Plan Commission Meeting – September 11, 2019
Agenda Item 3 (Revised)

McKinley Road Redevelopment – Phase 3
715 McKinley Road and 355 Westminster
Site Plan and Plat of Consolidation

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Master Plan as Approved by the City Council
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Correspondence Received by the City

The complete Plan Commission packet is available for review in the Community Development Department and on the City’s website, www.cityoflakeforest.com

Plan Commission Packet
September 11, 2019
Revised

STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

McKinley Road Redevelopment – Phase 3

TO: Chairman Kehr and Members of the Plan Commission
DATE: September 11, 2019
FROM: Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development
SUBJECT: Request for Approval of a Plat of Resubdivision

OWNER
City of Lake Forest

PROPERTY LOCATION
715 McKinley Road
355 Westminster
East side of McKinley Road,
South side of Westminster

ZONING
GR-3 General Residence
District

CONTRACT PURCHASER/APPLICANT
361 Westminster LLC
Todd Altounian 50%
Peter Witmer 50%
1000 Western Avenue
Lake Forest, IL 60045

REPRESENTATIVE
Peter Witmer, architect/owner

Summary of the Request
This is a request for approvals associated with the third phase of the previously approved McKinley Road Redevelopment. The concept of redevelopment of the area on the east side of McKinley Road, within walking distance to the train station and Central Business District, evolved initially from the work of the Cultural Corridor Task Force, an adhoc group formed in 2011 to study the area. The study concluded that as redevelopment opportunities became available in the area, uses should transition from office, to multi-family residential, to provide new housing opportunities adjacent to the Central Business District and near cultural uses such as the Library, Gorton Community Center and the History Center. The Task Force supported the consolidation of office, retail, restaurant and service businesses on the west side of the railroad tracks to encourage synergy among the uses in the business district. The City’s Comprehensive Plan supports multi-family use along the east side of McKinley Road and the Office District zoning is intended to accommodate multi-family residential, office and institutional uses in a mutually advantageous setting. This area is identified as a transitional area, the area between the more intense uses to the west; the business district and railroad tracks, and the single family homes to the east.
At this point in the process, the official action requested from the Plan Commission is consideration of the overall site plan for phase 3 of the development and an evaluation of whether, or not, the plan is consistent with the previously approved Master Plan. And, whether the plan is consistent with the direction of the Council that the area, including the three parcels along McKinley Road which were previously developed with office buildings and the two parcels on which the Historical Society was previously located, be developed as a unified planned development, instead of on an incremental, parcel by parcel basis. The Master Plan is intended to serve as a framework to guide the development of detailed plans. Consideration of a plat of consolidation is also requested to configure the 715 and 355 parcels into a single property.

The proposed Phase 3 development consists of two buildings, a condominium building on the south portion of the property, adjacent to the green space, and a duplex building.

**Commission Activity to Date on Phase 3**

At the March 13, 2019 meeting, the Commission held a public hearing to consider the plat of subdivision for Phase 2 of the McKinley Road Redevelopment. During that discussion, the Commission directed that prior to submittal of a plan for the third phase of the development for Plan Commission consideration, the petitioner should develop concept studies and return to the Commission for preliminary discussion and input. The Commission encouraged the petitioner to return to the Commission sooner, rather than later.

On June 20, 2019, the Plan Commission opened a public hearing and heard a presentation on conceptual plans for the third and final phase of the McKinley Road Redevelopment. The developer reviewed several concepts that were studied in response to input and requests from neighbors. Some of the concepts explored expanding the boundaries of the development beyond those reflected in the approved Master Plan. The petitioner explained that after studying various concepts, it was concluded that the best approach was to present a plan in which the boundary of the area aligns with the approved Master Plan for the overall planned development.

More detailed plans have now been developed and are presented for further Plan Commission consideration.

Since the earlier meetings, the construction and staging area has been relocated to the south half of the Phase 3 property to support construction of the Phase 2 building which is now under way. In recognition of the ongoing construction activity and impacts on the surrounding neighbors, the standard construction fencing around the construction area was replaced with solid fencing and a gate was installed. The City Engineer requested, reviewed and approved an interim grading plan for the construction staging area and the area was graded, a temporary swale was installed and a portion of the area was seeded and blanketed. The City engineering inspectors regularly are on site to verify that the interim drainage is working as designed. The City Engineer confirmed that the steps taken to mitigate off site impacts of the construction staging area exceed those normally required. However, given the length of time construction is ongoing on this property, the enhanced measures are appropriate.

