

August 16, 2021

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Division of Planning
5200 Emerald Parkway
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Re: Summary Zoning Analysis Memo—5055 Upper Metro Place (Revision)

- Information Needed for Additional Zoning Compliance Analysis
- Zoning Analysis Pertinent to the Informal Review Stage

Tammy—

I have completed my review of the materials submitted for the revision to this proposal dated 7.30.21. This summary memo provides high level analysis and comments on the proposal appropriate to the Informal Application review process, and also identifies areas where additional information is needed in order to provide substantive analysis and direction on other Bridge Street Code requirements.

Most of the comments previously provided for this proposal in the memo dated May 21, 2021 are still valid and applicable to the revised Informal Application. These previous comments are included here, with any updates or new comments provided in [*italicized blue font*](#).

General Comments

§153.059 – Uses

- *The proposal includes 7,700 square feet of commercial space, but the specific commercial land use type is not defined; and 175 dwelling units, but the number of bedrooms in each unit is not defined.*
- *The location of the proposed commercial space should be provided via a floor plan to better understand the relationship of these uses to the public rights-of-way and open spaces.*
- *Without more specifics on the exact uses and approximate square footage of each, as well as the dwelling unit quantities based on the number of bedrooms the minimum parking requirement cannot be calculated. See §153.065(B) - Parking Analysis.*

§153.060 – Lots and Blocks

- §153.060(C)(2)(a, d)—Maximum Block Size

- In the BSD Commercial District, the maximum permitted block length is 500 ft., and the maximum permitted block perimeter is 1,750 ft. The existing block length is ±1,048 ft., and the existing block perimeter is ±3,316 ft.
 - §153.060(C)(2)(d)—Exceptions
 - When existing barriers limit extension of the street network, blocks shall be created to match the above the above requirements to the maximum extent practicable.
 - The parcel is at the edge of the Bridge Street District limits and it is not possible to subdivide the block with a new street.
 - §153.065(I)(2)(a)(b)--Mid-Block/Mid-Building Pedestrianway
 - Mid-block pedestrianways are required on all blocks exceeding 400 feet in length.
 - A mid-building pedestrianway may serve as a mid-block pedestrianway provided it meets all design requirements.
 - The proposed building (not block) is over 550 feet in length. A pass-through is proposed in the ~~building, but it is not located in the~~ middle third of the building, as required. *Additional details for the proposed mid-building pass-through will be required to ensure compliance with the standards of §153.065(I)(2)(b).*
 - As the project is refined the uninterrupted length of the building should be mitigated to avoid a repetitive and undifferentiated façade across this distance.

§153.061 – Street Types

- §153.061(C)(4)(b)--Existing Streets/Proposed Modifications
 - Frantz Road is an existing street designated as a Corridor Connector Street on the Street Network Map, and is also a principal frontage street. It is a high-capacity thoroughfare handling significant traffic volumes through the Bridge Street District. No vehicular access is permitted along principal frontage street frontage, in order to minimize vehicular/pedestrian conflicts and to reinforce the streetscape character of these high profile streets through continuous architectural edge along the block face.
 - Upper Metro Place is an existing street designated as a Neighborhood Street. The design section of this street does not meet a Bridge Street District street type. Where existing alignments are shown to remain, these streets may be subject to improvements necessary to bring them into conformance with a permitted street type.
- On-Street Parking
 - The City has no *immediate* plans to modify/reconstruct Upper Metro Place to conform to a Bridge Street District street type. When these improvements are implemented it is *typically undertaken* in a comprehensive manner in order to maintain a safe and consistent travel way, with the entire street or *a* significant *number of* street segments improved at once. Incremental street modifications and improvements across individual property frontages are not typically supported.
 - The proposed on-street parking adjacent would require relocation of the existing curb, and sidewalk and the removal of all existing mature street trees along the Upper Metro Place site frontage.
 - *As proposed, the on-street parking location would result in a wider overall street section if this pattern were extended to the remaining Upper Metro Place streetscape. This wider street section minimizes the effectiveness of on-street parking to constrain travel speeds to create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.*

