (i.e., the fire rise structure along the front façade of Building A, Sheet CP1), and shall demonstrate that the equipment is screened from view by pedestrians and motorists off-site, and from adjacent on-site dwelling units.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Show all above-grade utility vaults and mechanical equipment on the Site Plan and in the Landscape Plan.
- Depict the above-grade vaults and mechanical equipment as appropriately screened in the Landscape Plan.

18.170.080 – Site lighting		
A. REQUIREMENT:		Provide adequate lighting along all pedestrian walkways and building entrances. Site lighting shall not unduly illuminate surrounding properties. Direct lighting away from windows of residential units. Locate all light posts away from tree canopies (at least half the width of canopy at maturity).
Complies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Use low-intensity landscape lighting along walkways.
- Use fixtures with directive shields to prevent lighting spill-over.
- Use light posts of medium height to avoid spill-over lighting.

STAFF RESPONSE: Lighting depicted throughout the site is provided on Sheets E100 and E101 (Attachment 3). The sheets show site lighting in plan-view in the site plan and include fixture specifications and cut sheets. Lighting is proposed on building walls, in carports and on garage walls; pedestrian scale lighting is shown in the picnic and play area, and on the front façade of the clubhouse. Lighting on the apartment buildings are wall luminaires with light spill control.

18.170.90 – Screening blank walls and fences		
A. REQUIREMENT:		Use vertical landscaping to screen or break-up long expanses of blank building walls or fences.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Screen walls or fences with a combination of trees, shrubs and vines.
- Use trees or shrubs planted in raised planter boxes that are irrigated.
- In narrow planting areas adjacent to walls or fences, use espaliered trees or shrubs and vines.

STAFF RESPONSE: Long expanses of walls adjacent to sidewalks can not only prove uncomfortable but can block lines of sight, prevent natural surveillance, and sever pedestrian interaction. Where expanses of retaining walls are unavoidable design treatments or uses should provide a human scale experience for pedestrians at the street level. Landscaping should be coupled with architectural features, elements, and details in the retaining walls to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and a sense of place.

RECOMMENDATION:

- See OMC 18.170.060 above.

18.170.100 – Building orientation and entries

A. REQUIREMENT:	Provide a clearly defined building or courtyard entry to the building from the primary street.	
Complies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

B. GUIDELINES:

- Use distinctive architectural elements and materials to indicate the entry.
- Define the transition space from the sidewalk to the entry with a terrace, plaza, or landscaped area.
- Avoid the use of exterior stairways to second stories that are visible from the street.

STAFF RESPONSE: The design of the site layout and buildings are such that entries are oriented internally toward the parking lot which provides convenient and direct access from vehicles to the units. Building entries are obvious with distinctive features such as overhead weather protection, distinct flat shed roof forms and internal open stairways at intervals in the building. Access to dwelling units is from the stairwells, which effectively extend through the buildings directly from the parking lot to sidewalks and streets surrounding the project site.

18.170.110 – Neighborhood scale and character

A. REQUIREMENT:	The building scale identified for the district may be larger than the building scale that exists in the neighborhood. Minimize any appearance of scale differences between project building(s) and existing neighborhood buildings by stepping the height of the building mass and dividing large building facades into smaller segments. Reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood (within 300’ on the same street) through use of related building elements.	
Complies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

B. GUIDELINES:

- Step the roof on the building perimeter segments to transition between a proposed taller building and an existing residential structure.
- Replicate or approximate roof forms and pitch found on existing residential structures in the neighborhood.
- Use wall plane modulation to divide the building facade into house-size building segments.
- Use window patterns and proportions similar to those on existing residential structures in the neighborhood.
- Use building facade materials similar to those used on existing residential buildings in the neighborhood.
- Maintain a relationship to the street (i.e., building setbacks and entryways) similar to existing buildings.

STAFF RESPONSE: The massing, scale and height of the buildings, including the clubhouse, are quite similar to the multifamily residential development surrounding the site; long rectangular four-story buildings. The perceived massing is reduced by building modulation and articulation, varying roof lines, unit decks and open-air stairwells. The buildings are also set back from property lines, through building modulation and zoning setback requirements, at points in distance of 20-30 feet.

18.170.120 – Building modulation		
A. REQUIREMENT:		Use building modulation at least every 30 feet to reduce the appearance of large building masses.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Modulate the building facade at regular intervals.
- Articulate roofline by stepping the roof and by using dormers and gables.
- Incorporate prominent cornice, fascia or soffit details that emphasize the top of the building.
- Use prominent roof overhangs.
- Provide porches, balconies, and covered entries.
- Provide deeply recessed or protruding windows.
- Provide light fixtures, trellises or architectural to accentuate modulation intervals.

STAFF RESPONSE: The building facades depict a large amount of modulation in the length of the buildings and include covered unit balconies and internal open stairwells that add depth and interest. Building roof styles include gable roof, sloped, and shed roofs – all of which add variation to the building.

