ACTION: Request for a Use Permit Standard to increase the maximum building height form 30’ to 33’ and a Development Plan Review consisting of eight new townhomes for HARDY TOWNHOMES, located at 506 South Hardy Drive. The applicant is Earl, Curley & Largarde P.C.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact on City funds.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff – Approval, subject to conditions

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: HARDY TOWNHOMES (PL150108) is a proposed eight lot townhome development. The request includes the following:

1. Use Permit Standard to increase the maximum building height from 30’ to 33’
2. Development Plan Review including site plan, building elevations, and landscape plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Owner</th>
<th>Highway Fourteen Inc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>Stephen C. Earl, Earl, Curley &amp; Lagarde P.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning District</td>
<td>R-3, Multiple Family Residential Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Site Area</td>
<td>18,955 s.f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed Density/Units</td>
<td>18 du/ac / 8 units (20 du/ac max. permitted by code)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Building Area</td>
<td>7,161 s.f.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lot Coverage</td>
<td>38% (50% max. permitted)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building Height</td>
<td>33% requested by Use Permit (30’ max permitted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Setbacks</td>
<td>10’ north (front), 21’ west side, 10’ east side, 22.5’ south (rear) (20’, 10’, 10’, 15’ min. required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Area</td>
<td>29.4% (25% min. required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vehicle Parking</td>
<td>19 spaces (16 min. resident required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Parking</td>
<td>0 spaces (0 required)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ATTACHMENTS: Development Project File

STAFF CONTACT(S): Karen Stovall, Senior Planner (480) 350-8432

Department Director: Dave Nakagawara, Community Development Director
Legal review by: N/A
Prepared by: Karen Stovall, Senior Planner
COMMENTS:
This .43 acre site is located at the southwest corner of Hardy Drive and 5th Street and is zoned R-3. It is surrounded on the west and south by apartments, to the east, across Hardy Drive, by Jaycee Park, and to the north, across 5th Street, by a new 19 unit apartment development currently under construction.

The site is currently vacant, and historical aerials show that it has been vacant since at least 1993. The project consists of two parcels that the applicant intends to re-plat into eight townhome lots with a shared drive aisle, landscaping, and open space. Lot sizes will range from approximately 962 square feet up to 1,057 square feet and will encompass the footprint of each unit and private patio.

On October 20, 2015 the Hearing Officer denied a Variance to reduce the front yard setback from 20’ to 10’. An appeal of this decision is scheduled to be heard before the Board of Adjustment on November 25, 2015.

This request includes the following:
1. Use Permit Standard to increase the maximum building height from 30’ to 33’.
2. Development Plan Review for site plan, building elevations, and landscape plan for eight new townhomes with garage parking spaces for residents and surface parking spaces for guests.

For further processing, the applicant will need approval for an Amended Subdivision Plat to create eight lots.

PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN REVIEW
• 4/8/2015: First Preliminary Site Plan review was completed (site plan only). Plan identified eight units in two buildings. Comments made by staff included: identify proposed locations of refuse pick-up on Hardy Drive, provide a 6’ sidewalk sidewalk on Hardy; provide landscape planters between garage doors along private drive, use pavers or stamped concrete on private drive, and provide correct driveway dimensions and fire truck turning radii.

• 8/13/15: Second Preliminary Site Plan review was completed. Comments made by staff included: identify proposed locations of refuse pick-up on Hardy Drive; replace wood perimeter fence with new CMU wall and provide a wall along south property line; note treatment of existing CMU walls to remain (stucco and paint); recess windows for shade; provide shade elements over entry doors; reduce amount of paving along Hardy by narrowing paths leading to private patios; and provide correct driveway dimensions and fire truck turning radii. Prior to formal submittal, applicant worked with staff to create solution to refuse bin pick-up locations.

• 9/30/15: Formal applications were submitted and a third Site Plan Review was completed. Staff comments included: construct a new CMU wall along south boundary of property; note treatment of existing CMU walls to remain; reduce amount of paving along Hardy by narrowing paths leading to private patios; show proposed townhome property lines; reduce patio wall heights from 8’ to max. 6’; enclose patios along Hardy to provide privacy and replace green screen with more decorative material; replace proposed dark gray trex with a lighter brown color; address blank walls of Building B north and south elevations; provide minimum clearance inside garages of 21’ wide by 20’ deep; and provide correct driveway dimensions.

