

The Noun Hotel Rezoning

4. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2526-31: AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AMENDING SECTION 36-201 OF CHAPTER 36 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN SO AS TO REMOVE A REPLAT OF THE EAST 236 FEET OF LOT SIX (6) AND THE EAST 200 FEET OF LOT SEVEN (7), OF ELMWOOD ADDITION, AND LOT TWELVE (12), IN BLOCK ONE (1), OF PARKVIEW ADDITION, TO NORMAN, CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA, FROM A CCPUD, CENTER CITY PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, AND PLACE SAME IN A CCPUD, CENTER CITY PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF. (542 AND 534 S. UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD; WARD 4)

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

1. Staff Report
2. Subject Tract
3. Location Map
3. Narrative
4. Site Plan
6. Traffic Impact Memo
7. Pre-Development Summary, 12-18-25
8. Protest Map & Letters

Staff Presentation

Anais Starr, Planner II, presented The Noun Hotel application.

Commissioner Jablonski noted that the CCPUD signage section refers to the Center City Form

Based Code (CCFBC), stating in cases of ambiguity or conflict, the CCPUD exhibit shall control. He asked if there are any conflicts with the proposed signage.

Ms. Starr responded stating the existing hotel and the new structure already have approved

signage, and no additional permanent signage is proposed. The applicant is requesting temporary signage, which is currently permitted for the hotel and is being extended to an additional lot. She confirmed the proposal complies with the referenced city code.

Applicant Presentation

Sean Rieger, representative of the applicant, presented the PowerPoint for The Noun Hotel

application.

Commissioner Brewer asked whether the economic impact figures presented by the applicant reflect the combined effect of the existing hotel and the proposed addition.

Mr. Rieger confirmed the figures represent the estimated impact of the existing hotel and the new addition.

Commissioner Brewer asked about the dumpster's location, noting public concerns and questioning its necessity.

Mr. Rieger explained City staff and the Sanitation department determine dumpster placement to ensure safe truck access and prevent property damage. After extensive coordination, the current location is considered the safest and most functional option.

Commissioner Brewer asked whether the dumpster was added for operational needs or at staffs request.

Gunner Joyce, the applicant's second representative, stated the dumpster was added solely to support the thrift store's operations.

Public Comments

Marielle Hoefnagels, 425 Elm Ave., Norman, OK (protest)

Mark Crumpley, 423 Elm Ave., Norman, OK (protest)

Jayne Crumpley, 423 Elm Ave., Norman, OK (protest)

Mitch Baroff, 421 Park Dr., Norman, OK (protest)

Doug Gaffin, 425 Elm Ave., Norman, OK (protest)

Carol Baylor, 2424 Cypress Ave., Norman, OK (protest)

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Brewer asked whether the developer had considered a setback like the previous application and whether it would still allow for the required number of rooms.

Mr. Rieger invited Kara Hall, the project architect, to respond.

Ms. Hall explained given the required number of rooms for the project, moving the setback would force the building to be taller to fit them all.

Mr. Rieger added AIM Norman explicitly allows buildings in this urban high-character area to be up to two stories taller than surrounding properties. The proposal places four-story sections next to two-story structures, adhering to AIM guidance.

Commissioner Jablonski noted the adjacent property is one-story and asked if the design could do a step up from three to four stories to reduce the height near neighboring homes.

Mr. Rieger stated all options were considered, and the current design is the only way to accommodate the number of rooms required for the project's economic viability.

Commissioner Kindel asked whether alternative designs were considered, specifically placing the ballroom on the top floor with higher windowsills. She noted this could allow natural light, improve the building's appearance and limit privacy impacts on neighbors. She acknowledged larger windows would increase costs and asked if design adjustments could reduce the visual impact of a tall blank wall while maintaining building height.

Mr. Rieger explained placing the ballroom on the top floor would create logistical challenges, for moving large numbers of guests efficiently via elevators or escalators. He also noted potential noise and privacy concerns, emphasizing a rooftop ballroom with windows could negatively impact neighbors.

Commissioner Kindel clarified her suggestion for higher windowsills was primarily for aesthetic purposes, interior and exterior, rather than for improving views. She acknowledged it may not solve all concerns but viewed it as a potential design improvement where setbacks or other adjustments are not feasible.

Commissioner Brewer praised the project's stormwater plan, noting it is exceptional and unlikely to negatively impact neighbors. He commended the developers for improving the project over time and following through on commitments, which he noted is uncommon in development. Regarding building mass and height, he stated that the proposed two- to four-story scale is appropriate under AIM Norman, but recommended design strategies such as landscaping, green walls, or varied materials to soften visual impact.

Commissioner Brewer further cautioned removing windows entirely can create an imposing wall, while retaining windows may raise privacy concerns. He highlighted site buffering efforts, including planting a row of trees behind the existing eight-foot concrete wall to create a softer edge over time. Overall, he expressed support for the project while encouraging thoughtful mitigation of visual impacts.

Mr. Rieger stated a “tree wall” is planned along the back of the property, behind the existing eight-foot concrete wall, to soften the building’s edge creating a more visually appealing buffer over time.

Commissioner Jablonski asked about the expected size of the trees at maturity and their size at planting.

Mr. Rieger responded the trees will meet a two-inch caliber at planting and they have a list of suitable species, with plans to coordinate with the City Forester for recommendations.

Commissioner Jablonski stated The Noun Hotel project is a positive addition to the community and a good neighbor. He acknowledged nearby residents’ concerns, noting that quieter neighborhoods naturally experience “growing pains” as higher-density development occurs, consistent with the AIM Norman Plan. He suggested softening impacts, through artistic approaches, like murals or other creative design, rather than solely physical modifications. While these measures cannot address issues like sunlight loss, they can help the building feel more integrated. He emphasized the importance of maintaining good neighborly relations, noting the hotel has consistently been a considerate presence in the area.

Motion made by Commissioner McKown, **Seconded** by Commissioner Brewer.
Voting Yea: Commissioner Brewer, Commissioner McKown, Secretary Parker, Vice Chair Jablonski, Commissioner McDaniel, Commissioner Griffith, Commissioner Kindel

Planning Commission recommended approval of O-2526-31.