

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION **May 20, 2026**

Case Number: 2026-CVR-803 / 2026-CVC-803

Property Address: 1437 – 1533 (odd) Saulcy Street, 1422 – 1528 (even) Astor Street, and 219 Koehne Street

Location: Center Township, Council District #18

Petitioner: Union Holdings III, LLC, by Michael Rabinowitch

Current Zoning: D-8
 Variance of Use and Development Standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for a Large Apartment (not permitted), a building height of 50 feet (maximum 35 feet permitted), a floor area ratio of 1.88 (maximum 0.80 floor area ratio permitted) and a minimum livability space ratio of 0.07 (minimum 0.75 required).

Request:
 Vacation of the first east-west alley south of Saulcy Street, ranging from eight feet and 12 feet in width, from the east right-of-way line of Koehne Street, being the southeast corner of Lot 51 of Minkner’s Wilmoth Place Section 3, as recorded in Plat Book 12, Page 157 in the Office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana, 680 feet to the east, to the west right-of-way line of White River Parkway, West Drive,
 Vacation of the first north-south alley west of White River Parkway, West Drive, being eight feet wide, from the south right-of-way line of Saulcy Street, 86 feet to the south, to the north right-of-way line of the first east-west alley South of Saulcy Street,
 Vacation of the second north-south alley west of White River Parkway, West Drive, being 14 feet wide, 220 feet south, to the north right-of-way line of Astor Street, all with a waiver of the assessment of benefits.

Current Land Use: Vacant land / Vacant single-family dwellings

Staff Recommendations: Approval of the variances and the vacations.

Staff Reviewer: Kathleen Blackham, Senior Planner

PETITION HISTORY

The Hearing Examiner acknowledged the automatic continuance filed by a registered neighborhood organization that continued these petitions from the March 26, 2026 hearing, to the April 23, 2026 hearing.

This petition was heard by the Hearing Examiner on April 23, 2026. After a full hearing, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of the variances of use and vacations. Subsequently, the remonstrator filed an appeal of the Hearing Examiner’s decision. A memorandum of her recommendation is attached.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the variances and the vacations.

PETITION OVERVIEW

This 3.2-acre site, zoned D-8, is comprised of vacant land and vacant dwellings. It is surrounded by single-family dwellings to the north, across Saulcy Street; single-family dwellings to the south, across Astor Street; White River Parkway West Drive right-of-way to the east; and single-family dwellings to the west, across Koehne Street, all zoned D-8.

Regional Center

The Regional Center Secondary Zoning District is designed to enhance the value of existing development and regulate development in the downtown area in which a diverse blend of uses, functions and facilities must coexist.

“All development of land and demolition of structures located within the Regional Center and the North Meridian Street Corridor district shall be subject to the Commission's approval as included within a required Site and Development Plan in accordance with the Ordinance provisions.”

Because this site is located within the Regional Center Secondary Zoning District Overlay, this development would be required to apply for and gain Regional Center approval. Documents submitted for this approval shall include all standards and requirements for the site and development plan, uses and structures, as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 742, Article II, Section 02.

VARIANCES OF USE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Proposed development of the site would provide for a 241-unit affordable multi-family development. The building would be three and four stories tall, with frontage along Saulcy Street, Astor Street, Koehne Street and White River Parkway West Drive. Amenity areas and parking would be internal to the site.

The request would provide for a Variance of Use to allow for a large apartment building defined as having 51+ units. A large apartment building is only permitted in the D-10 district. Staff, however, supports this request because the Neighborhood Plan contemplates a shift of use that could be multi-family development with views of the White River and with an additional benefit of providing affordable housing.

Staff supports the variance of Development Standards for a maximum height of 50 feet when the Ordinance limits height in the D-8 district to 35 feet. Documents note a reduction of height to the west, but staff would encourage consideration of height reductions to the north and south due to the proximity of the existing dwellings. Such height reductions would mitigate the impact of this development on the surrounding neighborhood.

Because of the proximity of the greenspace corridor along the White River, staff believes the floor area ratio of 1.88 (Ordinance requires a maximum of 0.80) and the minimum livability space ratio of 0.07 (Ordinance requires a minimum of 0.75) would be acceptable deviations and supportable.

VACATIONS

Because this project would include several parcels between Saulcy Street and Astor Street and Koehne Street and White River Parkway West Drive, vacation of three (3) existing alleys would be necessary for the development to move forward.

