

April 25, 2023

Knox & American II – Bloomington MN

Pre-Application DRC

NARRATIVE

### **Project Overview**

The proposed project is a new, residential development consisting of mixed-income dwelling units (both market-rate and affordable housing) on a vacant lot at the southwest corner of American Boulevard West and Knox Avenue South. The proposal includes 99 new residences ranging from studios and alcoves to 1-bedroom + den units. Amenities include, but are not limited to, a fitness room, structured parking and landscape improvements. The majority of the proposed building is four stories tall, and there is a piece that is three stories tall at the western portion. A resident amenity on the rooftop of the three-story portion features views to the south and west. There are 156 parking spaces proposed --- 50 parking stalls in the underground parking garage, 83 surface parking spaces and 23 (already built) on-street parking spaces.

The proposed project would further the Penn American District Plan's vision, integrate more mixed-income housing within the Penn American District that has existing retail and commercial uses that would greatly benefit from the additional residents, and improve the area with additional, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. Phase 3 of the Penn American District Plan's vision was the mixed-income housing development directly adjacent to the site along the south – the District Apartments.

### **Opportunity Housing**

Of the total units, 9% (9 units) are proposed to be very low-income units, defined by the City of Bloomington zoning ordinance as household income above 30% to at or below 50% Area Median Income (AMI).

### **Site Design**

The site design strategy locates the building along an east-west axis at the southern portion of the site and solidly engages the District Apartments along the south. Unit patios and decks along the southern and eastern façades are positioned close to the street and help to activate the pedestrian realm along 80th-1/2 Street. Proposed open and green space activates the existing METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit station at the east end of the site along Knox Avenue South.

The landscape design will satisfy the requirements of the City for plantings and screening while also providing additional site enhancements. Trees, shrubs, and grasses will be used in the parking lot to help screen the public streets while also softening and breaking up the needed asphalt. The plantings will help make the building more pedestrian-friendly along the streetscape realm on 80<sup>th</sup>-1/2 Street by visually stepping the building down in scale.

Stormwater is to be surface drained to multiple catch basins at low points in the proposed parking lot. These catch basins feed into an underground infiltration basin which will provide water quality and rate control compliant with all applicable City and watershed requirements.

### **Building Design**

The building design is a modern style of varied material depths. The proposed configuration and choice in color palette speak to the design language set by the District Apartments. Proposed exterior materials

include glass, stucco, brick veneer, metal, and fiber cement. Final exterior building materials are to be determined.

It is the applicant's intent to comply with the exterior building materials Ordinance (§19.63.08 (c)). The applicant acknowledges there is flexibility allowed under the Opportunity Housing allowances (§9.22) for alternative, exterior building materials (fiber cement, engineered wood, EIFS, 20-yr warranty metals) which may cover up to 75% of facades not facing public streets.

The applicant will work with staff in making a final determination of primary and secondary building elevation frontages. At this time, the applicant assumes the primary elevations are Knox and 80-1/2 and secondary elevations are Morgan (which the applicant considers for purposes of the Ordinance a private drive, not a public street) and, potentially, American (given the significant, proposed building setback along American).

### **Structure Design Standards**

It is the applicant's understanding that the Structure Design standards (§21.301.03 – Structure Design standards for Commercial, Industrial and Mixed Use Districts, including, but not limited to, the ground-level windows percentage requirement) are not applicable to this project as the applicant is proposing a rezone to a Residential District.

### **Anticipated Applications**

Anticipated applications are as follows:

- 1) Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Re-guidance request from Community Commercial (CC) to High Density Residential (HDR)
  - To create consistency in land use and increase housing units --- of various income levels --- to meet current housing and market demands (a significant goal within the Comprehensive Plan, Section 3)
- 2) Rezoning request from C-5 (Commercial) + Planned Development Overlay to RM-100 (Multiple-Family Residential) + Planned Development Overlay
  - Proposing deviations from RM-100

### **Anticipated Deviations**

The applicant is requesting flexibility in the following areas:

