

FILE NO.: Z-5239-H

NAME: Paradise Heights Revised Short-form PCD

LOCATION: Located at 300 East Roosevelt Road

DEVELOPER:

Metis Legacy Partnership, LLC
P.O. Box 241667
Little Rock, AR 72223

OWNER/AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Institute of Basic Life Principal, Owner
Metis Legacy Partners, Agent
Ron Woods, Woods Group Architects, Agent

SURVEYOR/ENGINEER:

Harbor
5800 Evergreen Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205

ARCHITECT:

Woods Group Architects
2200 South Main Street
Little Rock, AR 72206

AREA: 10.4-acres NUMBER OF LOTS: 1 zoning lot FT. NEW STREET: 0 LF

WARD: 1 PLANNING DISTRICT: 8 – Central City CENSUS TRACT: 46

CURRENT ZONING: PCD

ALLOWED USE: Hospital, mix of office, mini-storage, clinics, record and document storage, cold storage, light manufacturing and I-1, Industrial Park District uses

PROPOSED ZONING: Revised PCD

PROPOSED USE: Mixed Use including commercial, office and residential

VARIANCE/WAIVERS: None requested.

BACKGROUND:

The property consisted of two (2) tracts of land of 8.99-acres and 1.43-acres. The larger tract contained the main hospital building, approximately 500,000 square feet and security building 3,488 square feet. The smaller tract contained two (2) buildings of 9,780 square feet and 7,600 square feet.

Ordinance No. 16,024 adopted by the Little Rock Board of Directors on March 19, 1991, rezoned this site from R-4, Two-family District to PCD, Planned Commercial Development District, to allow the use of the "Old V.A. Medical Center" with a mix of office, mini-storage, clinics, record and document storage, cold storage, light manufacturing and other similar uses.

During the public hearing process it was determined that the applicant would have all I-1, Light Industrial District enclosed uses, take access only from Roosevelt Road for Tract 1 and use other access points for emergency access only, and also could not have any industrial uses located 100-feet as measured in a horizontal plane, from any point of the building to the property line.

Ordinance No. 16,065 adopted by the Little Rock Board of Directors on July 16, 1991, allowed a revision to the existing PCD zoning to add two (2) more uses to the already approved uses. The applicant proposed to add nursing home and hospital uses as allowable uses for the site. The motion approving the revision to the PCD zoning was for approval of a hospital and a nursing home and excluded psychiatric and mental rehabilitation facilities.

A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The applicant is now requesting to amend the previously approved PCD, Planned Commercial Development, to allow a mixed use development to occur on the site. The project is a complete renovation and repurposing of the Old VA Hospital. The facility will be a mixed use development of commercial, office and residential uses. Presently the Little Rock Police Department leases space on the second floor of the facility and plans are for them to remain as a tenant. The applicant anticipates and requests the following uses:

1st floor – Retail, Office (17,686 SF) Banquet Hall (13,032 SF) Kitchen (4,621 SF)
(35,339 total square feet)

2nd Floor – LRPD (10,367 SF – Office (22,800 SF) (33,167 total square feet)

3rd – 11th Floor Residential – 217 units (76 – 1 bedrm 122 - 2 bedrm 19 - 3 bedrm)

As noted floors three (3) through eleven (11) will be residential occupancy. The exact mix of uses has not been finalized. This will be determined by a feasibility study. The applicant anticipates 217 residential units located on these floors. A preliminary mix of uses is proposed as follows:

- 3rd – 4th Floors – 57 units of assisted living
- 5th – 9th Floors – 124 apartment units (1, 2 and 3 Bedrooms)
- 10th – 11th Floors 36 Air BnB rentals or apartment units

These are the preliminary uses the applicant is requesting however as mentioned, depending on the pro forma the mix may vary. The applicant mix may be increased and the site may be developed with 217 apartments only.

Accessory uses in the facility could include: Two (2) roof garden lounges at 1,860 square feet each, basement (43,339 square feet) tenant storage rental units, exercise rooms, conference rooms, recreation/game room.

