

## Memo

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**Stantec**

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To:	Tim Gladhill, Development Services Manager	From:	Tina Goodroad, AICP
	Recipient's Office		Sender's Office
File:	Workforce Housing Site Plan review	Date:	March 8, 2013

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### **Reference: Workforce Housing in Ramsey COR**

The applicant has submitted a preliminary site plan for a 47 unit workforce housing apartment building for a site located in COR 1 situated at the southeast corner of Sapphire Street and Sunwood Drive. Below is a summary of the site plan review based on the COR 1 site and building design requirements.

As described in The COR Design Framework the COR1 Mixed Use Core “provides the broadest variety, highest density and greatest intensity of development encouraging both vertical and horizontal mixed use.”

The site is located on Sunwood Drive which is classified as a destination street and Sapphire Street which is classified as a downtown street. The site also abuts Center Street which is also classified as a downtown street.

Minimum lot size requirement: none

Minimum lot width: 20' on all three streets. Proposed plan meets this requirement.

Density: greater than 15 units is permitted in COR1. The proposal is for a five story building (first floor at grade enclosed parking) with 47 units.

Minimum F.A.R is .75 and proposed is 1.09

Required build to lines on Sunwood Drive and Sapphire Street is 5' to the right-of-way with 60% of the building façade meeting this requirement. A scaled site plan was not provided to determine proposed build to lines. However, as the site plan illustrates, the applicant understands the intent of building placement in the COR up to the street. Nevertheless, improvements can be made to the building layout that would offer greater use of the entire site extending the Center Street, while meeting the build to lines on both Sunwood Drive and Sapphire Street. Development plans cannot prohibit the remaining site area from meeting the Development Plan, including building area to meet build to and building frontage requirements along Center Street.

The preliminary site plan does not meet the build to line along Sapphire Street. If the building were designed in an “L” shape and tucked into the southeast corner greater

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room would be available for a second “L” shaped building at the southwest corner as illustrated on Development Plan 6.1. Additional efforts may still be needed to meet the 60% building frontage along Sapphire Street via a knee wall, however, this building pattern would allow for maximum use of the site as intended in the overall development plan.

Building height maximum is five stories; proposed is five stories with the first story serving as enclosed at grade parking.

The applicant will also be required to provide for a 6’ wide boulevard and 10’ sidewalk. Streetscaping will be required according the COR Design Framework.

Minimum parking required is one space per unit with a maximum of two per unit. The applicant is proposing 36 enclosed spaces and 33 surface spaces totaling close to 1.5 spaces per unit. Parking shall be located at the rear or side of the site. With an “L” shape building this could be accomplished by locating the parking inside the “L”.

The preliminary site plan does locate the proposed surface parking at the rear of the site. As mentioned earlier a knee wall may be required to meet the required 60% building frontage. This knee wall may also be required to screen the parking lot along Sapphire Street.

Other items of consideration:

Building architecture is very important in the COR, especially in COR1 which is in the heart of the COR. Design requirements are based on the street type the site is located on as well as the sub-district. Sunwood Drive is classified as the destination street (the only one in the district). A destination street is defined as the location for shopping, entertainment, services, workplace and other primary amenities. As such, the proposed use, as an apartment building may not be the highest and best use of this particular site in COR1.

Buildings in this sub-district are intended to play a major role in defining the overall character in the COR. Buildings are required to have four sided architecture and highlight unique architectural features while also contributing to the compatibility of other buildings immediately surrounding the site. Emphasis in this sub-district is on the design of the elevation(s) facing the streets. To meet these goals the applicant shall follow the building design guidelines for all buildings in The COR Design Framework. This requires specific elements including but not limited to:

- Four sided architecture
- Reinforce the street edge
- Interesting mix of building styles, scales and massing

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- An animated street presence with a mix of street level uses, interesting building facades, doors and windows on the street and other architectural elements that animate the pedestrian experience. The proposed use, as residential will have difficulty meeting the design intent for this sub-district. Additionally, the proposed at grade, first level use of parking will make these requirements even more difficult to achieve without the use of false architectural elements which will not meet the intent for an animated street presence.
- Variety in building design and building elements including roofs. Use of high quality materials.
- Special architectural elements used to highlight key streets. In this case that would include Sunwood Drive, Sapphire Street and even Center Street. This site cannot develop in a manner that would prohibit future development from meeting the development plan for Center Street.

While elevations have not been provided; this list points out key requirements for the building design in the COR 1 sub-district that will apply to the proposed workforce housing proposal.

The above summary points to key areas where the preliminary plan meets requirements and where improvements and redesign shall be considered for this proposed use to fully meet the intent of the COR 1 sub-district.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call.