At the March meeting, the Commission requested general information on the terms of the Purchase, Sale Agreement that was entered into by the City and the developer for the sale of the north portion of the Phase 3 area. In summary, the Purchase, Sale Agreement provides for the following:
• Transfer of a portion of the Phase 2 development area to the City to provide additional parking for the Library. (The recently approved and recorded plat for the Phase 2 area satisfied this requirement.)
• Requires the developer to bear the cost and responsibility of removing the building on the site, the former location of the Historical Society. (This work is complete.)
• Allows use of the City property by the developer as a staging area during construction of Phases 1 and 2.
• Acknowledges that the final plans may vary somewhat from the Master Plan for the overall development as originally approved.
• Limits the overall development, all phases, to no more than four, multi-family buildings.
• Anticipates the overall development occurring in at least three phases.
• Permits the Phase 3 area to be developed with up to 14 units, in no more than two buildings, with the northerly building, the building fronting on Westminster, limited to no more than six units.
• Requires compliance with the City’s Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.
• Requires the establishment of one or more Homeowners’ Associations.
• Requires easements to be put in place to allow public access on the east/west private road, the north/south alley and on the green space.
• Requires maintenance, repair and replacement of the alley, on an ongoing basis by the developer, and later, the Homeowners’ Association(s), at no cost to the City.
• Requires the developer, and later the Homeowners’ Association(s) to maintain the open space areas.

Staff Evaluation of the Phase 3 Plan

Alignment of Phase 3 Plan with Previously Approved Master Plan
The Phase 3 plan as presented is consistent with the framework established by the approved Master Plan. The earlier approvals anticipated up to two buildings as part of the third and final phase of the development and permitted up to 14 units. A total of seven units are proposed, in two buildings. As directed by the Redevelopment Recommendations as approved by the Plan Commission in August 2016:

- Underground parking is provided for all units.
- Shared guest parking is provided on the overall site.
- Meaningful open space, a green space other than required setback areas, is provided across Phases 2 and 3.
- The City property, the properties on which the former Historical Society was located, is not isolated but instead, becomes part of a larger development.

Zoning
Unlike Phases 1 and 2 of the development, the Phase 3 property is zoned GR-3, General Residence, not O-1, Office. The GR-3 District is intended for one and two family dwellings and planned multi-family developments. At the direction of the City Council, the Phase 3 property was incorporated as part of the larger overall planned multi-family development.
All of the properties between the Phase 3 property and McKinley Road are zoned O-1, Office, which allows for both office and multi-family residential use. Properties to the east of the Phase 3 property are zoned R-1 which permits single family residences with a 9,375 minimum lot size.

Zoning Setbacks
The required zoning setbacks that are applicable to the Phase 3 property are:
- 40 feet – front yard setback
- 6 feet – side yard setback
- 35 feet – rear yard setback

The buildings as proposed on the plan both exceed the required 6 foot side yard setback. As proposed, the buildings are setback about 34 feet from the west property line, the road separates the building from the west property line. The buildings are setback 15 feet from the east property line. The narrow configuration of the buildable portion of the Phase 3 property limits the ability to create greater setbacks while still achieving a viable building footprint.

At the south end of the property, the building is setback 49 feet, in excess of the required setback.

At the north end, the duplex building is setback 48 feet from the property line along Westminster, in excess of the required setback. However, an open porch is shown at a distance of 36 feet from the property line which is not in compliance with the 40 foot setback. The duplex building is sited in part to provide a transition from the narrower setbacks of the building to the west, approximately 16 feet from the property line, to the much larger setbacks on the lots to the east which are in excess of 80 feet. The front yard setbacks on the properties across the street, on the north side of Westminster, range from about 40 feet to 80 feet.