• 10/21/15: Fourth Site Plan Review was completed. Staff comments included: construct a new CMU wall along south boundary of property; reduce amount of paving along Hardy; reduce patio wall heights from 8’ to max. 6’; enclose patios along Hardy to provide privacy and replace green screen with more decorative material; address blank walls of Building B north and south elevations; provide vining plants adjacent to patio walls/fences; provide correct driveway dimensions; provide 6’ wide sidewalk on Hardy;

PUBLIC INPUT
As required for the Variance request, a neighborhood meeting was held on September 9, 2015. In addition to the applicant’s team, two individuals were in attendance. Both individuals expressed support of the project.

On September 11, 2015, staff received a phone message from an individual who is opposed to the Use Permit request. Staff
returned the phone message, explained that the project will go through two different hearing processes, and which hearing process is applicable to the Use Permit request. He was informed of his options to provide written communication and/or attend the Development Review Commission hearing to voice his concerns. No further correspondence was received from the individual.

**PROJECT ANALYSIS**

**USE PERMIT**

The applicant requests a Use Permit Standard to increase the maximum building height from 30’ to 33’. Table 4-202B of the Zoning and Development Code (ZDC) permits an increase of the maximum height by 10 percent of the development standard. This would allow the applicant to go up to 33’. An additional two feet in height is provided at trex panel locations to screen the rooftop mechanical equipment. This additional two feet is considered an exception under ZDC Section 4-205.A and is not included in consideration of the maximum building height.

Section 6-308 E Approval criteria for Use Permit (in italics):

1. **Any significant increase in vehicular or pedestrian traffic.**
   Approval of the Use Permit will not result in a significant increase in vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

2. **Nuisance arising from the emission of odor, dust, gas, noise, vibration, smoke, heat or glare at a level exceeding that of ambient conditions.**
   The request for a three-foot increase in building height will not create a nuisance.

3. **Contribution to the deterioration of the neighborhood or to the downgrading of property values, the proposed use is not in conflict with the goals objectives or policies for rehabilitation, redevelopment or conservation as set forth in the city's adopted plans or General Plan.**
   This request should not contribute to the deterioration of the neighborhood or downgrading of property values. The request allows flexibility in building design, which leads to the creation of a unique project.

4. **Compatibility with existing surrounding structures and uses.**
   The increased building height is minimal and will be compatible with other structures at this intersection.

5. **Adequate control of disruptive behavior both inside and outside the premises which may create a nuisance to the surrounding area or general public.**
   This request should not lead to disruptive behavior.

The manner of conduct and the building for the proposed use will not be detrimental to persons residing or working in the vicinity, to adjacent property, to the neighborhood, or to the public welfare in general, and that the use will be in full conformity to any conditions, requirement or standards prescribed therefore by this code.

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW**

**Site Plan**

Vehicular access is provided by one driveway on Hardy that will serve all resident traffic. A gated emergency access driveway is provided on 5th Street. The existing median in 5th Street that separates vehicular traffic from bike traffic will be modified to a rolled curb to allow emergency vehicles to cross over it and access the driveway.

The development will contain eight townhome units in two buildings that are both three stories high. Each unit has separate access via a front door and garage door. All units have two side-by-side garage parking spaces. As a single-family development, no guest parking is required; however, three surface spaces have been provided. All units have a similar floor plan containing four bedrooms: one bedroom on the first and second floors and two bedrooms on the third floor. The living room and kitchen are on the second floor.
Each unit has a ground floor patio that leads to a glass entry door at the foyer and double sliding glass door at the first floor bedroom. Each patio has a gated storage area for trash and recycle bins. Refuse bin pickup will occur along Hardy Drive. Residents will place bins on designated areas of the sidewalk, indicated through the use of exposed aggregate concrete. The width of the sidewalk on Hardy will be increased to accommodate the bins while allowing a six-foot clear pathway.

**Building Elevations**
The building architecture is contemporary with flat roofs and varying wall planes and building heights. As mentioned in the Use Permit analysis, the requested building height is 33’. Screening for rooftop mechanical units, which is not considered in determining the building height, is 35’ high and provides vertical variation on the otherwise flat roof. Exterior materials include smooth stucco, composite planks, modular brick veneer, steel trim, and aircraft cable for patio railing. Material colors include varying shades of gray, beige, and black. The garage doors are simple and windowless. Glass doors on the first floor are laminated to increase safety and security.

