



## Minutes of the Development Review Commission August 28, 2018

Minutes of the regular hearing of the Development Review Commission, of the City of Tempe, which was held in Council Chambers,  
31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona

**Present:**

Chair David Lyon  
Vice Chair Michael DiDomenico  
Commissioner Philip Amorosi  
Commissioner Thomas Brown  
Commissioner Andrew Johnson  
Commissioner Scott Summers  
Commissioner Don Cassano

**Absent:**

Alternate Commissioner Angela Thornton  
Alternate Commissioner Barbara Lloyd

**City Staff Present:**

Chad Weaver, Director, Community Development  
Ryan Levesque, Deputy Director – Planning, Comm. Devel.  
Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner  
Diana Kaminski, Senior Planner  
Cynthia Jarrad, Administrative Assistant

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Hearing convened at 6:12 pm and was called to order by Chair David Lyon.

**Consideration of Meeting Minutes:**

- 1) Study Session Minutes, July 24, 2018
- 2) Regular Meeting Minutes, July 24, 2018

**MOTION:** By Vice Chair DiDomenico to approve the Study Session and Regular Meeting Minutes for July 24, 2018; second by Commissioner Amorosi.

**AYES:** Chair Lyon, Vice Chair DiDomenico, and Commissioners Amorosi, Brown, Cassano, and Johnson

**NAYS:** None

**ABSTAIN:** Commissioner Summers

**ABSENT:** Alternate Commissioner Thornton and Alternate Commissioner Lloyd

**VOTE:** Motion passed on a 6-0 vote

- 3) Request two Use Permit Standards to reduce the rear and side yard setbacks, and a Development Plan Review for a new two-story multi-family development consisting of five dwelling units, for **TEMPE STUDENT HOUSING**, located at 1432 and 1435 South Bonarden Lane. The applicant is 3 Engineering LLC. (PL180175)

**PRESENTATION BY STAFF:**

Ms. Diana Kaminski, Senior Planner, stated Tempe Student Housing is not requesting to change the zoning. An inquiry was made to Ms. Kaminski regarding when the zoning was established. She stated the earliest she could find after annexation was 1951 as a multifamily site and it remains as such and mentioned the multi-family development standards that applies to

the project. Ms. Kaminski then described the project including the requests for the Use Permits Standards to for the setbacks; that the development will be two-story homes which would look like single family homes even though it is a multifamily development. She explained that each building has a 2-car garage with four bedrooms, and additional parking in the west lot and the landscape requirements are being met. She then proceeded to show the audience the different floor plans, building types, and the three different color palettes. Ms. Kaminski stated that staff has received several e-mails of concern regarding the project mainly about density, traffic, and parking. Ms. Kaminski explained the developers proposed nine dwelling units per acre with these five units while the zoning district allows up to 25 dwelling units per acre. She restated that each dwelling unit has four bedrooms, is parked as a multifamily, and has guest parking available on the West lot. She proceeded to state there is street parking, and there is permit parking available to residents on the North side. Ms. Kaminski explained concerns about potential tenants and the behavior and operations of the development. She finished by stating she will defer to the applicant to discuss further about their design and operations.

#### **PRESENTATION BY APPLICANT:**

Mr. Matthew Mancini of 3 Engineering stated most of his comments will reflect what has been already stated. He announced he is represented here with Justin Helms, Principal of Haken Holdings.

Justin Helms introduced himself and explained that Haken Holdings was started in 2015. The company has focused projects mainly in the southeast and they have a lot of projects in Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, and Tennessee. Mr. Helms proceeded to explain that they do not build typical apartment building design, instead doing more cottage style houses. He stated this gives students a single-family home feel and stated students seem to be trying to leave big complexes, looking for more private quarters. He then explained all his properties are managed by local property managers. Mr. Helms explained they will hold interviews and find the best one with 24-hour maintenance. He then proclaimed since Haken Holdings is going to own these awhile, they want to screen tenants well, so their properties do not get destroyed. He stated that they like this site, the area, and being close to the University and one of the biggest amenities is being within walking distance.

