

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 4710 MORTENSEN ROAD
(THREE PROPOSED APARTMENTS)**

BACKGROUND:

The applicant, Westowne Apartments, represented by Matt Eller, owns land at 4710 Mortensen Road in southwest Ames which the City Council recently rezoned from Community Commercial/Residential (CCR) to Floating Suburban Residential Medium density (FS-RM). The site has no frontage on Mortensen Road, but is accessible by way of easements through the adjacent West Towne Apartments and Hilton Garden Inn. US Highway 30 lies to the south and Hilton Garden Inn on Dickinson Avenue is to the east. A location map is found in Attachment A.

The owner wishes to construct three apartment buildings for a total of 35 units on the 1.7 acre lot. Prior to obtaining a building permit, the City Council is being asked to approve a major site development plan for the project.

This parcel was originally intended to be the eighth building of the adjacent West Towne Apartments under the CCR zoning district. These mixed use buildings are located to the north and west of this parcel. Some of the original parking improvements for that project were built on this site and are being incorporated into this development to serve the new apartment buildings.

Project Summary

The owner proposes three apartment buildings containing a total of 35 units. The area of the site is 1.71 acres, which limits the total number of units to 35. They are configured as two 12-unit buildings and one 11-unit building. Within those 35 units are 115 bedrooms for an average of 3.3 bedrooms per unit. (See following addendum for full analysis.) The site plan is found in Attachment B.

The development follows a similar pattern and orientation as the surrounding mixed use apartment buildings. As noted above, a row of existing parking improvements exists on the west side of site and the spaces are included with the new improvements on the site. Additional parking will also be constructed on the east side of the site. Access to the site is from Mortensen Road through the existing West Towne Apartments. A secondary access to Dickinson Avenue is through an easement to the south of Hilton Garden Inn.

In addition to requiring Major Site Development Plan review, FS-RM has more restrictive standards in terms of height, coverage, open space, and separation than standard high-density residential apartment developments reviewed by staff as Minor Site Development Plans. Within these standards, the applicant proposes three buildings

that are four stories in height and of the same appearance and mass as each other. The building design incorporates a flat roof and includes a projecting bay on each facade. Materials are principally vinyl siding of various orientations with accents of brackets and a small amount of stone veneer. (See color elevations Attachment C)

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

At its meeting of October 15, 2014, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the proposed major site plan discussing its location, context, and architecture. Commission members focused their comments on the lack of prominence of the entries. By a vote of 6-0, the Commission recommended that the City Council approve the Major Site Development Plan for these three apartment buildings. The Commission also encouraged the developer to “work on details to better define the entryway.”

In response to the Commission’s comments, the applicant has submitted an updated façade design since that meeting. The applicant’s design modifications include increasing the length of the overhang along the west parking lot façade (the main entry) to better define the main entryway to each building. The covered entry has a depth of approximately 2 feet in front of the building with a recessed doorway. The space is defined by a stone veneer and supporting columns. The side entrance between buildings is more modest in scale with smaller overhang sheltering the doorway and includes decorative columns. Each façade also includes an element of a stone veneer to tie the architectural treatment of the base of the building together with the each entrance.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve the Major Site Development Plan for the proposed site and three apartment buildings as shown in the attachments.
2. The City Council can deny the Major Site Development Plan for the proposed site and three apartment buildings.
3. Action on this request can be postponed and referred back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The applicant requested rezoning to a residential district because another mixed use commercial/residential development did not seem feasible. The Major Site Development Plan review is to determine conformance with development standards and for the appropriate arrangement and design of the use of the site.

FS-RM allows only residential uses in structures containing no more than 12 dwelling units. The project includes uniformly designed buildings with either 12 or 11 units per building. The building design has a basic apartment aesthetic in terms of exterior materials, design interest, and coloring. The buildings are taller than the mixed use buildings to the north and the east, but are of compatible height. The proposed buildings appear bulky in their design due to the shape and size. However, in this location behind

other buildings and with its commercial surroundings, it does not negatively impact the surrounding character. The arrangement of the site has a more residential appearance than the surrounding sites due to the larger amounts of building separation and intent to build apartments rather than commercial mixed-use buildings. Parking and access meet the requirements for the use. Landscaping and open space has been incorporated appropriately into the site and includes trees for screening of Highway 30 to the south.

The proposed changes in response to the encouragement by the Planning and Zoning Commission to enhance the design are responsive and a reasonable approach to defining the entries and providing more interest to the building design and to address the buildings scale. The Major Site Development plan proposal meets the applicable design standards and criteria of the Zoning Ordinance.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council accept Alternative #1, thereby approving the Major Site Development Plan for this property.