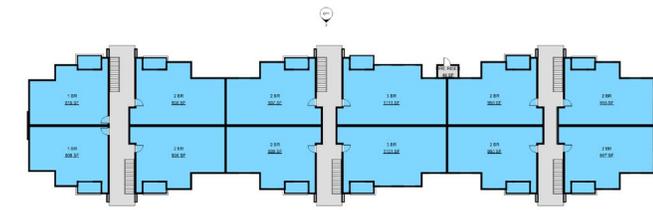
However, the carriage-garage units are two story rectangular buildings with flat facades – inconsistent with the other buildings such as the clubhouse and apartment buildings. All facades should be attractive and well-proportioned. The carriage-garages should exhibit the same extent of secondary architectural features that exist in the apartments and clubhouse.



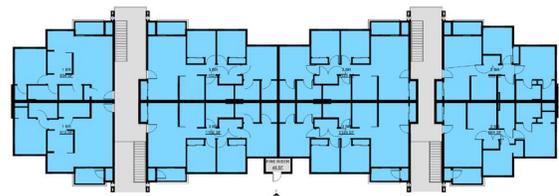
BUILDING TYPE A - FRONT ELEVATION



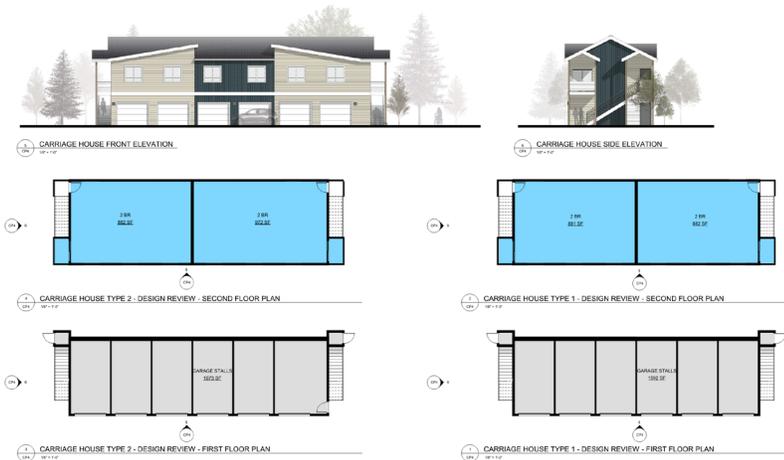
BUILDING TYPE B - FRONT ELEVATION



BUILDING TYPE A - DESIGN REVIEW - FIRST FLOOR PLAN



BUILDING TYPE B - DESIGN REVIEW - FIRST FLOOR PLAN



RECOMMENDATION:

- Add depth to the facades of the carriage garage buildings. For consistency and continuity in design among the buildings, incorporate elements of design used on the larger buildings.

18.170.130 – Building windows

A. REQUIREMENT:			Provide relief, detail, and visual rhythm on the facade with well-proportioned windows. Minimize window locations where residents from one unit may look directly into another unit.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Use vertically proportioned windows (i.e., windows that have a height of at least one and one-half times their width).
- Use multiple-pane windows.
- Provide windows that are designed to create shadows (either recessed or protruding).
- Use visually significant window elements (i.e., frame dimensions, lintels, sills, casings, and trim).

STAFF RESPONSE: Windows and openings in the façades (glazing) are vertically and horizontally aligned and will be installed with vinyl window units. A photo of a type of vinyl window and storefront glazing for the clubhouse is provided on Sheet CP5. Photos, examples, and cut sheets for all types of glazing should be included in the detail stage of design review, for the Board’s consideration, and for construction drawings.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Provide details of all window and door types around the site, specifications and cut sheets.

18.170.140 – Materials and colors

A. REQUIREMENT:			Use building materials with texture and pattern and a high level of visual and constructed quality and detailing. Reserve brightly saturated colors for trim features.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- Use natural appearing materials such as painted or natural finish horizontal lap siding, brick, stone, stucco, ceramic or terra cotta tile.
- Coordinate change in materials and color with building modulation.
- Use changes in colors or building materials to differentiate the ground floor from upper floors of the building.
- When remodeling or adding to an existing building, use materials and colors that preserve or enhance the character of the original building.
- In multi-building projects, vary building colors and/or materials on different buildings.

STAFF RESPONSE: The exterior building materials are similar to the materials on nearby multifamily buildings. The buildings to the west and north across Ketner Place and 6th Avenue, now known as 8 Hundred West Apartments, were designed and developed by the same company as the GOAT Apartments.

The building exteriors are climate appropriate; the materials are contemporary and used generally on this building type throughout the City. The perspectives and the colored elevations of the buildings (Sheet CP5) show the various colors, textures and patterns on the buildings in combination with metal board and batten siding, vinyl lap siding, wood roof fascia and painted trim, stone siding, and metal railings. Details of the materials and colors of site amenities such as the trash cans, picnic tables, benches, bike rack, and playground furniture are depicted on Sheet L1.6, Landscape Details.

A distinct and significant aspect of the project includes the retaining walls, however the design details of the retaining walls such as materials, colors, and finish details are not provided in the architectural plan set. (Staff Note: The applicants have indicated that design options for the wall will be provided at the Board video conference meeting on Jun 25, 2020, 6:30 p.m.).

RECOMMENDATION:

- Provide designs of the retaining walls including materials, colors, and finish details. See also OMC 18.170.050.