

CONCEPT PLAN COMMENTS
Aspen Heights
COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION

March 23rd, 2021

The Community Design Commission conducted a Concept Plan review for Aspen Heights at a meeting on March 23rd, 2021. The project proposes an apartment building with approximately 109 units (300-325 bedrooms) and 125-150 parking spaces.

**Key points made by members of the Commission about the Concept Plan are listed below.*

- Multiple Commissioners expressed concern with protecting the stream at the front of the site, improving drainage of the site, remediating the RCD, and investigating stormwater measures that will need be needed.
- Multiple commissioners expressed support for the applicant to consider methods to relate the design and height of the building to the existing adjacent duplexes in Columbia Place at the rear of the property.
- Multiple commissioners stressed the need for pedestrian activation of the site's frontage along MLK and developing a design which engages with the ground and the street,
- Multiple commissioners felt the project location presents an opportunity to engage with the corner of MLK and Longview Street by providing urban spaces. Commissioners were underwhelmed with the quality of the urban spaces shown on the concept plan.
- Multiple commissioners noted it was important for the applicant to focus on articulation of the parking deck.
- Two commissioners encouraged the applicant to design with the topography and to not cut into the slopes further by minimizing grading cuts and working with the natural topography as much as possible.
- One commissioner suggested that restoring the wetlands and preserving the steep slopes might call for a building with a smaller site footprint and greater height.
- One commissioner was concerned w/ the relationship of the townhomes across Longview Street to the newly proposed mass of the building.
- One commissioner liked the way the applicants "demassed" the building by opening up the middle courtyard area in the design.
- Commissioners were mixed on the urban feel of the site context and the suburban nature of the site plan due to the extent of on-site parking.

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- A commissioner noted the need for road improvements to Longview Street since the main access is proposed in this location.
- In response to a commissioner question, the applicant noted the site will need environmental remediation as a brownfield site.

Citizen Comments:

A citizen from Columbia Place expressed concerns about the impact of the project on their recently upgraded drainage system, the effect of the project on the steep terrain, and its impact on Columbia Place generally.