The front porch is proposed to relate to the single family home to the west, directly on the other side of the private road and to add a residential scale to the building. If found to be appropriate by the Commission, approval of the site plan could specifically indicate that only an open porch element is permitted to encroach into the front yard setback for the purposes stated above.

Parking and Traffic
As noted above, underground parking for all of the tenants is provided in all three phases. In Phase 3, 18 underground spaces are proposed for the seven units. Shared guest parking spaces are provided on the street. The property is close to public parking lots along the west side of McKinley which can provide additional parking for special occasions.

Importantly, the intent of locating residential units near the train station, the Library, Gorton Community Center, the Central Business District and even the beach is that people have the opportunity to walk, rather than drive every time they go out. People who have purchased the units in the first phase were attracted to the development in part due to its walkability. The development provides a unique housing opportunity, a bit more urban in character than found in other locations in Lake Forest. And, the development to date has been successful in attracting people who want to live near the City center.

Early in the process, a traffic study was completed by the petitioner’s consultant based on build out of the entire site with 30 units. The study concluded that the traffic generated by a residential development of 30 units would be significantly less than the traffic potential from, at that time, the
existing three office buildings or from any redevelopment of the site with office uses. The study determined that streets in the area can accommodate traffic from a multi-family residential development located in this area.

*Visual Feature – East End of the Road*
Earlier discussions of the Commission indicated an interest in establishing a feature at the east end of the road that enters the development from McKinley Road. The plans presented propose a building element centered on the roadway. The element is articulated with columns, balcony features and a roof element.

*Building Massing and Height*
Both of the buildings will require review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission since the property is located within the boundaries of the Original Lake Forest Historic District. The Historic Preservation has not yet weighed in on the building massing, height, architectural design, detailing or exterior materials. The buildings in the two earlier phases were reviewed and approved by the Building Review Board, those buildings are not located in the historic district.

The Plan Commission could direct the buildings to the Historic Preservation Commission for approval prior to taking final action.

The massing and height of the buildings has been a discussion point in the past. The transitional nature of the site, the narrow configuration of the lot, the interest in achieving greater density near the Central Business District and the need to allow the project to be economically viable must be balanced with how the buildings and any associated screening relates to the adjacent and nearby residential homes.

*Background Repeated from Previous Staff Reports*
Over the course of several meetings in 2016, the Plan Commission considered concepts for redevelopment of various properties located east of McKinley Road, in the immediate vicinity of the train station. After much deliberation, the Plan Commission developed a set of “Redevelopment Recommendations”, to guide future discussions. A copy of the recommendations as approved by the Plan Commission in August, 2016 are included in the attached to this staff report as background information.

Guided by the recommendations, the Commission considered and deliberated on an overall Master Redevelopment Plan (“the Plan”) for the McKinley Road area during fall, 2016. In December, 2016, the Commission forwarded a recommendation in support of an overall Master Redevelopment Plan (“the Plan”) for the McKinley Road area which was approved by the City Council in January, 2017. A copy of the approved Plan is included in the Commission’s packet. The Council’s approval of the Master Plan incorporated:

In May, 2017, the City Council entered into a Purchase-Sale Agreement with the developer for the entire 361 Westminster property. That Agreement specifically recognizes that the Phase 3 plan will vary from the approved Master Plan and will incorporate the entire 361 parcel with the specifics of the plan subject to further review and deliberation by the Plan Commission.

*Overview of the Master Plan*
The Master Redevelopment Plan envisions a unified development, occurring in phases over time, as properties become available for redevelopment. Although the Plan was not intended to dictate the specific footprint of buildings or details of the site, the Plan identifies some high level concepts to be implemented: three development sites providing for redevelopment over time in response to community needs and the market, a private road to provide access into and through the development (over which a public access easement has in part already been recorded), an open green space area, additional parking for the Library through a land swap, underground parking and pedestrian sidewalks through the development with connections to public streets and the Library. Phase 1 of the Plan is nearly complete with the built out of the remaining units nearing completion. Two office buildings were demolished and a new three story condominium building was constructed. Most of the units in the first building are occupied. Construction of the Phase 2 building is underway. The Phase 2 very closely replicates the first building in architectural style, detailing and exterior materials. The second building is smaller than the first and the massing of the building is modified to reflect the narrowing of the building as it moves to the east providing some interest when viewed from the south. The first building has 13 units, including two affordable units. The second building will have up to six units.

