

**REPORT TO PLAN COMMISSION  
FROM THE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**Case Number:** 2015-P-03

**Property:** 1925 Wilmette Avenue

**Zoning District:** NR, Neighborhood Retail

**Petitioner:** Housing Opportunity Development Corporation

**Nature of Application:** Request for approval of a Planned Unit Development Preliminary Plan and Special Use to permit the construction of a multi-family building containing approximately 20 affordable rental apartments in the NR, Neighborhood Retail, zoning district.

**Applicable Provisions of the Zoning Ordinance:** Section 5.3.E  
Article 5.9  
Article 6  
Article 9 - Table 9-1  
Article 9 - Table 9-2  
Section 12.3.G.3  
Article 14  
Section 14.4.A.7  
Table 14.1  
Article 15  
Section 15.10  
Section 15.10.D.1

**Hearing Date:** November 3, 2015

**Date of Application:** September 17, 2015

**Notices:** Notice of public hearing to the petitioner, October 5, 2015. Notice of public hearing published in The Wilmette Beacon, October 15, 2015. Posted on the property, October 16, 2015. Affidavit of compliance with notice requirements, dated October 21, 2015.

**Report Prepared By:** John Adler, AICP  
Director of Community Development

## STAFF INFORMATION AS PRESENTED TO THE PLAN COMMISSION

### Description of Property

The Subject Property is located on the south side of Wilmette Avenue, approximately 300' west of Ridge Road. The property has approximately 82.5' of frontage on Wilmette Avenue and averages approximately 197' in depth. The property is approximately 14,652 square feet (.336 acres) in area.

To the north are townhomes zoned R2, Attached Residence. To the west is the access drive to the Pin Oak townhouse development zoned R2, Attached Residence, and to the west of the drive is a single-family home zoned R1-A, Single-Family Detached Residence. To the east is a shopping center zoned NR, Neighborhood Retail. To the south is a three-story apartment building zoned R3, Multi-Family Residence.

The property is improved with a 1.5 story structure that most recently was occupied by the Huerter American Legion Post. While the existing structure has historical significance because it was the first school house in Gross Point, it has been significantly altered throughout the years and is not a local or national landmark.

### Description of Request

The petitioner is proposing to construct a new three (3) story affordable apartment building under the provisions of a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The proposed building contains approximately 14,112 square feet of occupiable space and consists of two (2) stories of residential above one (1) story that consists of open parking, a community room and management office. The proposed development has 20 rental apartments, and parking for 20 vehicles.

The proposed unit count is as follows:

|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| Studio      | 10 |
| One Bedroom | 10 |
| Total       | 20 |

The three (3) story building is proposed to be 30' in height to the top of the roof. The parapets will extend another 2' higher. The applicant has indicated that the elevator housing is proposed at 4' above the top of the roof at a height of 34' and that plans showing the housing and other rooftop equipment will be presented at the November 3<sup>rd</sup> Plan Commission meeting. The Zoning Ordinance establishes a maximum height of 30' to the top of roof and limits story height to two and a half (2.5) stories. While the building meets the 30' height limits, height relief is required for the extra one-half story to permit the building to be three (3) stories in height.

The proposed building maintains a 22.91' front yard setback, a 12' west side yard setback, an 8' east side yard setback and a 25' rear yard setback. The proposed setbacks are conforming.

Sixteen of the 20 parking spaces are located under the building at ground level. Four of the 20 parking spaces are located to the south of the building at ground level. Because the Zoning Ordinance requires 30 parking spaces for the 20 proposed dwelling units, parking relief is required.

The applicant is proposing using grass pavers in front of the building to allow for service vehicles such as trash pickup and deliveries. The trash/recycling areas are located in the first floor of the building off the driveway.

Bicycle parking is provided on the east side of the property. The zoning ordinance requires 2 bicycle spaces for residents and 1 for visitors and the applicant has indicated they will meet that requirement.

Building materials include red fiber cement lap siding, red brick, orange brick, cast stone and white fiber cement siding and trim. The landscape plan shows shade trees, ornamental trees, evergreen trees evergreen shrubs, deciduous shrubs, ornamental grasses, flowers and swale plantings. The plan indicates that the type of plantings will meet the Village's landscaping requirements. A more detailed landscape plan will be necessary for final PUD review if preliminary PUD approval is granted.