§153.062 – Building Types

- Table 153.062-A--Proposed Building Type.
 - The proposed Mixed-Use Building Type is a permitted building type in the Bridge Street Commercial District. As stated in the application materials, the elevations and renderings submitted are not intended to reflect the proposed architectural design of the facades. Accordingly, the comments provided herein will focus strictly on higher level urban design requirements of building siting, height and massing requirements of the Bridge Street Code.
- §153.062(O)(6)(a)--Building Siting Requirements.
 - Street Frontage.
 - Frantz Road is the front property line of the site, with Upper Metro Place being a corner side property line. The façade of Mixed-Use Building Types is required to be sited with a 0' to 10' required building zone (RBZ) along both the front and corner side property lines. Scalable plan drawings have not been provided, but it appears that the building is sited outside of both RBZs (>10' from the front and corner side property lines).
 - *The proposed revisions to open up views into the public open space by breaking up the building façade and pull it back from Upper Metro Place are both improvements over the previous proposal. The trade-off of visible public open space for continuous property line coverage as required by code may be more acceptable/supportable along a Neighborhood Street. However, given the significance of Frantz Road in the transportation network, the ell of the building should be extended north to provide a stronger presence along this Corridor Connector Street.*
 - Along the front property line, the building must occupy 95% of the length of the RBZ. As the building is not within the RBZ, this requirement is also not met as proposed.
 - *As was the case with the adjacent Towne Place Suites hotel, an existing utility easement precludes the placement of buildings within the RBZ, and waivers will be required.*
 - Buildable Area.
 - Along the side (southern) property line, no setback (0') is required, and along the rear (western) property line, a 5' setback is required. Note that under §153.065(D)(4) perimeter landscape buffering is required when development abuts a property in a non-BSD zoning district, as is the case along the southern property line.
 - Maximum permitted impervious lot coverage is 85%, with an additional 10% semi-pervious permitted. The proposed site layout appears to meet the requirement, but a scaled site plan indicating all areas of impervious and semi-pervious coverage.
 - Parking Location.
 - Parking is permitted in the rear and within the building, both as proposed.
- §153.062(O)(6)(b)--Building Height Requirements.
 - Minimum and Maximum Height.
 - The minimum and maximum height permitted is two to five stories. The proposed building is a consistent four stories in height.
 - Ground Story Minimum and Maximum Height.
 - The minimum and maximum permitted ground story height is 16 to 24 feet, *this story height range is typical for commercial uses on the ground story of vertically mixed-use buildings. As proposed, both residential and commercial uses are proposed on the ground*

story. The proposed ground story height is 13 feet, *which is slightly taller than typical for residential uses.*

- Upper Story Minimum and Maximum Height.
 - The minimum and maximum permitted upper story height is 10 to 14 feet. The *proposed* minimum upper story height is 11.33 feet, the maximum upper *most* story height is measured to the tallest portion of the roof deck on parapet roofs and appears to be incorrectly dimensioned on the materials provided.
- §153.062(O)(6)(d)4--Building Façade Divisions.
 - The building façade must be broken down into vertical divisions not greater than 45 feet in length through the use of recesses or projections a minimum of 18 inches in depth or through the use of an architectural element
 - It is premature to review the proposal against this requirement, but it should be nevertheless cautioned that the building as depicted may be poorly received by the Planning and Zoning Commission due to the length of the building and unvaried façade treatment.
 - *The updated elevations provide more façade variation than the previous submittal, and are improved by splitting the proposed building into two wings joined by a connector at the upper stories. Any further architectural analysis is premature based on the drawings provided, and overreaches the intent of an Informal Application.*
- §153.062(O)(6)(d)4—Minimum Transparency Required.
 - To clarify a question in the materials submitted regarding calculation method, please note the following:
 - Where commercial storefronts are proposed, the transparency requirement is calculated as the area of the story façade between two and eight feet divided by the area of clear glazing provided between two and eight feet above the adjacent sidewalk. The requirement is 70%.
 - Where residential units are proposed at the ground story, transparency is calculated as the entire area of the story (as measured from established grade to the floor above) divided by the area of glazing on that story façade. The requirement is 65%, and is typically very difficult to reach with residential units at the ground story.