Public Notice
Public notice of this hearing was published in a newspaper of local circulation and was mailed by the City to residents and property owners in the surrounding area prior to the February meeting, prior to the March meeting and prior to this meeting. The agenda for this meeting was posted at five public locations and on the City’s website. Correspondence received to date is included in the Commission’s packet.

Staff Recommendations
1. Endorse the site plan as presented based on the facts that it generally conforms to the approved Master Plan and the Redevelopment Recommendations.

2. Direct the petitioner to incorporate the Phase 3 site plan as presented into an overall, final Planned Multi-Family Development Plat.

3. Identify any areas for further refinement.

4. Direct the petitioner to present the buildings and associated hardscape and landscape plans to the Historic Preservation Commission for review, public hearing and approval.

5. Direct the petitioner to meet with the Housing Trust Fund Board to discuss the Inclusionary Housing requirements.

6. Direct the petitioner to return to the Commission upon completion of the above for final action.
McKinley Road - Redevelopment Recommendations

As Modified by the Plan Commission on August 17, 2016

Overall Redevelopment Site
Access/Connectivity (walking, biking, vehicular)
- Promote walkability.
- Provide safe and welcoming pedestrian linkages to the site – make walking and biking safe and inviting for residents of the new development.
- Provide for safe access through the site to the Library.
- Minimize potential conflict points for vehicles and pedestrians/bicycles.
- Limit curb cuts on to McKinley Road.
- Consider a road system that benefits the larger area and serves the new development and existing development in a coordinated manner.
- Consider hardscape materials that slow traffic, add aesthetic value, and create a distinctive neighborhood.
- Consider variances from street standards (width, materials, curbs) if necessary to create a unique development.

Open Space/Public Realm
- Incorporate meaningful open spaces that relate to and serve as an amenity to the new buildings and to surrounding existing development.
- Enhance the streetscapes – limit curb cuts, provide inviting sidewalks, lighting consistent with the Central Business District and landscaping consistent with the landscape dominate streetscapes throughout the community.
- Streetscape character should be of high quality and consistent with the overall character of the Central Business District and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Require underground parking.
- Avoid use of the area for large surface parking lots.
- Incorporate opportunities for some shared parking throughout the redevelopment area.

Aesthetics/Visibility
- Encourage building massing that is respectful and secondary to historic Market Square, the Church on the corner of Deerpath and McKinley Road and the Library.
- Buildings should not exceed three stories. Consider a mix of two-story, two and a half story and three story buildings.
- Recognize that due to the topography change on the property from west to east, some leeway in building height may be necessary.
- Organize buildings along the streetscape to achieve a coordinated, intentional manner, avoid a fragmented streetscape appearance.
- Recognize the prominence of the McKinley Road streetscape as a counterpart to Market Square and as the buffer between the Central Business District and the single family neighborhoods to the east.
- Take advantage of view corridors: to the towers at Market Square, to the train depot, to the Library dome, to the Howard Van Doren Shaw Church.
- Require high quality architectural designs in a manner consistent with the significant historic buildings in this area.
- Require high quality exterior building materials, consistent with the City’s adopted Design Guidelines.

Land Use
- Support residential uses and community uses in the area.
- Discourage commercial and office uses east of the railroad tracks.
- Encourage some variety in housing types and housing types that have the potential to attract residents of various ages.

Transition/Buffers
- Assure that the design provides appropriate buffers between the new buildings and existing uses.
- Consider operational and logistical needs of the Library, the Church and the existing condominium building in the design of the overall site plan.

City Property
- Encourage incorporation of the City site in the larger redevelopment area.
- Avoid isolating the City owned parcel for future, incremental development.
- Recognize that the City parcel and/or the adjacent City right-of-way, the alley, are critical to provide for well-designed circulation through the redevelopment area.
- Consider the use of the City property, or some portion of it, to improve circulation on the Library site, to provide for overflow parking and to provide green space to soften and buffer the north side of the Library.
LOCATION OF PROPERTY

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY 7.35 AC

VACANT ☐ DEVELOPED ☑ IF DEVELOPED NO. OF STRUCTURES 2

# OF BUILDABLE LOTS PROPOSED 1

# OF OUT LOTS PROPOSED 1

APPLICANT

Name 361 WESTMINSTER LLC.

