



Adopted: 5/6/20

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
CITY OF FAIRFAX  
CITY HALL, FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA  
March 4, 2020**

**Members Present:** Chair James Schroeder, Vice Chair Jagdish Pathela, Ryan Horner, Marie Cox, Robert Beaty

**Member(s) Absent:** Paul Cunningham, Robert Kalmin

**Staff Present:** Tommy Scibilia, Planner; Albert "Fred" Frederick, Planner

**Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.**

**1. Discussion of Agenda**

**MR. HORNER MOVED TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY MR. BEATY, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE, 5-0.**

**2. Presentations by the public on any item not calling for a public hearing**

None.

**3. Consideration of the meeting minutes of January 15, 2020.**

**MR. BEATY MOVED TO ADOPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY MR. PATHELA, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE, 5-0.**

**4. Work session** with Lynne J. Strobel, representative of Northfax JV LLC, for a mixed-use development comprising 56 townhouses, a senior living facility, and site improvements on a property located at 3570 Chain Bridge Road.

Mr. Scibilia presented the staff report, which has been incorporated into the record by reference.

**Board, staff, and applicant comments**

Mr. Horner asked whether staff had requested information regarding the heights of both the senior living facility garage and the proposed neighboring Brown's Mazda garage.

Mr. Scibilia stated that staff had not requested that information.

Mr. Pathela stated that he believed a physical scale model of the development would be useful for further discussion.

Mr. Pathela asked for clarification on guest parking for the townhouse units.

Mr. Scibilia stated that in addition to the 13 off-street surface parking spaces, on-street parallel parking spaces were proposed on either side of Farr Avenue extended and Orchard Street.

Ms. Strobel addressed the Board and made the following remarks:

- The 17 parcels that make up the subject site were consolidated over a 17-year period.
- The project contains transitional uses from the denser senior living facility, down to the townhouses, and to the Assembly townhouses to the north and the single-family homes of the Fairfax Acres subdivision to the west.

Mr. Russ Rosenberger of Madison Homes, representative of the applicant, addressed the Board and made the following remarks:

- Madison Homes, the builder of the townhouses for the development, has developed other residential communities in the City of Fairfax including Madison Mews and Eleven Oaks.
- The architecture for the townhouses was designed to have a transitional aesthetic, with contemporary elements relating to the architecture of the senior living facility and traditional elements and materials relating to the Assembly and Fairfax Acres homes.

Mr. Rodney Williams of Devereaux and Associates, project architect for the townhouses and representative of the applicant, addressed the Board and made the following remarks:

- The architecture team was exploring several color schemes for the townhouses to see how they could relate to surrounding residential uses and to the senior living facility.

Mr. Steve Marker of Brightview Senior Living, representative of the applicant, addressed the Board and made the following remarks:

- Brightview offers independent, assisted, and memory care living for seniors. All of these types of residences would be provided in the proposed project.
- He encouraged the Board members to visit one of Brightview's nearby locations to get a feel for the types of communities they offer.
- Brightview develops and operates their own facilities, and strives to have a good relationship with the communities in which they operate.

Mr. Joohan Kim of SK+I Architecture, project architect for the senior living facility and representative of the applicant, addressed the Board and made the following remarks:

- The design of the independent living section of the building was meant to evoke strength and stability, while the assisted living and memory care section of the building was meant to evoke lightness and airiness.
- The proposed vertical louvers for the exterior of the eastern portion of the garage are intended to create both pedestrian intrigue and porosity for the garage.
- Verticality is used throughout the design of the building, in elements such as the individual ground floor entrances to the independent living units, balcony columns, fiber cement accents, and garage louvers.

- There is an opportunity to print graphics onto the perforated metal panels proposed for the exterior of the western half of the garage as a way to add visual interest.
- The elevations of the senior living facility and proposed neighboring Brown's Mazda garage structure are as follows:
  - Top of Brown's Mazda proposed garage: 416 feet
  - Top of Brightview parapet: 440 feet
  - Top of Brightview garage: 382 feet
- The distance between the proposed Brown's garage and Brightview's garage would be approximately 120 feet.

Connie Fan of LSG Landscape Architecture, landscape architect for the senior living facility and representative of the applicant, addressed the Board and made the following remarks:

- The low point of the senior living facility is its northeast corner, although overall the topography is fairly level in this location.
- There is a dense landscape buffer proposed on the east side of the entrance drive aisle to provide a transition to the eastern portion of the Northfax project which is not yet programmed.
- The 500-square-foot eastern courtyard would act as the main entrance to the senior living facility, and would contain large canopy trees, a covered walkway from the drop off area, small private patios on the north side for the independent living ground floor units, a congregating space with a water feature, and tall evergreens against the garage façade on the south end to screen it from view.
- The 600-square-foot western courtyard would provide outdoor spaces for the fitness center on the north, dining areas on the east, and kitchen on the south. There are opportunities for intimate group seating around a water feature or fire pit, outdoor fitness space, and outdoor dining in this courtyard.

