



## PLANNING REPORT

# Planning & Zoning Commission

Thursday, January 18, 2024

## UPPER METRO MIXED-USE BUILDING 23-121CP

<https://dublinohiousa.gov/pzc/23-121>

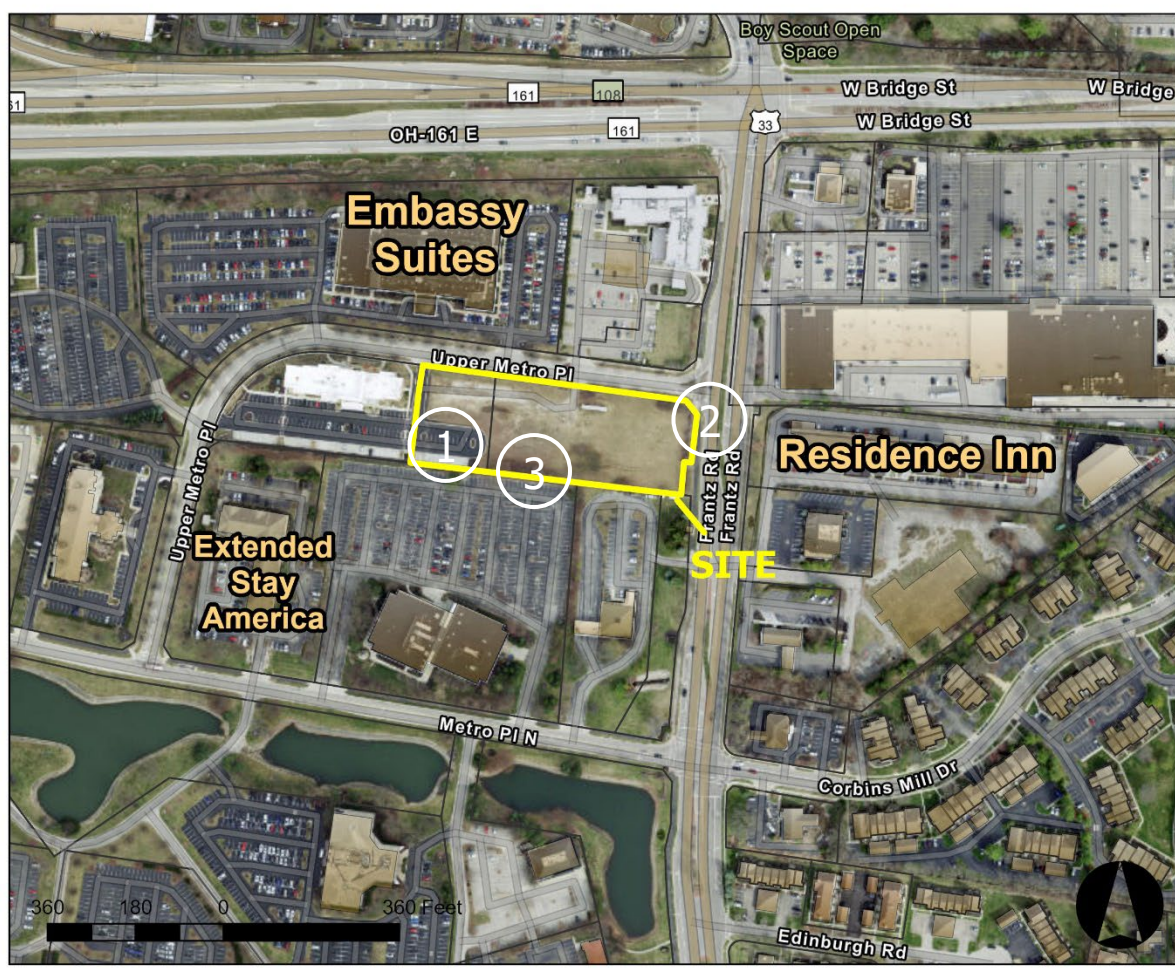
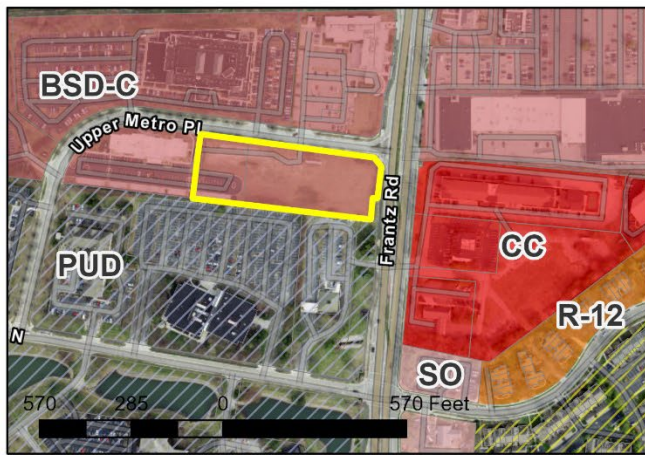
### Case Summary

