



**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
HEARING EXAMINER**

March 13, 2025

<b>Case Number:</b>	2025-ZON-007
<b>Property Address:</b>	2949, 2953, and 2959 Ruckle Street (Approximate Addresses)
<b>Location:</b>	Center Township, Council District #8
<b>Petitioner:</b>	Modern Housing Solutions, Inc., by David Gilman
<b>Current Zoning:</b>	D-5
<b>Request:</b>	Rezoning of 0.349-acre from the D-5 district to the D-8 district to provide for an eight-unit multi-family residential development.
<b>Current Land Use:</b>	Undeveloped
<b>Staff Recommendations:</b>	Denial
<b>Staff Reviewer:</b>	Marleny Iraheta, Senior Planner

**PETITION HISTORY**

This is the first public hearing for this petition.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff **recommends denial** of the request.

If approved against staff's recommendation, approval shall be subject to the following commitment being reduced to writing on the Commission's Exhibit "B" forms at least three days prior to the MDC hearing:

1. A 30-foot half right-of-way shall be dedicated along the frontage of 30<sup>th</sup> Street, as per the request of the Department of Public Works (DPW), Engineering Division if not already present. Additional easements shall not be granted to third parties within the area to be dedicated as public right-of-way prior to the acceptance of all grants of right-of-way by the DPW. The right-of-way shall be granted within 60 days of approval and prior to the issuance of an Improvement Location Permit (ILP).
2. Per the request of the Department of Public Works (DPW), the sidewalks on both street frontages shall be reconstructed to be one foot from the back of right of way, to allow a grass buffer between the curb and street.

**PETITION OVERVIEW**

**LAND USE**

The 0.349-acre subject site is comprised of three undeveloped parcels (1035815, 1063847, and 1059415) to be combined for development of the site.



**Department of Metropolitan Development  
Division of Planning  
Current Planning**

The subject site is surrounded to the west, south, and east by two-family dwellings, zoned D-5, and a single-family dwelling to the north, zoned D-5.

## **REZONING**

This petition would rezone the parcels from the D-5 district to the D-8 district to provide for an eight-unit multi-family residential development.

The D-5 district is intended for medium and large-lot housing formats, primarily for detached houses, but may incorporate small-scale multi-unit building types in strategic locations. This district can be used for new, walkable suburban neighborhoods or for infill situation in established urban areas, including both low density and medium density residential recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the Suburban Neighborhood and Traditional Neighborhood Typologies of the Land Use Pattern Book

The D-8 district is intended for a variety of housing formats, with a mix of small-scale multi-unit building types. This district can be used as a part of new mixed- use areas, or for infill situations in established urban areas, including medium and high-density residential recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the Traditional Neighborhood, City Neighborhood, and Village or Urban Mixed-Use Typologies of the Land Use Pattern Book.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

The Department of Public Works, Traffic Engineering Section, has requested the dedication and conveyance of a 30-foot half right-of-way along 30<sup>th</sup> Street if it does not already exist.

They have also requested a commitment for the sidewalks on both frontages to be reconstructed one foot from the back of right of way, to allow some grass buffer between the curb and street. This commitment would be attached the rezoning to be enforced at the issuance of an Improvement Location Permit, meaning the sidewalk relocation will only be needed upon development of the site.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The request would rezone the site to the D-8 district for the development of an eight-unit multi-family residential development.

The petitioner inquired with staff regarding the request to rezone the property to the D-8 district and was notified that staff would not support such a request. Staff considers the rezoning to the D-8 district as spot zoning due to the predominately D-5 zoned residential area. Instead, density can be accomplished with the development of multi-unit dwellings that meet the development standards either on each individual parcel or the combination of parcels. Furthermore, the option to develop single-family dwellings with secondary dwelling units is also permitted in the D-5 district.

Ultimately, there are more appropriate ways to develop the subject site that would be more in line with the context of the surrounding area regarding building mass, footprint, and design without introducing a new zoning district.