Summary

The first vacation would be the vacation of the first east-west alley south of Saulcy Street, ranging from eight feet and 12 feet in width, from the east right-of-way line of Koehne Street, being the southeast corner of Lot 51 of Minkner's Wilmoth Place Section 3,680 feet to the east, to the west right-of-way line of White River Parkway, West Drive,

The second vacation would be the first north-south alley west of White River Parkway West Drive, being eight feet wide, from the south right-of-way line of Saulcy Street, 86 feet to the south, to the north right-of-way line of the first east-west alley South of Saulcy Street,

The third alley vacation would be the second north-south alley west of White River Parkway West Drive, being 14 feet wide, 220 feet south, to the north right-of-way line of Astor Street.

Staff finds that the vacations **would be in the public interest**, and the vacation **should be approved**.

RECOMMENDED VACATION MOTION: That the Metropolitan Development Commission find that the proposed vacations are in the public interest; that a hearing upon the assessment of benefits be held on June 3, 2026; that the Metropolitan Development Commission confirm and ratify the adoption of Declaratory Resolution 2026-CVC-803, and that the vacation be subject to the rights of public utilities under IC 36-7-3-16.

Procedure

Neither the Division of Planning nor the Plat Committee, Hearing Examiner or Metropolitan Development Commission determines how vacated right-of-way is divided. The approval of a vacation petition only eliminates the public right-of-way. The vacation approval does nothing more. A petitioner will not receive a deed or other document of conveyance after the approval of a vacation.

The general rule under Indiana case law is that when a street or highway is vacated or abandoned the title to the land reverts to the abutting property owners. This rule exists by virtue of the fact that the abutting landowner owns to the center of the street or highway subject only to an easement for the public to the use of the street or highway. *Gorby v. McEndarfer* 135 Ind.App. 74, *82, 191 N.E.2d 786, **791 (Ind.App.1963). However, there are possible exceptions to this general rule.

After a vacation of public right-of-way, the county assessor determines how the vacated right-of-way will be assessed for tax purposes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	D-8		
Existing Land Use	Vacant land / Vacant dwellings		
Comprehensive Plan	Village Mixed-Use / 5-8 units/ acre / 8-15 units / acre		
Surrounding Context	Zoning	Land Use	
	North:	D-8	Single-family dwellings
	South:	D-8	Single-family dwellings
	East:	D-8	White River Parkway West Drive right-of-way
	West:	D-8	Single-family dwellings
Thoroughfare Plan			
Saulcy Street	Local Street	Existing 30-foot right-of-way and proposed 48-foot right-of-way.	
Astor Street	Local Street	Existing 30-foot right-of-way and proposed 48-foot right-of-way.	
Koehne Street	Local Street	Existing 40-foot right-of-way and proposed 48-foot right-of-way.	
White River Parkway West Drive	Primary Arterial	Existing 102-foot right-of-way and proposed 78-foot right-of-way.	
Context Area	Compact		
Floodway / Floodway Fringe	No		
Overlay	Yes. Regional Center		
Wellfield Protection Area	No		
Site Plan	January 27, 2026		
Site Plan (Amended)	N/A		
Elevations	January 27, 2026		
Elevations (Amended)	N/A		
Landscape Plan	N/A		
Findings of Fact	January 27, 2026 and March 20, 2026		
Findings of Fact (Amended)	N/A		
C-S/D-P Statement	January 27, 2026		

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Plan

Not Applicable to the Site.

Pattern Book / Land Use Plan

Not Applicable to the Site.

Red Line / Blue Line / Purple Line TOD Strategic Plan

Not Applicable to the Site.

Neighborhood / Area Specific Plan

The Near West Neighborhood Land Use Plan (2014) recommends D-8 zoning described as urban single-multi-family development, with a mix of land use recommendations, including Village Mixed-Use, 5-9 units / acre, and 8-15 units /acre.

The southern portion of this site (south of the east / west alley) is located within Critical Area #9 (Location: Southeastern Stringtown)

Historically, this area has been a mix of industries, commercial sites, institutions, and single-family housing. The area has a high number of vacant lots and unoccupied houses. It is ripe for a shift in use. Influences on the area are busy Washington Street to the south, the neighboring Indianapolis Zoo, the adjacent White River, proximity and views to Downtown and IUPUI, and the potential for rapid transit line in the Washington Street Corridor.

