STAFF REPORT

To: University Heights City Council

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Item: April 7, 2015 PUD submittal
1300 Melrose Avenue

Date: May 12, 2015

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Applicant:	Maxwell Development LLC 319-354-5858
Property Owner:	St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Requested Action:	Planned Unit Development Review
Purpose:	Neighborhood commercial and multi-family residential: Front Building, 24 condos (floors 2 and 3) 14, 600 SF of commercial space (floor 1); Rear Building, 80 condos.
Location:	The NW corner of the Melrose Avenue /Sunset Street intersection
Size:	5.30 acres approx.
Existing Land Use:	One building (church)
Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:	North: Institutional Land; owned by the University of Iowa South: Single Family Residential; R1 East: Single Family Residential; R1 West: Planned Unit Development; PUD, *and* Single Family Residential; R1
Zoning:	Multiple-Family Commercial PUD

INTRODUCTION

This report was created by the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) planning staff at the request of the City of University Heights. This report is intended to provide general guidance to the City during review of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) submittal (dated April 7, 2015) for the St. Andrew Presbyterian Church property at 1300 Melrose Avenue.

What is a Planned Unit Development?: *"A planned unit development (PUD) is a comprehensive development plan intended to provide flexibility in design and building placement, promote attractive and efficient environments that incorporate a variety of uses, densities and dwelling types, provide for economy of shared services and facilities, and preserve natural resources" (APA Planned Unit Developments, Mandelker page 4).*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of University Heights has received a Planned Unit Development submittal from Jeff Maxwell with interest in redeveloping the current St. Andrew Presbyterian Church property at 1300 Melrose Avenue. The applicant has been working with the City for several years on the concept and wishes to redevelop the property for both neighborhood commercial and multi-family residential uses. The applicant was successful in his request to have the property rezoned to allow for a mixed-use PUD. The subject property was rezoned from R1 Single-Family Residential to a Multiple-Family Commercial PUD zone on December, 14, 2010 - Ordinance No.180. On March 10, 2015, the City Council approved Ordinance 188 amending the 2010 Zoning Ordinance increasing the maximum number of dwelling units to 104 and the maximum number of surface parking spaces to 108.

The subject property is approximately 5.30 acres and currently has one principal building with access via Melrose Avenue. The remainder of the property exists as a paved parking area and undeveloped slopes along the rear of the site. A University of Iowa-owned parking lot is located to the north of the property and is accessed via the subject property owned by St. Andrew Presbyterian Church.

The property, zoned Multiple-Family Commercial PUD, is abutted by Institutional/Public property owned by the University of Iowa to the north, several wooded undeveloped lots zoned Multiple Family Commercial to the east, developed Single-Family Residential lots to the south (across Melrose Ave), and a Planned Unit Development and undeveloped wooded ravine to the west.

ANALYSIS:

Zoning: The subject property was rezoned from R1 Single-Family Residential to Multiple-Family Commercial PUD in December 2010. As stated in University Heights' Ordinances No.180 & 188, the subject parcel is allowed to hold no more than two total buildings, 104 residential units, and 20,000 square feet of commercial space, among other limitations and restrictions.

Table 1: Comparison of Zoning Criteria to Proposed Planned Unit Development

UH Zoning Ordinance No.188	Planned Unit Development Submittal
• 2 total buildings • 104 residential units • 20,000 sq/ft commercial space • 45,000 sq/ft total building footprints • 38' max front building height • 76' max rear building height • 185 parking spaces (min) • 108 surface parking spaces (max) • 33' front setback (min) • 20' side setback from any lot line	• 2 total buildings • 104 residential units • 14,600 sq/ft commercial space • 38,808 sq/ft building footprints • 38' front building height • 61' rear building height* • 238 parking spaces • 75 surface parking spaces • 40' front setback • 20.00' setback (min)

*Excludes height of elevator shaft, which extends to 70'

As shown in Table 1 above, the PUD submittal meets all of the quantifiable development regulations and restrictions set forth in University Heights Zoning Ordinance No.180 & 188 Section 13.B. Provisions in Section 13.B (4) and (8), as follows, cannot be measured at this time and will need to be addressed as development occurs and as the Developers Agreement and Condominium Declarations are prepared.

