

University Place Proposed Design Standards (July 23, 2021 version)

Review of Incorporation of Previous Comments

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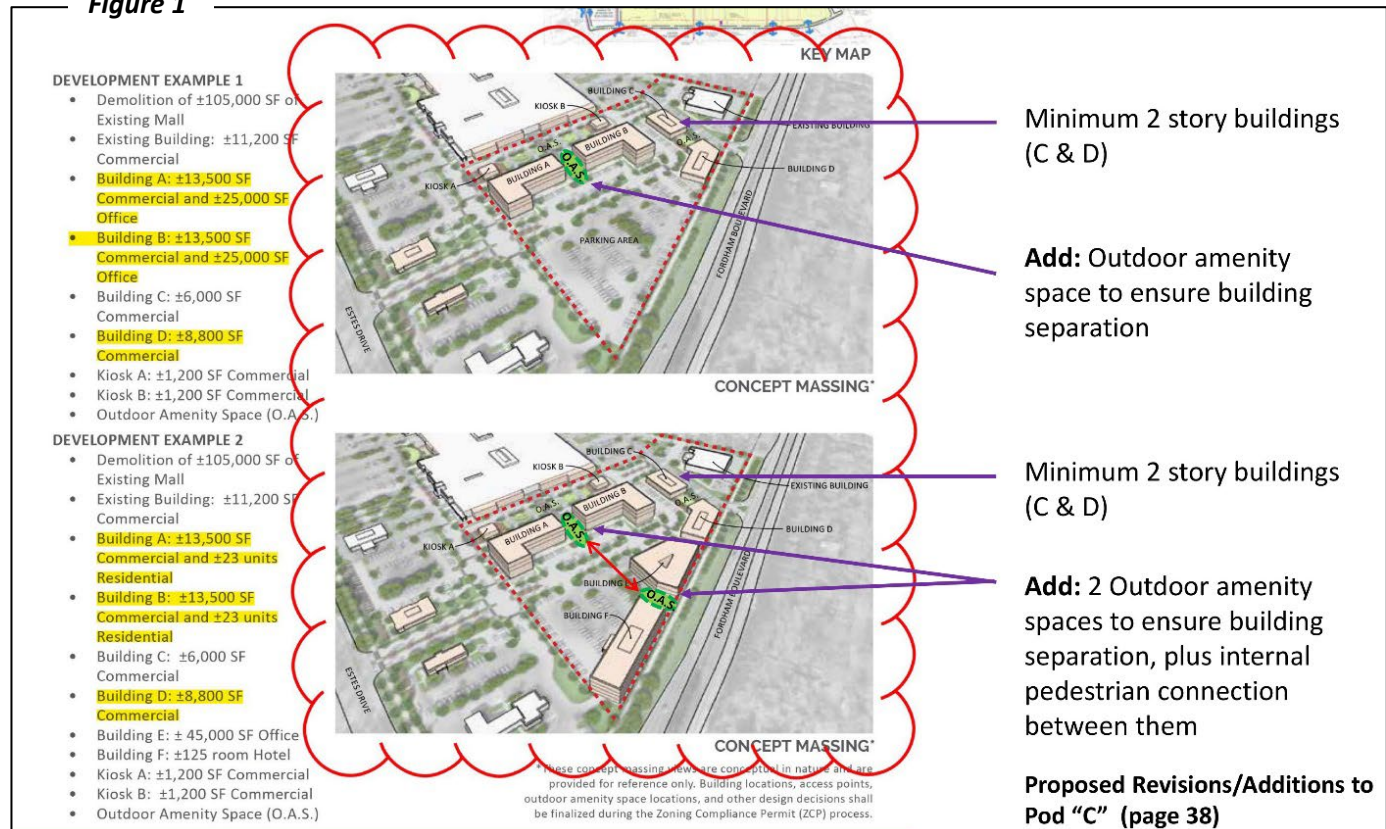
8-17-21

In my previous comments I outlined three general issues. Each are listed below along with an assessment of the degree to which they were incorporated into the latest Standards.

1. Previous comment-Block Sizes: *The ultimate scale of an urban environment is largely determined by the size of the blocks. There is no block size requirement for the University Place framework. It is defined by the framework site plan. However, the framework site plan is divided into five large “Pods” not individual blocks. Discussion of a maximum building length/footprint may be warranted, with the possible exception of the actual mall building.*

Analysis: The framework plan is still organized according to the “pods” and maximum building lengths/footprints are not addressed. However, it may be possible to limit the size/length of buildings in Pod “C” (the pod with the most development) by ensuring that development occurs as several separate buildings, as is shown in the two development examples, from page 38 (see figures 1 & 2 below). Example One indicates four separate buildings (A-D) and example Two includes six (A-F). It is suggested to ensure building separation between buildings A & B by establishing a defined Outdoor Amenity Space (O.A.S.). If development occurs along the Fordham Boulevard frontage, as shown in Development Example 2, an additional O.A.S. should be provided along the frontage to ensure building separation, and to discourage the possibility of one long building being constructed along the entire frontage. This would also create a view corridor from Fordham through the site to the new main amenity space and plaza. In addition, it is suggested that buildings C & D have a requirement to be at least 2 stories in height, in order to provide a more urban building mass at a key project entrance in contrast to a more suburban one story height.

Figure 1



3. Previous Comment-Open Space Connectivity: The “Internal Pedestrian Connectivity” network (shown as a red dotted line on the Development Framework Site Plan) will be one of the most important aspects to connecting the future redeveloped mall to the community, and will help break down the scale of the development pods. While acknowledging some flexibility is needed as to the ultimate location, it would be advisable to have more definition of the character of these sidewalks/paths by having some prototype cross sections of the paths to insure safe and comfortable pedestrian accommodation, even for portions of routes that extend through surface parking lots.

Analysis: Drawings of prototypical internal pedestrian corridors have not been provided, but provision of sidewalks along entry drives has been added (see comment #2 above) which addresses my previous concern to make sure the internal site pedestrian realm extends out to the site edges and perimeter public walks and trails. Text indicates the provision of streetscape-quality frontages (min. 6’ sidewalk, 5’ amenity zone, and 40’ trees o.c.) shall be provided along the primary entrance facades of buildings facing internal streets.

A recent addition to the project is the inclusion of a new site and facilities for the Farmers’ Market on the northern edge of Pod “E”. This will improve the entrance character to the site from Willow Drive and make for a kind of gateway experience. My one concern about it is whether the site is big enough to house the market which now takes up a larger portion of the parking lot to the east.

The Internal Main Street driveway’s Outdoor Amenity Space (O.A.S.) has been increased in width to a minimum of 40’ which is a welcome change. Comments above (#1) have suggested providing additional O.A.S.’s in Pod C, and linking them with an additional east/west pedestrian connection from Fordham to the internal main street. Figure 4 highlights the various pedestrian connection types on top of the master plan/phasing diagram and illustrates the degree of connection and coverage of the pedestrian system throughout the site. As development progresses over time, opportunities to create additional pedestrian-friendly facilities should be explored beyond this foundational system.

Figure 4