Recommendations – Critical Area #9:

- Development in the area between Washington Street and Market Street should be employment oriented. Moving north, new development should transition into mixed-use and multi-family residences.
- New buildings should be respectful of the solidly single-family residential street to the north and east of this Critical Area. Although new structures will likely be tall enough to take advantage of views to the river and downtown, they should not loom over the existing homes on Saulcy, Reisner and Richland Streets.
- Multi-family residential development in the area should take the form of purpose-built, multi-family structures rather than subdividing of single-family homes into numerous units.

Regional Center Design Guidelines (2008) - The purpose of these Guidelines is to set standards that will produce a more thoughtful design response to Regional Center development projects.

This document identifies this neighborhood as Neighborhood Residential. The neighborhood Residential typology occurs in neighborhoods with houses that are medium-density and primarily pre-WWII construction or areas of new housing construction developed in a similar pattern. Homes are in single-family, townhome or apartment configurations. Parcels are typically deep with narrow street frontage. Homes have small setbacks and front yards. The environment is pedestrian in nature. Examples of the neighborhood Residential typology are Stringtown and the Valley.

Infill Housing Guidelines

Not Applicable to the Site.

Indy Moves

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

The Marion County Thoroughfare Plan (2019) “is a long-range plan that identifies the locations classifications and different infrastructure elements of roadways within a defined area.”

The following listed items describe the purpose, policies and tools:

- Classify roadways based on their location, purpose in the overall network and what land use they serve.
- Provide design guidelines for accommodating all modes (automobile, transit, pedestrians, bicycles) within the roadway.
- Set requirements for preserving the right-of-way (ROW).
- Identify roadways for planned expansions or new terrain roadways.
- Coordinate modal plans into a single linear network through its GIS database.



ZONING HISTORY

None.

MEMORANDUM OF EXAMINER'S DECISION

2026-CVR/CVC-803 Various addresses on Saulcy, Astor, & Koehne Sts.

The petitions request a variance of use and development standards to provide for a large apartment, a building height of 50 feet, a floor area ratio of 1.88, and a minimum livability space ratio of 0.07, and the vacation of a portion of three alleys as part of the proposed development.

Your Hearing Examiner visited the site prior to the hearing and noted that all lots are either unimproved or contain what appear to be vacant dwellings. Single family dwellings are north, south, and west of the site, and White River Parkway West Drive is east of the site.

The petitioner's representative explained the proposal to redevelop the site with 241 units of affordable housing, with each end of the building having an outdoor amenity area within a courtyard, indoor community space, and a parking garage in the middle of the building. As a result of meetings with staff, the building design was modified to have three stories on the west end and four stories closest to White River. The petitioner's representative also discussed the Heritage Tree Inventory Report and proposed mitigation, and a Community Benefits Agreement with Stringtown Neighborhood Association (SNA). Although SNA did not attend the hearing, it provided a letter of support, and there was a letter of support from an area property owner. The City-County Councilor for the area provided a letter of support and spoke in favor of the petitions at the hearing, citing the importance of the investment here.

About 20 remonstrators attended the hearing, and concerns stated included insufficient parking, excessive traffic, impact on sunlight and privacy, increase in crime, and the petitioner's lack of maintenance and supervision at a nearby development. Most of the remonstrators belong to a different group, Stringtown Now, and they said that SNA does not represent them and they were not included in negotiations with the petitioner.

Staff stated that, because the Near Westside Neighborhood Plan contemplates a shift of use, the proposed development of a large apartment building for affordable housing is an appropriate land use. Staff also reiterated how the petitioner had modified the design to make the height variance supportable, as well as the other variances requested, and recommended approval of the alley vacations.

In your Hearing Examiner's opinion, the proposed redevelopment would be compatible with the single family dwellings in the area, and would be an appropriate reuse of the site. The variance petition was granted and the vacation petition was approved.

For Metropolitan Development Commission Hearing on May 20, 2026

Development Statement – January 27, 2026



Union at Astor is a proposed ground up 241-unit multi-family affordable development located at 1437 Saulcy Street, Indianapolis, Indiana (Marion County). The project is bound by N White River Parkway Drive West, Saulcy Street, Koehne Street, and Astor Street. This location will provide much-needed affordable housing on the Near West side of Indianapolis. Union at Astor will utilize income averaging to provide high quality affordable housing options at 50%, 60%, and 70% AMI rents.

