

ITEM #: 30
DATE: 10-22-24
DEPT: P&H

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: INTEGRATED SITE PLAN SUBDIVISION FOR 1726 COLLABORATION PLACE - PRELIMINARY PLAT AND MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BACKGROUND:

Hunziker Construction Services, Inc. is requesting approval of an Integrated Site Plan, which includes a Preliminary Plat (Attachment B) and Major Site Development Plan (Attachment C), for the construction of two mixed-use buildings at 1726 Collaboration Place in the Hub Activity Area of the Iowa State University Research Park (ISURP).

An Integrated Site Plan subdivision allows for the division of the 4.2-acre site into two lots with zoning compliance based upon the site as a whole. The proposal will use this flexibility to distribute parking across both lots, eliminating setbacks for parking areas from interior property lines, while placing the two buildings on separate lots.

Lot 1 (2.26 acres) will include one mixed-use building, four garage buildings for residential tenants, and a tenant amenity area including a picnic shelter and basketball/pickleball courts. Lot 2 (1.94 acres) will also contain one mixed-use building and four garage buildings. (See Page 14 Attachment B)

Each mixed-use building will contain 25 residential units. The ground floor must have a minimum 90% of the floor area as commercial. The ground floor of each building will contain commercial tenant spaces and an accessible apartment unit. The second and third floors will each include seven one-bedroom apartments and five two-bedroom units, totaling 25 units per building. Building plans are included in Attachment D.

Between the two buildings, there is an open area along the shared property line that may be developed for a patio and outdoor seating. The patio is not shown on the plans but may be approvable as a minor amendment to the site plan in the future if desired for a restaurant.

The applicant plans to phase the proposed development with the mixed-use building on Lot 1 being the first phase, as allowed by the Integrated Site Plan process. Phasing requires a development agreement with the City to ensure improvements necessary for site function, such as driveway extensions and stormwater management, are made even if future phases are not constructed.

All amenities are shown to be included in Phase 1. While a phasing plan exhibit was submitted with the site plan, the phasing plan and development and maintenance agreement for shared improvements will be part of the review of the final plat at a later date.

The applicant intends for the commercial tenant spaces to primarily be occupied by office uses, although retail and other uses are allowable subject to parking requirements. Grease interceptors and ventilation systems are to be provided for one tenant suite at each building to support a restaurant. **However, the number of parking spaces initially provided is only sufficient to meet the parking demand of one restaurant. If a second restaurant is proposed, a parking reduction or additional spaces may be required to be approved through an amendment to the site plan. There is an additional area at the rear of the site where parking may be added if needed.**

The site is subject to the Research Park Innovation District (RI) zoning standards and design guidelines for the Hub area. The intent of the guidelines is to foster an urban design with buildings placed close to streets, enhanced architectural features and glazing associated with commercial buildings rather than industrial buildings, identifiable and accessible entrances from the street, and interconnected sites to sidewalks and trails.

The developer addressed the requirements by: 1) placing the majority of the buildings at the maximum 20-foot setback to the principal façade, 2) accessing multiple commercial tenant spaces via private parallel sidewalk to the street, 3) implementing typical commercial retail glazing ratios, 4) using brick to distinguish building entrances, 5) extending several sidewalks into the site and from the site to a future trail, and 6) proposing additional landscaping along the back of the accessory structures that will interface with the adjacent trail and master-planned open space.

The building design treats the parking area as the front with the highest amount of storefront glazing. The street facing architecture does not highlight one specific feature as a main entrance or significant architectural element as defined in the guidelines because the design is a multi-tenant building with exterior access points. Overall, the design includes features expected within the Hub area as intended by the design guidelines.

As previously noted, a maximum front setback of 20 feet applies to the principal building. However, due to a curved front lot line along Collaboration Way and the grade change of the site dropping from west to east, the developer is requesting to set building pads using retaining walls, with the buildings' setbacks ranging from 18.46 feet to 20.28 feet. City Council recently passed an ordinance allowing up to a 20% variation of select numeric requirements, subject to City Council approval of requests made with a Major Site Development Plan. A more in-depth review of standards and the request to alter the maximum setback under this provision is further discussed in the Addendum.

To approve Mixed Use, City Council needs to find the use compatible with other nearby uses. Surrounding properties are also zoned RI (see Attachment A—Location and Zoning Map). As part of the Hub Activity area, adjacent properties include commercial uses that support ISURP users, including Ames Racquet and Fitness to the west, the Hub building to the north, and McFarland Clinic to the northwest. The lots to the northeast and south/east of the subject property are undeveloped. Further to the east, across existing open space, is a John Deere industrial building. South of the site beyond the tennis bubble is the Ag Smart R&D facility. **No operational concerns have been identified for any of the existing users that could impact the proposed residential use, nor would the residential use affect existing industrial users.**

The ISURP Phase III Master Plan indicates that the adjacent lot to the south/east is reserved as open space, including a planned trail. The off-site trail design by the ISURP has not been formally approved and if it is altered in location, the onsite trail connection may be modified by a future amendment to the plan to connect to it as needed.