Mr. Mancini described the site plan, as proposed, with five 4-bedroom units. He explained that the project is more of a single-family feel and he feels that is a very important aspect. He then stated that they are enhancing the project with a well-designed landscape that they have worked with staff on developing. He moved on to say that all the houses will have two stall garages and a parking spot and providing 22 spaces instead of the required 16. Mr. Mancini stated three lots will have driveways, but they are not parkable in terms of code overnight. He said he knows that parking on the street can lead to congestions, so they are providing "no-parking" signs on the street, and all parking is assigned in their parking stalls and garages. Mr. Mancini explained they are planning to do a hammer head road design to significantly improve traffic maneuverability. He stated that this will allow fire, refuse, and resident traffic to turn easily. He added that new streetlighting is being provided as well. Mr. Mancini stated they will be using standard single-family height of 26 feet and begins to explain the context area. He restated the fact that they are going for a single-family feel instead of the apartment style mass living. He added that these developments are not just geared towards student. He knew that this is what the development is geared towards, but they would not and cannot turn away families that might be interested in renting these properties regardless. Mr. Mancini believed this is an important aspect of the development. He proceeded to show us the landscape plan and stated it is designed with drought tolerant plants. He Listed Oak, Oleander and ground cover that will provide color to the community giving an aesthetic feel and added that all landscape will be professionally managed and manicured. He stated the site will look manicured at all time so there is no risk of the site deteriorating from a landscape perspective. Mr. Mancini added there will be turf, barbecues and seating in the common areas to promote community, which will be available for all five houses. He mentioned the color palette of the different house designs and stated there are three colors being applied to the housing units. He reinforced they worked closely with staff to design the stucco, metal rood, and stone veneers of the buildings. He reinforced the design of these buildings is enhanced architecture, and vastly oppose normal apartment complex design. Mr. Mancini stated one of the items today is a use permit for a two-foot reduction of setback on the south side and rears of the units. He explained the primary reason for this is due to the hammerhead design of the street. He said this will push the units east and west, and south with the parking lot. He stated they wanted openness with the community, so he felt like adding two feet could help with that. He also declared they are trying to keep the standard 5

and 10-foot setbacks you have on a normal single-family home. He felt as if two feet setbacks would help them achieve that, pushing as far south as the development could go, then as far east and west on the parcels. He also added that the east side would be the proposed workforce housing. Mr. Mancini continued discussing the specifications of the setbacks and stated they are not asking for any variation from what's allowed in R-4 zoning currently. He stated that when they design communities they keep neighborhoods in mind and cited what is allowable in code as far as unit number and height but says there no way they think that's appropriate to come into a residential neighborhood. He restated that the architect has designed houses that look like single family homes instead of apartments. Mr. Mancini continued by saying density is well below the allowable figure, but he knows traffic is going to be a concern. He supported this by stating the hammer head will increase maneuverability, and added there is no parking restrictions, that they are already over-parked. Mr. Mancini stated that all trash bins will be off the road in a dedicated bin space in the sidewalk bump outs, so traffic will not have to maneuver around those. He then proceeded to explain that they initially wanted to work with the developers of the project on Rita, but it did not work out due to Tempe Student Housing being so much farther along in the process.

Mr. Helms interjected their intention is to be good neighbors, it will be locally managed, monitored, and a call center if there are ever any issues.

Mr. Mancini said they are replacing the eight-foot perimeter wall and streetlighting around the facility and they are making it secure from a security standpoint. He explained they have talked to Ms. Kaminski about only renting to four people per house, as in four bedrooms, for people. They will not be able to have more than four people living in the house he explained, only to the individual it is rented to. He also added that for the factor of safety the property would not be more than 50% leased to an organization. So even if they are tied to an organization he stated, the development would not be allowed to have 50% as one organization, even though it is leased to the individual. Mr. Mancini proceeded to show the commission additional renderings of the complex and thanked the commission for the time he has had to present.

#### **COMMISSION COMMENTS & APPLICANT RESPONSE:**

Commissioner Scott Sumners comments that the Use Permit looks like the entire development was pushed to the railroad tracks.

Ms. Kaminski responds yes.

Commissioner Sumners clarified his understanding that there is an existing packet showing it is pushed north and he wanted to make clear it was being pushed South so that it is away from the existing single-family home to the North.

Ms. Kaminski proceeds to explain that this came up in a public comment that was received, the applicant had originally proposed two feet, which she says wasn't really a matter of which side, they just needed an additional two feet to provide the spacing they wanted between the houses.

Commissioner Amorosi commented that he looked at the Haken Holdings website and noted they seem to have a standard model at other sites around the country to which each room was key padded and inquired if that is what they are doing with this development.

Mr. Helms stated they put keypads on some of them because it is easier for the college kids instead of having keys that they can lose. He proceeded to say he keypads were on the outside, and the individual doors.