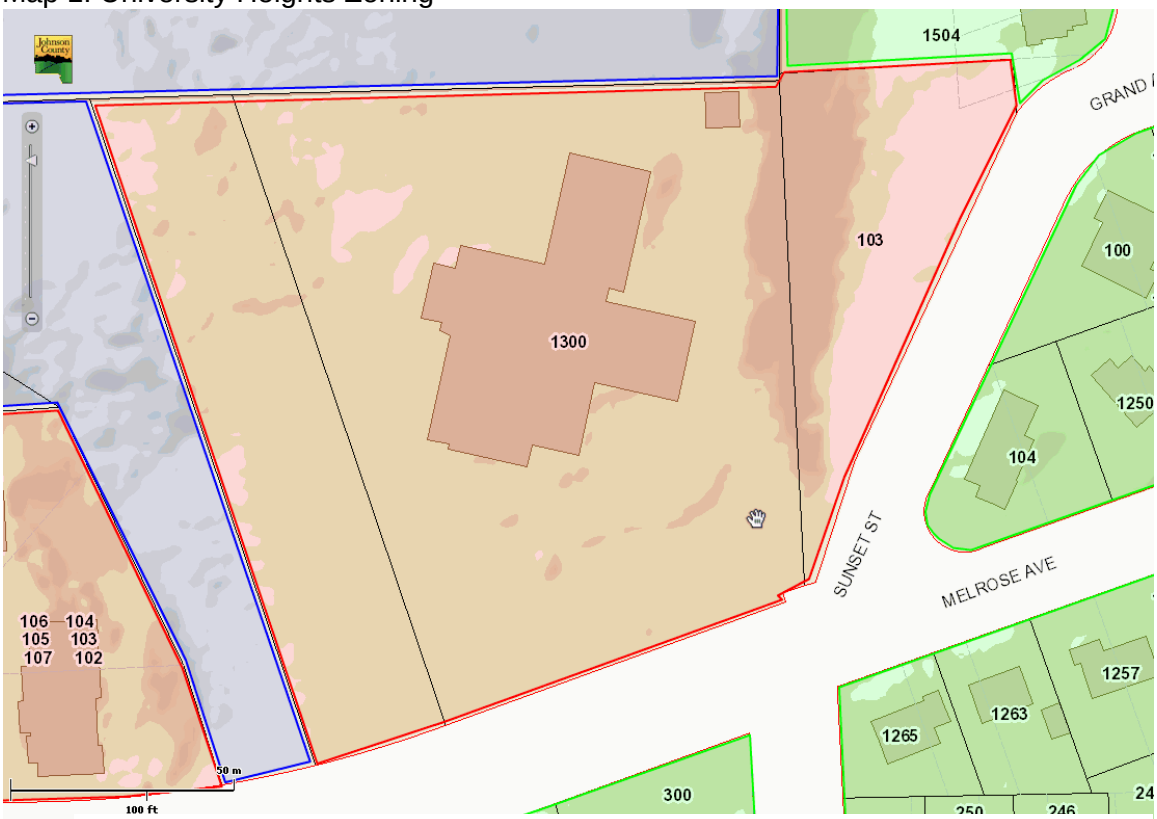
- *Section 13.B(4): 'No more than one person not a member of the family as defined in Section 3 of this Ordinance may occupy each dwelling unit as part of the individual housekeeping unit.'*

- *Section 13.B(8):'The University Heights City Council may impose additional reasonable conditions as it deems necessary to ensure that the development is compatible with adjacent land uses, will not overburden public services and facilities, and will not be detrimental to public health, safety, and welfare.'*