#### **Parking Between Building and Street (§21.203.09 (d))**

- Requesting exemption for multiple street frontages and proposing alternative compliance (enhanced street wall and building frontage) using C-5 frontage standards for proposing parking between building & street
  - Exemptions for sites having multiple street frontages may be allowed through the PD process (§21.301.02 (f)(2) and (6)).
  - Under the *Street Enclosure* standards of C-5 (§21.301.02 (f)(3)):
    - (A) *Primary street*. At least 50% of the linear primary street frontage must be enclosed by buildings. An additional 20% must be enclosed by buildings and/or other vertical elements located along the minimum building setback line. Vertical elements may consist of: trees, shrubs, walls, fences and sculptural elements. Vertical elements over four feet in height must be consistent with the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) objectives in the

Planning Manager's *Landscaping and Screening Policies and Procedures* document as may be amended from time to time.

(B) *Secondary street*. At least 30% of the linear secondary street frontage must contain buildings. An additional 20% must be enclosed by buildings and/or vertical elements, located along the minimum building setback line. Vertical elements over four feet in height must be consistent with the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) objectives in the Planning Manager's *Landscaping and Screening Policies and Procedures* document.

- The applicant is proposing an enhanced street wall along Knox and an enhanced streetscape along Knox, American and 80th-1/2 per drawings. Unit patios and decks along the southern and eastern façades are positioned close to the street and help to activate the pedestrian realm along 80th-1/2 Street. Proposed open and green space activates the existing METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit station at the east end of the site along Knox Avenue South.
- It is the applicant's understanding that the remaining Mixed Use District standards (§21.301.02 (f)) are not applicable to this project.

#### **Parking Setbacks (§21.301.06, i)**

- Proposing deviation: 19 surface parking spaces at northwest corner of site at a 5 ft 7 in setback (instead of the 20 ft min.-required setback)
- The applicant is proposing surface parking in this area to match those on the adjacent-to-the-west Red Lobster property in order to provide a consistent street frontage along American. To maintain the consistency between the two properties surface parking extents at the north edge, the 19 parking spaces are proposed within the required parking setback.

#### **Storage Space (§ 21.302.09, (d)(7))**

- While the applicant proposes the minimum count required, 51+/- spaces (49 storage spaces modified min.-required per § 9.23), the storage space size requirement is likely not met and TBD with further design.
- Some dedicated unit storage and dedicated bike storage (over-stall racks and a cage for common bike storage) have been provided.

#### **Opportunity Housing Reductions/Allowances Applied**

The applicant is applying Opportunity Housing reductions as follows:

- **Site Area** (§ 9.16.02) ---- Requesting the reduction (25% for 9% units at very low income) and proposing 78,691+/- sf (1.806+/- acres (60,000 sf modified min.-required)
- **Site Width** (§ 9.16.03) ---- Requesting the reduction (25% for 9% units at very low income): and proposing 196 ft 3 in (150 ft modified min.-required)
- **Usable Open Space** (§ 9.16.05) ---- Requesting the reduction (25% reduction for 9% units @ very low income) and proposing 26,000 sf +/- (22,275 sf modified min.-required)
- **Storage Space** (§ 21.302.09, (d)(7); § 9.23) ----- Requesting the reduction (50% reduction for 9% units at or below 60% AMI) and proposing 51+/- storage spaces (49 storage spaces modified min.-required)
- **Vehicle Parking, Overall Spaces** (§ 9.19) ---- Requesting the reduction (Transit Tier I = 15% for 9% units @ very low income) and proposing 156 parking spaces (135 parking spaces modified min.-required)

- **Enclosed Vehicle Parking** (§ 9.20) ---- Requesting the reduction (50% reduction for 9% units @ very low income) and proposing 50 enclosed parking spaces (49 enclosed parking spaces modified min.-required)
- **Exterior Building Materials** (§ 9.22) --- Acknowledging the Opportunity Housing flexibility for alternative, exterior building materials (fiber cement, engineered wood, EIFS, 20-yr warranty metals) which may cover up to 75% of facades not facing public streets. Final exterior building materials are TBD.