

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Planning Commission  
 From: Kinsey O’Shea, AICP, Senior Planner *KO*  
 Date: July 15, 2022  
 Subject: RZN 22-0002/ORD 1994-Request to rezone 3.08 acres at 1800 Whipple Drive (Tax Map Nos.197-1 50A, 51C, 5; 197-a 51B, 52B, 5; 197-1 51A, 52A, 5; 167-24 53A and 197-1 46A) from R-5 Transitional Residential to PR Planned Residential by Balzer and Associates (applicant) on behalf of JJB Properties LLC (property owner).

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Based on June 1, 2022 Application)**

<b>Property Details</b>	
<b>Property Location</b>	1800 Whipple Drive
<b>Tax Parcel Numbers</b>	197-1 50A, 51C, 5; 197-a 51B, 52B, 5; 197-1 51A, 52A, 5; 167-24 53A; 197-1 46A
<b>Parcel Size</b>	3.08 acres
<b>Present Zoning District</b>	R-5 Transitional Residential
<b>Current Use</b>	4 single-family residential units
<b>Adjacent Zoning Districts</b>	<b>North:</b> R-5 Transitional Residential <b>East:</b> R-5 Transitional Residential <b>South:</b> R-5 Transitional Residential <b>West:</b> R-5 Transitional Residential
<b>Adjacent Uses</b>	<b>North:</b> Ratcliff Townhomes; single- and two-family residential <b>East:</b> Single-family residential; vacant <b>South:</b> Single-family residential <b>West:</b> Single-family and multi-family residential across Whipple Dr.
<b>Adopted (2021) FLU</b>	Medium Density residential (up to 20 bedrooms per acre or 10 units per acre)
<b>Proposed Standards</b>	
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Townhomes
<b>Proposed Maximum Density</b>	32 bedrooms per acre/98 bedrooms; 12 units per acre/34 units
<b>Total Proposed Open Space</b>	20.4% recreational open space
<b>Minimum Proposed Setbacks</b>	Whipple ROW (western perimeter property line): 15’ North, East, and South Perimeter: 10’ Interior: 10’ <i>from interior property line to building</i>
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	60% impervious maximum
<b>Floor-to-Area Ratio</b>	0.40
<b>Maximum building height</b>	35’
<b>Proposed Parking Ratio</b>	1.0 spaces per bedroom surface parking; 98 spaces total
<b>Proposed Bicycle Parking</b>	0.41 spaces/bedroom; 40 spaces total

## ***STAFF REPORT and KEY ELEMENTS***

This staff report is divided into topical areas of evaluation. Many of the overarching principles in the Comprehensive Plan, the Residential Infill Guidelines, and the Zoning Ordinance overlap into key topical focus areas. To aid in review of the staff report each topic or focus area is covered only once. The analysis is contained in the staff report. The pertinent text sections from the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance have been included as an appendix to this report.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Density proposed above FLU designation
  - Need & justification for change
  - Consistency with intent of PR district in providing housing product to fill identified housing needs
  - Appropriateness of proposed district standards compared to surrounding neighborhood
  - Intensity of development; proposed layout of development
  - Adequacy of area for rear yards/perimeter buffer
  - Request for variance to reduce perimeter Public Utility Easement (PUE) width
  - No restrictions on occupancy
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## ***EXISTING CONDITIONS AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL***

### **EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS**

The subject area is located at 1800 Whipple Drive and currently consists of five individual parcels. There are currently single-family homes on four of the properties that would be demolished if the rezoning request is approved. The property is a mix of wooded areas and lawn, and is adjacent to single-family, two-family, and multi-family uses. The property is adjacent to the six recently-constructed Ratcliff Corner Townhomes at the corner of Whipple Drive and Givens Lane, which were developed under the R-5 zoning regulations with a Conditional Use Permit.

### **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

#### **Building Design and Site Layout**

The development proposal entails a 34-unit townhouse community comprised of six buildings. The buildings will range from three units to eight units. There are (4) two-bedroom units proposed, and the remainder of the units will be three-bedroom units. Each unit will feature bed-bath parity, plus an additional half-bath. Parking is provided around a one-way driveway that loops through the site. Open space is provided in two locations on the property. All of the townhomes will be two-story units, though the overall building height will vary based on the grade. Some will feature nearly at-grade entries, while others will have an elevated front porch. Each of the units is proposed to have solar panels installed on the roof at the time of unit construction.

The parent parcel will be subdivided so that each of the units will be on its own parcel. The lots are oriented facing the interior drive aisle and common area. The common area/open space and stormwater management area will be owned and maintained by the homeowners' association.

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## ***EVALUATION OF REZONING REQUEST***

There are a number of analysis points for evaluation of a request to rezone a property within Town. The policies and maps in the Comprehensive Plan lend guidance to the Town's vision of growth in the future, while specific codes and requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and the Town Code ensure that the

development meets all applicable regulations. Specifically, the Zoning Ordinance calls out the criteria for evaluation of a rezoning request, as found below:

### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

Section 1151 of the Zoning Ordinance requires the Commission to study all rezoning requests to determine:

- 1) *Whether the proposed amendment conforms to the general guidelines and policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan.*
- 2) *The relationship of the proposed amendment to the purposes of the general planning program of the Town, with appropriate consideration as to whether the change will further the purposes of [the Zoning Ordinance] and the general welfare of the entire community.*
- 3) *The need and justification for the change.*
- 4) *When pertaining to a change in the district classification of the property, the effect of the change, if any, on the property, surrounding property, and on public services and facilities. In addition, the Commission shall consider the appropriateness of the property for the proposed change as related to the purposes set forth at the beginning of each district classification.*

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EVALUATION**

In evaluating whether the proposed use conforms to the general guidelines and policies contained in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, all applicable sections of the Plan should be included in the review of the application. The Comprehensive Plan offers a wide range of guiding principles for the future of development within Town. The following text identifies the designation of the proposed rezoning property on the maps in the Future Land Use map series. ***Other relevant Comprehensive Plan text sections applicable to this request are included in the Staff Appendix.***

#### **Map A: Future Land Use Designation**

In evaluating whether the proposed planned residential development conforms to the general guidelines and policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use designation of the subject property is one consideration for evaluation. The Future Land Use designation of the subject parcel is Medium Density Residential. No changes were made to the Future Land Use designation on this property as part of the 2021 update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Medium Density Residential is defined as:

*Up to and including ten (10) dwelling units per acre, or up to 20 bedrooms per acre, whichever is less. Bedrooms-per-acre is the primary measurement for multifamily residential uses. Typical implementing zoning districts: Transitional Residential (R-5), Old Town Residential (OTR), Planned Residential (PR), and Planned Manufactured Home (PMH).*

The proposal equates to 32 bedrooms per acre, which is approximately 60% greater than the envisioned density under the Future Land Use designation.