Another item that cannot be evaluated at this time is the developer's right to establish certain uses in the commercial portion of the development. As provided in Section 12.F (b), the following commercial uses are permitted: professional offices, bakeries, drug stores, grocery stores, barber/beauty shops, catering businesses, restaurants, coffee shops (or similar), retail shops, art galleries, or further uses as provided in the Development Agreement between the City and developer. Designated drinking establishments and liquor stores are not allowed. It will be important to discuss other

specifics in the Developers Agreement / Condominium Declaration regarding the hours of operation and specific uses of commercial property (if different than granted in Section 12.F (b) of the City Code).

Map 1: University Heights Zoning



Planned Unit Development*
Institutional – University of Iowa
R1 – Single Family Residential

* Underlying zones include Single-Family Residential and Multiple-Family Commercial uses

In terms of application requirements set-forth in Ordinance No. 180 Section 13.D, staff reviewed the PUD submittal and finds several areas where additional information is necessary:

- Deed restrictions, covenants, agreements, association bylaws and/or other documents controlling the use of the property.

- A description of building materials to be used for all exterior surfaces is not definitively provided. Possibilities for the proposed buildings include precast concrete, clear low E vision glass, and metal/wood tone panel and trellis systems. The City Council should obtain more specific information prior to signing the development agreement.

Land Use and General Layout: The general layout of the commercial portion of the PUD submittal is consistent with the older commercial node on the east side of University Heights in that the building is close to the street with parking located behind the building. This will result in an *urban* presentation of the commercial space in that it is pedestrian-oriented.

With entrances and windows facing the street, the commercial area should be inviting to pedestrians as well as vehicular traffic. University Heights should examine the building concepts provided by the developer. Specifically, officials will want to articulate early in the process if the City has interest in pursuing the optional community space identified at the east end of the commercial building. If the City has interest in pursuing this idea, the developer will need to know how the space is intended to be used so that the general construction of the building can accommodate the finished space as envisioned by the community.

Regarding the proposed residential structure at the rear of the property: University Heights representatives should further analyze the images and renderings provided by the developer to gain an understanding of the height and character of the building. The developer has provided computer generated simulations of how the proposed buildings will appear from north, south, east and west.

For the general layout of the site, it is important for the development to be "connected" to the larger neighborhood. The PUD submittal accomplishes much of this by proposing wide sidewalks on both the south and east frontages of the development. Detailed landscaping plans should be submitted and reviewed by University Heights representatives before the proposed development is finalized to ensure that the development blends-in with the surrounding neighborhood and provides attractive views from the street.

Building Materials and Design: The PUD submittal indicates that possible construction materials to be used would be a combination of clear low E vision glass, and metal/wood panel and trellis systems. While these materials would generally conform with the comprehensive plan's statement that environmentally-friendly construction materials should be used, University Heights representatives should request to see examples of the building materials before finalizing and approving the PUD.

Regarding energy efficiency, information provided by the developer indicates the intent for the proposed structures to meet certain LEED requirements. This is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goal of encouraging energy efficient construction. Representatives should discuss what level of LEED certification the developer intends to meet. The PUD also indicates that photovoltaic arrays may be used on the front and rear buildings.

Mass and Scale: Mass and scale are important determining factors of how a building will blend-in with the surrounding neighborhood. Large buildings can appear out of scale with the surrounding residential neighborhood due to their bulk. This effect can be mitigated through the use of design strategies.

The proposed use of large windows and bays and variation in façade articulation, materials and colors, along with the open walkway, setbacks, and lateral off-set helps to reduce the perceived mass of the mixed use building. The proposed height of the mixed use building is 38' (to the top of the parapet), which conforms to City Ordinance No.180 that sets the maximum building height for this building at 38'. A front building setback of 40' from the Melrose Avenue right-of-way will mitigate the perceived height. The total length of the building has been reduced from 266' in the proposal approved in 2014 to 250' and is articulated with 40' modules to break up the horizontal aspect of the building. An open walkway at the ground level creates a feeling of separation between the two portions of the commercial floor of the building. One level of underground parking is provided.