Patios on all floors are shaded by the floor of the patio above or by a steel canopy. First floor patios are enclosed by 3’ high block walls with brick veneer that extends to 6’ high in locations of the refuse bin storage areas. Beyond the bin storage areas, aircraft cable fencing is attached on top of the walls to secure the patios while allowing visual surveillance as well as a place for vining plants to grow. The material schedule on elevation sheets notes a height of 48” for this aircraft cable. A condition is included to limit the cable fencing to a maximum 36” for an overall patio wall/fence height of 6’. The west elevation of Building A notes that windows are recessed 4”, but the lack of a similar note and shading makes it unclear whether or not recessed windows are proposed on Building B. A condition is included that requires all windows on the south and west elevations to be designed with a 4” recess.

**Landscape Plan**
On-site landscaping totals 30.7%. Street trees along 5th and Hardy are Chinese Elm, which is consistent with the tree type along 5th Street west of the site. Cascalote trees are used in the narrow landscape strip along the south property line and for the majority of the trees in the open space tract along the west property line. Palo Verde trees are proposed directly west of the patios of Building B to provide shade. A condition is included to require these two trees to be single trunk. Along the private drive, small planters are located between the garages and include Mexican Honeysuckle. Other flowering and vining plants are proposed elsewhere in the project to add color and assist with screening the private patios.

Section 6-306 D Approval criteria for Development Plan Review *(in italics)*:

1. **Placement, form, and articulation of buildings and structures provide variety in the streetscape;** variation in building height and wall planes is provided on all elevations, creating variety in the streetscape.

2. **Building design and orientation, together with landscape, combine to mitigate heat gain/retention while providing shade for energy conservation and human comfort;** six of the eight units have patios, balconies, and large windows on the east elevation, away from the western exposure. All first, second, and third floor patios are shaded by three-foot overhangs. Windows on the west and south elevations will be recessed a minimum of 4” to provide shade. The patios on the west side of Building B are shaded with landscaping using Palo Verde trees.

3. **Materials are of a superior quality, providing detail appropriate with their location and function while complementing the surroundings;** building materials include stucco, composite panels, brick veneer, steel, and glass. The use of these materials is appropriate for the building design and surroundings.

4. **Buildings, structures, and landscape elements are appropriately scaled, relative to the site and surroundings;** the building and landscape elements are appropriately scaled to the site and surrounding neighborhood.

5. **Large building masses are sufficiently articulated so as to relieve monotony and create a sense of movement, resulting in a well-defined base and top, featuring an enhanced pedestrian experience at and near street level;** the buildings contain variations in height, wall planes, and materials, resulting in a sense of movement and enhanced pedestrian experience near the street level.
6. Building facades provide architectural detail and interest overall with visibility at street level (in particular, special treatment of windows, entries and walkways with particular attention to proportionality, scale, materials, rhythm, etc.) while responding to varying climatic and contextual conditions; building facades provide architectural detail and the design is appropriate to the scale and context of the development.

7. Plans take into account pleasant and convenient access to multi-modal transportation options and support the potential for transit patronage; the site plan provides for convenient access to the existing bus stop on the west side of Hardy and to bike lanes along both 5th and Hardy.

8. Vehicular circulation is designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian access and circulation, and with surrounding residential uses; a single vehicular entrance is provided to the site and does not interfere with pedestrian access to or around the site. A separate pedestrian path is not provided to Building B outside of the drive, but the proposed eight units will not generate a significant amount of vehicular traffic to cause conflicts with pedestrian circulation.

9. Plans appropriately integrate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles such as territoriality, natural surveillance, access control, activity support, and maintenance; the design will comply with CPTED principles.

10. Landscape accents and provides delineation from parking, buildings, driveways and pathways; landscape accents the perimeter of the project as well as driveways and common areas.

11. Signs have design, scale, proportion, location and color compatible with the design, colors, orientation and materials of the building or site on which they are located; n/a

12. Lighting is compatible with the proposed building(s) and adjoining buildings and uses, and does not create negative effects. Lighting is designed to be compatible with the residential character of the development and adjacent uses.

