



PLANNING REPORT

TO: City of St. Francis Planning Commission
FROM: Beth Richmond, Consulting Planner
DATE: March 9, 2022
APPLICANT: Scott Black (EDI)
SUBJECT: Rezoning Request; Preliminary Plat; Site Plan
LOCATION: Between Hwy 47 and Ambassador Blvd NW (PIN: 32-34-24-23-0001)
MEETING DATE: March 16, 2022
COMP PLAN: Medium/High Density Residential
ZONING: R-2 Medium Density Detached and Attached Residential; BPK Business Park

OVERVIEW

The City has received land use and subdivision applications from Scott Black on behalf of EDI for the property located at 23465 St. Francis Blvd NW. These applications are the next step for a development project that has been working through the process for the last year. A concept plan for this development was reviewed in March of 2021 and found to be generally acceptable by Staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council. In August 2021, lot split and Comprehensive Plan amendment requests were approved for this property. These approvals created a new lot located between Ambassador Blvd NW and St. Francis Blvd NW (Hwy 47) and regraded the lot to the Medium/High Density Residential land use category.

The requests currently before the Planning Commission include a rezoning to PUD, preliminary plat, and site plan review. The applicant is proposing a senior housing facility on the site that provides a range of care from independent living to care suites. The proposed facility includes 65 units of independent senior living, 42 units of assisted living, and 32 units of memory care/care suites for a total of 139 units. This site would be used as a senior living campus of sorts and would have access to Aztec St on the south, Ambassador Blvd on the east, and Stark Dr/Zea St on the north. Additional opportunities for future expansion of the senior living campus are shown on the site plan.



REVIEW PROCEDURE

60-Day Land Use Application Review Process

Pursuant to Minnesota State Statutes Section 15.99, local government agencies are required to approve or deny land use requests within 60 days. Within the 60-day period, an automatic extension of no more than 60 days can be obtained by providing the applicant written notice containing the reason for the extension and specifying how much additional time is needed. The deadline for the land use request is April 16, 2022.

120-Day Subdivision Review Process

Pursuant to Minnesota State Statutes Section 462.358, local government agencies are required to approve or deny subdivision requests, such as the preliminary plat, within 120 days. The 120-day timeline for the review of the preliminary plat expires on June 15, 2022.

Public Hearing

City Code requires that a public hearing for review of the land use and subdivision requests be held by the Planning Commission. The public hearing notice was published in the Anoka County Union Herald on _____, 2022 and posted on the City Hall bulletin board on _____, 2022. The public hearing notice was mailed to all affected property owners located within 350 feet of the subject property on _____, 2022.

ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Plan

When this project was reviewed at a concept level, Staff identified the need for a Comprehensive Plan amendment to reguide this site to a higher density residential land use category based on the number of units proposed and the size of the site. In August 2021, the entire site was reguided from Business

Park/Light Industrial and Medium Density Residential to the Medium/High Density Residential (MHDR) category. The MHDR category allows a density of 7-12 units per net acre. This amounts to 125-215 residential units permitted on the 17.9-acre site. The applicant is proposing a senior living structure with 139 units ranging from independent living to memory care. An additional 60 units are shown as potential future additions. This is consistent with the MHDR land use designation.

Zoning

The site is currently zoned BPK Business Park along Hwy 47 and R-2 Medium Density Detached and Attached Residential on the eastern portion of the site. To bring the zoning into conformance with the Comprehensive Plan's guidance, the applicant is requesting to rezone the site. The applicant reviewed two options with rezoning:

1. Rezone to R-3 High Density Residential District.

The R-3 district is the base zoning district that is the most compatible with the proposal. Apartments, continuing care facilities, and assisted living facilities are permitted within the R-3 district. The proposed building meets the dimensional requirements for the R-3 district. However, the applicant is considering placing additional residential structures on the west side of the site in the future. The R-3 district only allows one principal structure per lot. A PUD would allow for multiple structures on one lot. If zoned R-2, a public street would need to be extended north from Aztec Street through the site to serve future structures.

Reviewing the site from purely a transportation planning/engineering perspective in the context of the larger area, continuing the road network from Aztec Street northward to Stark Drive/Zea Street provides greater connectivity and access to parcels fronting on Highway 47. Long term plans for State Highway 47 are to remove existing private drives and this road extension would provide alternative access for this parcel as well as adjacent parcels. Alternatives do exist to achieve access for these parcels. Additional information will be provided at the Planning Commission meeting.

2. Rezone to PUD R-3.

Some flexibility for the development, primarily focused on the access road and the future standalone structures could be requested through the PUD process. Specifically, PUDs are allowed to have more than one structure on a single lot, and private access roads are allowed.

Reviewing the site from a planning and community development perspective, it is clear that senior housing is a gap within the City's existing housing stock and is a use supported by the Comprehensive Plan. The City has entertained proposals on numerous occasions to bring senior housing facilities into the City but these have never come to fruition.