#### **Map B: Urban Development Areas**

The proposed development is not located within an Urban Development Area. Urban Development Areas were designated to indicate areas where future higher density residential and non-residential uses could be accommodated. A site's designation within an Urban Development Area does not obligate approval of a rezoning request, nor does the lack of such designation preclude the approval of a rezoning in these locations.

### **Map C: Neighborhood, Employment, and Service Areas Map**

This map is intended to categorize areas of Town based on similar characteristics of use, rather than particular geographical areas. These designations provide key issues to consider for the future for each of the neighborhood types. The subject parcel lies within an area designated as Multiunit Residential Neighborhood. The key characteristics and issues regarding this designation are found in the attached staff appendix.

#### Need for a Range of Housing Types

As part of a 2021 Comprehensive Plan update survey, the community identified Housing as the top challenge facing the Town, including approximately 41% of respondents desiring more affordable housing options in the Town over the next ten years. The overarching goal of the Housing chapter of the Town's recently updated Comprehensive Plan is to provide a diverse housing market to meet a "full range of life situations". The chapter indicates that "there are a number of market segments based on lifestyle, age, ability, and/or income for which there is not a sufficient inventory of suitable homes." There are a number of different Housing Objectives and Policies applicable to this request and these are provided in the staff appendix.

The proposal includes (4) two-bedroom/2.5-bath units and (28) three-bedroom/3.5-bath units, which are common in the overall stock of housing in Town. While this unit type may appeal to several market segments identified in the chapter as having unmet housing needs, the proposal does not include any restrictions related to undergraduate student occupancy or affordability of the units. Town Council has recently approved several thousand additional student housing beds over the past several years to serve the growing student population. Meanwhile, apart from single-family homes, there has been little construction and development for non-student residences, creating further gaps in the housing market in Town. With no restrictions on occupancy, it is likely that this development will be largely undergraduate student housing due to the layout, location in proximity to other student housing developments, and proximity to a campus-bound bus stop. Consideration should be given to whether the location and proposed density is appropriate for what will likely become student housing, and whether the approval of this request furthers the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **ZONING ORDINANCE EVALUATION OF APPLICATION**

#### Zoning Ordinance Intent of Districts

There is a statement of purpose for each district in the Zoning Ordinance.

##### *Planned Residential §3110*

*The purpose of this district is to provide for the development of planned residential communities that incorporate a variety of housing options as well as certain limited commercial and office uses designed to serve the inhabitants of the district. This district is intended to allow greater flexibility than is generally possible under conventional zoning district regulations by encouraging ingenuity, imagination, and high quality design to create a superior living environment for the residents of the planned community. The PR district is particularly appropriate for parcels that contain a number of constraints to conventional development. In addition to an improved quality of design, the PR district creates an opportunity to reflect changes in the technology of land development, provide opportunities for new approaches to home ownership, and provide for an efficient use of land that can result in reduced development costs.*

It is the burden of the applicant to prove that the design submitted meets the intent of the Planned Residential District. In some cases, a development application for a PR district provides the Town with a housing model or type that is not found elsewhere in town, such as the Shadowlake Village Co-Housing Community PR district. In other instances, the PR district allows an applicant to put forward housing for an underserved population and proffer limitations to ensure the need is met as with the Grissom Lane Affordable Senior Housing development, and the Legacy development. Other applicants have included proffers that provide green building certification, or have provided for additional bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to mitigate impacts of the development on

the Town’s transportation network. In all cases, these applications are reviewed by the Planning Commission and Town Council for their merits on a case-by-case basis.

The application does not specifically discuss the ways in which the proposed development meets the intent of the Planned Residential zoning district. The application does provide descriptions of the project and its design principles and concepts supported by Comprehensive Plan policies and other relevant tools beginning on Page 12 of the application.

### **Zoning Ordinance Standards**

The characteristics of physical site development are regulated by the Zoning District standards. In general, there are three types of zoning standards that apply to development in the Town: District Standards; Use & Design Standards; and Development Standards. Explanations and examples of these types of regulations are below:

- **District Standards** include regulations for the physical development of any use on a parcel in a particular zoning district. Common district standards include building height; setbacks; lot coverage; FAR; residential density; and minimum lot size. District standards (for non-planned districts) cannot be varied except through the Board of Zoning Appeals. District standards for planned districts are proposed by the applicant, and can be varied or amended through the rezone process.
- **Use & Design Standards** provide regulations for the physical development of a parcel based on the use, such as residential or commercial, in any zoning district. These standards vary and include architectural standards for some uses such as building orientation; site layout standards such as provision of sidewalks or a minimum parcel size; and operational standards such as outdoor display and storage, lighting, or vehicle circulation. There may be additional standards for uses based on zoning districts and the intent to mitigate adverse impacts. An example of this may be additional buffer yard requirements for a particular use where it abuts a lesser intensity zoning district.
- **Development Standards** provide regulations for improvements that may be required, such as parking or landscaping. The Planned Residential District allows some of these standards to be proposed by the applicant such as parking and landscaping or buffering. These standards vary based on both use and district, such as one standard for commercial uses and a different standard for residential uses, or one standard for one zoning district but not another.

In a Planned Residential Zoning District, the applicant may propose most of the individual District standards for the proposed development. Development Standards and Use & Design Standards require adherence for developments even during a rezoning request, unless a modification or exception is explicitly requested and granted through the rezoning process.