Conclusion
Based on the information provided and the above analysis, staff recommends approval of the requested Use Permit Standard and Development Plan Review. This request meets the required criteria and will conform to the conditions.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL:
1. The project meets the General Plan Projected Land Use and Projected Residential Density for this site.
2. The project will meet the development standards required under the Zoning and Development Code.
3. The proposed project meets the approval criteria for a Use Permit and Development Plan Review.

USE PERMIT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:
1. This Use Permit is valid only after a Building Permit has been obtained, the required inspections have been completed, and a Final Inspection has been passed.
2. The Use Permit is valid for the plans as submitted within this application.
3. Any intensification or expansion of the use shall require a new Use Permit.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

General
1. Except as modified by conditions, development shall be in substantial conformance with the site plan, building elevations, and landscape plan dated November 4, 2015. Minor modifications may be reviewed through the plan check process of construction documents; major modifications will require submittal of a Development Plan Review.
2. An amended Subdivision Plat to create an eight-lot townhouse development is required and shall be recorded prior to issuance of building permits.
3. A maintenance agreement is required for the use of alternate paving materials in the Hardy Drive right-of-way.

**Site Plan**

4. Utility equipment boxes for this development shall be finished in a neutral color (subject to utility provider approval) that compliments the coloring of the buildings.

5. Place exterior, freestanding reduced pressure and double check backflow assemblies in pre-manufactured, pre-finished, lockable cages (one assembly per cage). If backflow prevention or similar device is for a 3" or greater water line, delete cage and provide a masonry or concrete screen wall following the requirements of Standard Detail T-214.

**Building Elevations**

The materials and colors are approved as presented:

- Modular brick veneer – Interstate Brick – Arctic White
- Composite planks – Trex – Gravel Path
- Smooth finish stucco – Dunn Edwards – Antique Paper DE6218
- Smooth finish stucco – Dunn Edwards – Porous Stone DE6220
- Metal garage doors – Dunn Edwards – Black Jack DE6371
- Patio railing – custom aircraft cable, spaced at 3"
- Patio fence – custom aircraft cable, spaced at 4"
- Metal canopies and balcony floors – hot rolled steel, sealed
- Aluminum door and windows – dark bronze frame
- Windows – Low E, dual pane, clear glass
- Private drive pavers – Belgard – Moduline series, gray

Provide primary building colors and materials with a light reflectance value of 75 percent or less. Specific colors and materials exhibited on the materials sample board are approved by planning staff. Additions or modifications may be submitted for review during building plan check process.

6. All windows on the south and west elevations of Buildings A and B shall be recessed a minimum of 4”.

7. Reduce the height of the aircraft cable above the solid walls at the first floor patios from 48" to 36”.

8. The metal trim that extends from the second and third floor balconies on the north and south elevations of Building B shall be mounted flush with the building wall.

9. Provide secure roof access from the interior of the building. Do not expose roof access to public view.

10. Conceal roof drainage system within the interior of the building.

11. Incorporate lighting, address signs, and incidental equipment attachments (alarm klaxons, security cameras, etc.) where exposed into the design of the building elevations. Exposed conduit, piping, or related materials is not permitted.

**Floor Plans**

12. Provide a minimum depth of 20’ inside garages. This must be clear of all utilities and the garage door.

**Lighting**

13. This project shall be illuminated per the Site Lighting Plan dated November 4, 2015. Minor modifications may be review through the plan check process of construction documents.

**Landscape**

14. The two Palo Verde trees adjacent to the west property line shall be single trunk.
15. Irrigation notes:
   a. Provide pipe distribution system of buried rigid (polyvinylchloride), not flexible (polyethylene). Use of schedule 40 PVC mainline and class 315 PVC ½” feeder line is acceptable. Class 200 PVC feeder line may be used for sizes greater than ½”. Provide details of water distribution system.
   b. Locate valve controller in a vandal resistant housing.
   c. Hardwire power source to controller (a receptacle connection is not allowed).
   d. Controller valve wire conduit may be exposed if the controller remains in the mechanical yard.

16. Include requirement to de-compact soil in planting areas on site and in public right of way and remove construction debris from planting areas prior to landscape installation.

17. Top dress planting areas with a rock or decomposed granite application. Provide rock or decomposed granite of 2” uniform thickness. Provide pre-emergence weed control application and do not underlay rock or decomposed granite application with plastic.