The PUD submittal indicates that the proposed residential building at the rear of the property will have a height of 61' at the parapet with the elevator shaft extending up to 70'. The maximum height allowed by zoning standards set forth in Ordinance No.180 is 76'. To minimize the perceived height of the building the developer has proposed a flat roof. The PUD submittal indicates that the building would have 5 stories with two levels of underground parking. Patio space is provided on the rooftop level at the east and west ends of the building. The remainder of the rooftop will house mechanical units and potential solar arrays. The overall length of the building has been increased from 280' in the 2014 PUD to 328'.

The proposed density of the PUD remains approximately 20 dwelling units per acre (104 units). The architect has provided information that each unit in the PUD will have the potential for two bedrooms. An emphasis on units with fewer bedrooms results in fewer people per unit than would three or four bedroom units. If each unit has two bedrooms, there would be a total of 208 bedrooms; 163 underground parking spaces are proposed providing less than 1 parking space per bedroom.

Streetscape: The perimeter of the site is an important element to consider as it provides a transition from the new development to the existing neighborhood. In a commercial building, elements like large windows, canopies, and appropriate signage integrated into the building façade can enhance the appearance. The PUD submittal includes a landscaped area within the 40' setback between the Melrose Avenue right-of-way and the front of the building. Concepts for the area show the extensive use of shade trees, landscaping, and walkways that would ease the transition from the surrounding neighborhood to the newly constructed buildings. Benches and bike racks can further contribute to the site becoming a destination for University Heights residents.

While the developer has provided a site concept illustration, University Heights's officials should request specific information on street furniture and a detailed landscaping plan.

Slopes and Drainage: The subject property exhibits steep slopes (18-25%) in the northwest, east, and northeast quadrants of the subject property as indicated in the University Heights Sensitive Areas Ordinance (Comprehensive Plan page A-9). The storm water management system will need to be designed as part of the development of final design plans. The developer has proposed some fill near the top of the ravines on the east and west sides of the property and shows retaining walls adjacent to the proposed exit onto Sunset Street and the main entrance to the development. The City

will want to ensure that the proposal does not affect the critical and protected slopes on the property, particularly those located in the ravine to the east of the development. It appears the storm drain on page C-101 of the submittal projects onto the State owned property to the north of the subject parcel; an easement will need to be obtained for this to occur – this should be verified by the City Engineer.

The PUD indicates that several bio-retention cells will be used to manage stormwater. The University Heights Engineer will want to verify what additional plans, if any, the developer has for stormwater management and ensure that the stormwater management system is adequate for the development.

Transportation and Traffic Circulation: Melrose Avenue (near the subject property) is congested at peak travel times with an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 14,000 in 2012. In 2010, Melrose Avenue operated at a Volume to Capacity (V/C) ratio of 0.80 -1.2 (2012 MPOJC Long-Rang Transportation Plan). Corridors exhibiting V/C ratios of 1.0 or greater are considered to be functioning over capacity and are congested to some degree during peak travel periods.

Melrose Avenue / Sunset Street Intersection (looking north)

Based on information provided in the PUD, the amount of traffic generated by the new development will likely exceed 1,000 vehicles per weekday. This number is based on the assumption that the development will include 104 condos and 14,600 square feet of commercial space. The current land use, a church, produces 830 vehicles per day on Sundays based on 2010 traffic counts.

Turn Lanes: As proposed in the PUD submittal, staff agrees that a dedicated left-turn lane for eastbound traffic at the main entrance is necessary. This turn-lane will remove turning traffic from the through travel lane and minimize delay to eastbound traffic. An eastbound left turn lane is not necessary at the Sunset/Melrose intersection (see attached memorandum).