Address 1000 N. WESTERN AVE.
LAKE FOREST, IL 60045

Phone 847 234-5240

E-mail PWITMER@WITMERANDASSOC.COM

Relationship to Property
(Owner/Attorney/Representative/Contract Purchaser)

BENEFICIAL INTERESTS

Corporation ☑ (see exhibit A)

Partnership ☐ (see exhibit B)

Trust, land or other ☐ (see exhibit C)

I have read the complete application packet and understand the Subdivision process and criteria.
I understand that this matter will be scheduled for a public hearing when a determination has been made.
that this application packet is complete and accurate.

**SIGNATURE**

Owner

Date

**APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVES**

Date

**ENGINEER**

WETLAND

CONSULTANT

**BLACK ENGINEERING**

FIRM

FIRM

**ADDRESS**

**ADDRESS**

**PHONE**

**PHONE**

**LAND PLANER**

TRAFFIC

CONSULTANT

**MORROW LANDSCAPE**

FIRM

FIRM

**ADDRESS**

**ADDRESS**

**PHONE**

**PHONE**

**ATTORNEY**

LANDSCAPE

**ALAN WOLF**
CORPORATE OWNERSHIP

Please list the names and addresses of all officers and directors of the Corporation and all shareholders who own individually or beneficially 5% or more of the outstanding stock of the corporation. In addition, this application must be accompanied by a resolution of the Corporation authorizing the execution and submittal of this application.

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September 11th, 2019
Statement of Intent
Planning Commission
715 McKinley/355 Westminster

This project is the third and final phase of the McKinley Development. The total units for the project will be 24.

715 McKinley is a 3-story Condominium building and 355 Westminster is a two story duplex structure. Both building share a common underground garage that is entered at the north of the site and hidden by a hedge row and landscape at the north end of the site. All the units will be totally customer designed for each buyer.

Building massing

The 715 building steps down from the prior phase 1 and 2, 727/723 and 705 buildings to the west. First floor elevation is approximately 3’ lower and the building picks up similar detailing but caps the brick portion of the building at 2 stories and then has a shingle roof for the third story living space. The building will have exterior terraces on the third floor that face west and north within the space that is between the two buildings. The second floor outdoor space will be at the west end of the 715 building and in the void created on the east side of the 715 building to break the mass of the 715 building into two much like the phase 1, 727/723 buildings south elevation. There will be no roof terraces above the third floor as in the first two western buildings. The massing of the 355 Westminster building is stepped down to a two story structure with a lower pitched shingled roof. We feel this is the best approach so that it relates to the Westminster street scape. The 15’ separation between the two buildings of phase 3 allows the architecture to change and look like two separate buildings with similar materials.

Building Setbacks

The 715 building south set back was established in the approval of the phase 2 of the development. This allowed for additional open space that abuts the library. This also established a visual axis that is terminated by the building from the entrance drive off of McKinley. The side yard set-backs for the other previous phases were 5’ and were expanded to 15’ with the bays at 13’. The adjacent properties to the east have 6’ set-backs for side yard and we are proposing 15’ for the phase 3. This allows for larger landscape trees to be planted in this area. The front yard set back is 40’ in the duplex GR-1 current zoning and we are proposing 36’ to the porch and 48’ to the building. The proposed building location is 69’ to the building which is 19’ further back than the 333 Westminster building. The west set-back is 34’ for the 715 McKinley building and 38’ for the 355 Westminster building. This allows for a 20’ drive which is 2’ wider than the current access.

Height, Size and Number of Units:

715 MCKINLEY/355 WESTMINSTER RESIDENCES IN TOWN LUXURY RESIDENCES
715 McKinley Avenue  Lake Forest  Illinois 60045  847 234-5240
The project will have 7 units total this is well below the contract allowable of 15 units. The units will vary in size from approx 4,500 sq.ft. - 2,800 sq.ft. The south building will have five units and the north building will have two. The 715 McKinley building is 38' at the south west corner and the 355 Westminster building is 38' to the ridge.