18. Trees shall be planted a minimum of 20'-0” from any existing or proposed public water or sewer lines. The tree planting separation requirements may be reduced from the waterline upon the installation of a linear root barrier, a minimum of 6'-0” parallel from the waterline, or around the tree. The root barrier shall be a continuous material, a minimum of 0.08” thick, installed 0'-2” above finish grade to a depth of 8'-0” below grade. Final approval subject to determination by the Public Works, Water Utilities Division.

Signage
19. Provide address signs on the building elevation facing the street to which the property is identified.
   a. Conform to the following for building address signs:
      1) Provide street number only, not the street name
      2) Compose of individual mount, metal reverse pan channel characters.
      3) Self-illuminated or dedicated light source.
      4) Coordinate address signs with trees, vines, or other landscaping, to avoid any potential visual obstruction.
      5) Do not affix number or letter to elevation that might be mistaken for the address.
   b. Utility meters shall utilize a minimum 1” number height in accordance with the applicable electrical code and utility company standards.

CODE/ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS:

THE BULLETED ITEMS REFER TO EXISTING CODE OR ORDINANCES THAT PLANNING STAFF OBSERVES ARE PERTINENT TO THIS CASE. THE BULLET ITEMS ARE INCLUDED TO ALERT THE DESIGN TEAM AND ASSIST IN OBTAINING A BUILDING PERMIT AND ARE NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST.

- The owner shall provide a continuing care condition, covenant and restriction for all of the project's landscaping, required by Ordinance or located in any common area on site. The CC&R's shall be reviewed and placed in a form satisfactory to the Community Development Manager and City Attorney.

- Development plan approval shall be void if the development is not commenced or if an application for a building permit has not been submitted, whichever is applicable, within twelve (12) months after the approval is granted or within the time stipulated by the decision-making body. The period of approval is extended upon the time review limitations set forth for building permit applications, pursuant to Tempe Building Safety Administrative Code, Section 8-104.15. An expiration of the building permit application will result in expiration of the development plan.

- Specific requirements of the Zoning and Development Code (ZDC) are not listed as a condition of approval, but will apply to any application. To avoid unnecessary review time and reduce the potential for multiple plan check submittals, become familiar with the ZDC. Access the ZDC through www.tempe.gov/zoning or purchase from Community Development.
• SITE PLAN REVIEW: Verify all comments by the Public Works Department, Community Development Department, and Fire Department given on the Preliminary Site Plan Review. If questions arise related to specific comments, they should be directed to the appropriate department, and any necessary modifications coordinated with all concerned parties, prior to application for building permit. Construction Documents submitted to the Building Safety Division will be reviewed by planning staff to ensure consistency with this Design Review approval prior to issuance of building permits.

• STANDARD DETAILS:
  • Access to refuse enclosure details an all other Development Services forms at this link: http://www.tempe.gov/city-hall/community-development/building-safety/applications-forms. The enclosure details are under Civil Engineering & Right of Way.

• BASIS OF BUILDING HEIGHT: Measure height of buildings from top of curb at a point adjacent to the center of the front property line.

• HISTORIC PRESERVATION: State and federal laws apply to the discovery of features or artifacts during site excavation (typically, the discovery of human or associated funerary remains). Contact the Historic Preservation Officer with general questions. Where a discovery is made, contact the Arizona State Historical Museum for removal and repatriation of the items.

• FIRE:
  • Clearly define the fire lanes. Ensure that there is at least a 20'-0" horizontal width, and a 14'-0" vertical clearance from the fire lane surface to the underside of tree canopies or overhead structures. Layout and details of fire lanes are subject to Fire Department approval.

• ENGINEERING:
  • Underground utilities except high-voltage transmission line unless project inserts a structure under the transmission line.
  • Coordinate site layout with Utility provider(s) to provide adequate access easement(s).
  • Clearly indicate property lines, the dimensional relation of the buildings to the property lines and the separation of the buildings from each other.
  • Verify location of any easements, or property restrictions, to ensure no conflict exists with the site layout or foundation design.
  • 100 year onsite retention required for this property, coordinate design with requirements of the Engineering Department.

• DRIVEWAYS:
  • Construct driveways in public right of way in conformance with Standard Detail T-320. Alternatively, the installation of driveways with return type curbs as indicated, similar to Standard Detail T-319, requires permission of Public Works, Traffic Engineering.
  • Correctly indicate clear vision triangles at both driveways on the site and landscape plans. Identify speed limits for adjacent streets at the site frontages. Begin sight triangle in driveways at point 15'-0" in back of face of curb. Consult Intersection Sight Distance memo, available from Traffic Engineering if needed www.tempe.gov/index.aspx?page=801. Do not locate site furnishings, screen walls or other visual obstructions over 2'-0" tall (except canopy trees are allowed) within each clear vision triangle.

