Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association (LHENA) - Zoning and Planning Committee

Project Questionnaire

Mission Statement: The Zoning & Planning Committee provides a forum to share information and discuss land use, development, infrastructure improvements, and transportation affecting the Lowry Hill East community;*as an advisory body, it often makes recommendations on these issues to the Board and City.*

**Background**

* The Project Questionnaire is a set of standardized questions to be completed and submitted prior to Zoning and Planning Committee meetings by developers who wish to present project proposals to the Committee.
* The intent of this questionnaire is to promote a meaningful conversation at Committee meetings by allowing guests to better prepare for and address commonly-asked questions.
* Guests are to answer the Project Questionnaire to the best of their ability and submit to the Committee Chair at least **two days before the meeting**. Answers will be posted online as an attachment to the meeting agenda.
* The Project Questionnaire is not a comprehensive list of questions, nor is it a regulatory tool.
* Questionnaire responses will help guide Committee discussion and provide informed voting on any motions made in the meeting.
* A map of the Lowry Hill East neighborhood is provided on page three of this document.

**Questions**

*Addressing Needs*

* What type of residential units or commercial space will be offered by the project?

The project will provide +/- 240 market-rate rental dwelling units and +/- 10,000 sf of retail shell space. Unit sizes will range from 500 sf studios to 1,250 sf two-bedroom, two-bath units.

* If rental property, what is the anticipated price range, generally? What, if any percentage of the property will be affordable housing?

The project will be market rate house. Rents are expected to range from roughly $1,300 for studios to upwards of $3,000+ for 2-beds.

* If rental property, what unit sizes are you offering? How many units in total?

Refer to first answer above.

* If rental property, what is the current occupancy rate of comparable buildings in the area? How does the project fill a need within the neighborhood and city?

The broader market vacancy rate is roughly 4% metro-wide. The Uptown and Loring Park neighborhoods are even tighter in terms of vacancy (around 3.4%). In the immediate vicinity (other than the marquee apartments across the street) there has been very little new, market-rate multi-family redevelopment. With a growing number of millennials and downsizers seeking contemporary finishes in an urban, highly-walkable neighborhood like LHENA, LMC is confident that there is high demand for this type of project.

*Land Use and Zoning*

* Is the project in compliance with the City of Minneapolis zoning code, or will it require rezoning, a variance, conditional use permit, or other land use application approval?

The project will require several applications. More may be identified as the design progresses. The primary zoning district is C2 – Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District; the overlay zoning is Hennepin, Lyndale, Lagoon and Lake St area Pedestrian Overlay. No change in zoning is being pursued. In consultation with the staff planner, we have identified the following applications:

* CUP for height increase from 4 stories, 56’ to 8 stories, 85’
* Variance for FAR increase from 2.38 to 2.7 (base FAR is 1.7. The project will utilize two 25% FAR bonuses: enclosed parking and mixed use commercial-residential buildings
* Site Plan Review
* At this time we don’t believe the project requires any yard setbacks.
* Will you be seeking approval from the Committee?

Yes.

*Design and Quality*

* How does it fit contextually into the neighborhood?

The building is composed of two clearly articulated volumes, a C-shape and an L-shape, each clad with a single primary material. The massing takes advantage of the significant natural grade change across the site. A brick-clad L-shaped building holds the corner of Lyndale and Franklin with the street level devoted primarily to commercial space, in keeping with the neighborhood’s largely intact early-20th century building fabric. Minimal setbacks from each street will provide space for planted boulevards and 8’ sidewalks. This space will be similar in scale to what was commonly found along both corridors prior to post-war street-widening. The C-shaped volume is oriented toward Aldrich avenue with greater setbacks similar to the neighboring apartment buildings. This volume features a street-level central courtyard facing Aldrich, framed by equal building wings, similar to early 20-th century courtyard-style apartment buildings that can be found through Lowry Hill, Lowry Hill East and Whittier.

* What type of exterior materials will be used? Brick, traditional 3-coat cementitious stucco and fiber cement panels.
* How will the project enhance the public realm and pedestrian environment?

The existing public realm allows much room for improvement. The surface parking lot and blank building facades will be replaced with buildings oriented toward the pedestrian realm, with active uses, multiple entrances and regularly spaces windows. Planted boulevards will be added where non currently exist on Lyndale and Franklin. The overhead power poles on Franklin will be removed and the electrical lines will be buried. The development team will work with the city of Minneapolis as they look toward the complete reconstruction of Franklin Avenue in 2020 and our team will furnish improvements which may include widened pedestrian realm, boulevards and on-street bicycle facilities. The development team is working with the Public Works and Traffic departments to design vehicle access to the development that takes into account pedestrian and bicycle comfort and safety. The northern portion of the site provides an opportunity to enhance the entrance of the bike/ped bridge with landscaping and passive surveillance.

*Environmental Impact*

* How does the project incorporate best management practices for green building design (e.g., energy conservation, water conservation and stormwater management, mitigation of light and noise pollution, etc.)?