The Village Engineering/Public Works Department, Fire Department and Police Department have reviewed the preliminary PUD submittal and have expressed no concerns regarding the proposed development. If preliminary approval is granted, final engineering will be addressed during Final PUD review.

### **Zoning Relief in Connection with the PUD**

The PUD process allows a petitioner to propose a development that does not otherwise conform to the zoning requirements, including allowing uses not otherwise provided for in the Zoning Ordinance. Below is the relief that is being requested in connection with the proposed special use for a PUD:

Table 9-2 limits height to 2.5 stories and 30' to top of roof and floor area ratio (FAR) to 1.0. The proposed building is 3 stories and 30' to top of roof and has a FAR of 1.287.

Section 12.3.G.3 states that no parking required by the dwelling units are permitted at grade.

Section 14.4.A.7 requires at least 50% of all required parking spaces to be enclosed within the principal building.

Table 14.1 requires dwellings above the ground floor to have 1.5 spaces per unit or 30 for the proposed development.

Section 15.10.D.1 requires a 10' buffer yard adjacent to the R3 zoned property to the south.

### Summary of Development Standards

| <u>Proposed Building</u> | <u>Minimum/Maximum</u> | <u>Proposed</u>            |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Lot Area                 | None                   | 14,652 sf                  |
| Lot Width                | 30                     | 75'                        |
| Lot Coverage             | None                   | 6,284 sf                   |
| Floor Area Ratio         | 1.0 (14,652 sf)        | 1.287 (18,852 sf)          |
| Front Yard Setback       | 0'                     | 22.916'                    |
| East Side Yard Setback   | 0'                     | 8'                         |
| West Side Yard Setback   | 12'                    | 12'                        |
| Rear Yard Setback        | 25'                    | 25'                        |
| Building Height          | 30'/ 2.5 Stories Max   | 30'/3 Stories*             |
| Parapet                  | 32' Max                | 32'                        |
| Elevator Overrun         | 42' Max                | 34'                        |
| Total Parking Spaces     | 30                     | 20*                        |
| Enclosed Parking Spaces  | 15'                    | 0 enclosed*, 16 under roof |
| Buffer Yard – West Side  | 10'                    | 10'                        |
| Buffer Yard – South Side | 10'                    | 0''*                       |

\* Modifications being requested to required development standard.

### Planned Unit Development Process

The PUD process is intended to allow flexibility in the development of commercial property. The PUD process allows a petitioner to request approval for a development that does not otherwise conform to the zoning requirements of the underlying zoning district. The process allows the Village to work cooperatively with a petitioner so that the Village may receive some public benefit that would not otherwise be provided through a by-right development or through the variation process. In exchange for some public benefit, the Village provides some relief from the underlying zoning requirements.

To address the comprehensive nature of a PUD, the Plan Commission reviews all components of the development. In addition to reviewing how the development complies with the zoning ordinance, the Plan Commission evaluates the appropriateness of the development for the area and the community, how well it conforms to the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable plans and studies and reviews the appearance, materials, and landscaping of the proposal.

Upon completion of their review, the Plan Commission makes a recommendation to the Village Board, who will then consider whether or not to grant approval of a PUD Preliminary Plan and Special Use to permit the construction of a multi-family building containing approximately 20 affordable rental apartments in the NR, Neighborhood Retail, zoning district. Because Final PUD approval only requires Village Board approval, the Preliminary PUD review is the only time the Plan Commission will review the proposed development.

Section 20-6.1 of the Zoning Ordinance states that the purpose of the planned unit development regulations is to:

- A. *Encourage flexibility in the development of land and in the design of structures.*
- B. *Encourage planned diversification in the location of structures.*
- C. *Encourage a creative approach to the use of land that results in better development and design than might otherwise be accomplished under the strict application of other Articles of this Ordinance.*
- D. *Provide for the efficient use of land to facilitate a more effective arrangement of land uses, buildings, circulation systems and utilities.*
- E. *Provide for more usable and suitably located open space and recreation areas than might otherwise be provided under the application of other Articles of this Ordinance.*
- F. *Encourage the construction of appropriate amenities which will enhance the character of the site.*
- G. *Guarantee quality construction commensurate with other developments within the community, and compatible with the character of the surrounding area and adjoining properties.*
- H. *Provide an efficient application procedure that is sensitive to the need for expeditious development review.*

Section 20-6.5.E of the Zoning Ordinance states that no exception to district regulations within a PUD may be granted unless the petitioner demonstrates a substantial benefit to the Village. The benefits provided are to be balanced with the relief sought. The following items are a guide and not an exclusive list of permissible benefits. Additional design characteristics and amenities not listed may be considered as part of the approval process.