• LIGHTING:
  • Design site security light in accordance with requirements of ZDC Part 4 Chapter 8 (Lighting) and ZDC Appendix E (Photometric Plan).
  • Indicate the location of all exterior light fixtures on the site, landscape and photometric plans. Avoid conflicts
between lights and trees or other site features in order to maintain illumination levels for exterior lighting.

- **LANDSCAPE:**
  - Prepare an existing plant inventory for the site and adjacent street frontages. The inventory may be prepared by the Landscape Architect or a plant salvage specialist. Note original locations and species of native and “protected” trees and other plants on site. Move, preserve in place, or demolish native or “protected” trees and plants per State of Arizona Agricultural Department standards. File Notice of Intent to Clear Land with the Agricultural Department. Notice of Intent to Clear Land form is available at [www.azda.gov/ESD/nativeplants.htm](http://www.azda.gov/ESD/nativeplants.htm). Follow the link to “applications to move a native plant” to “notice of intent to clear land”.

- **SIGNS:** Separate Development Plan Review process is required for signs in accordance with requirements of ZDC Part 4 Chapter 9 (Signs). Obtain sign permit for identification signs. Directional signs (if proposed) may not require a sign permit. Directional signs are subject to review by planning staff during plan check process.

**HISTORY & FACTS:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 20, 2015</td>
<td>Hearing Officer denied a Variance to reduce the front yard setback from 20’ to 10’ for HARDY TOWNHOMES (PL150108), located at 506 South Hardy Drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 25, 2015</td>
<td>Board of Adjustment to hear an appeal of the October 20, 2015 Hearing Officer decision to deny a Variance to reduce the front yard setback from 20’ to 10’ for HARDY TOWNHOMES (PL150108), located at 506 South Hardy Drive.</td>
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**ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT CODE REFERENCE:**

Section 6-306, Development Plan Review
Section 6-308, Use Permit
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FILE
for
HARDY TOWNHOMES (PL150108)

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Location Map
2. Aerial
3-7. Letter of Explanation
8. Site Plan
9. Landscape Plan
10-11. Black & White Building Elevations
12-13. Colored Building Elevations
14. Building Sections
15-16. Floor Plans
LETTER OF EXPLANATION
Development Review Commission
Hardy Townhomes
506 South Hardy Drive
September 2015

Project Description

Overview
This is a request for development plan review of the site plan, building elevations and landscape plan. Highway Fourteen, Inc. and Urban Heart Homes, are planning to develop eight (8) “for sale” townhomes on a vacant 0.44 acre site zoned R-3 at the southwest corner of West 5th Street and South Hardy Drive. The subject site is “L”-shaped and comprised of two small parcels that were each originally developed with a single structure back in 1949, when much of this area was open fields being farmed. Unfortunately, for the past two decades, this corner parcel has remained a vacant eyesore while much of the downtown has undergone a significant urban transformation. Today, the subject site remains vacant and blighted. The underlying R-3 zoning allows 20 du’s/ac. and the City’s General Plan designates the property for residential development of up to 25 du’s/ac. In this redevelopment project eighteen (18) du’s/ac. are proposed.

The design of these eight (8) townhomes is contemporary with second and third floor balconies and inset windows and doors on the east façade facing the street. This encourages a visual connection between the townhomes and the street and fosters an “eyes on the street” environment, which increases safety for both pedestrians and other properties in the area.

The ground floor of each townhome is clad in brick, which, when combined with the proposed landscaping, creates a very attractive pedestrian experience at the street level, as well as a clearly defined base with front doors facing Hardy to activate the street. The entrance to each townhome is screened by landscaping and partial walls to ensure privacy. For homeowner convenience, the refuse enclosures have also been brought to the front of the units and are attractively and completely screened.