Commissioner Amorosi expressed concern about key padding the bedrooms and stated that would defeat the purpose. Mr. Helms assured they will be rented as a unit.

Commissioner Cassano asked about the location, and accessibility of the management office in case of parking issues.

Mr. Mancini explained the placement of the no parking signs, that there not allowed to park there on a long-term basis, and how he feels it will pull people off the streets. He also stated that the renters are likely also to call the association Mr. Helms explained they have the same kind of development and a tow company tows anyone without the appropriate sticker for said parking. Which also applied to parking lot parking, that will have guest labeled parking spots.

Commissioner Johnson asked whether there will be four people living in a unit because he was concerned about to many people can potentially inhabit in a unit.

Mr. Mancini responded that four people will be allowed to live in a unit.

Commissioner Johnson then asked how the development will control the number of people living in one unit, and would the applicant ensure that the people living in a unit is are not all from the same organization.

Mr. Helms clarified they will have to work with the property manager on that aspect, and Mr. Mancini suggested it could be part of the application.

Mr. Mancini clarified they do not want fraternities and sororities to be renting for said organizations.

Commissioner Johnson expressed concern on how enforceable that is.

Commissioner Summers asked for clarification of an inconsistency with allowed building height. Which led him to ask why they aren't going to build another story with all the extra room they have in code.

Mr. Mancini explained that in a previous meeting they were going to do 6-bedroom units, but staff and council stated that was unfavorable. He also added that they wanted to maintain a favorable visual standpoint with the development.

Commissioner Brown asked if the management company will be reachable by someone other than the police department.

Mr. Mancini responded that they are willing to share their contact information with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Commissioner Brown then asks about the buildings inclusion of exposed wood and architecture and stated wood doesn't fare well in this climate.

Mr. Mancini responded he needed to speak to the architect to confirm.

Commissioner Brown proceeded to state he feels as if the design is extremely repetitious and inquired if the design could be enhanced to not be so cookie cutter.

Mr. Mancini stated they can take the design enhancement into consideration and that they will be using a local architect who knows how to design houses to withstand this climate.

Commissioner Brown stated that he does see some detail, but the elevations are a little less inspiring.

Mr. Mancini assured Commissioner Brown the houses were design not to be a box, and the elevations is misleading.

Commissioner Brown proclaimed he enjoyed the flowering plant material included in the landscape plan.

#### **Public Comments:**

Chairman Lyon read several public comment cards;

Mr. Chuck Lindberg wrote Student only housing has no place in single family neighborhoods, they require constant supervision and are disruptive to neighborhood stability and cohesion.

Mr. Robert Hannan wrote he had reviewed the plans and is in full support of the project.

Mr. Philip Yates took the stand and proclaimed he had some complaints and concerns. Specifically, regarding parties, the fact that single rooms are being rented out, and the vagueness of what TEMPE STUDENT HOUSING means. He also asked if the call line if there was ever a problem was going to be 24/7.

Chair Lyon closed the public comment section and invites the applicant back the stage.

### **Applicant Response:**

Mr. Mancini stated that the number of units they proposed is far under what is allowed by code, and they provided 40% more parking than they needed to. He believed it was counter intuitive to add even more parking because it would invite even more people to the development to potentially party. He stated he believes they are doing a good balancing act regarding the visitors. He also believed a rental facility would be easier to manage than single family homes that people live in as students. He stated he is cognizant of the fraternity and sorority issue, and it was not their intention to build fraternity and sorority houses on Bonarden. He stated that from a managerial standpoint with 24/7-hour access, is better than having to rely on some 9-5 call center or police. Mr. Mancini addressed the issue of traffic and stated they are to everything in their ability to make Bonarden maneuverable at great cost to development.

Vice Chair DiDomenico asked if Mr. Mancini had any alternate elevations.

Mr. Mancini stated they had alternatives through the design process, but this was not the original design and they worked closely with staff to improve upon it.

Chair Lyon asked Ms. Kaminski to repeat the request that the Commission is considering. Ms. Kaminski restated the request for the two use permit standards, for the south side setback from 10 feet to 8 feet and the rear setbacks on the east and west side from 10 feet to 8 feet and multi-development landscape and elevations with materials for the buildings. She added that it was a five building, 4 bedrooms each apartment community.