Address	5055 Upper Metro Pl, PID: 273-009975 and 273-013009
Proposal	Construction of a five-story mixed-use building consisting of 159 residential units, 7,680 square-feet of commercial space, 231 parking spaces, and associated site improvements.
Request	Review and approval of a Concept Plan under the provisions of Code §153.066.
Zoning	BSD-C: Bridge Street District – Commercial
Planning Recommendation	<u>Planning recommends Approval of the Concept Plan with conditions.</u>
Next Steps	Should the Concept Plan be approved, the applicant may proceed to the Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) application.
Applicant	Mark Costandi, Costandi Studio
Case Manager	Christopher Will, AICP Senior Planner cwill@dublin.oh.us (614) 410-4498

Site Location Map

23-121CP | Upper Metro Place Mixed-Use Building 

- Site Features**
- 1 Existing Parking Lot
  - 2 Stone Wall
  - 3 Tree Buffer



## 1. Background

### Site Summary

The 2.55-acre site is located southwest of the intersection of Upper Metro Place and Frantz Road. There are pedestrian facilities on both Upper Metro Place and Frantz Road. The site does not have any significant change of grade throughout. There are existing trees along the south and east perimeters of the site. A stone wall erected in 1998 with the construction of Upper Metro Place is present along the east perimeter of the site. The site includes a 22 space surface lot providing additional parking for the adjacent TownePlace Suites. Within a developed area, the site has access to existing utility services through the City of Dublin.

### Case History

#### *July 2021 – Informal Review*

The development proposal was first presented to the Commission as an Informal application. Commission's feedback focused on parking, open space and amenity spaces. Specifically, the Commission expressed concerns for the massing of the building along Upper Metro Place, the lack of visibility of the open space and potentially the site lacking the space to accommodate all of the proposed uses. The Commission briefly discussed the on-street parking but noted more analysis would be necessary to formulate support for the parking.

#### *February 2022 – Informal Review*

The proposal was presented to the Commission as an Informal application. The Commission's feedback focused on quality of public open space, clear distinctions between public and private space, and adequate provision of parking. The Commission commended the applicant for breaking up the massing of the proposed building.

#### *July 2022 - Concept Plan*

In July of 2022, the Commission approved a Concept Plan for a four-story, mixed-use building with 175 residential units and 8,400 square-feet of commercial space. The Commission approved the Concept Plan with two conditions: that the applicant continue to work with staff to ensure open space meets BSD requirements and that the applicant continue to work with Staff to ensure on-street parking meets BSD requirements.

### Process

The BSD requires all new development to comply with the form-based provisions of the Code and meet the principles identified in the BSD Special Area Plan. The Concept Plan (CP) provides a foundation for future development steps by outlining the character of a proposed development including uses, building massing, open space location, and street connections. Approval of new development in the BSD is a three-step process:

- Informal Review (Optional Step)
- Step 1 – Concept Plan (CP)
- Step 2 – Preliminary Development Plan (PDP)
- Step 3 – Final Development Plan (FDP)

Though the Commission previously approved a Concept Plan, changes by the applicant to the site layout and building height necessitate new review and Concept Plan approval from the Commission.