The existing site contains multiple single-family homes which have been cited by code enforcement as needing significant repair. This project would demolish those homes in need of repair and provide neighborhood housing as contemplated in the Regional Center guidelines.

The Regional Center guidelines were utilized in development of the architectural elevations and have incorporated the recommendations with regard to height at 3 stories to the west to better align with the existing single-family homes, use of materials and undulation required at the roof line and with materials to break up long portions of the building. All parking will be within a garage screened with residential units.

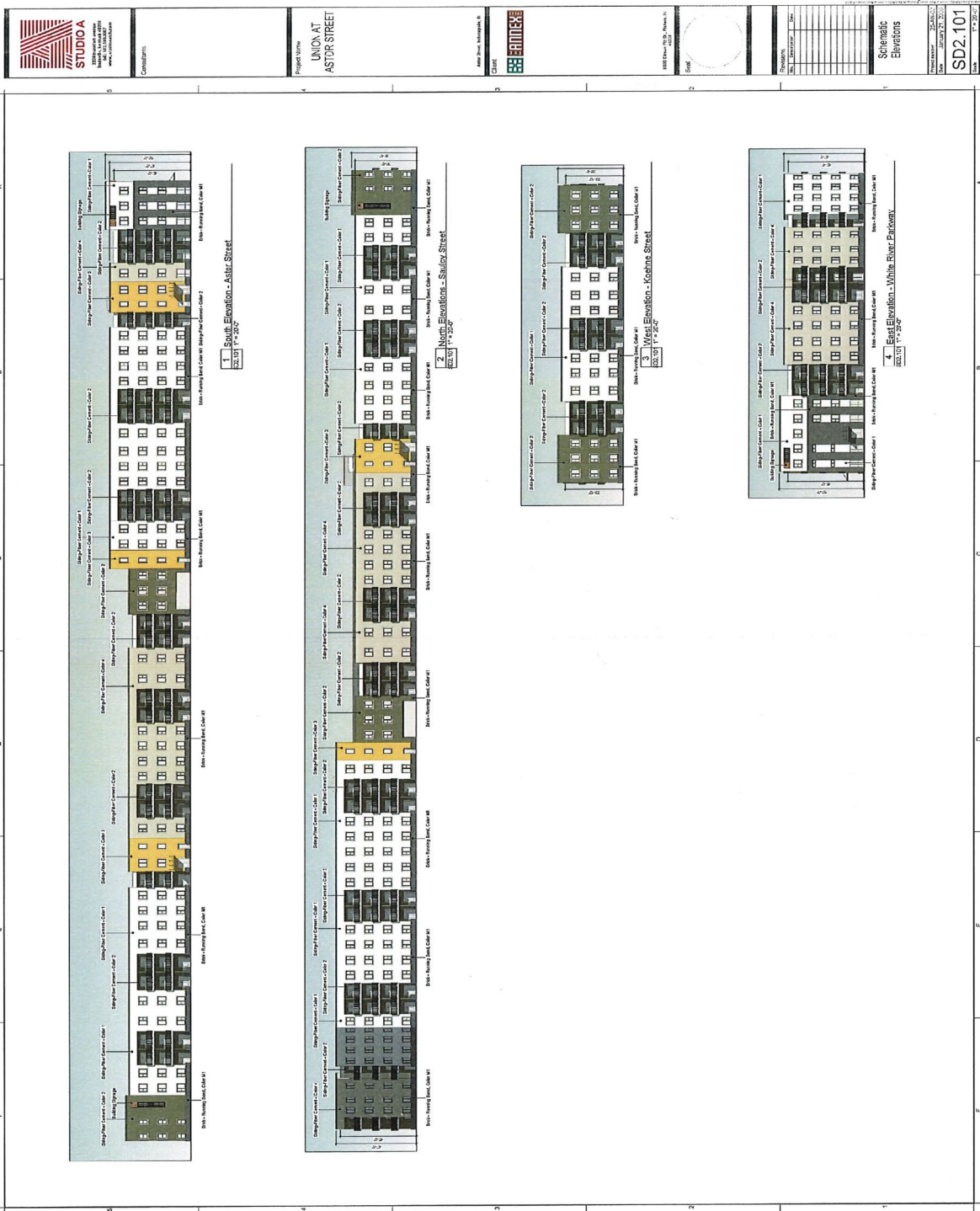
Amenities for residents will include a community room with community TV, fitness room, computer center and on-site management and leasing. A secondary clubhouse is plan on the 4th floor of the building overlooking the White River. Outdoor amenities include a playground, dog park area, outdoor grilling/dining area, and potentially an outdoor fire pit.