ADDENDUM

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project site is 1.71 acres, which allows 35 dwelling units. The zoning district allows a maximum apartment size of 12 dwelling units. The owner has configured these 35 units into two 12-unit and one 11-unit buildings. The density of this project is 20.47 dwelling units per acre, lying between the required minimum of 10.0 and maximum of 22.31 dwelling units per acre. The units vary in size from 3 bedrooms to 5 bedrooms. Within the three buildings, there are 115 bedrooms.

The project requires one parking space per bedroom. Using the existing parking that was installed in anticipation, a decade ago, of the eighth West Towne Apartment, and creating additional spaces, there are 120 spaces. The parking is configured as two separate double loaded aisles. There is access for vehicles and emergency vehicles through these aisles.

The project creates 13,410 square feet of building footprint, added to 42,225 square feet of additional impervious surface (parking, sidewalks). Landscaped open space accounts for the remainder, comprising 25.4% of the parcel. The required 10% of common open space is accounted for in areas adjacent to and between the three buildings. FS development standards require 10% open space that meets the intent of accessible and useable by residents. Open space is a subset of the overall landscape area. No specific improvements are proposed by the applicant for the open space other than seeding as lawn.

Landscape requirements are met with the installation of L2 screening adjacent to the commercial zone to the east. There are additional landscaping requirements for apartment buildings in the FS-RM district and these are met with the landscaping along the US Highway 30 frontage. Refuse receptacles and mechanical units are screened according to the ordinance. Normally, landscaping on the west side of the parking area would be required with a new development, but in this case the applicant is keeping the existing parking and has not been required to provide the 5-foot landscape strip between parking areas.

Pedestrian connections are provided through the existing West Towne Apartments and sidewalks connect with existing sidewalks to the north and west, providing access to the sidewalk along Mortensen Road.

The three buildings are similar in size and shape, being about 71 feet by 63 feet. Entrances are oriented to the north and west for each building. The buildings are about 49 feet tall, with an additional parapet at the southwest corner of each building reaching to 50.5 feet. Although the height limit of the district is 50 feet, parapets are allowed to extend up to ten feet above that. This extends 0.5 feet and complies.

The façades of each building are similar, with stone treatments applied near the entrances and lap vinyl siding over the rest of the building. Lap siding is a combination of light and dark tans with a whiter accent banding between floors. Small overhangs are located at each entrance. Each façade has some degree of bump out to provide some relief of the vertical sides.

MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CRITERIA

Additional criteria and standards for review of all Major Site Development Plans are found in Ames *Municipal Code* Section 29.1502(4)(d) and include the following requirements.

When acting upon an application for a Major Site Development Plan approval, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council shall rely upon generally accepted site planning criteria and design standards. These criteria and standards are necessary to fulfill the intent of the Zoning Ordinance, the Land Use Policy Plan, and are the minimum necessary to safeguard the public health, safety, aesthetics, and general welfare.

- 1. The design of the proposed development shall make adequate provisions for surface and subsurface drainage to limit the rate of increased runoff of surface water to adjacent and down stream property.***

The public works department has reviewed the storm water management plan and finds that the proposed development has met the required storm water quantity and quality measures by use of the existing regional detention facility on the east side of Dickinson Avenue.

- 2. The design of the proposed development shall make adequate provision for connection to water, sanitary sewer, electrical, and other utility lines within the capacity limits of those utility lines.***

The existing utilities were reviewed and found adequate to support the anticipated load of 35 dwelling units comprising 115 bedrooms.

- 3. The design of the proposed development shall make adequate provision for fire protection through building placement, acceptable location of flammable materials, and other measures to ensure fire safety.***

The fire inspector has reviewed access and fire truck circulation and found that the needs of the fire department are met. The fire access lane is specifically on the east side of the site.

- 4. The design of the proposed development shall not increase the danger of erosion, flooding, landslide, or other endangerment to adjoining and surrounding property.***

It is not anticipated that this proposed development will be a danger due to its location on the site.

- 5. Natural topographic and landscape features of the site shall be incorporated into the development design.***

Minimal grading will occur for the construction of the buildings. The site is relatively flat and grading will occur mostly to direct storm water where required.

- 6. The design of the interior vehicle and pedestrian circulation shall provide for convenient flow of vehicles and movement of pedestrians and shall prevent hazards to adjacent streets or property.***

Access to this site from Mortensen Road is through the existing mixed-use development to the north. Vehicular and pedestrian access is accommodated between and among the various buildings within and adjacent to this development. The on-site sidewalks will connect with the external stubbed connections to allow for circulation amongst the sites and out to Mortenson. A secondary access to Dickinson Road for vehicular traffic is provided within an easement to the south of Hilton Garden Inn.