Proposed Site Concept Illustration

Traffic Signal Analysis: A planning-level traffic signal warrant analysis was completed and shows that without a traffic signal at the main entrance to the development, southbound exiting traffic from the development would experience lengthy delays in the PM peak travel hour (see attached memorandum). Although the proposed southbound left-turning movements will experience lengthy delays, queuing traffic will be on private property and should not affect mainline movements. The main source of concern when excessive delays are anticipated is that motorists become frustrated and can exhibit unsafe driving behaviors, which can create safety concerns within the public right-of-way. Staff anticipates that much of this delay will 'self-correct' as motorists choose to exit the development at the Sunset/Melrose intersection – taking advantage of the signalized / controlled environment. While it was determined that the development-generated traffic added to the system would not satisfy the requirements for a traffic signal to be installed, approximately 35 more vehicles exiting the development during the PM peak travel hour would satisfy a single traffic signal warrant. *The MUTCD has 9 warrants that can be met to indicate the need for a traffic signal; meeting one warrant does not mandate that a signal be installed.*

Given that this analysis is based on a set of assumptions regarding how the commercial building will be used, and that those assumptions will likely change based on actual tenants that occupy the building, staff recommends revisiting this study at full 'build-out' of the development to analyze the need for a traffic signal or other traffic engineering improvements at the main entrance to the development. If development occurs to the

north of the subject property, and shares the same access onto Melrose Avenue, a reevaluation of intersection operations and potential for necessary infrastructure improvements should be triggered.

Sunset Street / Melrose Avenue Intersection: From a transportation planning perspective it would be beneficial to realign the north leg of the Sunset intersection as shown in the proposed site concept illustration. Given that the existing geometry of the intersection is skewed, visibility for both motorists and pedestrians is reduced; therefore decreasing overall safety at the intersection. Specifically, the north leg of the intersection (Sunset Street) veers to the northeast at approximately 45 degrees, instead of the more desirable 90 degrees as proposed. Realigning the intersection as proposed in the PUD would also eliminate the need for the current split-signal phasing for north and southbound movements at the Sunset Street / Melrose Avenue traffic signal. These modifications would allow for additional 'green-time' for eastbound and westbound motorists during peak travel hours thereby reducing the overall vehicle delay experienced and increasing the level-of-service of the intersection.

As shown in the site concept illustration, the PUD proposes that the access onto Sunset Street function as an 'exit only'. This restriction is likely to be viewed favorably by neighborhood residents as it will eliminate cut-through traffic on Grand Avenue.

The addition of a dedicated left-turn lane at the Sunset Street / Melrose Avenue intersection is not necessary from an intersection level-of-service perspective. However, the turn lane may be necessary for proper alignment of lanes and intersection geometry and should be further evaluated by the City Engineer.

Sidewalks: Constructing an 8' wide sidewalk on the south frontage of the development as proposed in the PUD is consistent with the wide-sidewalk recently constructed along Melrose Avenue east of the development. The site concept illustration on page C-106 of the PUD shows where sections of the 8' wide sidewalk are proposed to be constructed adjacent to Melrose Avenue. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidance notes that the buffer width (green space) between an arterial corridor and the adjacent sidewalk should be a minimum of 5 ft. (*Guide for Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities* - Page 59). This minimum buffer is provided to improve pedestrian safety and to allow space for snow storage, utility poles, signs, trash pick-up, and streetscaping. If the minimum recommended buffer cannot be achieved, staff recommends investigating alternative solutions. Page C-106 notes that a vehicular guard rail will be installed between the sidewalk and the curb. The City engineer should verify the necessity and design of the structure.

In regards to the site plan, staff recommends constructing a sidewalk adjacent to, and the length of, the main access drive. Such a sidewalk would allow pedestrians traveling from the west direct access to the residential building at the rear of the lot and to any future development on the property north of the subject parcel. Staff also recommends University Heights discuss constructing a sidewalk along the west side of Sunset Street, north of Melrose Avenue.