Mr. Beaty asked about green space for the townhouse units.

Ms. Strobel stated that there would be a one-acre portion of the property in the northwest section of the site that would be open space with a trail, and that the applicant is working with staff to determine appropriate programming.

Mr. Beaty asked if this area would contain floodplain.

Ms. Strobel confirmed.

Mr. Beaty asked about guest parking for the townhouse units.

Ms. Strobel stated that the senior living facility garage would contain 120 spaces, and that in addition to the 13 off-street surface parking spaces, there would be a total of 46 on-street parallel parking spaces. Each townhouse unit would have a two-car garage.

Mr. Beaty expressed concerns that the senior living facility would appear as a "big gray block" and that more material and color variation should be considered. He added that Fairfax is gaining a reputation of being "beige" and that this would be a great opportunity to introduce vibrancy and color.

Mr. Beaty asked why the fiber cement accent material was meant to mimic woodgrain if it is not actually made of wood.

Mr. Kim stated that this woodgrain accent was selected to warm up the color palette. He stated that the dark gray brick was meant to sharply contrast with the white panel, while the woodgrain panel would act as an intermediate color to tie the two together. He added that the use of real wood presents long-term maintenance concerns.

Mr. Beaty stated that he believed that another color of panel could be used to perform this same intermediary function without mimicking another material.

Mr. Beaty asked for an explanation of the proposed corrugated metal, adding that he was concerned that this provides too utilitarian a look for certain portions of the building.

Mr. Kim stated that the corrugated metal would have a shiny finish to create light play and movement throughout the day. He stated that there would be G-channel reveals to visually breakup the panels, and that fasteners would be hidden to give a more seamless surface appearance.

Mr. Horner asked how the applicant believed the senior living facility belonged in Fairfax, and what excites them about the design.

Mr. Marker made the following remarks in response:

- Brightview always intends to integrate into the look and feel of the community, although there is not a lot of built context in this part of the City.
- This denser development lends itself to a more contemporary aesthetic.
- The project is intended to provide homes for residents, and so a residential overall feel is a major design goal.

Mr. Horner cited the goals of the Architectural Control Overlay District in the Design Guidelines relating to strengthening the street edge, pedestrian engagement, and enhancing streetscapes with landscaping. He asked that the applicant consider how the street section relates to the built structures on site.

Mr. Rosenberger stated that the applicant has been working with the City to redesign the right-of-way to their standards.

Mr. Horner made the following remarks related to the senior living facility:

- Add buildings into the street section exhibits to better communicate their scale in context with the pedestrian realm.
- He expressed concern related to the immediacy of the public realm outside of the stoops of the ground floor independent living units on the north side of the building.
- He expressed concern about the pedestrian experience on the north side of the building due to the narrow pedestrian realm and immediate adjacency of a seven-story structure.

- Consider widening the sidewalks to accommodate for what will likely be high levels of pedestrian traffic.
- Enhance the streetscape and the experience of its different users with landscaping.
- Consider making a stronger distinction between public and private spaces in the courtyards.
- Show walkways into and around the senior living facility in the plans to better understand pedestrian circulation.
- Create human scale at the ground floor by playing with materiality.
- While the proposed architectural style of this building is unique to the City, it is perhaps not unique to the region.
- He appreciates the subtlety of the design, as it is very large but from a distance will not be overly visually dominant.
- Consider how the building will look from afar on Fairfax Boulevard. It will likely be highly visible.
- High priority should be given to the design of the western portion of the garage due to its high visibility and potential high volume of pedestrian traffic that would pass right next to it.
- He appreciates the differing designs of the courtyards, with the eastern courtyard being a more passive space and the western courtyard being more active.

Mr. Horner made the following remarks related to the townhouse units:

- The townhouses look like “Anywhere, USA.”
- How will the townhouses facing the senior living facility differ from those with internal orientation?
- Think of each stick of townhouses as one building, rather than five individual buildings.
- Differentiate the appearance of the end units in some way to give each stick a finished and thought-out end condition. This should be informed by the context of the unit (i.e. is it facing a street, an alley, another building?).
- Consideration should be given to a unique design for the townhouse units at the terminus of Orchard Street due to their unique positioning on the site and the direct approach of vehicles in the westward direction. Consider how headlights will affect ground floor living in these units.