The layout and standards of the development, if approved, are binding, and any deviation would require amending the rezoning. Since the applicant proposes the standards in the PRD, the evaluation of the proposed standards is different. The evaluation should be based on how well the proposed standards, when applied, fit into the existing character of the surrounding area. The Planning Commission and Town Council evaluate each Planned Residential development on its own merit.

### **Comparative District Standards**

In determining whether the proposed district standards are appropriate for the neighboring area, consideration should be given to the proposed standards in relation to the surrounding development. The parcel is surrounded on all sides by R-5 zoning. The R-5 zoning district allows only single-family, and two-family dwellings to be constructed by-right in the district. The R-5 Zoning District does allow townhome and multifamily uses by CUP, but all district standards must be met. The chart below illustrates the comparison between the standards in the existing R-5 and proposed PR zoning districts:

	R-5 District Standards §3052	Whipple Townhomes PRD Proposed District Standards
<b>Maximum Density</b>	Up to 20 beds/acre or 10 units/acre	32 bedrooms per acre
<b>Minimum Setbacks</b>	Front: 35'	Whipple ROW: 15'
	Side: 10' (or 20' for street-facing side yard)	Side (perimeter): 10'
	Rear: 25'	Rear (perimeter): 10'
<b>Maximum lot coverage</b>	55% impervious	60% impervious
<b>Maximum FAR</b>	0.35	0.40
<b>Maximum Height</b>	35' or up to 45' with additional setback	35'
<b>Maximum Occupancy</b>	Family + 2 unrelated; no more than 3 unrelated	Family + 2 unrelated; no more than 3 unrelated

- **Density**

Density of the development is a factor in considering whether the proposed development is appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood. This proposed standard should be evaluated for its compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, given the target market for the proposed development, the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood, and the proposal’s mitigation of adverse impacts.

The applicant is proposing a bedroom density approximately 60% higher than what is allowed in the existing R-5 zoning district and envisioned in the Future Land Use designation (32 beds vs. 20 beds). For reference, a chart containing comparative densities of Planned Residential Developments since 2012 is provided in the Staff Appendix.

In conjunction with the number of bedrooms built, the number of occupants per bedroom or per unit also contributes to the overall density of any development. The application states that the occupancy for the development shall be a family, plus two persons unrelated to the family, or no more than three unrelated persons. This standard applies to two-bedroom units and three-bedroom units. The application does not offer any proffers restricting occupancy such as restricting student housing.

- **Setbacks and Yards**

Setbacks or required yards provide areas on a property that are to remain free from structures. This allows for both landscaping and open space around buildings for light and air circulation, but it also generally provides areas where public utilities may be installed. In many cases, public utility easements (PUEs) are established around the interior of lot lines, within the setbacks to allow for both Town public utilities, but also for private utilities such as telecommunications, gas, and power. Minimal setbacks can contribute to the overall intensity of a development.

Because the PRD allows an applicant to establish a development’s specific district standards, the ordinance also gives guidance to the evaluation of these proposed standards. Town staff has used these criteria in providing evaluation for staff reports when evaluating proposed setbacks for a development. These criteria are included below to assist Planning Commission and Town Council in evaluating the proposed setbacks:

*§3113(d) Minimum setback requirements shall be specifically established during the review and approval of the master plan. The following guidelines shall be used in establishing the building spacing and setbacks, but shall not be construed as constraining creative site design:*

- 1) *Building spacing shall provide privacy within each dwelling unit;*

- 2) *Building spacing shall ensure that each room has adequate light and air;*
- 3) *Areas between buildings used as service yards, storage of trash, or other utilitarian purposes should be designed so as to be compatible with adjoining dwellings;*
- 4) *Building spacing and design shall provide privacy for outdoor activity areas (patios, decks, etc.) associated with individual dwelling units;*
- 5) *Yards located at the perimeter of the PR district, not fronting a street, shall conform to the setback requirements of the adjoining zoning district, or to the setback requirements deemed appropriate during the review and approval of the master plan for the PR district;*
- 6) *For the purpose of determining the depth of yards, any yards located at the perimeter of the PR district that front a street shall be treated as a front yard. The yard may be reduced, as deemed appropriate during the review, and approval of the master plan, through the application of enhanced streetscape features that promote the existing design context of the zoning district on the other side of the street.*

The applicant is proposing both perimeter and interior setbacks that are generally smaller than the surrounding R-5 minimum setback requirements. The application shows that a 10' perimeter setback is located around all sides of the parent parcel, except along Whipple, where the perimeter setback adjacent to the right-of-way is proposed to be 15'. For comparison, the R-5 front yard setback adjacent to the ROW is 35' (or 25' with parking in the rear of the building); and the R-5 rear and side yard setbacks are 25' and 10' respectively. It should be noted that the R-5 district does not allow townhome developments, except by conditional use permit, and as such, all district standards apply.

Interior to the site, the application and plan show that all setbacks are a minimum of 10'. These setbacks dictate the distance between the units and the interior individual unit property lines. These setbacks are best illustrated as the space between contiguous building series.

The 10' perimeter setback is smaller than neighboring R-5 rear yard setbacks. The R-5 does allow 10' side yard setbacks, but requires 25' rear yard setbacks. It should be noted that the proposed 10' perimeter setback precludes the dedication of the required 15' public utility easement (PUE) around the perimeter of the lot, which is required upon subdivision of the parcel into individual lots. Further discussion regarding PUEs is found later in the staff report.

The 15' front/ROW setback is significantly shallower than the required 35' setback in the existing/neighboring R-5 zoning. The development is laid out such that only 5 units (all four units in Building 1, and one end unit in Building 2) face Whipple Drive and thus have a 15' front yard setback. The remainder of the parcel frontage is driveway, parking, and stormwater management/open space. The shallow right-of-way setback may not be as impactful, given the small number of units along the parcel frontage. However, the overall impact of the shallow setbacks will be felt along the perimeter of the property for the majority of the site.