## 2. Plans, Policies, and Codes

### Community Plan

The Community Plan is a key policy document adopted by City Council to guide decision-making for the future of Dublin's natural and built environments. The Community Plan includes Future Land Use recommendations, Special Area Plans, and the Thoroughfare Plan. Special Area Plans provide an illustrative framework to guide development in a way that fosters a sense of place and establishes community identity in key locations.

#### *Dublin Corporate Area Plan*

The Community Plan identifies the Dublin Corporate Area as an area with aging legacy office parks that need repositioned for success with infill and redevelopment opportunities to bring vibrancy to the district. The goals of this district are to create a walkable, mixed use environment with amenities, encourage vitality, refresh Frantz Road, and improve mobility and transit options for businesses and visitors.

#### *Envision Dublin – Community Plan Update*

Through Envision Dublin, the City is currently updating the Dublin Community Plan. The plan update includes the review of current future land uses, transportation, and special area plans - vetting recommendations of the current plan with community goals and priorities, and providing revisions where needed. As the Community Plan update is developed, City Council has adopted Interim Land Use Principles to further guide development during the transition.

### Bridge Street District Code

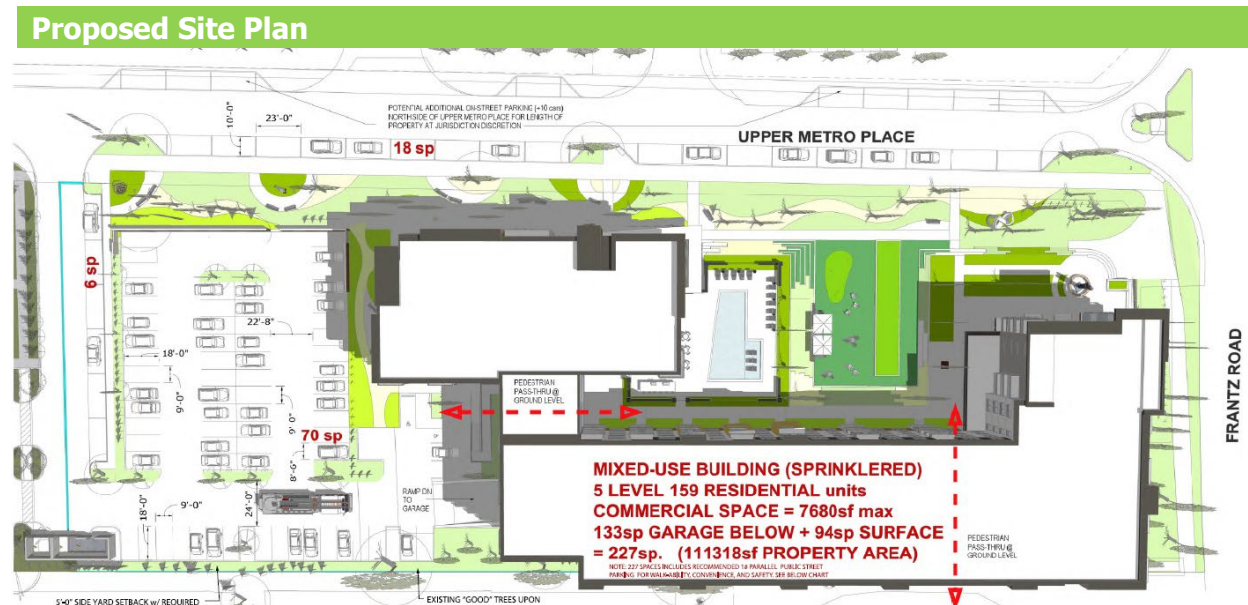
Following a community engagement-led visioning process to reimagine the Bridge Street corridor as a vibrant and walkable center of the city with a dynamic mix of land uses and housing, the City created the hybrid form-based BSD Code and approved an area rezoning to BSD zoning districts to allow for implementation of the community's vision. The site is zoned BSD-C: Bridge Street District – Commercial. This district applies generally to existing retail centers and other low-rise commercial uses, including single use freestanding retail buildings, as listed in the BSD Code.