Parking:

The project will provide underground parking for each unit with a minimum of 2 per unit. Guest parking will be provided by the existing 9 parallel spaces, 3 spaces of the north-south drive and two additional spaces at the entrance to the ramp at the 355 Westminster building.

Economic Benefit:

The existing property does not produce any real estate tax for the city. The project will provide approximately 10 million in assess value in real estate tax. Fees paid for the project will be impact fees, building permit fees, affordable housing fee.
333 E WESTMINSTER

723-727 N MCKINLEY
13 UNITS
15,968 SF FOOTPRINT
49,275 SF TOTAL

705 N MCKINLEY
6 UNITS
9,736 SF FOOTPRINT
29,393 SF TOTAL

361 WESTMINSTER
2 UNITS
3,740 SF
FOOTPRINT
7,480 SF
TOTAL AREA

715
McKINLEY
5 UNITS
6,184 SF
FOOTPRINT
17,652 SF
TOTAL AREA

GREEN SPACE

MCKINLEY ROAD DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING AREAS

SEptember 9, 2019
SCALE: 1" = 50'
BUILDING HEIGHTS

STREETSCAPE GRADE CHANGE

401
373
361
351
333

Witmer & Associates
Architecture and Interior Design
witmerandassoc.com

MCKINLEY ROAD DEVELOPMENT
STREET SECTION LOOKING SOUTH
September 6, 2019
SCALE: 1" = 30'
Alternate Concepts
Correspondence Received Since Last Meeting
Dear Lake Forest City Council members,

As concerned neighbors of Lake Forest at 385 East Westminster, we are opposed to the proposed rezoning of 'McKinley Road Redevelopment - Phase 3 (McKinley Road/Westminster)' and the 'Swift Property Planned Preservation Subdivision - 770 Washington Road.' Both of which are to be reviewed during the Plan Commission Wednesday, September 11, 2019 meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Fortunate enough to grow up in a town just outside Princeton New Jersey. Each weekend, my family and I would attend Church in town. Driving to town, we would discuss how incredible the city was, and how even more incredible was how few alterations made since its inception in the 1700's. So, when my wife and I decided to move to Chicago, no community embodied the same regard for the preservation of historical significance as Lake Forest. As a new father, I have cherished being able to walk my daughter around this beautiful downtown area. If we build these condos and multi-family unit homes, I fear our city will be flipflopping on it's a promise to the community at large and we will lose what is special of Lake Forest.

In addition to the historical ramifications of these new buildings. I am deeply concerned with the increase in traffic. Through the acquisition of just the residence in McKinley, you will be adding between 8-14 additional cars between the townhouse/duplex and the condo; this is on top of the 10-12 cars from Phase-1 and the 10-12 Cars from Phase-2. You add that to the properties proposed in Washington Road subdivision which one would estimate would likely be ~10-14 townhouse/condos at 2-cars per unit with a total of 24-cars. Overall you have to estimate that means there will be an addition of 38-50 additional cars in a small area. Not to mention the extra cars, trucks, and services vehicles that come through cleaner, delivery, food service, amazon, too name a few.

Lastly, in the meetings that have pasts, it was discussed multiple times that Phase-3 Would need to take a less industrial look and feel and only have a two-story unit with an outdoor third floor. The current artist rendering is showing that these condos would be a third full story. This property will look directly into my house and while yes there are trees there, these only cover during the few summer months and otherwise, I will have 13 sets of windows ~50 yards from my house all looking in. When I bought this house, this was a place of privacy and peace. Now it will be a place of utter exposure to a community, and without a doubt will increase not only the brightness in my backyard but also will add unwanted noise pollution due to the tight squeeze of some many units.

We respectfully ask for no zoning change on these two parcels not because we are anti-growth but because we are enthusiastic supporters of maintaining the historical legacy of the community. If we were allowed to vote on the classifying and rezoning of Mckinley & Swift, we would vote no in opposition to this proposed change. Asking that the city maintain the areas zoned as they currently are. We strongly urge our elected officials to do the same.

Thanks

-Reed Dailey