Yards also have development standards, as laid out in §5790, and generally describe what is and is not permitted in them. In addition to the evaluation of the proposed setbacks for their appropriateness to the development and surrounding neighborhood, any modifications to the development standards for yards should be evaluated as a part of the overall rezoning request. It appears from the master plan sheet Z3 that some rear deck steps may project into the rear yard setback of Building 6, which is a 10' perimeter yard, and the proposed reduced 10' PUE. Structures, including deck stairs, are not allowed to be constructed in any PUE. *The plan will have to be revised to eliminate these conflicts.* It also appears that several front deck steps project into front setbacks of Buildings 1, 2, 3, and 4, which is not allowed. The front yard encroachment at Building 1 projects into the 15'

ROW setback along Whipple Drive. ***The applicant should clarify if any encroachment into the setbacks requires modifications to the standards below, and provide justification for the encroachment request:***

§5790 Yards:

*(b) Eaves, cornices, windowsills, and belt courses may project into any required yard a distance not to exceed two feet.*

*(c) A deck or patio may project beyond the front building line (but not into the front yard setback) or into a rear yard setback a distance not to exceed five feet.*

- **Lot Coverage**

Lot coverage refers to a percentage of impervious surface allowed on a parcel. Lot coverage varies based on zoning district, with districts that permit more intense uses such as commercial and industrial, allowing for a higher percentage of lot coverage. In the Downtown Commercial district, the maximum lot coverage is 100%, reflecting and encouraging an urban development pattern. In residential districts, the lot coverage varies based on use type, with the understanding that multifamily developments will by nature have higher lot coverage needs than single-family development.

The applicant is proposing a maximum lot coverage of 60% of the parent parcel, which is greater than what would be allowed by-right under the R-5 zoning district, which is 55%. For a parcel of this size, 5% represents an additional 6,700 square feet of impervious area.

- **Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR)**

The Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) refers to a ratio of the gross square footage of all floors of all buildings on a lot to the total square footage of the lot. In urban areas, the FAR of multistory buildings will often be whole numbers rather than fractions, meaning that the square footage of the building is larger than the square footage of the parcel. In the R-5 district, the maximum FAR is 0.35.

The proposed FAR of 0.40 for the parent parcel is greater than what is allowed in the surrounding zoning district. This will result in an overall more intense feel with larger buildings than the neighboring residential area would allow, and more intense than what is currently built. The neighborhood is a mix of multifamily apartments, townhomes, two-family dwellings, and single-family dwellings of varying sizes. The proposed townhomes will be larger in scale and size than the neighboring existing single- and two-family dwellings, but similar in size and scale to the other multifamily and townhome uses in the area.

- **Height**

Building height is measured from the grade at the front (usually the bottom of the lowest porch or stoop step) to the highest point of the roof. In the R-5 district, the maximum height is 35', but buildings may be constructed taller, if 1' of additional setback is provided for every foot of additional foot in height, up to a maximum of 45'.

The proposed structures will be 2-story townhomes, and are proposed to have a maximum height of 35'. The existing R-5 zoning maximum height is 35', without additional setback. As a townhome product, the overall building height of 35' will contribute to the more intense size, mass, and scale of the proposed development. As previously mentioned, the overall building height may vary based on grade, as some units will have entries nearly at grade, while others will have elevated front porches, resulting in an overall taller building. The height would be measured from the bottom step to the top of the roof.



### Open Space

The Planned Residential District Standards §3113 require that applicants provide a minimum of 20% open space for any PR developments. The Use & Design Standards for Townhomes §4231 require a minimum 20% open space as a part of a townhome development with more than five units. The application and plan show that the proposed development meets the minimum standard. The master plan shows that 20.4% of the site will be dedicated to “recreational open space” and will consist of the programmed spaces in the central common area, and the flex space/dog park and exercise park. Furthermore, in the Townhome Use & Design Standards, a specific recreation amenity area or areas has to be provided for any development of 5 or more townhomes. The open space layout shows that there are several programmed areas for residents including raised gardens, open play lawns, pavilion and picnic areas, and other uses.

### Townhouse Use & Design Standards §4231

Use & Design Standards provide regulations that generally govern the overall appearance and function of a development. Use and Design Standards can go a long way to establishing the feel and appearance of a development, including its compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. There are a number of Use & Design Standards applicable to this development.

The Townhome Use & Design Standards are intended to encourage site and building design that is more in keeping with attached single-family housing than apartment buildings. Standards for façade articulation, single-family appearance, front and rear entries to each unit, and others provide for a more individual-unit experience rather than apartment living. Outlined below are several standards that contribute to the overall feel of a proposed development and its compatibility with the neighborhood. Use and Design standards pertaining to sidewalks are discussed in the Infrastructure section of this staff report. Additional applicable standards are provided in the Staff Appendix.

- **§4231(b)(1) [No more than 8 townhomes in a row; no more than 2 buildings in a row]:** *Except in the DC District a maximum of eight (8) dwelling units may be constructed in a contiguous series of townhouses. No more than two (2) contiguous series shall be constructed adjacent to each other.*

The intent of the regulation is to ensure that there is adequate light and airflow to buildings, as well as limiting façade length to reduce the overall mass and scale of the buildings. Additionally, the regulation states that no more than two series be in a row. The proposal includes six buildings which all comply with the above regulations:

- |               |         |               |         |
|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| • Building 1: | 4 units | • Building 4: | 3 units |
| • Building 2: | 6 units | • Building 5: | 5 units |
| • Building 3: | 8 units | • Building 6: | 8 units |
- **§4231(b)(2) [Single-family appearance of townhomes]:** *Proposals for facades and treatment of external materials shall be submitted as a condition of site plan approval. Townhouse design, scale, and building materials shall be single-family residential in appearance.*
  - **§4231(b)(5) [Principal orientation of townhomes]:** *The principal orientation of all townhouses shall be the street or parking area on which the lot has frontage. There shall be at least one (1) entrance facing the street, and the principal windows of the townhouse shall also face this street.*
  - **§4231(b)(14) [Front façade setback variation]:** *Front yard setbacks for adjacent units shall vary a minimum of three (3) feet and a maximum of eight (8) feet. [This standard references “front yard setbacks” though the intent of the standard is to require building façade articulation of 3’-8’ between units such that no adjacent units are co-planar with one another.]*

These standards together aim to ensure that townhome developments are more single-family in appearance, rather than multifamily-apartment in nature. The application indicates, on page 6, that the unit materials will be a mixture of brick veneer and cementitious siding. The elevations and renderings show a mixed color palette such that each unit contrasts from its neighbors by color variation. Rooflines between individual units are also varied as well, with some units featuring an eyebrow gable above the second story, and porch overhangs. Principal orientation and front façade setback have been adequately met.

