

Project Name: Olympia Crest Apts III
Concept Design Review

Project Number #: 21-1161
Date: May 13, 2021

CITY OF OLYMPIA
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
Chapter 18.170

18.170.010 Grading and tree retention

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

☒

Conflicts

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N/A

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Incorporate existing topography and mature trees in the project design to the extent feasible.

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 majority of the site is flat from east to west – 0.95% slope. The west property along Lilly Rd NE drops slightly onto Lilly Rd NE. Given the flat site, there will be relatively little grading (~200 cy), more fill. A mix of Madrone, Douglas Fir and Big Leaf Maple (59 mature trees) in the east portion of the development site will be retained for open space – passive and active open areas and the soil and vegetation protection area. This requirement is met.

18.170.020 – Pedestrian and vehicular circulation

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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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.

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:

Staff finds that the project design connects the project with the existing housing, Phases I & II, well, and provides a safe, attractive connection to Lilly Rd NE – for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Vehicular access to the site is from Lilly Rd NE onto a private internal drive aisle that is used by the entire development site. The meandering sidewalk extends from the public right-of-way east across the development site to connect with the Phase II meandering sidewalk and provides a continuous walkway connection to the Chehalis Western Trail – approximately 633’ across the subject site and a total of 1200’ to the public trail.

Staff would like the Board to note, and possibly discuss with the project design team, the pathway behind Building 3 that extends between the parking lot and the open space area. The pathway is 3’ in width with compacted decomposed granite material and aluminum edging. There is no requirement for this pathway to be behind Buildings 1 and 2, however it might make sense to include a pathway behind Building 2, to better connect Buildings 1 and 2 to the same open space area, unless there is a compelling reason not to. Building 1 has a stormwater swale that would preclude a pathway behind the building.

Both the Architectural Site Plan (Sheet DRA1.00) and the Landscape Plan (Sheet L1.02) show bike storage locations with covered area and details of the bike rack. The overhead cover and structure of the short term bike storage sheds should be consistent with the building design in terms of materials and colors, and form. (As a side note to the Board: The bike parking will also need to meet the size standards of the Bicycle Parking and Design Standards, OMC 18.38.220.C.)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- 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, dimensions).

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	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

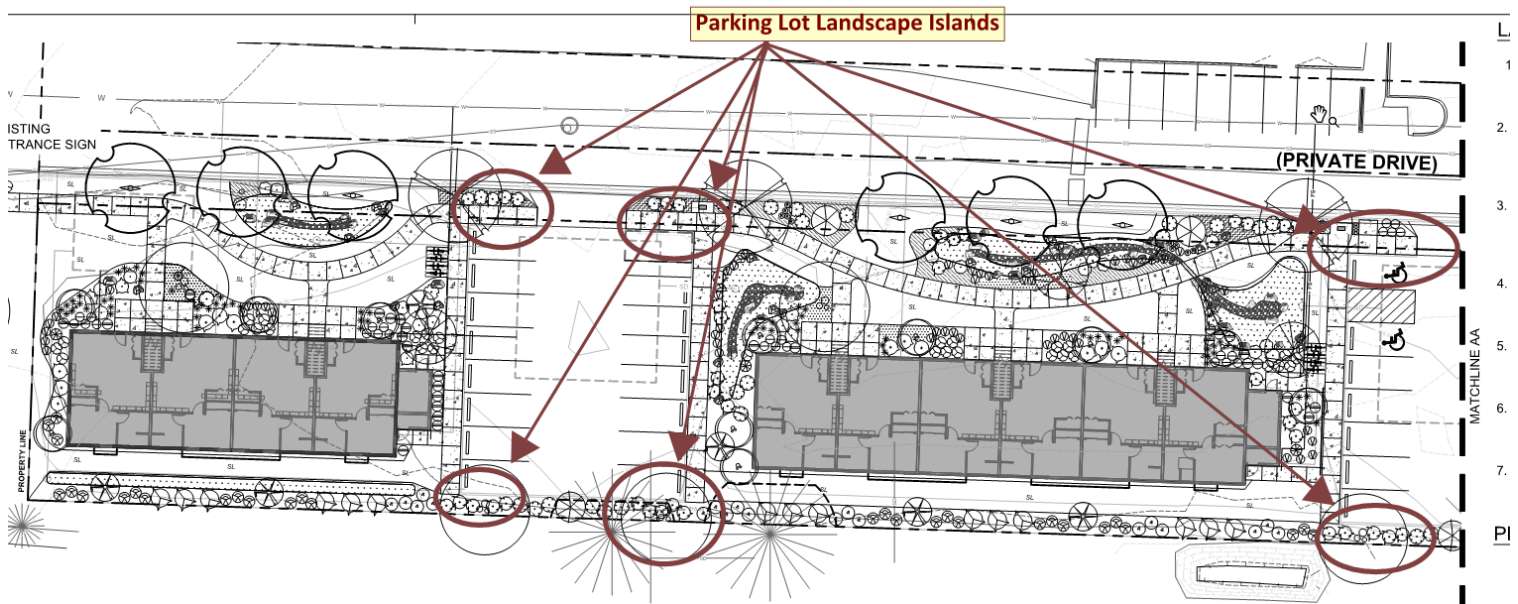
- ☒ Break-up large parking lots by designing significant landscape areas with walkways for pedestrian access.
- ☒ Share driveways with adjacent property owners.
- ☒ Minimize width of driveways linking the project to the public right-of-way.
- ☒ Landscape areas along all driveways and drive aisles that 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.