The second and third floors of each townhome are a combination of stucco, Trex, and glass. The Trex cladding articulates the modern design elements within each unit (such as kitchens, bathrooms, and storage), clearly separating the living spaces and providing significant articulation for the east elevations facing the street. The main living space on the second floor of each townhome features a glass roll-up door which opens to a small balcony. This feature provides a unique selling point for each unit and, during times of excellent weather, a great connection to the street and the outdoors.
The garages of each home are oriented to and accessed only from the interior of the site, which leaves the streetscape to pedestrians and hides most of the vehicular activity from street view. This also minimizes the conflicts between pedestrian and vehicles. Fire truck access is provided on the north side of the site, but the entry/exit for all other vehicles is in the southeast corner of the site, directly across from the driveway to the nearby park. Although not required, the project provides three (3) visitor parking spaces.

These proposed eight (8) high quality townhomes comply with the General Plan’s designation of residential development up to 25 units per acre on the property and, at 18 du’s/ac. complies with the allowed density of the site’s existing R-3 zoning. Unfortunately, the site is small (at only .44 acres) and is irregularly shaped with the portion of the site fronting onto Hardy Dr. to be narrow and shallow. The property has been passed over for redevelopment for over two decades. The reasons the site has remained vacant and unused (during the decades of revitalization of Tempe’s beautiful downtown area) relate to its size, which cannot be enlarged, narrowness and irregular shape. No one has been willing to creatively tackle these issues until now.

It is a City goal to develop infill residential properties, where appropriate, with ownership housing. This design is the only legitimate way to develop the property in a manner encouraged by the General Plan and allowed by the existing zoning. Driveways for these eight units are placed internal to the project thus consolidating what would otherwise be a series of single-family residential driveways accessing directly onto Hardy. This design is consistent with Sec. 30-24 of the Subdivision Ordinance, which discourages driveways backing onto thoroughfares. The project’s creative design also eliminates the typical garage dominant approach. Dropping another unit to pick up 10 ft. of setback would eliminate the viability of the project. This home ownership, urban style redevelopment project is already below both the allowed zoning and the General Plan density designations.

In order to develop the site in its current design, relief from one development standard is necessary and an application has been submitted to the Hearing Officer for consideration. A use permit is also being requested to enhance the quality of the units by allowing higher ceilings, which will be discussed in more detail later.

Very small and irregularly shaped infill sites like this one are the most difficult types of properties to redevelop as evidenced by the site’s vacant condition over decades, while numerous beautiful new downtown projects have been constructed. In some cases, there is market pressure to develop such challenging infill sites with much higher apartment level density that is not complimentary to the surrounding area. In this instance, this redevelopment proposal is consistent with the new development coming into this area of the downtown and these ownership style townhouses are consistent with City Council’s goals and the design is complimentary to the area. Long vacant property developed as proposed here will have a positive influence on both livability and property values of the area.
Compliance with City Design Guidelines
The following addresses how this proposal complies with the City’s Development Code Criteria:

1. **Placement, form, and articulation of buildings and structures provide variety in the streetscape;** different building materials and different heights of the various elements of the building elevation are utilized to articulate the units in a manner that results in the building elevations reading as having different yet contiguous elements for a pleasant streetscape appearance.

2. **Building design and orientation, together with landscape, combine to mitigate heat gain/retention while providing shade for energy conservation and human comfort;** the main windows of living spaces are inset and covered by a roof extension on the east site of building away from the western sun. Window openings on the west side are minimized and the building itself is insulated.

3. **Materials are of a superior quality, providing detail appropriate with their location and function while complementing the surroundings;** a brick base and brick vertical columns, composite wood, stucco and metal are used in the design of these buildings.

4. **Buildings, structures, and landscape elements are appropriately scaled, relative to the site and surroundings;** the building and landscape elements are appropriately scaled to this neighborhood, which has a wide variety of building styles and heights.

5. **Large building masses are sufficiently articulated so as to relieve monotony and create a sense of movement, resulting in a well-defined base and top, featuring an enhanced pedestrian experience at and near street level;** the building is designed to promote a casual, modern and inviting appearance with the open balconies and insets that create shade and shadows which create interest. All but two of the units front onto Hardy Dr. to produce a pleasant pedestrian appearance.

6. **Building facades provide architectural detail and interest overall with visibility at street level (in particular, special treatment of windows, entries and walkways with particular attention to proportionality, scale, materials, rhythm, etc.) while responding to varying climatic and contextual conditions;** the building facades have been designed to accomplish this objective. The entrances to these units front onto and activate Hardy Dr. All parking has been internalized. The design also features large front windows and glass doors to be inviting to pedestrians on Hardy Dr.