The developer also is requesting an alternative landscaping plan to address issues of parking lot landscaping and proposed garage placement. The landscape plan includes the required quantities of plant materials for front yards and required screening and buffering. It does not achieve minimum spacing of trees within parking areas from the detached garages. The City requires a distribution of overstory trees throughout parking areas and a spacing of 15 feet from buildings to allow room for maturity. As proposed, the developer requests relief from the full spacing distance for two

trees and proposes to compensate with a more vertical columnar tree species set 7.5 feet away from the buildings. **This exceeds the 20% alternative design standards that City Council may grant and requires an alternative landscape plan to be approved by the Council, which is further discussed in the Addendum. Staff supports the request due to the additional site amenity of covered parking that it facilitates.**

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the Integrated Site Plan at its October 2, 2024, meeting. A sign was placed on the property and notice was sent to property owners within 200 feet prior to the meeting.

The Commission asked staff several questions about bicycle connectivity and the availability of transit in the Hub area. Staff indicated the location of existing and future trails and on-street bike facilities on Collaboration Place, and the location of CyRide stops to the west of the site on Collaboration Place.

The Commission focused its discussion on potential compatibility issues between residential users and nearby industrial users. Staff noted that most users in the ISURP use buildings for office space and not manufacturing. If industrial development occurred on an adjacent lot, screening would be required.

Staff also noted that the Major Site Development Plan process required for mixed-use development approval requires notification of nearby users and public hearings, which allows any users with concerns about residential development near existing industrial facilities to express those concerns. As the ISURP controls adjacent vacant lots they also are able to address potential compatibility issues responsible for marketing and siting industrial businesses.

The Commission voted (6-0) to recommend City Council approve the Integrated Site Plan subject to the alternative approvals and conditions. One recommended condition, that an FAA airspace study and determination of no hazard be completed given the proximity to the airport, has since been satisfied.

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AMENDMENT:

If City Council approves the proposed Mixed-Use project, the development agreement for ISU Research Park Phase III will need to be amended to allow for apartments to be taxed as a residential use. The original agreement only allowed for commercial and industrial classifications to ensure that no tax-exempt uses were developed within the area that was supported by TIF. If the agreement is not amended, the taxable value would be higher for apartments than other places in the city where a residential classification would normally apply. **The addendum could be approved along with the future Final Plat.**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Integrated Site Plan, which includes:
 - a. Approval of the Major Site Development Plan for 1726 Collaboration Place for a Mixed-Use Development, subject to the following conditions and alternative approvals:
 - i. Allowance for a design alternative to increase the 20-foot maximum principal building front setback to accommodate the proposed placement for both buildings.

- ii. Allowance for alternative landscaping plan to reduce the spacing of two parking lot trees from the garages to 7.5 feet from 15 feet.
- iii. Prior to occupancy, the applicant shall submit for review and approval an outdoor lighting plan that conforms to the Zoning Ordinance.

b. Approval of the Preliminary Plat for the Iowa State University Research Park Phase III Subdivision, Seventh Addition, noting that prior to final plat all requirements of the integrated subdivision for phasing plans, agreements, and easements are to be reviewed and approved by the City.

c. Direct staff to prepare and addendum to the ISU Research Park Phase III Development Agreement recognizing the residential use tax classification for apartments in addition to Industrial and Commercial.

2. Approve the Integrated Site Plan, which includes concurrent approval of a Preliminary Plat for the Iowa State University Research Park Phase III Subdivision, Seventh Addition, and Major Site Development Plan, for 1726 Collaboration Place for a Mixed-Use Development, with modified conditions.

3. Deny the request for an Integrated Site Plan, which includes concurrent approval of a Preliminary Plat for the Iowa State University Research Park Phase III Subdivision, Seventh Addition, and Major Site Development Plan, for 1726 Collaboration Place for a Mixed-Use Development if City Council finds that the proposed project does not conform to the Major Site Development Plan, Integrated Site Plan Subdivision, and Subdivision criteria.

4. Defer action on the request and refer it back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The proposed Integrated Site Plan represents the first mixed-use development in the ISURP after City Council amended the Research Park Innovation District (RI) to permit mixed-use development in the Hub Activity Area. As described by the applicant in their request for the text amendment, the intent of the mixed-use amendment is to foster a live-work-play environment in the Hub area. **Staff believes the mixed-use development will benefit the overall collaborative environment and activity in the Hub area with residential uses and commercial use opportunities including a restaurant.**

The site design and layout is consistent with the standards and guidelines for development in the Hub area. There are several connections to the street and one to the adjacent trail. The design allows for the addition of an outdoor patio between the buildings if desired in the future. Although the design treats the parking side of the building as the front, the design includes appropriate glazing levels and high interest and durable materials including brick. Amenities of garages and recreational elements enhance the quality of the project.

Staff determined that the proposed use and site design would not impact other industrial uses in the area primarily due to the existence of commercial uses nearby and the large separation of distance to industrial uses that exist east and southwest.

With the conditions of approval, staff finds that the project meets the design principles of an Integrated Site Plan, subdivision standards, and the standards of the Major Site Development

Plan. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, with noted alternative features and conditions as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Addendum and Attachments A - D.pdf](#)