Presently there are 360 on-site parking spaces. This number may vary depending on the landscape requirements. The applicant anticipates being able to net an additional 48 parking spaces in the northeast corner of the property.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The site is occupied by the former VA Hospital buildings and parking. The site is fenced and all streets are in place. East 24th and East 25th Streets dead-end into the property. There are no sidewalks in place along the abutting streets including the Roosevelt Road frontage. The area along Roosevelt Road is developed with commercial uses including two (2) auto parts stores. Our House is located to the east of this site and there is a church and single-family homes located to the north of the site.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

All property owners located within 200-feet of the site along with the Hanger Hill Neighborhood Association were notified of the public hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS:

PUBLIC WORKS CONDITIONS:

1. Roosevelt Road is classified on the Master Street Plan as a principal arterial with special design standards. Dedication of right-of-way to 35-feet from centerline will be required.
2. Sidewalks with appropriate handicap ramps are required to be constructed adjacent to Roosevelt Road in accordance with Section 31-175 of the Little Rock Code and the Master Street Plan. A public project is proposed to construct sidewalk adjacent to the subject property. If the proposed redevelopment is issued a building permit before the project bids, the developer is responsible for constructing the sidewalk adjacent to Roosevelt Road.

E. Utilities/Fire Department/Parks/County Planning:

Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority: Sewer available to this site. Capacity and fee analysis required. Contact Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority for additional information.

Entergy: Entergy does not object to this proposal. There do not appear to be any conflicts with existing electrical utilities at this location. Service is already being provided to this building via an underground power line extending from the northeast to a padmount transformer on the north side of the property. Contact Entergy in advance to discuss electrical service requirements, or adjustments to existing facilities (if any) as this project proceeds.

Centerpoint Energy: No comment received.

AT & T: No comment received.

Central Arkansas Water:

1. All Central Arkansas Water requirements in effect at the time of request for water service must be met.
2. The Little Rock Fire Department needs to evaluate this site to determine whether additional public and/or private fire hydrant(s) will be required. If additional fire hydrant(s) are required, they will be installed at the Developer's expense.
3. Please submit plans for water facilities and/or fire protection system to Central Arkansas Water for review. Plan revisions may be required after additional review. Contact Central Arkansas Water regarding procedures for installation of water facilities and/or fire service. Approval of plans by the Arkansas Department of Health Engineering Division and the Little Rock Fire Department is required.
4. A Capital Investment Charge based on the size of meter connection(s) will apply to this project in addition to normal charges.
5. If there are facilities that need to be adjusted and/or relocated, contact Central Arkansas Water. That work would be done at the expense of the developer.
6. Contact Central Arkansas Water regarding the size and location of the water meter.
7. Due to the nature of this facility, installation of an approved reduced pressure zone backflow preventer assembly (RPZA) is required on the domestic water service. This assembly must be installed prior to the first point of use. Central Arkansas Water requires that upon installation of the RPZA, successful tests of the assembly must be completed by a Certified Assembly Tester licensed by the State of Arkansas and approved by Central Arkansas Water. The test results must be sent to Central Arkansas Water's Cross Connection Section within ten days of installation and annually thereafter. Contact the Cross

Connection Section at 501.377.1226 if you would like to discuss backflow prevention requirements for this project.

Fire Department:

1. Fire Hydrants. Maintain fire apparatus access roads at fire hydrant locations as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.1 Access road width with a hydrant. Where a fire hydrant is located on a fire apparatus access road, the minimum road width shall be 26 feet, exclusive of shoulders.
2. Grade. Maintain fire apparatus access roads as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.2 Grade. Fire apparatus access roads shall not exceed 10 percent in grade except as approved by the fire chief.
3. Loading. Maintain fire apparatus access road design as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D102.1 Access and loading. Facilities, buildings or portions of buildings hereafter constructed shall be accessible to fire department apparatus by way of an approved fire apparatus access road with an asphalt, concrete or other approved driving surface capable of supporting the imposed load of fire apparatus weighing at least 75,000 pounds.
4. Maintain fire apparatus access road gates as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.5 Fire apparatus access road gates. Gates securing the fire apparatus access roads shall comply with all of the following criteria:
 1. Minimum gate width shall be 20 feet.
 2. Gates shall be of swinging or sliding type.
 3. Construction of gates shall be of material that allow manual operation by one person.
 4. Gate components shall be maintained in an operable condition at all times and replaces or repaired when defective.
 5. Electric gates shall be equipped with a means of opening the gate by fire department personnel for emergency access. Emergency opening devices shall be approved by the fire code official.
 6. Manual opening gates shall not be locked with a padlock or chain and padlock unless they are capable of being opened by means of forcible entry tools or when a key box containing the keys to the lock is installed at the gate location.
 7. Locking device specifications shall be submitted for approval by the fire code official
 8. Electric gate operators, where provided, shall be listed in accordance with UL 325.