The Annex Group® (TAG) is a premier impact housing developer dedicated to creating affordable, workforce, and student communities. We deliver innovative, amenity-rich housing solutions through a diverse portfolio of properties that drive both economic and residential growth in the communities we serve. TAG currently has projects in operation, construction, and development in over 20 states, reaching 13,601 Lives, 7,713 Households, 47 Communities, and Counting. Our firm's mission is to create an impact on the people who live, work and are involved in our communities.

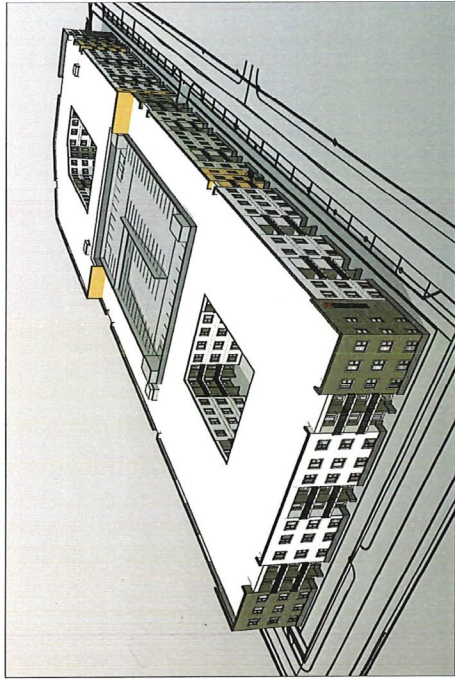
The Annex Group® communities are thoughtfully designed and meticulously executed to provide exceptional living environments. We achieve this through our team of industry-leading experts across development, preconstruction, design, and finance — ensuring each project delivers meaningful value to residents and communities alike. Our specialized development team identifies emerging markets nationwide where housing needs are most critical, then develops targeted strategies to address these gaps effectively.

Union at Astor will be the third low-income housing tax credit project for Annex in the Indianapolis area.

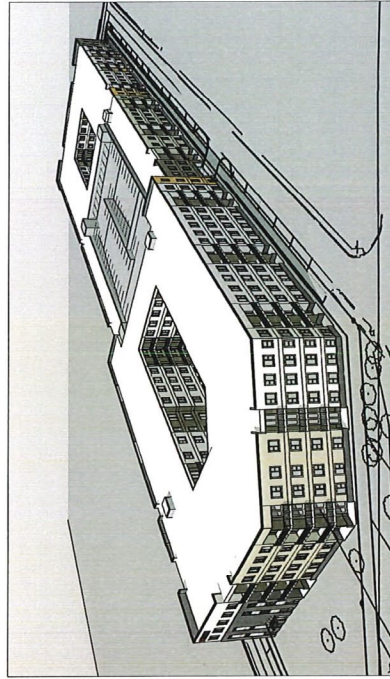




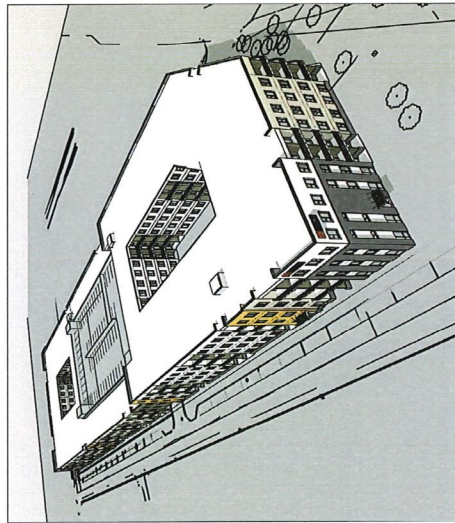
 STUDIO A ARCHITECTURAL STUDIO 1000 WEST WASHINGTON CHICAGO, IL 60606 TEL: 312.467.1000 WWW.STUDIOAARCHITECTS.COM	Project Name: UNION AT ASTOR STREET	Architect: BRITTELE 1000 WEST WASHINGTON CHICAGO, IL 60606 TEL: 312.467.1000 WWW.STUDIOAARCHITECTS.COM	Client: BRITTELE	Project No.: 1000	Date: 10/20/10	Scale: AS SHOWN	Project Status: SCHEMATIC	Project Location: UNION AT ASTOR STREET	Project Number: SD2.102
	Contents: SHEET 1 OF 1	Project Name: UNION AT ASTOR STREET	Architect: BRITTELE	Client: BRITTELE	Project No.: 1000	Date: 10/20/10	Scale: AS SHOWN	Project Status: SCHEMATIC	Project Location: UNION AT ASTOR STREET