Mr. Pathela made the following remarks:

- He greatly appreciates the integration of senior living into the community rather than isolating it.
- He likes the transitional architectural style of the townhouses, and thinks the outdoor living spaces, especially the fourth floor terraces, will be attractive amenities that will enhance the feel of the community.
- He expressed concern related to the location and size of the open space for the townhouse units, stating that the location was not accessible or large enough for the number of residences proposed.
- A three-dimensional physical model of the development would go a long way in helping both the applicant and the Board in understanding the spatial relationships on the site.
- He expressed concerns related to the number of guest parking spaces.

Mr. Marker stated that the number of parking spaces for the senior living facility was based on an average derived from looking at Brightview's 41 locations. He added that parking would primarily be for staff and visitors.

Mr. Pathela asked if the applicant had considered rooftop amenity space above the seventh floor of the senior living facility.

Mr. Marker stated that they had not explored that as an option but were providing third-floor outdoor amenity space for memory care residents and fourth-floor outdoor amenity space for assisted living residents. He added that the green roof above the eastern portion of the parking garage is intended to provide pleasant views for south-facing residents.

Mr. Pathela asked if the senior facility would be LEED certified.

Mr. Marker stated that the project would not be, and that Brightview does not typically construct to LEED standards unless required by the municipality.

Mr. Pathela asked if the applicant was considering installing solar panels to help power the senior living facility.

Mr. Marker stated that the applicant was looking into incorporating solar into the project. He added that Virginia does not have good incentives to add solar.

Mr. Horner made the following remarks:

- He agreed with Mr. Pathela that a rooftop amenity space above the seventh floor of the senior living facility could be a great feature.
- He expressed concerns about the proposed third- and fourth-floor outdoor amenity areas facing out onto the Brown's Mazda garage because of the elevation drop from the Brown's property to the subject site.
- He agreed with Mr. Pathela that a physical model of the development would be very useful and added that well-placed vantage points in renderings can also be very effective in communicating scale.

Mr. Pathela stated that he believed it was a good design concept to have the parking garage of the senior living facility facing the proposed Brown's Mazda garage.

Mr. Pathela asked for clarification on the piping of the Accotink Creek on the subject site as part of the proposal.

Mr. Rosenberger stated that the applicant has been working with the City, FEMA, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the US Army Corps of Engineers to develop the plan to pipe the creek. He stated that FEMA has approved their Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) for changes to the floodplain. He stated that the piping would tie into the City and VDOT's recently-completed culvert system immediately east of the subject site.

Mr. Pathela asked if there was a timeline for Phase 2 of the Northfax development.

Mr. Rosenberger stated that at this time that area was still not programmed, but pending market analysis the applicant anticipated a more intensive mix of commercial and residential. In order for Phase 2 to be viable, the creek would need to be piped and the road network completed first as part of Phase 1.

Mr. Pathela asked how many bedrooms would be in each townhouse unit.

Mr. Rosenberger stated that each unit would have three or four bedrooms. The ground floor would have the den/optional bedroom and the garage, the second floor would contain the living spaces such as the kitchen and living room, the third floor would contain three bedrooms, and the fourth floor would contain a loft/optional bedroom and terrace. He added that the applicant believes that rooftop terraces work well in urban contexts, which is appropriate for this area as an Activity Center per the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

Mr. Pathela asked if there would be elevators in the townhouse units.

Mr. Rosenberger stated that elevators would be optional.

Ms. Cox stated that she believed the concept of scaling the development up in density toward the center and back down with townhouses closer to the surrounding residential development was excellent.

Ms. Cox asked what the structure of the senior living facility would be.

Mr. Marker stated that the first two floors would be a concrete podium while the upper floors of the assisted living section of the building would have a light-gauge metal frame and the upper floors of the independent living section would have a wood frame.

Ms. Cox asked for clarification on the vehicular circulation at the senior living drop off area.

Mr. Marker stated that vehicles would continue through the garage and out onto Farr Avenue extended.

Ms. Cox made the following remarks:

- This new road network would likely be used as a cut-through for people not wanting to wait with traffic at the signalized intersection of Chain Bridge Road and Fairfax Boulevard.
- The main entrance to the senior living facility is not immediately apparent. The design of this entrance should emphasize where this is located.
- Material samples are integral to a full understanding of the project. She requested that staff require material samples prior to work sessions.
- There is a lot of gray brick, which can be a beautiful material, but the applicant should explore ways to further break up wall sections with material and color variation.
- She agreed with Mr. Horner that a full street section including buildings would be very useful in understanding the scale of the project and more specifically how the end units of the townhouses interact with the street.