### 3. Project Summary

#### Site Layout

The proposed building is located along both Frantz Road and Upper Metro Place street frontages with parking generally below and the rear of the building. The previously approved Concept Plan included a more prominent building wall, stretching along the entire frontage of Upper Metro Place. A portion of this building has been eliminated in the current plan, and an extension of the surface parking lot is now proposed closer to Upper Metro Place. The parking area closest to Upper Metro is proposed to be screened and is illustrated by the applicant as a potential future phase for an infill building. Open spaces are accessible from the public right-of-way.



#### Use

The applicant is proposing a mixed use building with 159 multi-family residential units and 7,680 square-feet of eating and drinking and co-working office space. All of these uses are permitted. The eating and drinking and co-working office space are proposed within the ground-floor of the building fronting Frantz Road. The applicant previously received Concept Plan approval for a 174-unit multi-family residential and 8,400 square-feet of commercial space.

#### Building Type

The applicant is proposing a five-story Mixed Use Building which is permitted and compatible with the existing buildings in the area that typically range from four to eight stories in height. The applicant previously received Concept Plan approval for a 4-story Corridor Building.

This building type requires a Required Build Zone (RBZ) of 0 to 10 feet along both Frantz Road and Upper Metro Place. The building has not been placed within this RBZ based on existing utility easements that prohibit this location, as well as comments by the Commission to break up the façade of the building along Upper Metro Place. This will require a waiver if the application proceeds to the PDP. The building type also requires a Corner Side Required Build Zone and a Corner Occupation of 0 to 10 feet along the Corner Side Property Line for the same reasons. This will require waivers as the application proceeds to the PDP.

### Architecture

Conceptual visualizations and precedent imagery illustrate the building to be clad with brick and glass as the primary materials. Contemporary architectural accents are illustrated around portions of the residential balconies and building entryways. Detailed architectural plans are reviewed with PDP and FDP steps.

### **Streets**

The Code provides a hierarchy of requirements for establishing a gridded street network and includes three families of streets: Corridor Connectors, District Connectors, and Neighborhood Streets. Corridor and District Connectors are often designated as Principal Frontage Streets (PFS), which are designed to ensure a continuous, pedestrian-oriented block. Frantz Road is a Corridor Connector Street and a PFS. This is a high capacity thoroughfare with significant traffic.

Upper Metro Place is an existing street designated as a Neighborhood Street. The existing section of this street does not meet a BSD street type and the existing alignments may be subject to improvement to bring them into compliance. The applicant is proposing to retrofit Upper Metro Place with on-street parking which would better align with BSD street character and help to activate the street. The applicant should continue to work with Staff on proposed improvements within the public rights-of-way.

### **Lots and Blocks**

The Lots and Blocks provisions of the BSD code include standards for minimum and maximum block sizes, which in turn establish lot size. The maximum permitted block length in the BSD-Commercial District is 500 feet, and maximum block perimeter is 1,750 feet. Exceptions to this are permitted if there are existing barriers preventing the extension of the street network. In this case, the existing block length and block perimeter exceed the lengths permitted. However, Staff has determined that the site is on the boundaries of the BSD, and subdividing the block with a new street may not be possible. A Waiver will be required with the PDP.

### Mid-Block Pedestrianway

Mid-block pedestrianways are required on all blocks exceeding 400 feet in length. A mid-block building pedestrianway may serve to fulfill this requirement provided it meets all of the design standards. The applicant is proposing a mid-block pedestrianway between this site and the existing hotel to the west along an access drive with parallel parking and a pedestrianway within an open space between the building and surface parking lot. More detailed plans will be required to ensure the pedestrianways meet design standards of the Code if the application advances to PDP.