For these reasons, staff is recommending denial of the request.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

<b>Existing Zoning</b>	D-5	
<b>Existing Land Use</b>	Undeveloped	
<b>Comprehensive Plan</b>	8 to 15 Residential Units per Acre	
<b>Surrounding Context</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Land Use</b>
	North:	D-5 Residential (Single-family dwelling)
	South:	D-5 Residential (Two-family dwellings)
	East:	D-5 Residential (Single and Two-family dwellings)
	West:	D-5 Residential (Two-family dwellings)
<b>Thoroughfare Plan</b>		
Ruckle Street	Local Street	48-foot proposed right-of-way and 50-foot existing right-of-way.
30 <sup>th</sup> Street	Primary Arterial Street	88-foot proposed right-of-way and 60-foot existing right-of-way.
<b>Context Area</b>	Compact	
<b>Floodway / Floodway Fringe</b>	No	
<b>Overlay</b>	Yes	
<b>Wellfield Protection Area</b>	No	
<b>Site Plan</b>	January 23, 2025	
<b>Site Plan (Amended)</b>	N/A	
<b>Elevations</b>	January 23, 2025	
<b>Elevations (Amended)</b>	N/A	
<b>Landscape Plan</b>	N/A	
<b>Findings of Fact</b>	N/A	
<b>Findings of Fact (Amended)</b>	N/A	
<b>C-S/D-P Statement</b>	N/A	

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS**

**Comprehensive Plan**

- Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan (2013)
- Red Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan (2021)
- Infill Housing Guidelines (2021)

- Indy Moves Transportation Integration Plan (2018)

#### **Pattern Book / Land Use Plan**

- Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan (2013) below.

#### **Red Line / Blue Line / Purple Line TOD Strategic Plan**

- The subject site falls within the Red Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan (2021).
- The closest station, classified as a District Center typology, is within a ½ mile west of the site at the 30<sup>th</sup> Street and Meridian Street intersection.
- Characteristic of this typology would include a dense mixed-use hub for multiple neighborhoods with tall buildings, minimum of three stories at core with no front or side setbacks, multi-family housing with a minimum of five units, and structured parking only with active first floor.

#### **Neighborhood / Area Specific Plan**

- The site falls within the Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan (2013).
- The Plan recommends residential development greater than eight and equal to or less than 15 units per acre. This density is typically the highest density serviceable in suburban areas. In suburban areas it would typically be a multi-family (apartment or condominium) category. In urban areas, this is the highest density single-family residential category and a common multi-family category. Development at this density is appropriate for all types of mass transit corridors.
- The subject site falls within a designated LEED-ND Area. LEED for Neighborhood Development, known as LEED-ND, is a program of the United States Green Building Council. It sets energy-efficiency and environmental sustainability standards for development and redevelopment of neighborhoods. The Mapleton-Fall Creek Development Corporation has been working to certify a portion of the neighborhood under LEED-ND. If successful in their certification, Mapleton-Fall Creek will be one of the first existing urban neighborhoods in the nation to receive certification under this rigorous sustainability standard. MFCDC and their design and construction partners intend to use the standards of LEED-ND as a guide for future development so the Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood can reap the benefits of green building and smarter neighborhood planning and design. MFCDC is developing a guidebook to be used to evaluating proposed development within the LEED-ND area. The guidebook developed should be considered in any new development within the designated LEED-ND area.