Transit: City officials should discuss the desire to include a bus pull-off in the final design of the development. If desired, the City should require the pull-off to be constructed to Iowa City Transit standards as they are the authority that would provide service to the stop. Similarly, a discussion on the necessity of the bus shelter should also be vetted. Plans for such amenities, and the agreement for cost/maintenance, would be included in the Developers agreement.

Lighting: Lighting can produce 'negative externalities' that may be obtrusive to surrounding residents. University Heights representatives should request that any and all light fixtures on the site be downcast and shielded to not allow more than one foot-candle of light spillage beyond the property line. One foot-candle is a commonly used measurement of light, and is approximately the amount of light given by a full moon at night. Planimetric maps showing the amount of lighting on the property should be requested of the developer. U.S. Green Building Council LEED lighting standards should be used to ensure exterior lighting is designed to minimize glare or light trespass onto other properties.

Signage: Another thing to consider is the size and style of the commercial signage used. Large signs, illuminated signs, and flashing, blinking, or changeable copy signs can significantly detract from the residential feel of Melrose Avenue and be a distraction for drivers. University Heights representatives should request that details of the size, illumination, and animation of signs on the site be included in the Developer's Agreement and/or Condominium Declaration. The current PUD shows the use of two ground-mounted monument type signs near the southeast and southwest corners of the property. MPO staff is available to provide examples of signage restrictions for commercial signs in residential areas upon request.

Hours of Operation: While University Heights cannot dictate all uses of the commercial property (any use allowed in the Multiple-Family Commercial Zone in the adopted Zoning Ordinance would be allowed), you may restrict the hours of operation of the site to mitigate against any late-night noise issues. While the site is well buffered to the northeast and west, there are residential properties on the south side of Melrose Avenue and on the east side of Sunset Street. If noise from commercial activities is a concern, University Heights should discuss with the developer hours of operation, outdoor seating for restaurants, cafes, or exterior amplified sound or other noise creating elements. Any restrictions to these elements of the development should be enumerated in the Developer's Agreement or Condominium Declaration.

Utilities: The University Heights City Engineer will need to ensure that utilities are adequate for the proposed development. Adequate water pressure, sewer capacity, storm sewer capacity and electrical and gas services should all be included in such a review. If existing utilities are not adequate, University Heights officials will need to discuss what upgrades to the system, if any, will be required of the developer.

Fire and Police Protection: The University Heights Police Department and the Coralville Fire Departments should be consulted as to their capabilities to provide protection to the proposed development. Both provided letters indicating they were able to provide protection to this property and could do so with the current capacity of their departments during the initial PUD application in April 2011. Reconfirming the capabilities based on the increased number of residential units is recommended.

Developer's Agreement: The Developer's Agreement is a legally binding document that typically includes items such as: descriptions of property (including covenants, easements, and restrictions), final plans and specs, construction/phasing timelines, condominium declarations, dedications, maintenance agreements, agreements for costs to be incurred by the developer, environmental requirements, assurances against damage to publicly owned property, and other items related to the development.

The City should require that the developer prepare the agreement for review by the University Heights City Attorney.

SUMMARY:

In summary, the following points should be considered as part of the development review process, it will be important to articulate to the developer what elements of the proposal are appropriate. These are staff recommendations for University Heights City Council consideration.

- The subject property exhibits several steep, critical and protected slopes, as indicated in the adopted Sensitive Areas Ordinance, which should be protected. Grading plans and tree protection plans should be reviewed by the University Heights' Engineer.

- Any storm water retention required of the development should be identified by the City Engineer. Plans to manage storm water provided by the developer indicates the use of bioretention cells.

- City officials will want to articulate early in the process if the City has interest in pursuing community space at the east end of the commercial building. If the City has interest in pursuing this idea, the developer will need to know how the space is intended to be used so that the general construction of the building can accommodate the finished space envisioned by the community.