### **Parking**

The proposed uses of the site would typically require 219 parking spaces to meet minimum requirements of the Code. However, the intent of the Bridge Street District is to create high quality walkable neighborhoods. To encourage walkability, the Code includes a provision that the minimum number of off-street parking spaces may be reduced by 10% if more than 50% of the land in a proposed development is located within 1,320 feet of any public transit stop. 100% of the site is within said distance from the COTA transit stop located south of the West Bridge St/Frantz Rd intersection. With the 10% reduction, the required number of parking spaces required by Code is 198, 375 space are permitted at maximum.

The applicant is proposing 209 off-street spaces, 133 within a below-grade parking structure, 70 spaces within a surface lot, and 6 spaces along the entry drive from Upper Metro Place. The 209 proposed off-street spaces are within the minimum and maximum required by Code. The surface lot is proposed to be screened from Upper Metro with a screen wall/art wall. It is also organized to create the opportunity for shared parking with the neighboring hotel though no shared parking is proposed with this application. The previously approved Concept Plan included structured parking only within the building footprint, parking is now proposed under both the building and open space which improves the internal circulation of the parking area. Additionally, the applicant is proposing to retrofit Upper Metro Place to provide 18 on-street parking spaces. The applicant should continue to work with Staff for all proposed improvements within the public right-of-way.

### **Open Space**

In the BSD, open spaces must meet both quantity, public accessibility, and Open Space Type including pocket plaza, pocket park, green, square, plaza, park and greenway. The surrounding area is under served by public open space that provides opportunity for activity and social engagement. The required open space for this development is 31,954 square-feet. The applicant has been mindful of creating purposeful open spaces with a mixture of activity and is proposing 32,813 square-feet in three types of open spaces.

#### *Plaza*

The Plaza include stage/performance platform, micro-recreation, and outdoor seating and dining. This open space is located closest to the intersection of Frantz Road and Upper Metro Place. In the previously approved Concept Plan, this space was elevated from street level. Though these spaces are still elevated from the street, the applicant has lowered the space making it more connected to the street.

#### *Art Walk*

Similar to the previously approved Concept Plan, the applicant is proposing an art walk along the Upper Metro Place frontage with a collection of pocket plazas connected through an undulating linear progression of spaces with outdoor seating and sculpture/art. In the current proposal, the modified surface parking area now abuts a portion of the art walk. The applicant is proposing to screen the lot from the street and art walk with an art wall, which provides an opportunity for additional art elements.

#### *Frantz Road Pocket Plaza*

The applicant is proposing pocket plazas between the commercial spaces fronting Frantz Road. As illustrated, these open spaces appear to serve as ground-floor commercial patio space and may not meet accessibility and other requirements of the Code. The applicant should continue to work with Staff to ensure open spaces meet Code requirements.

### **Landscaping**

The BSD requires landscape buffering when a property is developed abutting a property located in a non-BSD zoning district. The buffering is intended to obscure the higher-intensity land use from view and block potential negative impacts related to noise, lighting levels, and activity. Properties abutting the subject site not within a BSD zoning district but contain commercial uses. More detailed landscape plans will be required if the application advances to PDP.

**Utilities and Stormwater**

A ten-inch sanitary sewer line runs the length of the property, approximately 15-feet from the back of walk. A 24-inch storm line bisects the site north to south. In the previous Concept Plan, the applicant proposed to relocate the existing 24-inch storm line to allow for the construction of the portion of the building along Upper Metro Place. The applicant has modified the building to remove the portion over and west of the storm easement to eliminate this conflict. Details and strategies for stormwater management were not provided at this step of the planning approval process. Staff will continue to work with the applicant to review utility details if the application advances to PDP.