9. Gates, intended for automatic operation shall be designed, constructed and installed to comply with requirements of ASTM F 2200.
5. Fire Hydrants. Locate Fire Hydrants as per Appendix C of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code. Section C101 – C105, in conjunction with Central Arkansas Water (Jason Lowder 501.377.1245) and the Little Rock Fire Marshal's Office (Capt. Tony Rhodes 501.918.3757 or Capt. John Hogue 501.918.3754). Number and Distribution of Fire Hydrants as per Table C105.1.

Parks and Recreation: No comment received.

County Planning: No comment.

F. Building Codes/Landscape:

Building Code: Project is subject to full commercial plan review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit. For information on submittal requirements and the review process, contact a commercial plans examiner: Curtis Richey at 501.371.4724; crichey@littlerock.gov.

Landscape:

1. Site plan must comply with the City's landscape and buffer ordinance requirements.
2. Street buffers will be required at six (6) percent of the average depth of the lot. The minimum dimension shall be one-half (½) the full width requirement but in no case less than nine (9) feet.
3. Screening requirements will need to be met for the vehicular use areas adjacent to street right-of-ways. Provide screening shrubs with an average linear spacing of not less at three (3) feet within the required landscape area. Provide trees with an average linear spacing of not less than thirty (30) feet.
4. Land use buffers are to be maintained adjacent to the surrounding R-4, Two-family and R-5, Urban Residential District properties. As a component of all land use buffer requirements, opaque screening, whether a fence or other device, a minimum of six (6) feet in height shall be required upon the property line side of the buffer. A minimum of seventy (70) percent of the land use buffer shall be undisturbed. Easements cannot count toward fulfilling this requirement. In addition to the required screening, buffers are to be landscaped at the rate of one (1) tree and three (3) shrubs for every thirty (30) linear feet. Existing plant materials can be used to satisfy this requirement.
5. A perimeter planting strip is required along any side of a vehicular use area that abuts adjoining property, or the right-of-way of any street. This strip shall be at least nine (9) feet wide. One (1) tree and three (3) shrubs or vines shall be planted for every thirty (30) linear feet of perimeter planting strip.

6. Building landscape areas shall be provided at the rate equivalent to planter strip three (3) feet wide along the vehicular use area. One (1) tree and four (4) shrubs shall be planted in the building landscape areas for each forty (40) linear feet of vehicular use area abutting the building.
7. Eight percent (8%) of the vehicular use area must be designated for green space; this green space needs to be evenly distributed throughout the parking area(s). For developments with more than one hundred fifty (150) parking spaces the minimum size of an interior landscape area shall be three hundred (300) square feet. Interior islands must be a minimum of seven and one half (7 1/2) feet in width. Trees shall be included in the interior landscape areas at the rate of one (1) tree for every twelve (12) parking spaces.
8. A landscape irrigation system shall be required for developments of one (1) acre or larger.
9. The development of two (2) acres or more requires the landscape plan to be stamped with the seal of a Registered Landscape Architect.
10. The City Beautiful Commission recommends preserving as many existing trees as feasible on tree covered sites. Credit toward fulfilling Landscape Ordinance requirements can be given when preserving trees of six (6) inch caliper or larger.

G. Transportation/Planning:

Rock Region Metro: The site is not located on a dedicated Rock Region Metro route.