It should be noted that the application indicates that the HOA will be responsible for maintenance of drive aisles, parking areas, common areas, stormwater facilities, and exterior maintenance of individual units. This can help to ensure a consistent appearance and quality of maintenance over time, especially in the instance of townhomes where exterior materials including roofing, are shared across several units.

- **§4231(b)(6) [Location of Parking and Driveways]:** *Shared driveways are permitted, with the recordation of perpetual easements to provide for the use and maintenance of the shared driveway. Courtyard style parking is permitted. Only one (1) yard, either the front yard or the rear yard, or in the case of an end unit, the side yard, shall be improved with a driveway or parking spaces. All parking spaces shall be located behind the front building line. Town Council may grant a special exception to this requirement as authorized by §1112.*

All of the parking is located behind the front building line with respect to Whipple Drive. The units facing Whipple Drive establish the front building line. The first parking space in each of the two bays of parking nearest Whipple Drive are located behind the front building line of Building 1, and Unit 5 in Building 2.

Development Standards

In Planned Residential Districts, the Development Standards found in the Zoning Ordinance apply unless specific modifications are requested. Development standards applicable to this request are Overall Tree Canopy, Parking Lot Landscaping, Vehicle Parking, and Bicycle Parking. The chart below illustrates the comparison between the two sets of standards. (*\*The minimum parking ratio can be varied through the PRD process per §3113(f) as below*).

	Applicable Development Standards	Whipple Townhomes PRD Proposed Development Standards
<b>Minimum Tree Canopy</b>	10%	“as specified...for multifamily uses”
<b>Parking Lot Landscaping</b>	1 tree per 10 spaces; 5% of entire parking lot	“as specified in the...Zoning Ordinance”
<b>Minimum Parking Ratio*</b>	1.1 spaces/bedroom = 107 spaces	1 space per bedroom = 98 spaces
<b>Minimum Bike Parking</b>	0.25 spaces/bedroom = 24 spaces	0.41 spaces/bedroom = 40 spaces

- **Landscaping & Buffering §5300 et seq.; §5400 et seq.:** The Planned Residential District has no overall landscaping or buffering requirements such as a prescribed overall tree canopy or required buffers between uses or districts. The PR district rather relies on the other development standards for landscaping such as parking lot landscaping and street tree requirements. The overall canopy coverage requirement in the Development Standards §5426 states that canopy coverage shall be “per [similar] uses”.

The landscape plan shows that the appropriate number of street trees and parking lot trees have been proposed. The PR district requires that applicants specify a minimum canopy coverage that is in keeping with

similar uses. As this use is most similar to development in the RM-27 or RM-48 zoning districts, a canopy coverage minimum of 10% is required. The application does indicate that the canopy coverage will be “as specified in the Town of Blacksburg Zoning Ordinance...requirements for multifamily uses.” The plan as proposed will likely meet this requirement based on the quantity of trees proposed, *but the applicant will have to provide a minimum canopy percentage in the site development regulations for the district so that the minimum requirement is clear.* Staff recommends a greater canopy minimum for this development to be more in keeping with the existing development pattern in the surrounding R-5 neighborhood, and to help mitigate the impact of the intensity of the development in relation to the surrounding area.

In addition to setbacks, buffer yards and vegetation can provide additional space for transitions, and mitigate impacts between uses of varying intensities. In most cases, developments must provide a buffer against adjacent uses or zoning districts that are of lesser intensity than the proposed use or district. While there are no specific requirements for buffer yards in the PR district, appropriate buffering between uses or districts can help to mitigate impacts and contribute to neighborhood compatibility. Buffers are determined for PR districts on a case-by-case basis and should be evaluated such that the more intense uses are buffered. The parcel adjoins by-right single-family and two-family uses, a CUP townhouse use, as well as undeveloped parcels. It is across the street from multifamily uses. No defined buffer is shown for this development, though a mix of deciduous, evergreen, and flowering trees are shown as proposed around the entire property. A buffer yard, especially adjacent to where the development borders single-family residential uses, would help to mitigate impacts of the proposed use in the neighborhood. Details including buffer yard width, and length (if necessary); plant spacing and height at time of planting; and plant type should be determined at the time of rezoning to ensure that the commitment and standards are clear.

In this case, the perimeter setback is 10'. This area is also proposed as the perimeter PUE area. There is little space left for individual unit yards, or landscaping to mitigate impacts of the development on the adjacent parcels. While the Town does not support landscaping in PUEs where public utilities are present or proposed, landscaping in perimeter PUEs can be allowed with the understanding that in future, the easement area may be encumbered and cannot support the landscaping. The proposed design layout and requested density is the driver for the space constraints and the applicant's desire to layer landscaping, PUEs, setbacks, and rear yards together in the same 10' space. An alternative design could result in additional accommodations for planting and buffering. Further discussion of the adequacy of the PUEs is found later in the staff report.

Lastly, another consideration for this development is how the landscaping, combined with the shallow setbacks, will impact the function of the unit solar panels over the long term. As proposed on the “Open Space Layout” plan, “large deciduous trees” are proposed along the southern property line, as well as other locations throughout the site. These trees will likely grow tall enough to shade the solar panels on the south-facing roofs of buildings 2 and 3 (and others). If priority is given to the function of the solar panels, then the trees may never reach their full mature canopy due to the need to keep the panel area clear. Additional setback would allow for greater distance between the trees and the solar panels. Further discussion of the solar is found in the Sustainability and Solar section of this staff report.