Applicant Response: The proposed parking lots for OC-III match the design and location of parking areas at the previous phase, which is adjacent to this property and shares common borders. It meets the required spaces with only a 10% automatic reduction at this time. Each lot never has more than 8 spots in a row, so it never triggers the independent island requirement that occurs at 10 spaces. At the north end of the lots is access from the private circulation drive. The buffer is 10'-0", but half of this is covered with our public access walkway to Lilly Road going across both lots. Additional vegetation at these areas would obstruct drive entrances to the lots. On the south side, the lots are 5'-3" from the property line, and this area includes a 5'-0" vegetation buffer of large shrubs and evergreen trees. The adjacent property is a parking lot for medical offices, so it would seem that our perimeter screening would meet the intent of the buffer landscaping. Note that none of these lots will be visible from a public way as currently designed.

STAFF RESPONSE:

The requirement is meant to reduce the visual impact of parking lots from the public right-of-way, and in this site design the parking is well away from the public right-of-way, tucked between the three buildings. The bulk of the parking is also visually separated from the private drive, except for 8 compact vehicle spaces northeast of building 3.

Staff Note to the Board: The City's Landscape and Screening Code requires a landscape island at the end of every parking row regardless of the number of spaces, *and* at the end of 9 vehicle stalls in a row (mis-interpretation of the code as stated by the applicant above). This is to facilitate the maneuverability of vehicles in and out of the end parking spaces. This requirement will need to be met prior to land use approval, which will likely translate to a reduced number of total vehicle stalls in order to meet the parking lot landscaping requirement (OMC 18.38.180.C.2). Staff and the applicant will work through this issue as part of the land use review.



18.170.040 – Usable open space

A. REQUIREMENT:			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).
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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 design program includes several examples of usable active open space features such as the play area with play equipment at the east end of the site, and benches and picnic tables. The residents will also enjoy the passive open space features such as the stormwater swales, abundant landscaping, and meandering pathway. This requirement is met.

18.170.050 – Fences and walls			
A. REQUIREMENT:			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.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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 intent of this requirement is to discourage closed communities in urban areas and promote clear open connections between housing and the public right-of-way. The only fencing proposed is located along the entire south property line, from west to east, behind all three buildings. The plans show that the fencing is a “6’ chain link to 4.5’ wood fence which is to remain.” Landscaping proposed against the fence includes trees and shrubs that provide a mixed semi-transparent buffer between the development and the property to the south.

18.170.060 – Landscape plant selection			
A. REQUIREMENT:			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.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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:

Plants that have been chosen for the project are known to be well suited in this climate and are planted throughout our community. The plant palette includes appropriate adaptive plants in the swales (lilly, sedge, rush), and in the open space area east of building 3 (existing deciduous and coniferous trees), and along the fence line and adjacent to the buildings (wax myrtle, ninebark, spirea).

Additionally, two trees on the abutting the property to the south will be fenced and protected throughout construction of the development. The trees will remain on the south property, off-site, but will add depth to the overall landscape plan, and integrate well with on-site landscaping along the fence line. This requirement is met.

18.170.070 – Screening mechanical equipment – to be completed upon Detail Design Review			
A. REQUIREMENT:			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.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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.

STAFF RESPONSE:

The site plan and landscape plan should clearly depict site mechanical equipment at the concept design stage of review. This is to ensure that wherever building-mounted or above- or at-grade service equipment are located, they are appropriately screened from adjacent dwelling units and neighboring buildings. In addition, knowing where mechanical equipment is located, early, helps prevent inadvertent conflicts between plantings and mechanical equipment - underground pipes, taps, meters, etc. Screening might be provided in the form of landscaping or by other means such as wood screens, or shutters/louvers.

