

CITY OF OLYMPIA
Olympia Design Review Board

CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 13, 2021

Project Name/Number:	Olympia Crest Apartments, Phase III, File 21-1161
Applicant:	Olivia Snell, Architect, MWA Architects for Housing Authority of Thurston County
Location:	204 Lilly Rd NE
Project Description:	New construction of three two-story buildings with 28 affordable multifamily housing units. Parking for 38 vehicles, 6 short term bicycle parking spaces, and 28 long term bicycle spaces. The project will also include common laundry facilities and an outdoor community open space amenity.
Design Review District:	The project site is not within a design review district, however it is subject to the Multifamily Residential design requirements (OMC 18.170).
Zoning District:	Medical Services (MS)
Comprehensive Plan Designation:	Urban Corridor
City Staff:	Catherine McCoy, Associate Planner Phone: 360.570.3776 E-mail: cmccoy@ci.olympia.wa.us
Public Notification:	In accordance with the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) 18.78, public notification was mailed on March 9, 2021, to agencies, recognized neighborhood associations and property owners.
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 project design. The Community Planning and Development Director will make the final decision.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Context and Existing Conditions

The vacant 1.43 acre parcel site is located in northeast Olympia adjacent to and east of Lilly Road NE. Martin Way is a major arterial south of the development site. This area of Olympia is zoned Medical Services (MS) and abuts the High Density Corridor 4 (HDC 4) to the south. Development is consistent with both of the higher-intensity zoning districts, consisting of two- to three-story multifamily residential and commercial office buildings.

Background information, site context, project description and goals pertaining to the site and building design,

pedestrian and vehicle connections, and more, are presented in the applicant's project narrative, Attachment 3.

Land Use Review

Land use review is currently underway; the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) has not completed its review and further analysis might result in additional site modifications. At this stage of land use review, the items below have been identified as needing further attention. Staff and the applicant will work through issues as part of the land use review, and revisions will be reflected in the detail design architectural packet.

1. Parking lot landscaping is required at the end of every parking row regardless of the number of spaces in the row, and at the end of 9 vehicle stalls in a row. This will affect the site plan, possibly reducing the number parking spaces provided overall. Refer to page 3, Attachment 2.
2. Solid waste – There are locations in the site plan for trash and recycling, however the applicant team will need to work with the City's Solid Waste staff to identify precise locations for compactor, dumpster and/or recycling carts.

DESIGN REVIEW

Concept Design Review: Please note that this is a *Concept Design Review*. Conceptual review involves the early design considerations and elements of a project, such as site context and contextual response, site development, and architectural and landscape concepts as they relate to the general citywide design criteria and the specific design criteria of the design district.

The section called "How to Use Design Criteria" in the Olympia Municipal Code provides instructions for meeting the City's design criteria (OMC 18.100.100). Compliance with each requirement is necessary; the guidelines provide methods to achieve compliance with the requirement.

Design Review Board meetings are public meetings open for public attendance; however, the meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony or comments are not taken at the meeting. Written comments related to project design may be submitted in advance of the meeting. Written comments should be forwarded to this Lead Planner by 4:00 PM prior to the meeting.

Design Analysis:

The project is not in a design review district, but because it is a new multifamily development with over 5 units the project is required to comply with the Multifamily Residential design criteria and is subject to design review by the Design Review Board (OMC 18.170.090).

Staff's analysis of the design proposal is incorporated in the Multifamily Residential checklist (Attachment 2). The checklist identifies areas of compliance and deficiency and staff recommended conditions for the Board's consideration. Staff has evaluated the project based on the appropriate design requirements, the conceptual architectural plan set, the preliminary landscape plan and the applicant's narrative and project description. Staff finds that the concept design program generally meets the criteria within the Design Review Code, Chapter 18.170.

Key Issues for Board Consideration:

1. Appropriate screening of mechanical equipment should be shown at the conceptual stage of design review. This is to mitigate utility-landscape conflicts early in design and to ensure equipment screening, building mounted or throughout the site, compliments and integrates well with the building and site design. OMC 18.170.070.

2. Lilly Rd NE is a public right-of-way, whereas the drive aisle that runs from Lilly Rd NE into the development site is a private easement. Given the long rectangular lot and the single site access from Lilly Rd NE, staff recommends the Board treat the easement as the front (road), rather than Lilly Rd NE. This would be a departure from the requirement of having building entries provided from the primary street – one in which the Board will need to discuss and determine. OMC 18.170.100.
3. There should be no flat expanses of wall greater in length than 30' on (front) facades. Regular modulation of building walls adds depth, dimension and separation and interest to the buildings. There are sections in the facades of the buildings that are in excess of 30' in width that will need modification.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Based on review and analysis of OMC 18.170, Multifamily Residential Design requirements, staff recommends the Design Review Board recommend approval of the conceptual design review proposal for the Olympia Crest Apartments III, File 21-1161, subject to the conditions below. The conditions shall be reflected in the detail design review submittal.

A. **Context Plan:** Approve as proposed.

B. **Site and Landscape Design:** Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The landscape plan will need to clearly show 1) the location of all above- or at-grade mechanical equipment, and 2) appropriately scaled screening of the equipment. OMC 18.170.070.
2. Screen at-grade mechanical equipment utilities with vertical plants such as trees, shrubs or ornamental grasses. OMC 18.170.070.

C. **Building Design:** Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. Provide design details of the 3 short term bike parking shelters in the detail design architectural packet. The details shall include black and white, and colored elevations with materials and colors called out (height and dimensions included). OMC 18.170.020.
2. Locate mechanical equipment and utility vaults on the least visible side of the building and/or site. OMC 18.170.070.
3. Screen or paint wall-mounted mechanical equipment to match the building. OMC 18.170.070.
4. Modify the (front) facades of all three buildings to address lengths of walls greater than 30 ft. in width. OMC 18.170.120.

Detail Design Review – Provide photos and cut sheets of the following final architectural elements and features:

- Final Landscape plan, including plant photos;
- Materials – hardscape, roofing, doors and windows, hardware, etc.;
- Short term bike storage overhead structures; short and long term bicycle racks, hangers, cabinets, or other;
- Site amenities – benches, trash receptacles, picnic tables, etc.;
- Site Lighting – building and site lighting; and
- Windows – details, profiles

Submitted By: Catherine McCoy, Associate Planner

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – This Staff Report

Attachment 2 – Design Review Checklist, OMC 18.170

Attachment 3 – Applicant Narrative

Attachment 4 – Architectural Plan Set