

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The ApplMMicant, Reuter-Walton, is considering acquiring land from the City of Columbia Heights on which to construct a new affordable apartment building. The City owns Lot 1 and Outlot E of the Northwestern 2nd Addition, which is located north of the intersection of Jackson Street NE and 41st Avenue NE. The combined property measures 5.0 Acres and spans across the land between 41st Avenue NE and 42nd Avenue NE and is generally located between Jackson Street NE and the alley between Jackson Street NE and Central Avenue NE. The City of Columbia Heights Public Safety Center is located on the south half of the property. The north half the property is currently paved with an asphalt parking lot, but does not have any permanent structures.

The Public Safety Center occupies 3.3 acres, leaving the northern 1.7 acres of land that currently functions as a parking lot as relatively under-utilized. The Reuter-Walton apartment proposes to develop the western 1.3 acres, leaving 0.4 acres of remaining land available for future development. The operators of the existing SACA have expressed interest in constructing a food shelf building on the remaining 0.4 acres.

SUBMITTAL APPLICATION

The objective of this application is to gain preliminary approvals from the City of Columbia Heights for a new Planned Unit Development over the 5.0-acre parcel. To accomplish this objective, existing easements on the northern 1.7 acres would need to be vacated, and the land would need to be subdivided into three proposed lots: one for the City Public Safety Center, one for the proposed apartment building, and one for future development. Three accompanying applications are included with this submittal.

The first application for this submittal is the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Application. The Applicant is Reuter-Walton, the proposed developer of the proposed apartment building. The application form has been completed and signed by the applicant, and a check for the required fee of \$2,500 is included. Attached to this application are the required documents listed at the top of page 2 of the PUD Application, including:

1. This narrative;
2. A vicinity map;
3. An accurately scaled site plan;
4. Existing and proposed topography;
5. Vehicular access and parking areas;
6. Landscaping and other site features;
7. A stormwater management plan;
8. Elevation views of the proposed apartment building.

There are two sets of plans included with this application. The first is titled, "42nd Avenue Apartments", are the preliminary architectural plans for the proposed apartment building. The second set is titled, "Northwestern 3rd Addition", which include land survey, civil engineering, and landscape architecture plans, and stormwater management plan for the proposed overall development. Each of these documents has been prepared in accordance with the City of Columbia Heights Site Plan Application Submission Checklist.

The second application form for this submittal is the Vacation Application. The Applicant is requesting the following four existing easements that encumber the northern 1.7 -acre parcel be vacated:

1. Platted perimeter drainage and utility easement per Northwestern 2nd Addition;
2. Storm water drainage utility easement per Document Number 1554478;
3. Utility easement per Document Number 594146;
4. Parking easement over Outlot E, per document number 1554482.

We have shown all four of the easements on the plan sheet titled, "Easement Exhibit", sheet number X-2 in the Northwestern 3rd Addition plan set. In accordance with the Vacation checklist, we have also included a detailed narrative titled, "Easement Vacation Narrative" the describes the need or desire for the vacation of these proposed easements.

The third application for this submittal is the Minor Subdivision Application. The Applicant is requesting the 5.0-acre property currently recorded as Lot 1 and Outlot E of Northwestern 2nd Addition be re-platted as Lot 1, Lot 2, and Lot 3 of Northwestern 3rd Addition. The resulting plat and proposed easements are depicted on the plan sheet titled, "Preliminary Plat", sheet number C-1 in the Northwestern 3rd Addition plan set. The Applicant that the City determine the Parkland Dedication Fees for the proposed project during their review of this application.

The Applicant is requesting Preliminary Approval of the Architectural, Land Survey, Civil, and Landscape Plans for the proposed apartment building on Lot 2 of the proposed Northwestern 3rd Addition plat. This application does not include a formal request for the development of the SACA Food Shelf on Lot 3 of the proposed plat. However, the Applicant has been working with SACA to obtain conditions of approval with this application that would support the future development of the SACA Food Shelf on Lot 3.

Based on the City finding this application to be complete, the Applicant is requesting the project be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their meeting on Tuesday, May 4, 2021. If the Planning Commission approves the preliminary application for the proposed project, the Applicant is requesting the project be reviewed by City Council at their meeting on Monday, May 10, 2021.

ZONING

The existing property proposed for development is currently zoned as Planned Unit Development. The underlying zoning for Lot 1, is R-4 – Multiple Family Residential District, which is consistent with the proposed apartment building land use. The Public Safety Center is listed as an acceptable conditional use in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The underlying zoning for Outlot E appears to be Public and Open Space. This application currently does not request rezoning of the underlying property. However, the northeasterly 7.0 ft of proposed Lot 2 extends into the westerly portion of existing Outlot E. Neither the proposed apartment building nor a future food shelf facility are permitted or conditional uses within Public and Open Space.

If the City feels that re-zoning of the underlying land is appropriate, the Applicant could work with City staff to modify this application to accomplish that objective.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

LOT AREA

Lot 2: City Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum lot area for Multi-Family Residential District (R-4) zoning of 10,000 sq. ft. for a multi-family dwelling, and a minimum lot width of 70 ft. The proposed lot area for Lot 2 is 1.3 acres (56,628 sq. ft.) and the proposed lot width is 207.3 ft. Therefore, the proposed lot area and lot widths meet the minimum dimensions for the proposed use.

Lot 3: City Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum lot area of 6,000 sq. ft. for Limited Building District (LB) and for General Business District (GB), and a minimum lot width of 50 ft. for LB and 40 ft. for GB. The proposed lot area for Lot 3 is of 0.4 acres (17,424 sq. ft.) and the proposed lot width is 79.6 ft. Therefore, the proposed lot area and lot widths meet the minimum dimensions for each district, if this application is amended to include proposed rezoning.