At the detail design stage of review, the landscape plan should be fully developed with this information provided, and elements like screening pre-determined with photos and cut sheets provided.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- The landscape plan will need to clearly show 1) the location of all above- or at-grade mechanical equipment, and 2) and appropriately scaled screening of the equipment. Provide photos and cut sheets (if applicable) or screening choices.
- 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.



18.170.080 – Site lighting – to be completed upon Detail Design Review

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies



Conflicts



N/A



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).

B. GUIDELINES:



Use low-intensity landscape lighting along walkways.



Use fixtures with directive shields to prevent lighting spill-over.

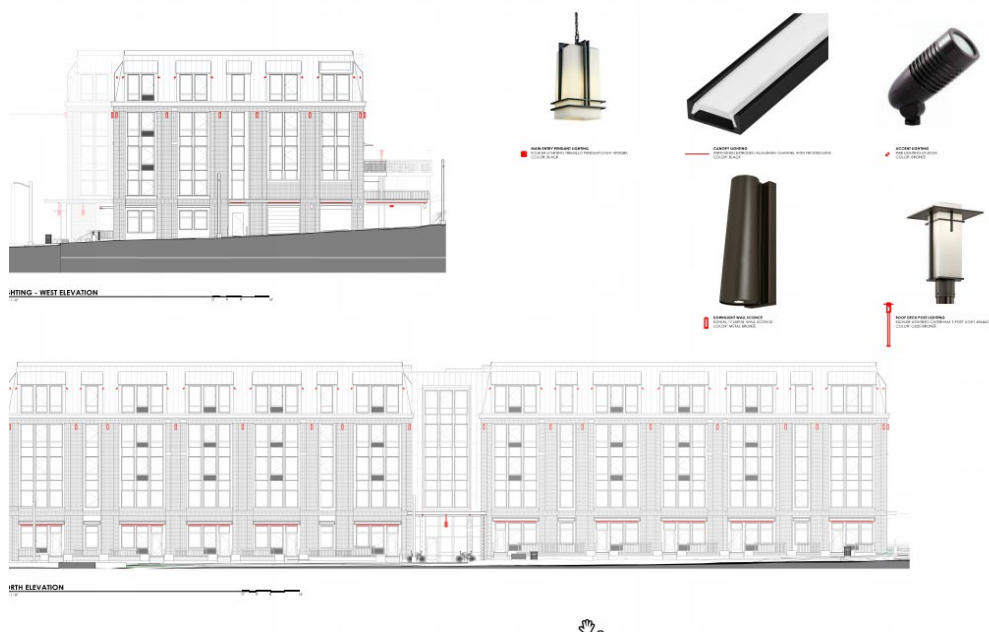


Use light posts of medium height to avoid spill-over lighting.

STAFF RESPONSE:

The project narrative mentions bollard lighting along the pathway, similar to what exists along the pathway on the adjacent Phase II development. At the next stage of design review the Board will need to see all choices of site lighting around the buildings and around the site. This includes photos and design details of the bollards along the pathway. An example of what this might look like is provided in the detail elevations below. Locations and photos of

lighting over entries, stairwells, in the parking areas, and in the play area, for example, should be easily identifiable in the architectural plan set. It is important that lighting enables people to be comfortable where they are, provides easy navigation and prevents the potential of entrapment areas.



18.170.90 – Screening blank walls and fences

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies



Conflicts



N/A



Use vertical landscaping to screen or break-up long expanses of blank building walls or fences.

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:

The fence along the south property line is appropriately screened and provides a gentle landscape buffer of native trees, shrubs, and ground cover along the expanse of the fence. This requirement is met.