Mr. Rosenberger stated that in response to planning staff comments, the applicant was exploring reorienting more of the townhouses to be parallel to Orchard Street, and that the applicant was amenable to looking into side-entrance end units.

Ms. Cox asked for clarification on the location of the mechanical units for the townhouses.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that they would be roof-mounted on top of the fourth floor and would be screened from view as required.

Mr. Schroeder made the following remarks:

- He agreed with other Board members that the scale transitions within the project scope were a good urban design feature.
- He agreed with Mr. Pathela that the amount and location of green space provided for the townhouse units should be rethought.

Mr. Schroeder asked how emergency vehicles would circulate at the senior living facility.

Mr. Marker explained that emergency vehicles would access the building from the drop off area on the east side of the building and personnel would access the building and elevators via the main entrance. He explained that the emergency vehicles could exit through the garage onto Farr Avenue extended.

Mr. Schroeder asked where the emergency generator would be located.

Mr. Marker explained that it would either be located within the building or in an underground vault.

Mr. Schroeder made the following remarks:

- Material samples will be very useful moving forward.
- Understanding how the project would look from the right-of-way on Fairfax Boulevard will be very important.
- The pedestrian realm along Farr Avenue extended and what people experience and see while walking along that road is very important to consider.
- There are currently no pedestrian destinations in this part of the City and he hopes to see popular commercial uses provided in Phase 2.

Mr. Horner asked whether the applicant anticipated any telecommunications providers requesting to collocate on the roof of the senior living facility.

Mr. Marker stated that Brightview typically does not make such agreements.

Mr. Horner asked that the design team for the senior living facility take into consideration that requests from telecommunications providers for collocation will be imminent due to the relative height of the proposed structure, and that the rooftop and façade should be designed in a way that collocation can be accomplished in a tasteful and discreet manner.

Mr. Marker stated that the parapets on the independent living section of the senior living facility would be tall enough to screen all anticipated roof-mounted equipment from view.

Mr. Pathela reiterated his earlier point that the green space be integral to the design of the townhouse community.

## **5. Staff Report**

Mr. Scibilia discussed administrative approvals of minor certificates of appropriateness since the last meeting:

- eXurb Fitness (formerly World Gym) monument sign reface – 10201 Main Street
- Cardinal Court apartments landscaping and basement-level emergency egress modifications – 10803, 10805, and 10810 Harvey Drive

Mr. Scibilia discussed upcoming BAR meetings and anticipated cases:

- March 18, 2020:
  - Work session for EYA townhouse development – 3500 Pickett Road (currently Metro Church)
- April 1, 2020:
  - Hampton Inn façade modifications – 10860 Fairfax Boulevard
  - Potential work session for redevelopment of 3903 Old Lee Highway (formerly State Farm)
- April 15, 2020:
  - Potential final review of Brown's Mazda redevelopment – 10570 Fairfax Boulevard

Mr. Scibilia asked for Board member availability for upcoming meetings on March 18, April 1, and April 15.

- No known conflicts.

Mr. Scibilia asked Mr. Beaty for any relevant updates from the Community Appearance Committee (CAC):

- Nothing to report.

Mr. Scibilia briefed the Board on the small area plans process for Northfax and Old Town and provided recently passed meeting dates:

- Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 6:30 in the Council work session room – Joint briefing by consultant Cunningham Quill for City Boards and Commissions
  - Mr. Beaty attended
- Thursday, January 30, 2020 at 6:30 at the Sherwood Center – Public briefing by the consultant on the Northfax Activity Center small area plan
- Thursday, February 6, 2020 at 6:30 at the Sherwood Center – Public briefing by the consultant on the Old Town Activity Center small area plan

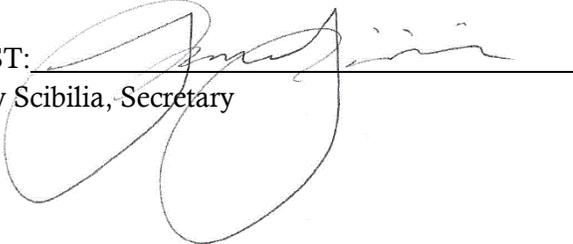
Mr. Scibilia discussed training for Board members.

**6. Closing Board Comments**

None.

**7. Adjournment**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.**

ATTEST:   
Tommy Scibilia, Secretary