## Infill Housing Guidelines

- The Infill Housing Guidelines (2021) are applicable to this residential lot for infill development.
- **When Lots are Larger Than Average on a Block, Adjust Plans to Account for this Difference.** Over time, individual lots may have been combined with neighboring lots. This creates lots that are larger than others in their surrounding context. In these situations, consider one of the following strategies:
  - Build a single-family house on one side of the larger lot; ideally, build a house that fits in the historic boundary lines of the former parcels. Utilize the other side of the lot as a yard or open space. This allows for context-sensitive spacing for the new house with the existing neighboring house while leaving the option for the side lot to be developed in context-sensitive ways in the future.
  - Larger lots may support a larger structure such as a two-family or three-family house. When designing these structures, follow building spacing recommendations and other recommendations in these guidelines, including massing.
- Massing refers to the shape and size of buildings. Massing can contribute to the overall character of a neighborhood. For example, ranch developments from the 1950s and 1960s feel very different than a neighborhood of bungalows. Massing that coordinates with existing buildings along a street and the overall neighborhood enhances cohesion and maintains the character of the area.
- Massing and façade composition refines the scale and form of buildings beyond basic height, setback, and lot coverage standards by breaking down the volume into smaller-scale masses and adding depth, texture and variation to surfaces in a manner that improves the relationships of buildings to the lot, to adjacent lots and buildings, and to the streetscape. This cohesive relationship between a building and its surrounding context promotes neighborhood character.
- From a design perspective, massing is more than just a number, like square footage. The way that buildings are designed can affect how people perceive the size of a building. The use of materials, roof styles and slope, and breaking up the façades with various components are ways to influence the perception of massing.
- **Consider the Size of Surrounding Houses.** The massing of new construction and additions should be characteristic of surrounding buildings, particularly on local streets.
- **Build with Respect to the Street.** Use the street type to help guide appropriate massing. Busier, wider streets might allow for greater massing than local streets.
- **Design Strategically to Match Context.** Larger than typical massing can be appropriate if it is broken into elements that are visually compatible with the mass of surrounding buildings.
  - For larger new construction, stepping back upper stories, off-setting secondary masses from main masses, dividing larger façades into smaller components, and/or varying materials may be appropriate solutions to reduce the overall feel of the massing.
  - Adding a basement may also offer an opportunity to increase square footage without increasing massing or height.
- **Utilize Roof Lines to Reinforce Massing.** Roof styles can play an important role in massing. Houses with similar square footage can feel very different based on their roof design. For example, a standard

gabled roof may create the illusion of more massing than a hipped roof. Similarly, a flat or low-sloped roof has much different massing than more steeply pitched gabled roofs.

- **Materials Matter; Use Them Strategically.** Material selection plays a large role in how massing is perceived. Some materials provide a much heavier feel than others. For example, masonry often has the appearance of more mass than glazing (i.e. windows).

#### **Indy Moves**

(Thoroughfare Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, Greenways Master Plan)

- The subject site falls within the Indy Moves Transportation Integration Plan (2018).
- More specifically, Pedal Indy (2018) proposes off-street complete streets upgrades for a multiuse path along 30<sup>th</sup> Street from Ruckle Street to Fall Creek Parkway North Drive.
- IndyMoves PedalIndy (2018) proposes an on-street bike lane along 29<sup>th</sup> St /Ruckle Street from Illinois Street to 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

## ZONING HISTORY

### Zoning History – Site

**2024-DV2-038; 2959 and 2953 Ruckle Street** (subject site), Variance of Development Standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for the construction of a two-unit multi-unit house on each lot, with a 25-foot front building line (maximum 19.9 feet permitted), with a five-foot corner side yard setback (eight feet required) and walking paths with a 0.5-foot side yard setbacks (two feet required) and parking areas with zero-foot side yard setbacks (five feet required), **withdrawn**.

### Zoning History – Vicinity

**2015-CZN-838; 510 East Fall Creek Parkway, North Drive; 2819-2957 (odd) North Central Avenue; 2802-2810 and 2826-2844 (even) Ruckle Street; 512 and 518 East 28th Street; 507 and 508 East 29th Street** (west of site), Rezoning of 0.79 acre from the C-1 and C-4 districts to the C-3C district to provide for commercial and residential development, **approved**.