18.170.100 – Building orientation and entries

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies



Conflicts



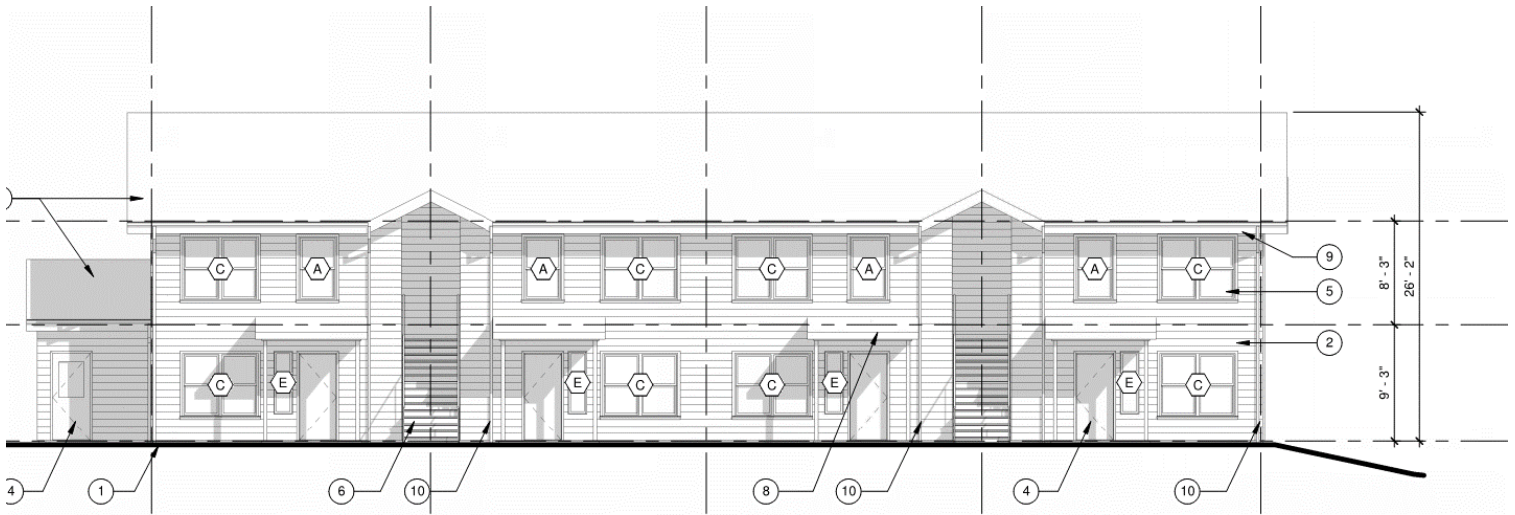
N/A



Provide a clearly defined building or courtyard entry to the building from the primary street.

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 primary street is Lilly Rd NE; however, the buildings are oriented to the north along the primary vehicular accessway, which is an easement rather than a street; there are no building entries from the primary street. The applicants have chosen to orient the development, and as such the entries, towards the vehicular accessway.

Since the design is not technically meeting the requirement, the Board should determine whether the current site plan the applicant proposes is equal to or better than what the code literally says – strict compliance. Clearly defined entries are provided from the primary vehicular accessway, and given the existing lot layout as rectangular east-west running, and one single site access point from Lilly Rd NE, staff feels it is a better site design approach.

The Design Review Board should decide whether the intent of the Code is being met with the current design and whether to accept the modification or advise the applicants to revise the design and return to the Board at the detail stage of review with entries and access to the buildings directly from Lilly Rd NE.

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	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<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. **N/A**
- ☒ 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.

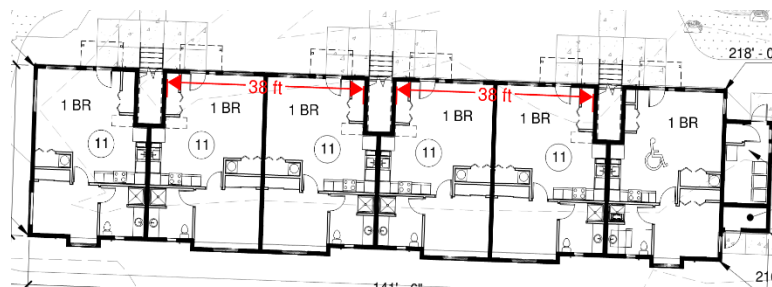
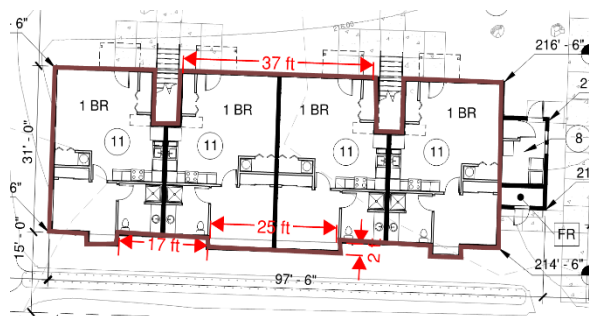
STAFF RESPONSE:

The scale of development in the surrounding vicinity is predominantly two-story for both commercial and residential development. All three of the proposed buildings mimic the scale, massing, and articulation of the residential units to the east, Phase II, and clearly 'read' residential buildings. The design and functionality are compatible and contribute positively to the entire development (roof forms, window units, unit entries).