7. **Plans take into account pleasant and convenient access to multi-modal transportation options and support the potential for transit patronage;** a bus stop is in front of the property on Hardy and another stop for the Orbit (ASU) neighborhood bus route is very near the site on 5th St. Given the project proximity to downtown and ASU, owners can easily walk or bike to numerous dining venues, sports and educational opportunities.

8. **Vehicular circulation is designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian access and circulation, and with surrounding residential uses;** only one driveway into the property is proposed. This is contrasted with developing the property with single-family homes with driveways fronting onto Hardy. The six units fronting onto Hardy can access the public sidewalk
directly without crossing any driveways. All parking has been shifted inside the project with a single driveway to Hardy Dr.

9. Plans appropriately integrate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles such as territoriality, natural surveillance, access control, activity support, and maintenance; garage doors and pedestrian walkways are generally on opposite sides of the buildings thus the 6 units fronting Hardy provide “eyes” on the street. The two (2) rear unit’s front onto the interior accessway to the garages which provides “eyes” on the internal space. The development will comply with CEPTD principles.

10. Landscape accents and provides delineation from parking, buildings, driveways and pathways; landscape accents the perimeter, the accessways from the building, the visitor parking and pathways.

11. Signs have design, scale, proportion, location and color compatible with the design, colors, orientation and materials of the building or site on which they are located; N/A

12. Lighting is compatible with the proposed building(s) and adjoining buildings and uses, and does not create negative effects. Lighting has been designed to be compatible with the development and adjacent uses. Exterior lighting meets the City’s. The lighting has been designed to cast light downward to illuminate doorways, focal points and garage driveways for safety.

Use Permit Request

Table 4-202B of the Zoning and Development Code permits an increase of the maximum building height by 10 percent; in this case up to 33 ft. The purpose of this request is to enhance the quality of the units by allowing higher ceilings typically sought after by young professionals. The northeast corner and the lot to the west of the subject site are developed with two (2) story apartment buildings. The northwest corner is vacant and the southeast corner is a City park. Three (3) story multi-family residential is located to the east, north and west of the site.

Again, very small and irregularly shaped infill sites like this one are the most difficult types of properties to redevelop as evidenced by the site’s vacant, unproductive condition over decades, while numerous beautiful new downtown projects have been constructed. In this instance, this redevelopment proposal is consistent with the new development coming into this area of the downtown. These ownership style townhouses are consistent with City Council’s goals and the design is complimentary to the area. Long vacant property developed as proposed here will have a positive influence on both livability and property values of the area.

Justifications for Use Permit Approval to Increase Building Height from 30 ft. to 33 ft.:

a. Any significant increase in vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
   • Approval of the Use Permit will not result in a significant increase in vehicular or pedestrian traffic. Adding only 3’ of building height to these eight (8) units does not increase traffic.
b. Nuisance arising from the emission of odor, dust, gas, noise, vibration, smoke, heat, or glare at a level exceeding that of ambient conditions;
   •  Again, this request is to increase internal ceiling height and does not have emissions. Thus, approval of this Use Permit will not cause any nuisance exceeding that of ambient conditions.

c. Contribution to the deterioration of the neighborhood or to the downgrading of property values which, is in conflict with the goals, objectives or policies for rehabilitation, redevelopment or conservation as set forth in the city's adopted plans or General Plan;
   •  Approval of this Use Permit will not contribute to deterioration of the neighborhood because the General Plan calls for density up to 25 du/ac. and the existing R-3 zoning already allows 20 du/ac.  These allowances have taken into account the impact of multi-level development above the project density of 18 du/ac. In our view, this development will contribute positively by bringing a long vacant parcel into productive use in line with City plans and objectives.

d. Compatibility with existing surrounding structures and uses; and
   •  The increase height of 3’ is minimal and will be compatible with other structures in this area as well as the recently approved 19 unit apartment development just across the street on the northwest corner of the intersection.

e. Adequate control of disruptive behavior both inside and outside the premises, which may create a nuisance to the surrounding area or general public.
   •  The addition of high quality ownership housing will contribute positively to the neighborhood and this area of the downtown and the approval of a 3’ increase of building height should not lead to disruptive behaviors.

Very Truly Yours,

Stephen C. Earl

SCE/GVK