Planning Division: This request is located Central City Planning District. The Land Use Plan shows Mixed Office and Commercial (MOC) for this property. The Mixed Office and Commercial category provides for a mixture of office and commercial uses to occur. Acceptable uses are office or mixed office and commercial. A Planned Zoning District is required if the use is mixed office and commercial. The applicant has applied for a revised PCD (Planned Commercial District) to allow redevelopment of the site with commercial, office and residential in any combination.

Master Street Plan: South of the property is East Roosevelt Road and it shown as a Principal Arterial on the Master Street Plan. West of the Property is East 24th Street and it shown as a Local Street on the Master Street Plan. The primary function of a Principal Arterial Street is to serve through traffic and to connect major traffic generator or activity centers within an urbanized area. Entrances and exits should be limited to minimize negative effects of traffic and pedestrians on Roosevelt Road since it is a Principal Arterial. The primary function of Local Streets is to provide access to adjacent properties. Local Streets that are abutted by non-residential zoning/use or more intensive zoning than duplexes are considered as "Commercial Streets". A Collector design standard is used for Commercial Streets. These streets may require dedication of right-of-way and may require street improvements for entrances and exits to the site.

Bicycle Plan: There are no bike routes shown in the immediate vicinity.

H. SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE COMMENT: (January 31, 2018)

The applicant was present representing the request. Staff presented an overview of the item stating there were additional items and clarification necessary to complete the review process. Staff questioned if an events center was a part of the request. Staff also questioned the activities proposed for the roof top garden lounge.

Public Works comments were addressed. Staff stated dedication of right of way along Roosevelt Road to 35-feet from centerline was required. Staff stated the sidewalk along Roosevelt Road was to be installed by the developer if the developer requested a building permit prior to the City initiating a public project for the sidewalk construction.

Landscaping comments were addressed. Staff stated with the redevelopment of the site screening, buffering and vehicular use area landscaping were to be installed per City ordinance. Staff stated an irrigation system was required to be installed to water the landscaped areas. Staff stated with the development of sites in excess of two (2) acres required a landscape plan, stamped with the seal of a registered landscape architect, was required.

Staff noted the comments from the various other departments and agencies. Staff suggested the applicant contact the departments or agencies directly with any questions or concerns. There were no more issues for discussion. The Committee then forwarded the item to the full Commission for final action.

I. ANALYSIS:

The applicant submitted a revised cover letter to staff addressing a number of the technical issues associated with the request. The applicant has indicated an events center is not part of the request. The restaurant will have a banquet hall available for rent. The applicant has also indicated C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District uses as allowable uses. The roof top garden lounge will be available only to the tenants of the apartment development.

The request is to amend the previously approved PCD, Planned Commercial Development, to allow a mixed use development to occur on this site. The project is a complete renovation and repurposing of the Old VA Hospital. The facility will be a mixed use development of commercial, office and residential uses. The hours of operation for the office portion of the development are proposed from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm daily. The commercial portion of the development is proposed from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm Sunday through Thursday and from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm Friday and Saturday.

The Little Rock Police Department leases space on the second floor of the facility and the plan is for the Police Department to remain as a tenant. The applicant anticipates the first floor with retail, office and a restaurant. The retail/office square footage is proposed at 17,686 square feet. The restaurant/banquet hall square footage including the kitchen space is proposed at 17,653 square feet. The second floor is proposed for office uses. The total square footage proposed for office use is 33,167 square feet. Floors 3 – 11 are proposed as residential. The applicant has indicated the floors will be developed with 217 units of residential housing. Of the 217 units 76 units are proposed with one (1) bedroom, 122 units are proposed with two (2) bedrooms and 19 units are proposed with three (3) bedrooms.

Alternatively, the applicant indicates the residential breakdown of the units could be assisted living, traditional multi-family units and the potential for Air Bed and Breakfast units (Air BnB). The plan indicates on Floors 3 and 4, 57 units of assisted living is proposed. On Floors 5 through 9, 124 apartments units are proposed and on the 10th and 11th Floors 36 units will be available as Air BnB units.

The redevelopment includes two (2) roof top garden lounges each containing 1,860 square feet. The applicant states the lounges will contain a small food prep area. The lounges will serve as concierge lounges for the tenants. The public will not be allowed use without a tenant escort. The lounges are not available for public rent. The hours are proposed from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 11:00 am to 11:00 pm Friday and Saturday. The applicant indicates on occasion music will be allowed.