- 7. The design of outdoor parking areas, storage yards, trash and dumpster areas, and other exterior features shall be adequately landscaped or screened to minimize potential nuisance and impairment to the use of adjoining property.***

The general development standards of the zoning ordinance have been met. Dumpsters are in the northwest corner of the site and shared with adjacent mixed use building. Parking design follows the existing pattern of the area.

- 8. The proposed development shall limit entrances and exits upon adjacent streets in order to prevent congestion on adjacent and surrounding streets and in order to provide for safe and orderly vehicle movement.***

No new access to a public street will be created. Access to Mortensen Road and Dickinson Avenue will be through existing driveways. There is capacity within those existing driveways to accommodate the expected traffic from this residential development, which is expected to be similar to that of the previously approved mixed use development.

- 9. Exterior lighting shall relate to the scale and location of the development in order to maintain adequate security, while preventing a nuisance or hardship to adjacent property or streets.***

No lighting information has been submitted. In such instances, the city requires a note on the plan indicating that no exterior lighting will be installed unless approved by the department of planning and housing.

- 10. The proposed development shall ensure that dust and other forms of air pollution, noise disturbances, odor, glare, and other nuisances will be limited to acceptable levels as prescribed in other applicable State and City regulations.***

The proposed residential uses are not expected to generate nuisances in this commercial area.

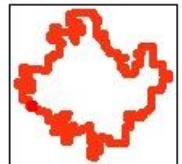
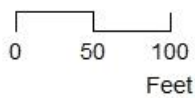
11. Site coverage, building scale, setbacks, and open spaces shall be in proportion with the development property and with existing and planned development and structures, in adjacent and surrounding property.

The three buildings provide less building coverage and more green space than under the adjacent mixed-use development. Even with approximately 25 percent green space, the site has maximized the development by reaching the limits of the number of units allowed by the lot size (35 units). The density is maximized by the efficiency of the layout of the site in a manner similar to its surroundings. The building design is also efficient in its uniform appearance and arrangement. Even with the bulky appearance it is compatible with the character and scale of its surroundings. Appropriate separation of the homes from Highway 30 with buffering is included. Open areas and landscaped areas meet the quantitative standards of the code and would allow for use by the residential for informal activities.

The Development Review Committee has reviewed the Major Site Development Plan and found that it complies with all other requirements of the Ames Municipal Code.

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ATTACHMENT A: LOCATION MAP

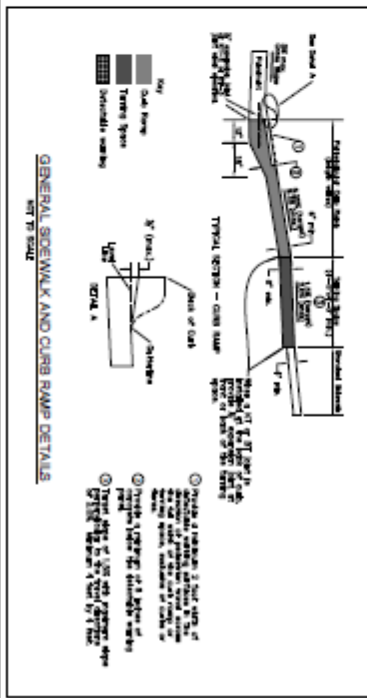
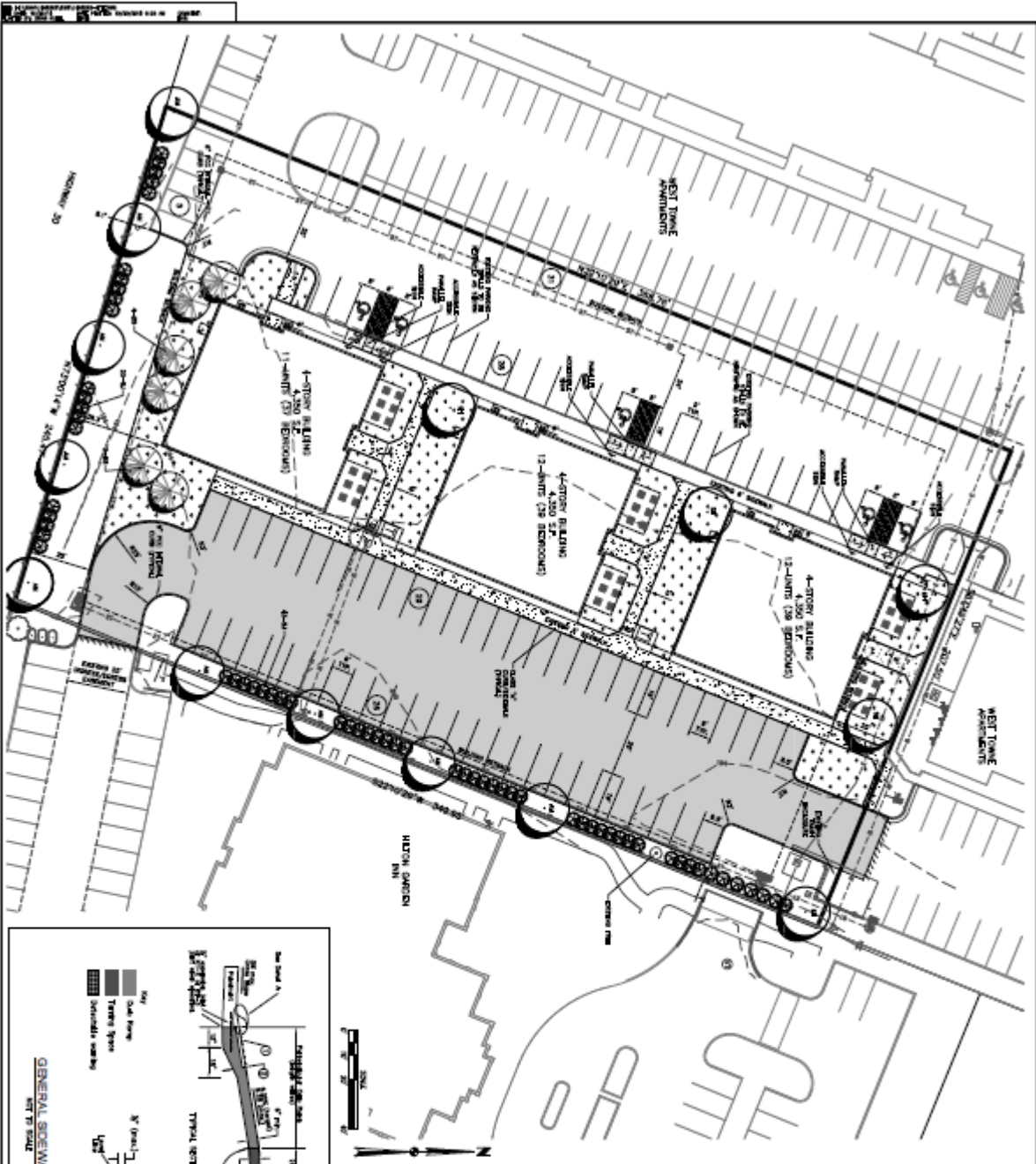