- **Parking §5200 et seq.** The Planned Residential District allows an applicant to propose alternate Development Standards than what is typically required in the Zoning Ordinance, including vehicle-parking ratios. The ordinance gives guidance regarding the evaluation of standards different from what is prescribed in the Townhome use minimum parking standards:

***§3113(f): Parking in the PR district shall either be as contained in Section 5200 or as approved through:***

1) *A rezoning to the PR district based on demonstrated parking needs, housing types and potential impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.*

The application states that the minimum parking for the development will be 1 space per bedroom, which is less than the townhome requirement of 1.1 spaces per bedroom. The parking for the development is provided in a shared common parking lot accessed via a one-way driveway off Whipple Drive. The parking and drive aisle will be owned and maintained by the HOA. In developments where not enough parking for residents and guests is provided, excess parking can spill over into the adjoining neighborhoods. There is no on-street parking allowed on Whipple Drive or Givens Lane. The appropriateness of the proposed parking ratio will likely depend on the occupancy of the development. No restrictions regarding occupancy, such as restricting undergraduate student occupants, have been proffered. In developments with unrelated individuals, it is common for each person to have a vehicle, and thus one-space-per-bedroom accommodates residents, but leaves no space for guests. The application and proffer states that a parking permit system will be implemented for residents, and that a policy will be determined by the HOA.

- **Bicycle Parking §5213:** The PR district standards do not address bicycle parking beyond what is required in the zoning ordinance development standards. Bicycle parking is required at a rate of 0.25 spaces per bedroom.

Per the Zoning Ordinance, space for 24 bikes is required. The applicant is proposing space for 40 bicycles which equates to a ratio of 0.41 spaces per bedroom, and is a commitment to providing more than the minimum bike parking requirement. The application states that 12 of the bike parking spaces will be covered, and that the remainder of the bike spaces will be uncovered.

The Corridor Committee reviewed this request, and had several comments regarding bike and pedestrian connections, which are discussed further in the report. However at the meeting, the applicant indicated that residents may store bikes on porches or in the units. Staff noted that many of the porches are elevated and require steps to the entrance. Steps can be challenging and inconvenient, leading to less bicycle parking on or in the unit, and thus there may be a greater need for more covered secure storage onsite.

- **Signage §5500:** The Planned zoning district application requirements §1162 require applicants to submit a “comprehensive sign plan”.

The application does not include any details on specific signage. There is no location indicated on the plan for any freestanding signage. *If signage is proposed as a part of the development, the applicant will have to revise the application to include details regarding signage that include size, square footage, location, materials, etc.*

### **Sustainability & Solar**

Typically, for residential rezoning and conditional use permit requests, any proposed sustainability measures are included in the application. While specific sustainability measures are not required, this is considered a continuing community value. The townhomes are proffered to be constructed with photovoltaic solar panels on the roofs, wired and an integral part of the unit electrical systems at the time of certificate of occupancy. This ensures that the measure is provided up front, rather than relying on a future owner to install the system. The details of the system have not yet been provided in terms of number of panels, expected energy production compared with expected energy consumption, and other operational aspects of the system so it is unknown at this point how the solar panels will be utilized in the units.

Additional information regarding ownership and maintenance of the units should be provided. Staff does commend the commitment to renewable energy for these units, but recommends that additional information is provided so that the benefits may be evaluated, and to help understand the proffer. Several developments in town have proffered different methods to achieve sustainability goals, including Earthcraft or LEED certifications, rainwater capture/reuse systems, and additional energy efficiency measures beyond the minimum building code requirements.

### **IMPACT ON PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

In evaluating the potential effect on public services and facilities that this rezoning would have, the application is reviewed to determine the scope of the impact, and what improvements may be required to mitigate the impact. The evaluation of impacts to public infrastructure should take into account the proposed intensity of the development and the current condition of the Town's public infrastructure. Specific improvements necessary to support a proposed development, and attributable to a development should be constructed by the developer. Full engineering design and layout of infrastructure typically occurs at the site plan stage, but the applicant must provide enough information at the rezoning stage to determine the impact. Additional review for compliance with all Town standards and specifications would occur at the site plan stage, if the rezoning is approved.

### **Transportation**

#### Sidewalks and Trails

Sidewalks and trails are necessary to further the Town's goal of an interconnected non-vehicular transportation network. Development both generates a need for sidewalks and trails, and is often the mechanism by which this infrastructure is constructed by the private developers, with the Town filling in missing gaps as possible. The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, as well as the Comprehensive Plan, provide significant supporting text stressing the importance of pedestrian and bicycle connections.

The application shows that there is Town-standard sidewalk proposed adjacent to the Whipple Drive right-of-way including a minimum 4' vegetative strip behind the back of the curb, and a 5' concrete sidewalk. The townhome use and design standards also require internal sidewalks:

***§4231(b)(4)** Sidewalks shall connect each townhouse to the parking area serving that townhouse, to other buildings within the site, and to other building or uses on adjacent lots.*

The plan shows internal sidewalks along the back of the parking spaces and connecting to the units. There are sidewalks shown from the end units of Building 1 that do not connect to other sidewalks. The application should be revised to provide connecting sidewalks.

The Corridor Committee reviewed the request and had several comments pertaining to sidewalks and connections:

- The Committee recommends the applicant add a bike/pedestrian connection from the internal sidewalk through to Givens Lane via the private access easement to the north of the development that allows access for the existing home which will be demolished. Preference would be for a 10' asphalt trail. At the meeting the applicant indicated that an asphalt driveway already exists in this location, and that they will consider making this connection. The applicant should work with planning and engineering staff.
- The crosswalks with bump-outs in the parking lot help with vehicular traffic calming, which makes it safer for people walking and people on bikes. Consider adding a bump-out to the southern crosswalk

within the parking lot [or moving the crosswalk adjacent to the bump-out between Buildings 2 and 3 and connecting the sidewalk to the covered bike parking and mail kiosk on the greenspace side of the parking lot].