**2014-CZN-826; 510 East Fall Creek Parkway, North Drive; 2819-2965 (odd) North Central Avenue; 2802-2844(even) Ruckle Street; 512 and 518 East 28th Street; 507 and 508 East 29th Street** (southwest of site), Rezoning of 5.7 acres from the D-8, C-1, C-2 (FW) and C-4 districts to the C-3C(FW) and C-3C districts to provide for a three-story, 32,000-square foot mixed-use building (510), with approximately 12,000 square feet of commercial space and 16 units; two, three-story senior apartment buildings, with 48 units each, and six, 1,600-square foot (per unit) two-family dwellings, **withdrawn**.

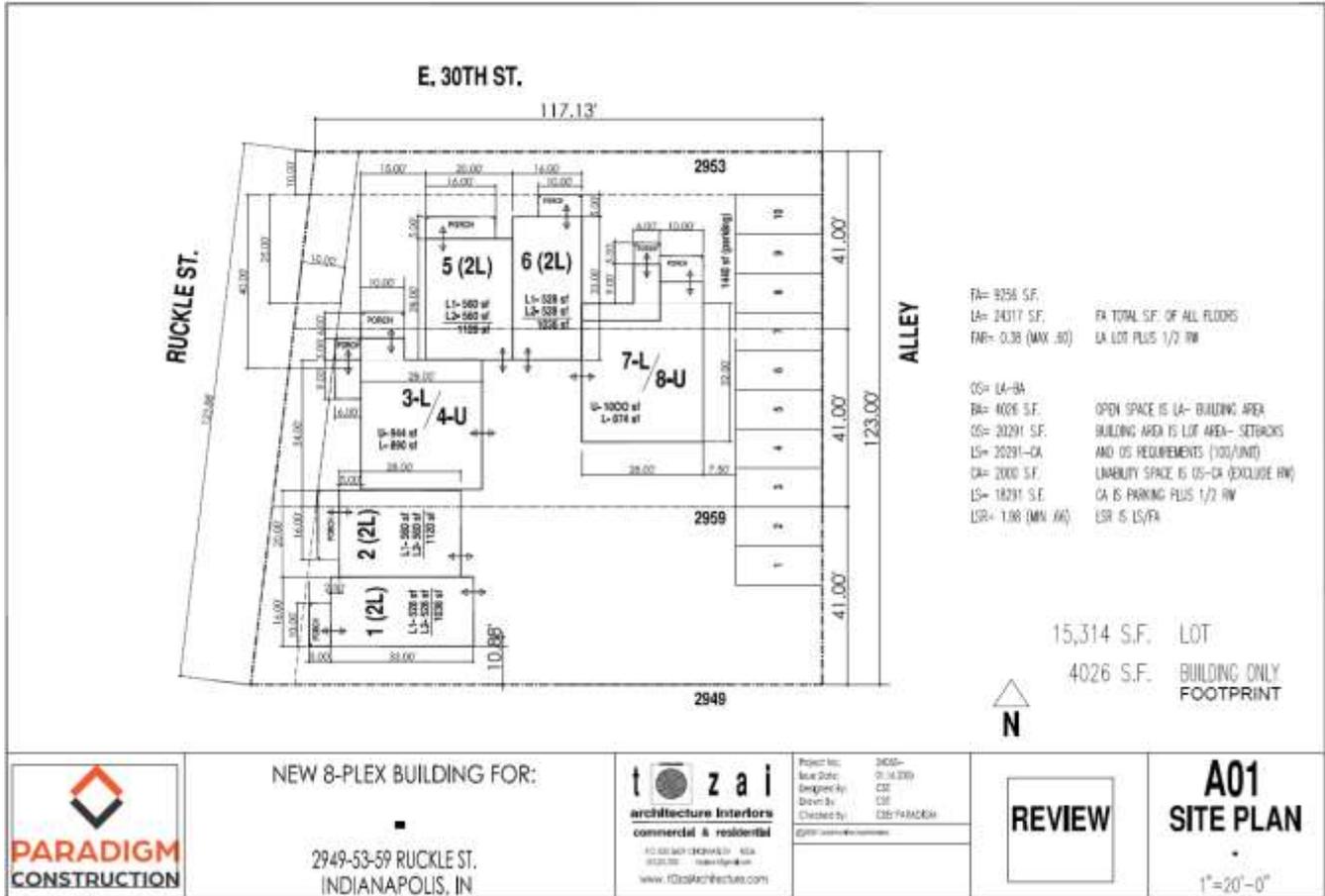
**2014-UV2-031; 532, 536, and 540 East 30<sup>th</sup> Street** (north of site), Variance of use of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to provide for a rooming house (not permitted, maximum four unrelated persons permitted) for missionaries., **granted**.