### **Commission Comments:**

Vice Chair DiDomenico commented he would like the Commission to consider the two requests, Use permit Standards and Development Plan Review, with two separate motions. He stated that he has no problem with the use, and he thinks it would be an improvement to the property if properly managed. However, he commented that he finds the design of the properties ugly and would hate to see the version before the "improved" version. He finished by stating he likes the positioning of the buildings, but he is just not a fan of the architecture.

Commissioner Brown stated he does not believe the setback request, or design of the buildings is a good idea. He added he would not mind voting on them separately

Commissioner Amorosi did not believe this type of development belongs on Bonarden due to the character the street. He cited the case of the Riverside neighborhood in which developments like this went up and the students destroyed the neighborhood. He stated he would rather see single family type homes that are affordable and does not create as much traffic as this the proposed project.

Commissioner Brown stated he shared concerns about the architecture, but he supported the general idea of the area improvement.

Chair Lyon stated the Commission would need to provide some direction to staff as to how to proceed and what the Commission is looking for.

Vice Chair DiDomenico wanted to go back with staff and work on the development aesthetics. He did not believe this would be an upgrade to a neighborhood, as proposed. He stated he would not have trouble approving the project if he found it more appealing.

Commissioner Johnson stated he does not like the name of the project and the aesthetics of the development. He did not believe it fits in with the neighborhood. He believes having a good management company is very important in this situation. What he hoped happens is the adjacent neighbor gets involved in a larger scale with this development.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Vice Chair Michael DiDomenico to approve the two use permits standards reducing rear side yard, rear and side yard setbacks for the Tempe Student Housing project **PL180175**. Seconded by Commissioner Don Cassano.

**AYES:** Chair Lyon, Vice Chair DiDomenico, Commissioners Cassano, Sumners, and Johnson

**NAYS:** Commissioners Philip Amorosi and Thomas Brown

**ABSENT:** Alternate Commissioner Thornton and Alternate Commissioner Lloyd

**VOTE:** Motion passes 5-2

Chair Lyon moved on to discuss the request for approval of the Development Plan Review.

Commissioner Sumners suggested we move for a continuance to work with staff on the design of the project.

Mr. Mancini stated they have worked with staff for a very long time to get to where the design is today and looked for suggestions from the commission.

Chair Lyon stated he supports the project, but he thinks the architecture is not going to hold up in 15 years.

Vice Chair DiDomenico stated he believes the design is too boxy and does not fit in with the local architecture and meets the bare minimum design standard.

Commissioner Cassano stated he believed upgrading the streets development would attract more new developments in the future.

Mr. Mancini added he is proposing to work with a local builder to use a construction style that uses concrete wall instead of complete wood framing.

Chair Lyon asked Mr. Mancini if he would like for them to vote for a continuance.

Mr. Mancini agreed to a continuance.

Ms. Dasgupta suggested that it would be helpful to staff and the applicant if the Commission can provide some specific direction to enhance the architecture and design.

Commissioner Cassano noted there is no visible relief to the elevations, and it needs more character and relief on the outside.

Vice Chair DiDomenico stated he believed the architect should be pointed to well received local projects by staff.

Commissioner Sumners believed they looked like tract homes and said there was good potential on the side that will only have two lots. He also stated it would be smart not to build the sidewalks until you see where people tend to walk the most, a campus planning approach.

Commissioner Johnson stated he liked the roofline, how it connects with the exposed wood, and shares the concern with the longevity of the exposed wood. Otherwise the side view threw him off.

Mr. Mancini said he had some room to the setbacks to give some depth in variation, and he will work with staff.

Chairman Lyon, agreed he does believe they look like mid 90's cookie cutter homes from California. He believed they need to look like they belong in Arizona more.

**MOTION:** Made by Commissioner Scott Sumners to continue the request for a Development Plan Review to the September 12<sup>th</sup> Development Review Commission meeting for Tempe Student Housing **PL180175**. Seconded by Commissioner Andrew Johnson.

**AYES:** Chair Lyon, Vice Chair DiDomenico, Commissioners Cassano, Sumners, Johnson, Amorosi, and Brown

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Alternate Commissioner Thornton and Alternate Commissioner Lloyd

**VOTE:** Motion passes 7-0

#### STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ms. Dasgupta announced for September 12th we will add the Tempe Student Housing in the agenda item as a Development Plan Review item as well as request for use permit to allow mini warehouse, storage facility and general industrial zoning district and development plan review for Beyond Self Storage at 8303 southeast drive.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 pm.**

Prepared by: Christopher Ray



Reviewed by:  
Suparna Dasgupta Principal Planner,  
Community Development, Planning Division