1. *Community amenities including plazas, malls, formal gardens, outdoor seating, public art, and car sharing facilities.*
2. *Preservation of historically significant structures.*
3. *Adaptive reuse.*
4. *Preservation of environmental features.*
5. *Public open space and recreational amenities such as:*
  - a. *Swimming pools*
  - b. *Tennis courts*
  - c. *Recreational open space accessory buildings*

- d. *Athletic fields*
  - e. *Jogging trails and fitness courses*
  - f. *Dog parks*
  - g. *Playgrounds*
  - h. *Natural water features and conservation areas*
6. *Innovative storm water management including a reduction of impervious surface, use of semi-pervious materials, such as pervious pavers, bio-swales, rain gardens and similar techniques.*
  7. *Additional public infrastructure improvements in addition to the minimum required by the planned unit development, such as new or repaved streets, installation of gutters and sewers, repaved streets, bicycle paths and traffic control devices to improve traffic flow.*
  8. *Affordable or senior housing set-asides.*
  9. *Provision of accessible dwelling units with accessible features beyond what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or any other applicable codes.*
  10. *The use of sustainable design and architecture, such as the use and/or incorporation of green or white roofs, solar panels, wind turbines and other energy efficient design concepts, new building technologies, and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or LEED-equivalent structures.*

#### **Village Benefits as Presented by the Applicant**

*Section 6.5.E.6 – Innovative storm water management including a reduction of impervious surface, use of semi-pervious materials, such as pervious pavers, bio-swales, rain gardens and similar techniques* – The applicant has indicated permeable pavers and a bio-swale will be installed on-site to help reduce water run-off and improve storm water quality.

*Section 6.5.E.8 – Affordable or senior housing set-asides* – The proposed development includes 20 units of affordable housing.

*Section 6.5.E.9 – Provision of accessible dwelling units with accessible features beyond what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or any other applicable codes* – The applicant has indicated that they will provide 4 adaptable units and 2 accessible units and contain other universal design features.

*Section 20-6.5.E.10 – The use of sustainable design and architecture, such as the use and/or incorporation of green or white roofs, solar panels, wind turbines and other energy efficient design concepts, new building technologies, and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or LEED-equivalent structures* – The applicant has indicated that they intend to exceed

the requirements of the current International Energy Conservation Code and achieve Energy Star and Enterprise Green Communities Certification.

In order to recommend approval of a PUD the Plan Commission must make certain findings about the proposed development. The required findings include appearance review, special use and PUD standards. Included in the PUD standards is the requirement that a PUD, including all proposed exceptions, are in conformance with the Village's Comprehensive Plan. These standards are attached as document 2.8 and are addressed in the petitioner's responses to the standards of review, attached as document 2.1.

### **Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies Being Furthered by this PUD Request as Presented by the Applicant**

Chapter 4 of the Village's Comprehensive Plan addresses housing. Two continuing housing issues are specified and they are:

*(1) The availability of decent, safe and reasonably affordable housing for elderly and low and moderate income households and (2) whether an appropriate range of housing options is available to the Village's senior citizens.*

*Goal Two states: Continue to provide housing options in appropriately zoned locations that complement the traditional single-family character of Wilmette.*

*Goal Three states: Foster a climate for equal housing opportunities.*

*Policy One states: Maintain residential densities at approximately the levels permitted by the Zoning Ordinance in effect at the time this Plan is adopted. The various residential zoning districts within the Village have varying levels of permitted density. Every effort should be made to maintain the densities in particular neighborhoods at approximately the existing permitted levels and the overall density of the Village at approximately the existing permitted level.*