The basement which contains 43,339 square feet is proposed with tenant storage rental units, exercise rooms, conference rooms, recreation/game room all to serve the residents of the apartment building.

The existing standalone building located at the northwest corner of the site will be a combination caretaker's residence and security command center.

Presently there are 360 on-site parking spaces. The applicant anticipates being able to net an additional 48 parking spaces in the northeast corner of the property but has not indicated this area on the site plan. Parking for multi-family is typically based on one and one-half (1 ½) spaces per unit. Parking for 217 multi-family units would typically require 325 spaces. Parking for a mixed use development is typically based on one (1) space per 225 gross square feet of floor area. Parking for 17,686 square feet of office/retail use would typically require 78 parking spaces. The restaurant/banquet hall would typically require one (1) space per 100 gross square feet of floor area or 176 parking spaces. Parking for office uses is typically based on one (1) parking space per 400 gross square feet of floor area. Parking for 33,167 square feet of office space would typically require the placement of 82 parking spaces. The typical parking required for the use mix as proposed would be 661 parking spaces. As noted there are currently 360 on-site parking spaces.

The applicant is proposing the placement of a perimeter fence. The fence is proposed as a decorative fence five (5) feet in height with six (6) foot columns. The applicant has indicated screening with either a fence or dense evergreen plantings will be installed along the perimeters were adjacent to the single-family residences, along the northern and western boundaries. The screening will be installed as typically required per current City Ordinance or a minimum of six (6) feet in height.

The applicant is proposing the placement of a ground sign along Roosevelt Road. The sign is proposed eight (8) feet in height and 22-feet in length. The sign face is proposed four (4) feet in height with a 20-foot sign face. Signage is also proposed on the upper level of the building. The sign lettering is proposed with 48-inch aluminum letters. Three (3) building signs are proposed. Signage is proposed on the front of the building and also on the eastern and western wings of the building.

Staff is generally supportive of the applicant's request to redevelop the site with multi-family but has concerns with the use mix proposed. Based on the typical parking requirements for the use mix proposed the site is significantly under parked. Since there are no alternatives for parking other than impacting the adjacent single-family neighborhoods staff feels the applicant should address the parking demands which will be generated from the use mix as proposed.

J. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the request as filed.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(FEBRUARY 22, 2018)

Mr. Ron Woods of Woods Architectural Group was present representing the request. There was one (1) objector present. Staff presented the item stating the original proposal was to allow a portion of the site to develop with a restaurant and banquet hall. Staff stated based on their concerns regarding the available parking the applicant had removed the restaurant and banquet hall from the request and indicated should this become a proposed use in the future the applicant would seek an amendment to the approved uses and site plan to include the placement of a parking structure to accommodate the potential parking demand. Staff presented a recommendation of approval of the request subject to compliance with the comments and conditions as outlined in paragraphs D, E and F of the agenda staff report. Staff also presented a recommendation the proposed uses mix of the development match the parking available on the site.

Mr. Woods stated he had reviewed the plan with Reverend Brooks. He stated he would yield his time to allow Reverend Brooks to address the Commission.

Reverend Herbert L. Brooks of the St. John's Baptist Church addressed the Commission with questions. He stated he was uninformed of the request and needed additional information. He stated the Church was opposed to alcohol sales, tobacco sales or a rehab facility. He stated he did not want the proposed redevelopment of the site to impact the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Wood stated the facility was not a rehab facility. He stated the assisted living was proposed but would only be added if a third party desired to develop units for this use. He stated his clients were multi-family developers and usually did not develop assisted living units.

Mr. Cedrick Cooper addressed the Commission with concerns. He questioned access to the proposed development. Mr. Wood stated all access would be from Roosevelt Road. He stated other access points would be for secondary access only. Mr. Wood stated the police department used the access into the neighborhood but there were no concerns with the limited amount of traffic generated from the police department.

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the item including all staff recommendations and comments. The motion carried by a vote of 11 ayes, 0 noes and 0 absent.