Ultimately, the applicant chose to request a rezoning to PUD R-3 to allow additional flexibility for future phases of development on the property. The applicant is not interested in creating a public street through the center of the property as doing so would be costly and could impact the character of the site's development as an area for senior living.

A majority of Staff support the requested PUD. Staff feels that the need for senior housing facilities in the City and the benefit that would be provided with this development outweighs the need for a public street to be constructed through the site. Staff has reviewed the potential need for access for the

properties north of the site that abut Hwy 47 and feels confident that this access could be supplied in other ways in the future.

Dimensional Requirements

The proposed development will meet all of the lot dimensions and setbacks as listed in the R-3 district, as shown in the table below:

Standard	Required R-3	Proposed PUD R-3
Min. lot area	2,000 SF per unit	5,600 SF per unit
Min. lot width	100 ft.	775 ft.
Min. front setback	30 ft.	60 ft. building 30 ft. parking
Min. interior side setback	10 ft. living 5 ft. garage 15 ft. separation between buildings	25 ft.
Min. corner side setback	20 ft.	20 ft.
Min. rear setback	25 ft.	25 ft.
Min. setback adjacent to R-1 and R-2 districts	50 ft.	50 ft.
Max. Impervious surface	50%	Applicant to provide

A 50’ setback is required from all property lines abutting the R-1 or R-2 districts. An R-1 residential neighborhood abuts the southern property line of the proposed development. In this area, the proposed building is located more than 150’ from the south property line which exceeds the required 50’ setback.

The applicant has not calculated the amount of impervious surface provided on the site. However, ample open space is provided in the site plans. The applicant should provide this calculation to Staff prior to the City Council’s review.

Preliminary Plat

In August 2021, an administrative subdivision was completed to separate the portion of land between Hwy 47 and Ambassador Blvd from the land east of Ambassador Blvd. Because the site in question is less than 20 acres, and for the ease of all in accurately describing the property, the applicants are proposing to plat the land. A preliminary plat application has been submitted which identifies the entire 17.9-acre site as Lot 1, Block 1.

Site Plan

New construction of any multiple unit residential structure requires a site plan review completed by the Planning Commission and City Council. No public hearing is required. The following sections will review the site plan against City Code requirements.

Use-Specific Standards

Long-term and transitional care facilities are a use that is permitted with standards. These standards apply to the portion of the building used for memory care and care suites. The additional standards required for this type of use include:

- A. A minimum of 600 square feet of lot area shall be provided for each person to be housed on the site.
- B. All structures shall meet the setback standards established for multi-unit dwellings in the same zoning district.
- C. At least 12 percent of the lot area shall be developed as designed outdoor recreation area.
- D. The structure housing the use shall comply with the requirements of the state law and the building code regulating the construction of licensed care facilities.
- E. Approval must be obtained from the proper agencies concerning health and safety conditions and the home must be licensed by the agencies.

The proposed structure meets the lot area and setback requirements listed above. The applicant is proposing to provide open space amenities including sidewalks and trails, an outdoor gathering area, courtyard, and open green space. An exact calculation of the amount of open space to be provided will be required. Compliance with state law and the building code and proper licensing will be required.

Architectural Requirements

The exterior façade of the structure is proposed to consist primarily of vinyl siding and manufactured stone, with cedar beams for accents. This meets the requirements for exterior building finishes for residential structures.

Multi-unit structures are required to have pitched roofs made of shingles, metal standing seam, or better. The residential portions of the structure are proposed to be covered with an asphalt-shingle roof. The central portion of the building is proposed to be covered with a sheet metal roof. Staff requests that the applicant provide additional information about the proposed roof to ensure it meets Code requirements.

Building Height

The residential structure proposed is multi-level. The northeast wing with the memory/care suites is a single-story. The northwest wing housing the assisted living units is two stories. The southern portion of the building dedicated to independent living is three stories tall. Structure height is measured as “the vertical distance from the average elevation of the finished grade at the front of the building to the ... mean height between eaves and ridge for gable, hip, and gambrel roofs.” By Staff’s estimation, the proposed building height is 47.5’ tall. Prior to the City Council meeting, the applicant should provide detailed calculations showing the building height at all elevations.

Streets

This site is surrounded by streets on all sides. To the north, the intersection of Stark Dr and Zea St is located at the property line. Ambassador Blvd and Hwy 47 bound the property on the east and west sides, respectively. On the south side, Aztec St and Yucca St terminate along the property boundary.

The applicant is proposing 4 access points for this project. Two access points are proposed along the north end of the property. A service and delivery drive will continue south from Stark Dr NW. A driveway just to the east of that will be used for the parking area serving the memory care suites. On the southern end of the site, a drive extending north and east from Aztec St will lead to the site’s underground parking which serves residents living in the independent living portion of the building. This drive continues to the east where it connects with the main entrance off of Ambassador Blvd.