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

There are expanses of walls on the (front) facade of the buildings that are over 30' in width. In these areas the wall plane is flat, although there is a canopy above the residential entries. Building modulation helps break up flat planes, gives buildings depth, dimension and separation, as in fenestration, and adds interest to the building. Options for breaking the expanse of these wall sections might include decks, balconies, window bays, sunshades, porches, building bump-outs, or other.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Modify the (front) facades of all three buildings to address lengths of walls greater than 30' in width, pursuant to the requirement.

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	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

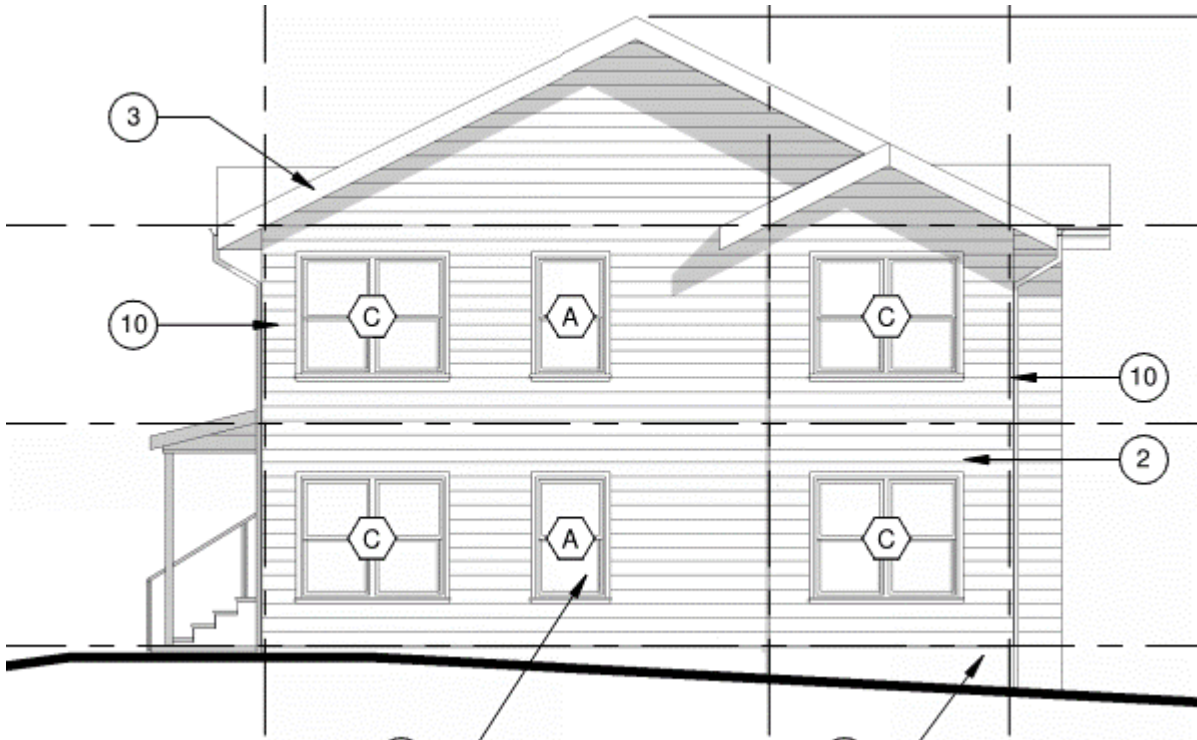
B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ 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).

Applicant Response: We believe vertical windows don't match the existing apartments on this property and did not use them for this reason.

STAFF RESPONSE:

Windows on east and west walls are located such that privacy between the ends is maintained – refer to sheets DRA4.11- 4.13, Attachment 4. Windows around the buildings also appear to have extended frames (protruding) with multi-panes, muntins, possibly sills, and appear to be horizontal and vertical sliding windows – all of which add interest and functionality.



18.170.140 – Materials and colors – to be completed upon Detail Design Review

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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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.

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 narrative points out that the building will be clad in fiber cement siding. Fiber cement siding comes in a variety of textures – planks, shingles, panels. The black and white elevations depict primarily horizontal siding. It will be important that the final building materials such as doors and windows, roofing, hardware, light fixtures, etc., are durable, functional, attractive and well-coordinated with surrounding buildings and context.