- The PUD indicates that a dumpster will be kept in an enclosure at the west end of the mixed use building and that all mechanical units will be within the building and/or on the roof so not to disturb/detract from the neighborhood.

- The PUD indicates that that truck deliveries will take place at a loading dock the west end of the commercial building. Additional vegetative or 'hard' screening may be desired to limit visibility of the loading dock.

- The University Heights Engineer should confirm that the appropriate utilities are available to support the development. If they are not sufficient, the Engineer should identify what utilities will need to be improved and at what cost to the City.

- The construction of a dedicated left-turn lane for eastbound traffic at the property entrance as proposed, and correcting the skewed geometry of the Melrose Avenue/Sunset Street as proposed by the developer are viewed favorably from a traffic engineering perspective. Both of these measures will decrease delay for through traffic on Melrose Avenue and increase the level of service at those intersections.

- Staff recommends revisiting the traffic study at full 'build-out' of the development to analyze the need for a traffic signal or other traffic engineering improvements at the main entrance to the development. Provision of this traffic signal (and/or other improvements) may be a requirement of development approval or may be part of the developer's agreement to be installed with agreed-upon traffic conditions. If development occurs to the north of the subject property, and shares the same access onto Melrose Avenue, a reevaluation of intersection operations and potential for necessary infrastructure improvements should also be triggered.

- Disallowing entering traffic and left-turning traffic out of the development onto Sunset Street will eliminate cut-through traffic on Grand Avenue and will likely be viewed favorably by the neighborhood to the east of the PUD.

- The construction of an 8' sidewalk on south frontage of the property as proposed in the PUD submittal will be advantageous for bicyclists and pedestrians. A sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Street north of Melrose would also be advantageous from a traffic engineering perspective and should be discussed by City officials.

- Staff recommends that a sidewalk be constructed adjacent to the main access drive. This will provide direct access to the residential building for pedestrians traveling from the west and provide future access to the University owned parcel north of the subject PUD.

- Although the rear building is proposed to be much taller (61') than the building fronting Melrose Avenue (38'), the perceived heights of the buildings may not appear as such depending on the viewer's vantage point. Computer generated images of the site could address these perceptions by showing the proposed buildings in concert with proposed grading, set-backs, trees, and view sheds from adjacent properties. University Heights officials will want to discuss whether the techniques (setbacks, terracing, rooflines, and landscaping) for minimizing the mass and scale of the buildings are adequate for the property.

- University Heights representatives should request to see additional examples of the proposed construction materials before finalizing the development approval process.

- We recommend University Heights representatives request that any and all light fixtures on the site be downcast and shielded to not allow more than one foot-candle of light spillage beyond the property line. Planimetric (lighting impact) maps should be produced.

- University Heights representatives should discuss with the developer the appropriate size, illumination, and animation of any signs on the site. Current plans identify two monument signs to be erected on the property. These items should be enumerated in the Developer's Agreement.

- University Heights should discuss with the developer hours of commercial operation, outdoor seating for restaurants, cafes, bars or balconies, and/or exterior loudspeakers or other noise creating elements. These items should be enumerated in the Developer's Agreement.

- Inclusion of plans for a bus pull-off and shelter in the PUD should be discussed by the City Council. The cost and maintenance agreements for the amenities should be outlined in the Developer's agreement.

Conclusion and Standards for Approval: We find that the proposed development is substantially consistent with the zoning criteria adopted for this parcel (Ordinance No.180 & 188) in terms of height, density, setbacks, parking, number of units, and residential and commercial square footage.

Other standards for approval should include: final plans and specifications, construction/phasing timelines, condominium declarations, dedications, maintenance agreements, agreements for costs to be incurred by the developer, environmental requirements, assurances against damage to publicly owned property, and other items related to the development. These items should be enumerated in the Developer's Agreement and/or other documents for the City of University Heights.