**Future Phase**

The applicant has conceptually illustrated a potential future phase to infill a portion of the parking closest to Upper Metro Place with two stories of office above ground-level parking. This future phase is not part of this current application.

**4. Plan Review**

<b>Concept Plan Review</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Review</b>
1. Consistent with the applicable policy guidance of the Community Plan, BSD Special Area Plan, and other applicable City plans and policies.	<b>Criteria met:</b> Both the Bridge Street District and the Dublin Corporate Area Plan are Special Area Plans that promote dense, walkable, mixed-use environments. Both the proposed building and open space will help to activate and contribute to the vibrancy of this area. The proposal is consistent with the Interim Land Use Principles.
2. The Concept Plan conforms to the applicable requirements of the BSD Code.	<b>Criteria met:</b> The proposed uses, site layout, and open spaces reflect the intent of the Bridge Street District, which is to create a more urban form of development, with buildings fronting public streets to activate and engage the streetscape and provide parking to the rear of developed sites. This Concept Plan identifies potential waivers to the Code that may be necessary. These waivers, which include block size and required build zone, are generally the result of existing site conditions and constraints.
3. Conforms to Lots and Blocks, Street Types, and Site Development Standards.	<b>Criteria met with condition:</b> Though the block size exceeds maximum standards, Staff has determined that the site is on the boundaries of the BSD, and subdividing the block with a new street may not be possible. A Waiver will be required with the PDP. The proposed site does not contain any additions roads and will rely on the existing street network for



**Concept Plan Review**

Criteria	Review
	<p>access. The applicant is proposing to retrofit Upper Metro Place to provide on-street parking. The applicant should continue to work with Staff for proposed improvements within the public rights-of-way. To mitigate the block size, the proposal provides for mid-block pedestrianways to improve the permeability of the site. More detailed plans will be required to ensure the pedestrianways meet design standards of the Code if the application advances to PDP.</p>
<p>4. The proposed land uses allow for appropriate integration into the community, consistent with the adopted plans and align with Uses identified in the Code.</p>	<p><b>Criteria met:</b>          The primary use of the site is residential with ancillary office and eating and drinking uses, all of which are permitted. Residential and eating and drinking uses are currently limited in this area so new options will support the existing employment and hospitality already present in the vicinity.</p>
<p>5. The conceptual building is appropriately sited and scaled to create a cohesive development character, completes the surrounding environment, and conforms with the Building Types in the Code.</p>	<p><b>Criteria met:</b>          The applicant is proposing a five-story, mixed-use building that will be compatible with the existing buildings in the area that typically range from four to eight stories in height. The building mass has also been divided into two sections that are connected by an interior connector to intentionally minimize the massing along Upper Metro Place. Staff have identified existing utility easements which prevent building placement in required build zones, however, so waivers will be required if the proposal advances to the PDP.</p>
<p>6. The conceptual design of open spaces provides meaningful gathering spaces for the benefit of the development and community.</p>	<p><b>Criteria met with condition:</b>          The surrounding area is underserved by public open space that provides opportunity for activity and social engagement. The applicant has been mindful of creating purposeful open spaces with a mixture of activity, including public art that will entice pedestrian activity. The applicant should continue to work with Staff to ensure that the proposed open spaces meet the quantity and type requirements of the Code.</p>
<p>7. The Concept Plan allows for the connection and expansion of public or private infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>Criteria met:</b>          The proposal allows for public services and utilities.</p>

## Concept Plan Review

Criteria	Review
8. The development concept conforms with the Neighborhood Standards, as applicable.	<b>Not applicable:</b> Neighborhood Standards are not applicable to this application.

## 5. Recommendation

The proposal meets or meets with conditions all applicable BSD Concept Plan review criteria.

**Planning Recommendation:** Approval of the Concept Plan with conditions:

1. The applicant should continue to work with Staff for proposed on-street parking and other improvements within the public rights-of-way;
2. The applicant should continue to work with Staff to ensure site open spaces meet the quantity, accessibility, and type requirements of the Code.