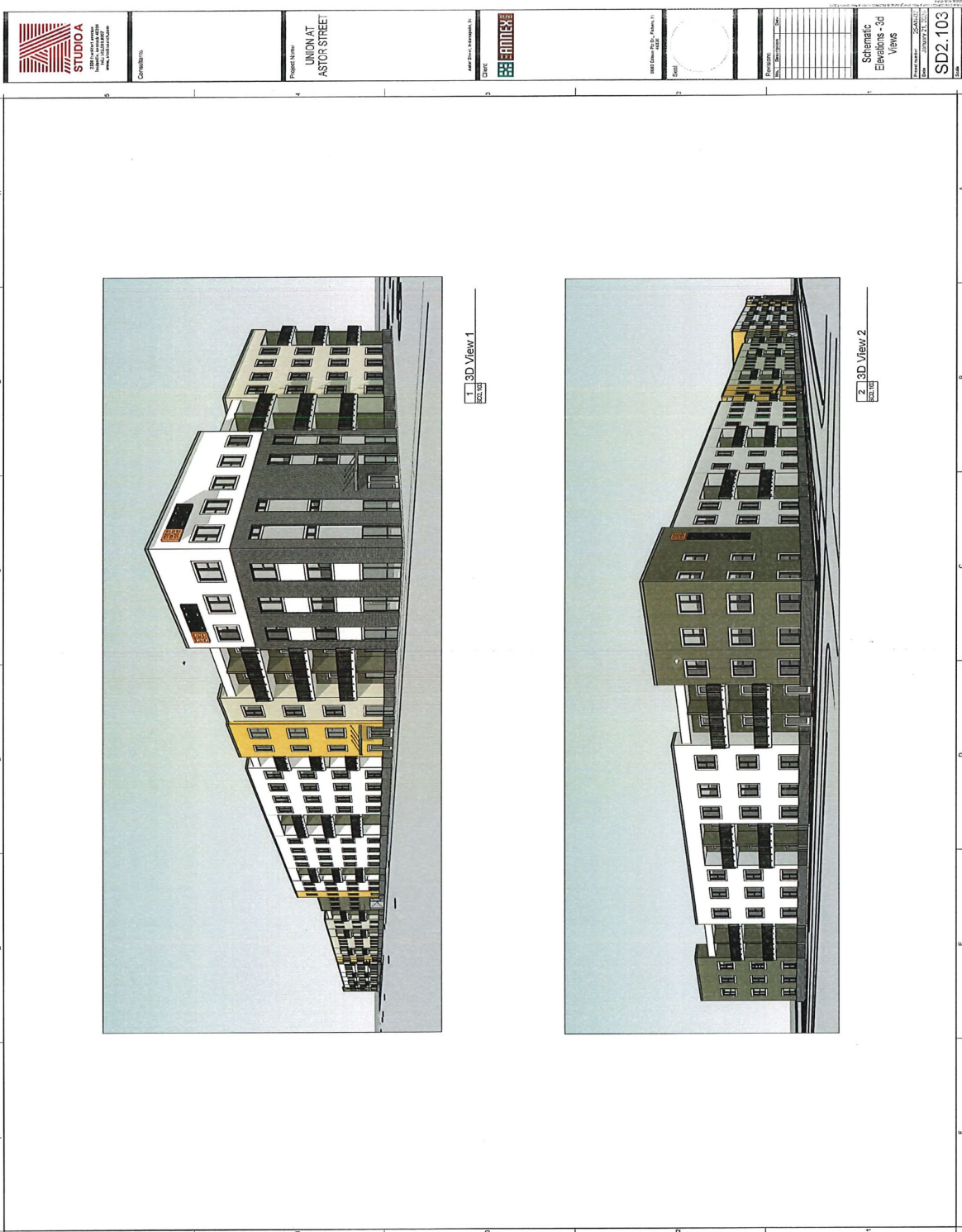
1 - Birds Eye 3D View 1



3 - Birds Eye 3D View 3



2 - Birds Eye 3D View 2





Petition Number _____

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF USE

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. THE GRANT WILL NOT BE INJURIOUS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, MORALS, AND GENERAL WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY BECAUSE