GENERAL NOTES

1. THE SITE PLAN IS THE PROPERTY OF THE ENGINEER AND IS NOT TO BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED IN ANY MANNER WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE ENGINEER.
2. THE SITE PLAN IS BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT AND THE ENGINEER HAS NOT CONDUCTED A FIELD SURVEY OF THE SITE.
3. THE ENGINEER HAS NOT CONDUCTED A FIELD SURVEY OF THE SITE AND HAS NOT VERIFIED THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT.
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	ENGINEER:		TECH:	SUBMITTED TO:



PLANT SCHEDULE

NO.	PLANT	QUANTITY	NOTES
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LANDSCAPE NOTES

1. ALL PLANTINGS SHALL BE INSTALLED AS SHOWN.
2. PLANTINGS SHALL BE INSTALLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE IOWA PLANTING CODE.
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PAVEMENT THICKNESSES

1. DRIVEWAY: 5" FILL, 4" CONC. (MIN. 4000 PSI)

2. SIDEWALK: 4" FILL, 4" CONC. (MIN. 4000 PSI)

3. CURB: 4" FILL, 4" CONC. (MIN. 4000 PSI)

LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS

1. ALL PLANTINGS SHALL BE INSTALLED AS SHOWN.

2. PLANTINGS SHALL BE INSTALLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE IOWA PLANTING CODE.

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GENERAL NOTES

1. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE CITY OF DAUNTLESS, IOWA.

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ATTACHMENT C: BUILDING ELEVATION

EAST ELEVATION
SCALE: NOT TO SCALE



WEST ELEVATION
SCALE: NOT TO SCALE



NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE: NOT TO SCALE



SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE: NOT TO SCALE



<p>DATE: 10-08-14 PROJECT NO: 14-0001 SHEET: 0100 FILE NAME: 14-0001-0100.dwg JOB CITY: AMES, IA CONTRACT NO.: 14-0001-0100 BUILDING ELEVATION: 10-23-14 SHEET NO.: 1</p>	<p>WESTOWNE APARTMENTS, LLC. PRO COMMERCIAL, INC. 4720 MORTENSEN ROAD, AMES, IA</p>	<p>Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C. 461 Clark Avenue, Suite 200, Ames, IA 50010 Phone: 515.233.9988 Fax: 515.233.9989 www.benjamin-design.com</p>
	<p>Scale: 1/8" = 1'</p>	