- Please ensure the sightlines for vegetation and crosswalks are good for those biking in the road and walking in the crosswalk or on the sidewalk.
- The applicant indicated that the surface of the trail in the center open space area is compacted brick chips. People on bikes may cut through this area from the bike racks to Whipple Drive. Therefore, please ensure this surface is rideable for those on bikes and other wheeled devices.
- The Committee recommends adding a curb-less sidewalk or some sort of ramp, to allow people riding bikes to get to the bicycle racks. *[Currently, all of the bike rack areas are located adjacent to a curb].*
- The Committee commends the applicant for providing some covered bike parking and an internal sidewalk, as shown on the Master Plan.

### Crosswalks

The application shows new public crosswalks are proposed adjacent to the site as a part of the development. The master plan shows the required crosswalks at the development entrance and exit on Whipple Drive. The master plan also shows the installation of two new public sidewalks on Whipple Drive to facilitate crossing to and from the bus stop. One crosswalk is proposed across Whipple Drive, in front of Building 1 and adjacent to the entrance to the development across the street. The other crosswalk is proposed within the Whipple Drive ROW across the entrance to the development across the street. The crosswalks will have to include the proper VDOT CG-12 ramp, which facilitates ADA requirements including landing with detectable warning surface and curb ramps. This will necessitate replacement of a small section of sidewalk across Whipple Drive, due to the need for the required curb ramps and the limited length of the overall sidewalk section. *The plan should be revised to show the required infrastructure associated with the proposed crosswalks.*

### Vehicular Transportation

Applicants for rezoning must provide traffic impact information for consideration as a part of the rezoning application, in order to determine the effect of the development on public facilities, including the Town's transportation network. The application requirements for Planned Districts (§1162) states that applicants shall provide:

*"A circulation plan, including location of existing and proposed vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and other circulation facilities and location and general design of parking and loading facilities. General information on the trip generation, ownership and maintenance and proposed construction standards for these facilities should be included. A Traffic Impact Analysis may be required by the Administrator."*

### Impact on Transportation Network

The applicant has provided the appropriate information needed to evaluate the request's impact on the Town's transportation network. Based on agreed-upon methodology prior to submission of the rezoning application, since there are no restrictions on occupancy, the material submitted utilized the "Off-campus student apartment (1/2 mile+)" trip-generation code to determine overall trip generation impacts. This further supports the likelihood that the development will be primarily student housing.

Per the attached memo from Town Engineering staff, proposed development will have an increase in trip volumes, and that the increase in trips will have a moderate impact on operational and safety aspects of the adjoining road network. However, no mitigating measures are required or recommended.

### *Entrance/Exit and Internal Circulation*

Town staff also evaluates internal circulation and vehicle entrances for proposed developments. The development is proposed to have a one-way loop through the site from Whipple Drive, with the southern leg being the entrance, and the northern leg being the exit. The one-way design of this parking layout helps to reduce vehicle turning movement conflicts at the entrance and exit locations on Whipple Drive, as opposed to two-way entrances. The attached transportation memo indicates that revisions to the southern entrance to the development will be needed to remove several parking spaces in order to provide the required throat distance of 50' from the ROW line. The parking ratio should be revised to reflect any changes if the spaces cannot be accommodated elsewhere on the site. Additionally, exits are required to meet sight distance minimums for the street before they can be approved. This requires applicants to demonstrate what the minimum sight distance is for a stopped vehicle at the exit of the development considering horizontal and vertical curves in the adjoining street, shoulder grades, and vegetation. The master plan does not indicate what the minimum achievable sight distance is for the proposed exit. *The plan will also have to show what the sight distance is at the proposed exit. If sight distance is not achievable at the proposed location, modifications to the design will be necessary.*

### **Stormwater Management**

Rezoning applications must also include a stormwater concept plan to ensure that the proposed development, in concept, can meet both the Town's stormwater quality and quantity regulations. The applicant prepared the concept plan with the application and is showing underground stormwater detention on a non-buildable stormwater lot near Whipple Drive. All of the development's water quality requirements are proposed to be met with the purchase of offsite nutrient credits.

Town Engineering staff has approved the concept plan. While the water quality standards can be met with offsite nutrient credit purchase, this has no local water quality benefit. The letter also outlines several items that will need to be addressed in greater detail at the site plan stage. The approval letter is included as an attachment to this staff report.

### **Public Water Utility Services**

Rezoning applications also must include conceptual utility layouts for water and sewer. This is to ensure that there are no potential conflicts in the development layout with utility easements, and that the Town's services are adequate to support the additional development. Town Engineering staff reviewed the development proposal water utility plan and has several comments regarding the development that may affect the layout of the design:

- All utility trenches, including trenches for individual unit laterals, require stone backfill as these trenches are under pavement and will be required to bear traffic weight.
- Water meters are typically installed where the public utility easement or right-of-way meets the property line. In this case, the location of the water meters for units 5-34, at the edge of the easement, will be in the parking area, and will make access and maintenance difficult. An alternative design would place the water meters behind the back of the sidewalk, in the unit front yards, which would require additional easement between the main and the public side of the water lateral to the meter.

### **Public Sanitary Sewer Utility Services**

Developers must also provide information to the Town for evaluation of sanitary sewer service capacity. The applicant has provided the necessary information for the development. Town Engineering staff has evaluated the impact of the proposed development on the Town's sanitary sewer infrastructure and has found that there is capacity in the Town's sanitary sewer system to accommodate the development. Town Engineering staff

reviewed the development proposal sanitary sewer utility plan and has several comments regarding the development that may affect the layout of the design:

- All utility trenches, including trenches for individual unit laterals, require stone backfill as these trenches are under pavement and will be required to bear traffic weight.
- Sanitary sewer cleanouts are typically installed where the public utility easement or right-of-way meets the property line. In this case, the location of the cleanouts for units 5-34, at the edge of the easement, will be in the parking area, and will make access and maintenance difficult. An alternative design would place the cleanout behind the back of the sidewalk, in the unit front yards, which would require additional easement between the main and the public side of the sewer lateral to the cleanout. This would also shorten the length of lateral that the property owner maintains, and would eliminate the need for traffic-bearing cleanouts, and may also decrease the width of the PUE in the parking area.