The site currently has no storm-water quality treatment. Whatever stormwater reaches the site washes across the site, picking up surface contaminants before reaching the city storm sewer and, ultimately, the Mississippi River. Our development project will bring the site up to current standards. Storm water will be gathered (on roofs) and piped to a system that filters out sediment and controls the rate of stormwater being discharged to the municipal storm sewer. Our strategy will likely include some level of infiltration as well, depending on suitability of soil characteristics. The redevelopment will not solve local flooding issues but, the measures described above and the addition of boulevards and additional canopy trees will also provide incremental rate control for stormwater falling on public sidewalks which should reduce peak flood elevations.

This project is not yet engineered but will target similar verified total energy performance of similar ESG-designed projects: +/-55 Kbtu/ft2/yr (40% better than baseline of 88.2). Select specific strategies are listed below:

* Optimized window/wall ratio for local climate (between 30% to 35% glazing)
* R-30 roof insulation (50% better than code minimum of R-20)
* 8” (nominal) thick exterior walls with R-25 fiberglass batt insulation
* 0.048 U-Factor (33% better than code minimum of 0.064)
* High-performance low-e fiberglass windows:
* 0.28 U-Factor (25% better than code minimum of 0.35)
* 0.28 SHGC (43% better than code minimum of 0.40)
* Reduced lighting power density achieved through a combination of efficient LED fixtures and occupancy sensors in public areas including parking
* Energy Star appliances
* 2.0 gpm low-flow bathing fixtures
* Ceiling fans in all bedrooms (reduces air conditioning use)
* Street trees planted in open boulevards help intercept storm water runoff from the sidewalk; mature trees will help shade street level storefront glazing.
* All exterior light fixtures will be full cut-off type to minimize light pollution
* We will perform a cost/benefit analysis for a rooftop solar array, taking into account locally available financial incentives
* EV charging stations (quantity TBD)
* Select areas of planted roofs
* What long-term environmentally sustainable opportunities are you considering for this building? (From material choices, offering organics composting, a green roof, garden space, native plants, mature boulevard trees, etc.)

Refer to the measures described above.

* Are you considering doing a shade study (if the building is changing in height)? We will include a shadow study in the Committee of the Whole submission.

*Transportation Impact*

* How does the project contribute to active transportation (walking, biking, transit) in the neighborhood? How could the project support car-free living in Minneapolis?

The walkability and bikeability of the neighborhood are key features that drew the developer’s interest in the site. As such, the development team will design the project to cater to residents who seek to minimize car use. On-site resident parking will be leased ala carte, meaning nobody who doesn’t use parking will have to pay for parking. The developer will commission a travel demand management plan including a list of transit incentives that will become binding commitments. Secure bicycle parking for residents will be provided at a ratio of at least one stall per dwelling unit. The majority of bike parking will be provided in a room at grade with views and direct access to the outdoors. In addition to bike storage, the room will include facilities for repairing and maintaining bicycles. The addition of 10,000 sf of retail will incrementally improve the entire neighborhood’s walkability.

* Do you anticipate the project impacting traffic operations? If so, what mitigation strategies will the project employ?

Mitigation strategies used at Lennar’s most recent Minneapolis development will likely be used at this project:

* Kiosk within development including info on transit, biking, carshare, including a monitor displaying real time transit information designed specifically for this site by Metro Transit.
* Multimodal info packet supplied to each new resident and retail employee
* ADA sidewalks and curb cuts
* Assess feasibility of providing car-share on site
* Provide secure bike parking at 1:1 ratio
* Provide bike maintenance facility
* Conduct baseline surveys to assess resident and employee commuting habits within six months
* Parking stalls will be leased separately from apartments
* Designate a TDM liaison as point of contact for all strategy committments
* How will the project address loading and delivery zones (if applicable)?

The development team strongly desires to provide off-street loading zones and vehicle access for tenant move ins, commercial loading and trash/recycling removal. Our team is working with Traffic and Public Works to design service vehicle access from the public street.

* How many parking spaces will be on the property? Approximately 250 stalls for residents and guests and 25 stalls for commercial space customers and employees.

*Economic Impact*

* What is the estimated municipal property tax revenue associated with the project?

Once the project is fully-stabilized, the property could be generating over a million dollars in additional tax revenue for the city. This increase in tax revenue is even more significant given the fact that the VLR site (currently owned by a non-profit) generates no tax revenue for the city today.

* How many estimated jobs will be created/supported by the project in the short and long term?

During construction, hundreds of local trades, engineers, architects, contractors, laborers, and artists will be employed. Once the project is stabilized, LMC anticipates at least 3 leasing professionals and 3 service engineers to be employed full-tie.

* Do you have a best practices policy when hiring contractors/subcontractors? How will you ensure hiring and treatment will follow the law?

Feel free to take a look at our firm’s Code of Business Ethics and Conduct ([LINKED HERE).](http://investors.lennar.com/~/media/Files/L/Lennar-IR/documents/governance-documents/COBC_FY_2017.pdf) At Lennar, our business is built on commitment to Quality, Value and Integrity in all aspects of our work. We fulfill this commitment every day for the benefit of our customers, our Associates, our stockholders and the communities in which we build homes.