BUILDING SETBACKS

Lot 2: The underlying R-4 zoning requires building setbacks as follows: front yard 15 ft., side yard 10 ft., corner side yard 15 ft., and rear yard 15 ft. This application is requesting the PUD conditions to allow for reduced setbacks as follows: front yard 12 ft. and corner side yard 10 ft. The application meets the R-4 zoning standard for building setbacks of 10 ft. for side yard and 15 ft for rear yard.

Lot 3: The standard building setbacks for Limited Building District (LB) are: front yard N/A, side yard 15 ft., corner side yard 10 ft., and rear yard 20 ft. Standard building setbacks for General Business District (GB) are front yard 15 ft., side yard N/A, corner side yard 15 ft., and rear yard 20 ft. To accommodate the building dimensions that the food shelf desires, they have asked the Applicant to propose the following setbacks: front yard 12 ft., side yard 8 ft., corner side yard 5 ft., and rear yard 5 ft.



PARKING SETBACKS

Lot 2: The underlying R-4 zoning for Multiple-Family requires parking setbacks as follows: front yard 30 ft., side yard 10 ft., corner side yard 30 ft., and rear yard 10 ft. This application is requesting the PUD conditions to allow for parking setbacks as follows: front yard 85.3 ft., corner side yard 85.7 ft., side yard of zero, and rear yard of 2.0 ft.

The proposed parking setback increases along the front and corner side yard dimensions are proposed to maximize the distance between the proposed surface parking area and the adjacent residences to the west of Jackson Street and north of 42nd Avenue NE. The request for parking setback reductions to the east parking lot setbacks are requested to support shared parking with Lot 3. The request to reduce the parking setback to the south is to further support the efforts to maximize the parking setback from 42nd Avenue NE by minimizing the distance from the compatible land use to the south.

PARKING COUNTS

Lot 2: Based on the number of units and unit occupancy, the total number of required parking stalls for the proposed apartment building is 108. The proposed design includes 46 underground stalls (43 standard stalls, 1 compact and 2 ADA), and 62 exterior stalls (35 standard, 24 compact, and 3 ADA). Therefore, the total count of 108 stalls provided meets the total required count of 108. Also, the total count of ADA stalls of 5 meets the ADA requirement of 5 stalls for 108.

The existing parking easement on Outlot E that is proposed to be vacated with this project currently provides the rights to the existing Crest View Senior Living to 11 parking stalls on Outlot E. The City of Columbia Heights is the current landowner of Outlot C. Pursuant to discussions with City of Columbia Heights City staff, this project proposes to relocate the parking rights for 11 stalls from Outlot E to Outlot C. There is currently adequate space for 22 parking stalls on Outlot C. Also pursuant to discussions with City staff, this application proposes to provide an easement over Outlot C to grant parking rights for the remaining 11 stalls to Lot 3.

Since the proposed residential land use on Lot 2 and the potential future land use on Lot 3 have time-of-day parking demands that would complement each other, the Applicant is proposing to execute a private agreement with the future owners of the food shelf that would allow them to use the proposed parking stalls on Lot 2 during the day. The hours of operation for the food shelf are anticipated to be 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m., which is generally the time of day with the lowest demand for parking for the proposed apartment building on Lot 2.

TRASH AND RECYCLING REMOVAL / PICKUP

Lot 2: The standard procedure for trash and recycling removal starts with the appropriate truck parking on Jackson Street near the entrance to the garage access ramp. The trash or recycling carts are then brought up the entry ramp and out to the truck for pick up from the basement trash room. The duration of this procedure is expected to take five minutes.

DELIVERY / LOADING

Deliveries will be made through the entrance on 42nd Ave and packages will be placed in a secure package room located adjacent to the entry vestibule. Postal service will also access through the 42nd Ave entrance and proceed through the lobby to the mail area to the south. Loading and unloading for move-in will be mainly handled through the garage parking directly through the elevator or through 42nd Ave entry for delivery vehicles.

STORMWATER

The applicant is proposing a stormwater management system that would adequately address the storm water design requirements for both rate control and water quality for both Lots 2 and 3. The details of the proposed stormwater system are provided in the Stormwater Management Report included with this application.

PROPOSED AFFORDABLE APARTMENT BUILDING

The project is located just west of Central Ave NE and 42nd Ave NE intersection on the current municipal parking lot north of the Columbia Heights Police and Fire Department.

The proposed project is a 4-story, 62-unit affordable housing building with one level of below grade parking garage. 46 enclosed parking stalls will be provided for residents in the garage with 62 stalls in a surface parking lot. The below grade parking garage will be accessed off of the south west corner of the site on Jackson St NE. Surface parking will be accessed from the south east corner off of the ally in line with Van Buren St NE. Also to note, both enclosed and surface parking for the project will be provided free of charge to residents based on the number of allotted parking stalls for each unit type.

The main entry of the building will be located on the north side facing 42nd Ave NE with a secondary entrance directly south across the lobby on the parking lot side. The lobby and common area on the first floor of the east wing will host the management offices, package room, mail area, conference room, and a common room for different functions for the residents. The courtyard adjacent to the common areas will have a playground structure and other outdoor furniture for resident use.

The project will provide a range of unit types and sizes from 635 square foot one-bedroom units, 935 square foot two-bedroom units, and 1280 square foot three-bedroom units. All units will have individual washer and dryer machines provided. Exterior materials will include brick on the first floor with a cast stone base. Floors 2-4 will have a combination of brick, fiber cement lap siding, and fiber cement panel.

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REUTERWALTON
DEVELOPMENT



PLANNED UNIT
DEVELOPMENT

04/30/21

42ND AVENUE AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MN
19-094

PROJECT NARRATIVE

GO.1

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