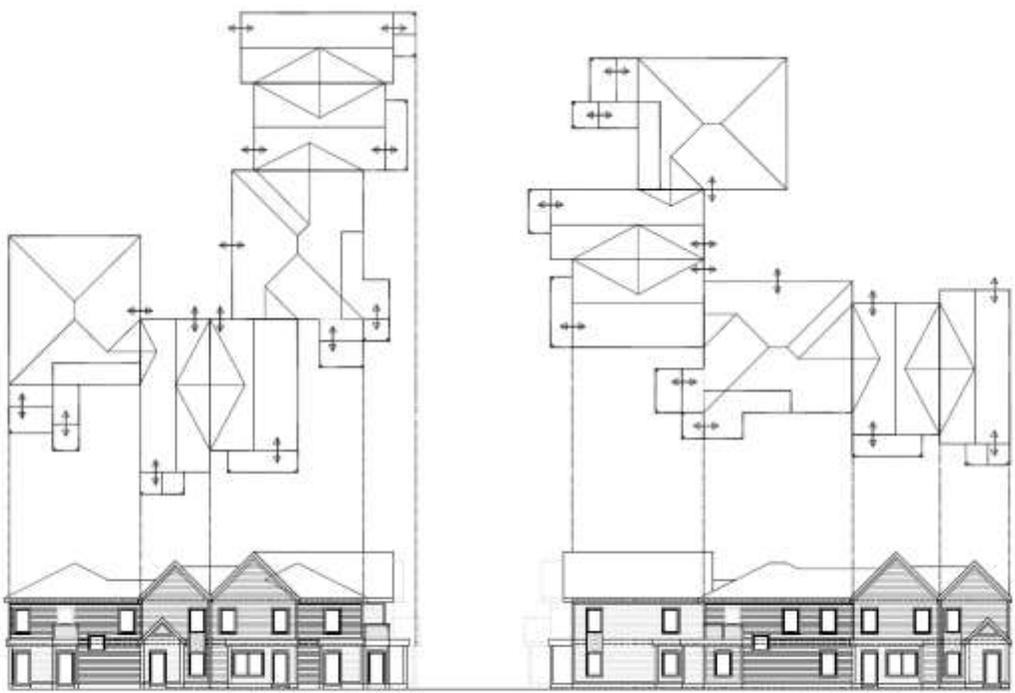
**2014-ZON-054; 510 East Fall Creek Parkway, North Drive; 2819, 2821, 2825, 2829, 2837, 2841, 2845, 2917, 2925, 2927, 2931, 2935, 2941 Central Avenue and 2802, 2806, 2810, 2822, 2826, 2834, 2838 and 2844 Ruckle Street; 512 and 518 East 28th Street; 507 and 508 East 29th Street** (southwest of site), Rezoning of 4.95 acres from the D-8, C-1, C-2 (FW) and C-4 districts to the C-3C (FW) and C-3C districts, **approved**.

**2013-ZON-008; Various addresses on Ruckle Street, New Jersey Street, Central Avenue and North Park Avenue** (north and southeast of site), Rezoning of 1.91 acres from the D-5 District to the PK-1 classification to provide for park uses, **approved**.