*This policy uses the word "approximately" because it is recognized that each proposal for the use of land must be judged on the particular circumstances involved in the proposal. However, it is the Village's policy that the densities allowed for individual parcels generally should be no greater than the zoning in effect at the time this Plan is adopted. Exceptions should be made rarely and only when other compelling public interests outweigh this policy and justify a change.*

*Policy Three states: Continue to provide opportunities for the development of non-single family detached housing options in accordance with the uses and densities permitted under the current Zoning Ordinance and research additional housing options that may assist in addressing the housing needs of the changing Wilmette population.*

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, the Village adopted an Affordable Housing Plan in 2004. A copy of the Plan is attached as document 2.19. The Purpose and Scope of the Plan is as follows:

*It is the longstanding policy of the Village of Wilmette (“Village”) to provide affordable housing options so persons with moderate incomes can enjoy the benefits of living in our community, and so our residents can enjoy the benefits of a community with economic diversity. This policy has been implemented, with active Village support or sponsorship, as opportunities have occurred over the past quarter century. It is currently set forth in Chapter Four of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan of the Village of Wilmette. The Village has been careful to balance the worthy objectives of this policy against other important policies, such as the policy favoring the maintenance of the Village’s single-family-home character, and the policy favoring land use re-development consistent with the capacity of infrastructure. The crux of this Plan is the Village’s ongoing commitment to a proactive but reasoned approach to providing additional affordable housing.*

### **Property Consolidation**

As part of the PUD approval the petitioner is requesting the consolidation of the property. If Preliminary Approval is granted a Plat of Consolidation will be completed and presented with the Final PUD submittal.

### **Zoning Ordinance Provisions Involved**

Section 5.3.E contains the Special Use standards.

Section 5.9 contains the planned unit development process.

Article 6 contains the planned unit development requirements.

Article 9 contains the Neighborhood Retail Business District (NR) requirements.

Table 9-1 establishes dwelling unit above the first floor as a permitted use on the Subject Property.

Table 9-2 contains the NR district permitted bulk and yard regulations.

Section 12.3.G.3 contains use standards for dwellings above ground floor. States that no residential common area greater than six hundred (600) square feet are permitted at grade and that no parking required by the dwelling units are permitted at grade.

Article 14 contains the off-street parking and loading requirements.

Section 14.4.A.7 requires that at least 50% of all required parking must be enclosed within the principal building.

Table 14.1 requires dwellings above the ground floor to have 1.5 spaces per unit.

Article 15 contains the landscaping and screening requirements.

Section 15.10 contains the buffer yard requirements.

Section 15.10.D.1 requires buffer yards to be a minimum of 10' in width.

Site Plan Review Comments/Conditions and Applicant Response if Provided:

- 1) The landscape plan shows landscaping on property owned by the Pin Oak HOA. If you are looking to add landscaping in that area, approval would need to be received from the HOA.

*Response: We are not planning to provide landscaping outside the proposed site. The Landscape Plan has been revised to terminate the landscaping at the west property line.*

- 2) Low landscaping to screen the grass paver area from the property to the west and the street should be provided.

*Response: Landscaping was originally omitted from that area to respect the vehicular sight lines and flow at the corner of Wilmette Avenue and Pin Oak Drive. Low-growing perennials and shrubs have been added to the Landscape Plan around the pavers to screen the grass pavers.*

- 3) The traffic study was completed on August 8<sup>th</sup> which is a low traffic time of year in Wilmette.

*Response: We have notified our traffic engineer and they went back out to the site to get a new sample evening peak hours count this week. The traffic engineer will attend the Plan Commission meeting.*

- 4) Is the fence that surrounds the property proposed to remain and if so, the condition of the fence should be addressed.

*Response: The fence surrounding the property will remain and the sections we own will be repaired and replaced in-kind with a new section of fencing to match provided at the north end of the west property line. Please note, the fence to the west belongs to the Pin Oak HOA.*

- 5) The Engineering Department requested that you consider using green infrastructure on-site such as a bio-swale along the west property line. If a bio-swale is proposed please identify appropriate shade trees that are water tolerant for the west side of the property.

*Response: The drainage concept currently shown along the west property line is proposed as a bio-swale, with the caveat that IDOT may have additional requirements*

*with respect to the volume of water that is detained in the swale. A sheet has been added to the Landscaping Plan submittal that identifies appropriate plants for the bio-swale. Cross sections showing existing and proposed drainage have been added to the submittal to help illustrate the proposed improvement.*

- 6) Given the proposed use of the building, is one (1) handicapped space sufficient?