the site, located within the Regional Center, is conducive to a development that is more dense and exceeds the development standards for small apartments under the D-8 zoning ordinance.

2. THE USE AND VALUE OF THE AREA ADJACENT TO THE PROPERTY INCLUDED IN THE VARIANCE WILL NOT BE AFFECTED IN A SUBSTANTIALLY ADVERSE MANNER BECAUSE

the site, located within the Regional Center, is conducive to a development that is more dense and exceeds the development standards for small apartments under the D-8 zoning ordinance.

3. THE NEED FOR THE VARIANCE ARISES FROM SOME CONDITION PECULIAR TO THE PROPERTY INVOLVED BECAUSE

the site, although conducive to multifamily development, is narrowly configured with small contiguous residential lots.

4. THE STRICT APPLICATION OF THE TERMS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE CONSTITUTES AN UNUSUAL AND UNNECESSARY HARDSHIP IF APPLIED TO THE PROPERTY FOR WHICH THE VARIANCE IS SOUGHT BECAUSE

although the site is conducive to multifamily development in accordance with the D-8 zoning classification, the ordinance, as written, does not permit the large apartment standards to be applied to D-8.

5. THE GRANT DOES NOT INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BECAUSE

the Village Mixed Use typology, applicable to most of the site, contemplates multifamily housing like the proposed development which is compatible with the area.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____



Petition Number _____

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

(Building Height)

1. The grant will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community because:

the building is designed in a manner that respects adjacent properties by stepping down building height to the west and at the same time provides much needed affordable housing to the community.

2. The use or value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because:

the building is designed in a manner that respects adjacent properties by stepping down building height to the west and at the same time provides much needed affordable housing to the community.

3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property because:

Limiting height to 35' does not permit appropriate development of the site, given the location of the site within the Regional Center and the need to increase density to provide affordable housing options in Indianapolis.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____



Petition Number _____

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The grant will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community because:

the requested deviation from the livability space ratio and the floor area ratio is appropriate in this urban context and where the site is located adjacent to the greenspace corridor along the White River.

2. The use or value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because:

the requested deviation from the livability space ratio and the floor area ratio is appropriate in this urban context and where the site is located adjacent to the greenspace corridor along the White River..

3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property because:

the D-8 ordinance requirements for LSR and FAR do not appropriately consider an urban context like the subject site and that the site is adjacent to substantial green space along the White River corridor.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____



Department of Metropolitan Development
Division of Planning
Current Planning

Petition Number _____

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
PLAT COMMITTEE
HEARING EXAMINER
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

PETITION FOR VACATION OF A PUBLIC WAY, EASEMENT OR PUBLIC PLACE

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. THE PROPOSED VACATION IS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST because:
comprehensive development of an underutilized and decaying site will be facilitated by the proposed development.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VACATION petition is APPROVED, subject to any conditions stated in the minutes (which conditions are incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this decision).

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____



View of site looking southeast across intersection of Koehne Street and Saulcy Street



View looking east long Saulcy Street



View looking north along Koehne Street



View of site looking south across Saulcy Street



View of site looking south across Saulcy Street



View of site looking south across Saulcy Street



View of site looking south across Saulcy Street



View of proposed north / south alley vacation looking south



View of site looking southeast at last dwelling on Saulcy Street



View of site looking east from alley towards White River Parkway West Drive and unimproved east / west alley proposed for vacation



View looking west at proposed east / west alley vacation



View looking north at proposed north / south alley vacation



View of site looking northwest across Astor Street



View looking west along Astor Street



View of site looking north across Astor Street



View of site looking north across Astor Street



View of site looking north across Astor Street



View of site looking north across Astor Street



View of site looking north across Astor Street



View looking north along Koehne Street from Astor Street