**EXHIBITS**





					
<p>NORTH (E30th-front-1) ELEVATION                      WEST (RUCKLE-front-2) ELEVATION</p>					
 <p><b>PARADIGM</b> CONSTRUCTION</p>	<p>NEW 8-PLEX BUILDING FOR:</p> <p>■</p> <p>2949-53-59 RUCKLE ST. INDIANAPOLIS, IN</p>	 <p><b>t z a i</b> architecture interiors commercial &amp; residential</p> <p>11000 NEY (MCKAY) AVE 53133 IN    indianapolis www.tzaiarchitects.com</p>	<p>Project No: 240207        Issue Date: 01-14-2025        Designed by: CSE        Drawn by: CSE        Checked by: CSE/TAS/CDK</p> <p>Q:\2024\240207\240207.dwg</p>	<p><b>REVIEW</b></p>	<p><b>A02</b> ELEVATIONS</p> <p>1" = 20'-0"</p>

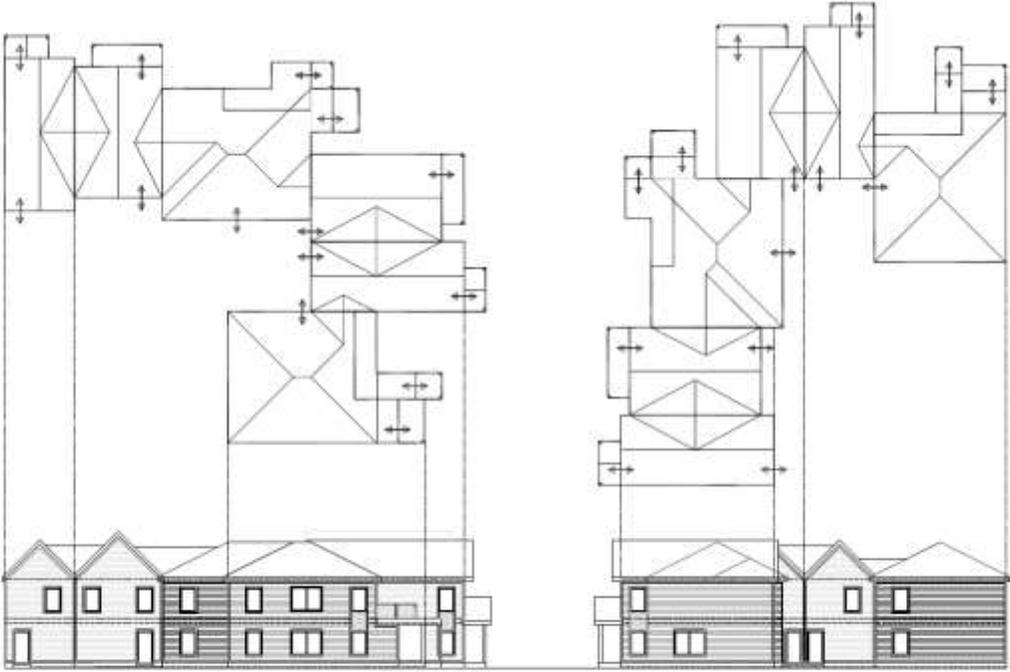
					
EAST ELEVATION	SOUTH ELEVATION				
	<p>NEW 8-PLEX BUILDING FOR:</p> <p>■</p> <p>2949-53-59 RUCKLE ST.        INDIANAPOLIS, IN</p>		<p>Project No: 240207        Issue Date: 01-14-2025        Designed by: CSE        Drawn by: CSE        Checked by: CSE/TAS/CDK</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p><b>REVIEW</b></p> </div>	<p><b>A03</b>  <b>ELEVATIONS</b></p> <p>1" = 20'-0"</p>







Photo of 5959 Ruckle Street looking east.



Photo of 5953 Ruckle Street looking east.



Photo of 2949 Ruckle Street looking east.



Photo of two-family dwellings south of the site.



Photo of two-family dwellings west of the site.



Photo of a single-family dwelling north of the site.



Photo of two-family dwellings east of the site across the alley



Photo of the alley east of the site looking south.



Photo of the street frontage along 30<sup>th</sup> Street.