The main entrance for the building is proposed off of Ambassador Blvd. As a County road, final approval for this access lies with Anoka County. The applicant is proposing a southbound right turn lane and a northbound bypass lane which is in line with the comments provided by the County during their review of the concept plan last year. Any feedback received from the County will be shared at the Planning Commission meeting.

Currently, the City maintains and plows Aztec St up to the southern property line of the site. Because the applicant is not proposing to extend a public road, the City would not be responsible for the maintenance of the private drive. Staff will coordinate with Public Works staff prior to the Planning Commission meeting to determine if any additional easements are necessary in this area.

Parking

The applicant is proposing a mix of underground and surface parking to accommodate each use within the care facility. There are 63 underground spaces below the independent living portion of the building. Surface spaces are available on the east side of the structure outside of the main entrance and on the north side near the memory care suites. The table below shows the parking requirements for the proposed structure.

Use	Required Spaces	Proposed Spaces
Independent Living	0.5 space per bedroom = 67	63 underground spaces 78 surface spaces
Assisted Living	0.5 space per unit = 21	
Memory Care/Care Suites	1 space per 6 beds plus 1 space per employee on largest work shift = 6+	
Total	94+	141

The applicant has provided adequate parking for the uses proposed. The applicant should provide final numbers for the number of units and bedrooms within the project, as well as the number of employees on the largest shift for the care suites. Prior to the Council meeting, Staff will double check this final number to ensure there is adequate parking for the site.

Lighting

Lighting will be provided around the perimeter of the building along the entryways, driveways, and parking areas. This lighting meets Code requirements and has been designed to deflect light away from adjoining residential properties and public streets. In addition to this lighting, Staff recommends pedestrian lighting placed along the fitness path.

Landscaping

The applicant has provided a landscaping plan demonstrating the proposed planting and seeding on the site. The amount of caliper inches of trees required to be planted on the site is equal to the total gross square footage of all floors of the proposed building divided by 320. The total gross square footage of all floors of the proposed building (excluding underground parking) is 182,913 SF. This means that 571 caliper inches must be planted on the site. 545.5 caliper inches are proposed to be planted with the submitted landscape plan. These trees include an acceptable diversity of species types located in all areas of the site.

Overall, the landscaping proposed on the site appears sufficient and consistent with the Code with minor modifications. The applicant should revise the landscaping plan as follows:

1. Identify the proposed landscaping on the far west side of the site, including if there are existing trees to be preserved.
2. Adjust proposed planting list and landscaping plan to provide the required caliper inches of 571. Staff recommends that any additional trees to be added be located on the south and north ends of the building to soften the impact of the building on the neighboring properties.
3. Trees must be located outside of all utility easements.

Trails/Sidewalks

Sidewalks are located around the perimeter of the entire building to form an off-street walking loop and provide access to each building entryway. In areas where these sidewalks are adjacent to parking stalls, the sidewalks are 7.7' wide. In all other areas, the sidewalks are proposed to be 5' wide which meets ADA requirements for sidewalks.

A fitness path is proposed along the west side of the structure connecting from Aztec St on the south side of the site up to the north driveway entrance. This trail is intended to be used by residents of the facility. It also serves as a fire lane. The path is 20' wide in total, with 8' of pavement in the center and 6' of grass pavers on each side. The Fire Department has reviewed the proposed fire lane and found it acceptable.

In addition to the internal paths, a sidewalk is proposed to extend from the southern portion of the site to the existing trail along Hwy 47. This connection was mentioned as a desirable element during the concept plan by both City Staff and MnDOT.

Waste & Mechanical Equipment

All waste containers and mechanical equipment must be screened from public view. The applicant has shown trash enclosures located at the north and south ends of the building. A retaining wall and vegetation would be placed around these areas to screen them from view. The applicant should provide detailed plans for each trash enclosure as well as for any outdoor mechanical equipment for Staff to review to ensure the proposed screening is adequate.

Future Development

The site plan shows opportunities for future expansion for the project. A future expansion of the western, assisted living wing of the care facility is shown on the plans. Two independent living buildings are also shown as potential future expansion opportunities located on the west side of the site adjacent to Hwy 47. These buildings could house 30 units each and would have access off of the current fire lane path. In order to serve these buildings, the fire lane path would need to be expanded and modified. An additional site plan review would be required in order to construct future phases. Any substantial changes to the site plan provided with this application may need a future PUD amendment.