§153.064 Open Space Types

- §153.064(C)—Provision of Open Space
 - Residential.
 - There shall be a minimum of 200 square feet of publicly accessible open space for each residential dwelling unit. *(175 DU x 200 = 35,000 SF)*
 - The information submitted indicates that 35,000 square feet of open space is required, which may not include open space required for proposed area of commercial uses.
 - Commercial.
 - There shall be a minimum of one square foot of publicly accessible open space for every 50 square feet of commercial space.
 - ~~Square footage of commercial uses is not included on the plans provided.~~ *7,700 square feet of commercial use is proposed (7,700 x .02 = 154 SF).*

- A preliminary area calculation of the materials provided indicates that many areas that would not be eligible to count toward open space requirement have been included in the ±35,000 square feet highlighted on plans.
 - *Not all areas of impervious coverage or landscaping are eligible for inclusion in meeting the required dedication of public open space. As outlined in the code, to be counted toward the requirement each area must meet the requirements of a designated open space type. This includes size requirements, length to width proportion requirements, improvements/amenities, etc. as previously noted below.*
- §153.064(F)— Open Space Types
 - Open spaces must meet the requirements of an ‘open space type’.
 - Much of the non-linear open space indicated behind the building lacks adequate frontage on a public right of way, and the linear open space proposed is not permitted to exceed a ratio of 3:1 length to width.
 - The location of the pool should be reconsidered as this private amenity will deter public use of the space proposed to meet the provision of publicly accessible open space requirement. *Siting the proposed private pool in the middle of public open space-- some of which is anticipated to be associated with commercial uses in the form of plazas, patios, etc.--is detrimental to the success of the entire open space. The physical proximity of these different open space uses/activities will likely be uncomfortable for residents using the pool as well patrons of the commercial spaces. It is strongly recommended that private amenity space be relocated to the rear or to the rooftop of the building.*

§153.065—Site Development Standards

- §153.065(B)(6)—Parking
 - Parking calculations have not been provided to determine if the minimum parking requirement for each use is met. Parking for the residential units is based on the number of bedrooms proposed with each of the ~~174~~ 175 units. 7,700 Commercial use square footages ~~have has~~ not been ~~provided~~ *defined by specific use to* allow for verification of parking compliance.
 - *The existing surface parking spaces on this parcel that were constructed as part of the TownePlace Suites project as ‘shared parking’ can potentially no longer be designated as shared spaces due to the aligned peak parking demand of the hotel and proposed residential uses. Depending on the actual minimum parking requirement, these spaces may be required to be dedicated exclusively for the proposed uses.*
 - A parking layout for the underground parking should be provided to allow for review of the parking count and proposed circulation. A secondary entrance/access will likely be required.
 - Although Code does not prohibit tandem parking, it raises questions as to the logistics of these spaces.
 - As noted in Street Types analysis provided above, the on-street parking spaces proposed present a challenge and will be at the determination of the City Engineer.

Exhibit A: Alternate Site Layout Suggestions

- Please find attached to this analysis a suggested alternate site layout. *(No further Alternate Site Layouts have been created. The proposed 7.30.21 revision includes several of the alternate layout suggestions*

previously provided. Suggestions that remain pertinent and should be considered with the 7.30.21 revision are noted below.)

- The building footprint:
 - Breaks down the linear mass of the building
 - Opens up views to the proposed open space from Frantz Road
 - Facilitates cleaner access to the open space for residents and commercial uses.
 - Potentially yields more dwelling units
 - Orients more dwelling units to the open space
- The proposed access point on Upper Metro Place: *(All comments below are still pertinent to the 7.30.21 revision and should be given consideration)*
 - Provides a more immediate access point to below grade parking for commercial patrons that is visually connected to the commercial uses.
 - Provides a secondary access point to the below grade parking, which may ultimately be required.
 - Aligns with the existing curb cut on north side of Upper Metro Place and may have a defacto 'dedicated left turn lane' given the existing striping between Frantz Road and the proposed curb cut (pending discussion with Engineering).

Please let me know if you need any further clarification of these comments and analysis. I am available to discuss at your convenience and would be happy to assist in relaying these requirements to the applicants.

Sincerely,



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