*Response: Yes, one handicapped parking space is sufficient based on our experience with few likely residents having vehicles including those with physical disabilities who would use the space.*

- 7) Relief to Section 13.3.A.1.c – The light level must be no greater than one-half (0.5) foot candle at any property line. Light level at the east and south property lines exceed .5 foot-candles.

*Response: The Lighting Plan has been revised to show less than one-half foot-candle at all property lines. The overage at those locations was unintentional and does not impact the safety or lighting provided.*

- 8) Staff requests that the Wilmette Historical Museum be given an opportunity to salvage pieces of the building before demolition, including the cornerstone if it isn't incorporated into the new building design.

*Response: We have already been in contact with the Historical Society and provided them access for anything existing in the building. We do plan to incorporate the cornerstone into the new building design and will work with the Museum and others when removing the cornerstone. We will give the Museum access to any pieces of the building they desire.*

- 9) A roof plan and elevation showing rooftop equipment and elevator/stair overruns should be provided.

*Response: Plans reflecting the rooftop equipment and overruns will be presented at the Plan Commission meeting.*

- 10) The south portion of the parking area does not provide an area for a vehicle to turnaround if the parking lot is full. While this should only impact on-site circulation, staff wanted to make the applicant aware of this potential issue.

- 11) If preliminary PUD approval is granted, final engineering will be need to be submitted with the final PUD submittal and will be reviewed at that time.

### Action Required

Approval of this request entails a recommendation to approve a Planned Unit Development Preliminary Plan and Special Use to permit the construction of a multi-family building containing approximately 20 affordable rental apartments located in the NR, Neighborhood Retail, zoning district at 1925 Wilmette Avenue, in conformance with the plans submitted. The use to run with the use.

(After the vote on the request)

Move to authorize the Chairman to prepare the report and recommendation for the Plan Commission for case number 2015-P-03.

### CASE FILE DOCUMENTS

| <u>Doc. No.</u>                | <u>Documents</u>                |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Location Maps and Plans</b> |                                 |
| 1.0                            | Zoning Map                      |
| 1.1                            | Aerial Map                      |
| 1.2                            | Sidwell Tax Map                 |
| 1.3                            | Plat of Survey                  |
| 1.4                            | Topographic Survey              |
| 1.5                            | Site Plan                       |
| 1.6                            | Vicinity Plan                   |
| 1.7                            | First Floor Plan with Site Data |
| 1.8                            | Second and Third Floor Plans    |
| 1.9                            | Elevations                      |
| 1.10                           | Renderings                      |
| 1.11                           | Preliminary Engineering Plan    |
| 1.12                           | Landscape Plan                  |
| 1.13                           | Lighting Plan                   |

### Written Correspondence and Documentation

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 2.0 | Completed application dated September 17, 2015  |
| 2.1 | Letter of Application with attachments (response to standards of review and exceptions list) dated September 17, 2015 |
| 2.2 | Proof of ownership  |
| 2.3 | Notice of Public Hearing as prepared for the petitioner, October 5, 2015  |
| 2.4 | Notice of Public Hearing as published in <u>The Wilmette Beacon</u> , October 15, 2015                                |
| 2.5 | Certificate of publication  |
| 2.6 | Certificate of posting, dated October 16, 2015  |
| 2.7 | Affidavit of compliance with notice requirements, filed by petitioner, October 21, 2015                               |

- 2.8 Appearance, Special Use and PUD Standards
- 2.9 Responses to staff's preliminary comments
- 2.10 Market Study completed by Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc., dated September 4, 2015
- 2.11 Preliminary Financial Feasibility Study
- 2.12 Sample Illinois Housing Development Authority Covenants
- 2.13 Preliminary Title Insurance Commitment
- 2.14 Preliminary Development Schedule
- 2.15 Traffic Impact Study by Benesch dated September 10, 2015
- 2.16 Historic Disclosure
- 2.17 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment completed by Environmental Consulting Group, Inc., dated June 19, 2015
- 2.18 Village Comprehensive Plan
- 2.19 Village Affordable Housing Plan