Utilities/Stormwater

The site is proposed to be served by City utilities. The City has adequate capacity to serve a development of this size. Four infiltration basins are proposed on the site to accommodate the additional stormwater runoff generated by the development of the site. The applicant has submitted utility and stormwater plans which are under review by the City Engineer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following:

- 1) Planning Commission recommendation of approval of the rezoning of the subject site from PUD R-3.
- 2) Planning Commission recommendation of approval of the preliminary plat for Vista Prairie Senior Living with conditions and findings of fact.
- 3) Planning Commission recommendation of approval of site plan for Vista Prairie Senior Living with conditions and findings of fact.

Proposed Conditions – Preliminary Plat

1. Approval is subject to the concurrent approval of the related land use requests pertaining to the Vista Prairie Senior Living project.
2. Any expansion of this PUD shall require a PUD amendment as specified by Code Section 10-37-05 Amendment of a PUD.
3. Prior to the City Council meeting, the applicant shall provide a certified preliminary plat and final plat for Staff's review with the correct name and address of the project.
4. Applicant shall work with the Engineer to address any Engineering concerns or revisions listed in the Engineering Review Memo dated March 9, 2022.
5. Park dedication shall be satisfied at the time of final plat.
6. Other conditions identified during the review process by Staff, the Planning Commission, or the City Council.

Proposed Findings of Fact – Preliminary Plat

1. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan and compatible with present and future land uses of the area.

2. Excluding the exceptions granted by the PUD, the development is consistent with the City's Zoning Ordinance.
3. City services have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development.
4. Traffic generated by this development is within the capabilities of streets serving the property.

Proposed Conditions – Site Plan

1. Approval is subject to the concurrent approval of the other related land use and subdivision requests pertaining to the Vista Prairie Senior Living project.
2. Prior to the City Council meeting, the applicant shall:
 - a. Calculate the amount of impervious surface proposed.
 - b. Calculate the amount of the site proposed as open space and provide this number to Staff.
 - c. Provide detailed calculations showing the building height at all elevations.
 - d. Provide final number of units and bedrooms within the project proposed for each type of housing unit.
 - e. Update the parking requirements based on the number of units and number of bedrooms proposed, as well as the number of employees on the largest shift for the care suites.
 - f. Provide additional details about the proposed sheet metal roof to ensure it meets Code requirements (manufacturer, etc.).
 - g. Provide detailed plans for each trash enclosure as well as for any outdoor mechanical equipment to ensure the proposed screening is adequate.
3. Applicant shall comply with all comments from Anoka County Transportation Division regarding roadways and access onto Ambassador Blvd NW.
4. Applicant shall comply with all comments from MnDOT regarding roadways.
5. Pedestrian lighting shall be provided along the proposed fitness path.
6. Applicant shall revise the landscaping plan:
 - a. Identify the proposed landscaping on the far west side of the site, including if there are existing trees to be preserved.
 - b. Adjust proposed planting list and landscaping plan to provide the required caliper inches of 571. Staff recommends that any additional trees to be added be located on the south and north ends of the building to soften the impact of the building on the neighboring properties.
 - c. Trees must be located outside of all utility easements.
7. Applicant shall revise site plan:
 - a. Update the proposed zoning to PUD R-3
 - b. Update the required parking based on the proposed number of units and bedrooms.

8. A geotechnical evaluation shall be provided following the City Engineer's direction.
9. Applicant shall comply with all comments from the City Engineer in the review memo dated March 9, 2022.
10. The fire hydrant on Ambassador shall remain in that area when the turn lane goes in. It shall not be capped or removed as part of this development.
11. The property shall be provided two separate addresses for the building entrances. This will provide more clarity for emergency calls based on the level of care provided in the area of the property of the call.
12. In the event that additional principal structures are built on the lot in the future, these structures must remain under the same ownership as the original care structure.
13. All fees and financial obligations shall be received by the City prior to the releasing of the approval document for recording.
14. Other conditions identified during the review process by Staff, the Planning Commission, or the City Council.

Proposed Findings of Fact – Site Plan

1. The proposed development is consistent with the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposed development meets all use-specific standards identified for long-term/memory care facilities.
3. Excluding those exceptions granted by the PUD, the proposed development is consistent with the City's Zoning Ordinance and the development standards identified therein.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS

After the public hearing and discussion, the Planning Commission could take one of the following actions:

- 1) Recommend approval with the conditions and findings of fact as presented by Staff.

Proposed Motions:

- A) Move to recommend approval of the rezoning of the subject site from BPK Business Park and R-2 Medium Density Detached and Attached Residential to PUD R-3.
 - B) Move to recommend approval of the preliminary plat for Vista Prairie Senior Living with conditions and findings of fact as recommended by Staff.
 - C) Move to recommend approval of the site plan for the Vista Prairie Senior Living development with conditions and findings of fact as recommended by Staff.
- 2) Recommend denial with Planning Commissioners' findings of fact.
 - 3) Table the request to the next Planning Commission meeting and provide direction to Staff and the applicant as to the additional information needed.

ATTACHMENTS

- Applicant Submittals