### **Public Utility Easements**

The subdivision of property requires the dedication of public utility easements to provide access for public and private utilities to individual lots. The subdivision ordinance §5-901 requires that subdividers dedicate a 15' public utility easement (PUE) along the interior of the subdivision, and centered on interior lot lines to provide space for both Town public infrastructure tie-ins and crossings, but also to provide space for private utility companies such as power and telecommunications. In a townhome or duplex development where individual lots may be subdivided along party walls, there is not the ability to provide the interior PUEs. For this reason, it is most important that the perimeter PUEs be dedicated to provide adequate access to the site, and also to adjacent properties. The plan shows that public utility extensions of water and sewer will be provided through the site, and located generally in the drive aisles of the development. These will have PUEs around them. However, the applicant has not provided the space needed for the required 15' perimeter PUEs. The applicant is requesting a variance to reduce the required PUE width from 15' to 10'. No justification has been provided in the application for why the requirement cannot be met in this new development. *Staff does not recommend approval of the variance request to §5-901 to reduce perimeter PUEs to less than 15'. In this case, the perimeter setbacks would also have to be revised to be no less than 15' to ensure that the buildable envelope within the setback is not greater than what PUEs would allow.*

As noted in the setbacks section, the master plan shows that some rear deck stairs project into the 10' perimeter public utility easement. Additionally, the Easement Exhibit sheet shows that there are other deck stairs that project into the interior public utility easements. No structures including retaining walls and stairs may encroach into any PUE. *The plan will have to be revised to eliminate any conflicts between structures and PUEs.*

It should also be noted that landscaping and fencing are permitted in PUEs where there are no active Town public utilities. However, if work is needed in the easement, the landscaping and fencing may be removed by the contractor in order to perform the work.

### **Waste Management and Recycling Services**

The applicant is proposing that trash and recycling will be handled by a single location for trash and recycling dumpsters in an enclosure. The applicant will have to ensure that the residential recycling capacity of 12 gallons per bedroom per week can be accommodated through the size of the container or the frequency of pickup. If accommodations necessitate a change to the development layout, the application will have to be revised. The access for the waste and recycling for units in Building 1 may be challenging, particularly without connecting sidewalks as previously noted. The applicant should ensure that the development can accommodate the needs of waste and recycling prior to public hearing to ensure that no layout changes are needed.



### **Blacksburg Transit**

The nearest existing transit access for this development is on Whipple Drive. There is a Whipple-southbound stop across the street from the development that serves the Main Street North route inbound toward campus. There are other routes nearby along North Main Street. There is continuous sidewalk on the west side of Whipple Drive (across the street from the development) from Givens Lane to North Main Street. The applicant is proposing a new crosswalk across Whipple Drive from the development to the bus stop to facilitate pedestrian crossing. Blacksburg Transit reviewed the request and also recommended that a crosswalk be installed near the northwest corner of the site, which would be behind the bus stop on Whipple Drive. Disembarking passengers exit the bus at the rear, and crossing the street behind the bus is safest from a pedestrian visibility perspective. *The applicant should consider incorporating the recommended crosswalk to further facilitate pedestrian safety near the bus stop.*

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**

A neighborhood meeting was held on Wednesday June 2, 2021, at 6:30 pm. Notes and sign-in sheet from the meeting are attached.

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### **MODIFICATIONS/VARIANCES REQUESTED**

- **§5-901** *The subdivider shall convey a 15 foot wide common or shared public utility easement centered on all interior lot lines **and interior to all perimeter lot lines**, to franchised cable television operators furnishing cable television and public service corporations furnishing cable television, gas, telephone, and electric service to the subdivision...The agent may require a wider easement where necessary to provide adequate separation between water, sewer, and/or stormwater management facilities.*
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### **PROFFER STATEMENT DATED JUNE 1, 2022**

1. The property shall be developed in substantial conformance, as determined by the Zoning Administrator, with the submitted rezoning application entitled Clay Street Townhomes Planned Residential Development (the "Application") dated June 1, 2022.
2. Each new townhome unit shall have a photovoltaic solar power system installed at the time of construction.
3. JJB Properties LLC will retain ownership and management of the townhome units for a minimum of 5 years beginning at the time of issuance of the first certificate of occupancy.
4. All townhomes shall be rented/leased by the unit. No by-the-bedroom leases will be permitted.
5. Property owner shall issue parking permits/stickers to residents and residents shall abide by the written parking policy as determined and provided by the Homeowners Association.

### **LAND USE EVALUATION SUMMARY**

The applicant is proposing to rezone the subject property from R-5 Transitional Residential to PR Planned Residential. The applicant seeks the rezoning to allow an increase in density above the maximum in the zoning district, as well as to provide flexibility with development standards. The evaluation of the PR request takes into consideration the proposed standards and proposed character of the development as they relate to the existing neighborhood, as well as conformity to the maps and text in the Comprehensive Plan. The applicant is proposing a density higher than what is found within the surrounding R-5 zoning, and higher than what is

envisioned in the Medium-Density Residential Future Land Use designation. As mentioned previously, the neighborhood is a mix of housing types, including rental and owner-occupied, single-family, townhouse, and multifamily uses.

The evaluation of the request should also include the modifications requested to Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance regulations. In consideration of the proposed rezoning, improvements, including those as highlighted in the staff report to the site design, and layout of the proposed development would help to make the proposed townhomes more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

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### ***PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND COUNCIL ACTION***

The Planning Commission is asked to consider and make a recommendation of approval or denial of the proposed rezoning request. If the request is approved, the property will be rezoned Planned Residential with any proffers offered by the applicant and accepted by Town Council. Any changes to the master plan would be required to be reviewed through the public hearing process to amend this PR district. If denied, the property will continue to be zoned R-5 and any such subsequent development application will have to adhere to all the minimum standards found therein. The decision to grant or deny the rezoning request is a discretionary decision, and should be made according to the criteria outlined in §1151, and with the analysis provided.

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### ***ATTACHMENTS***

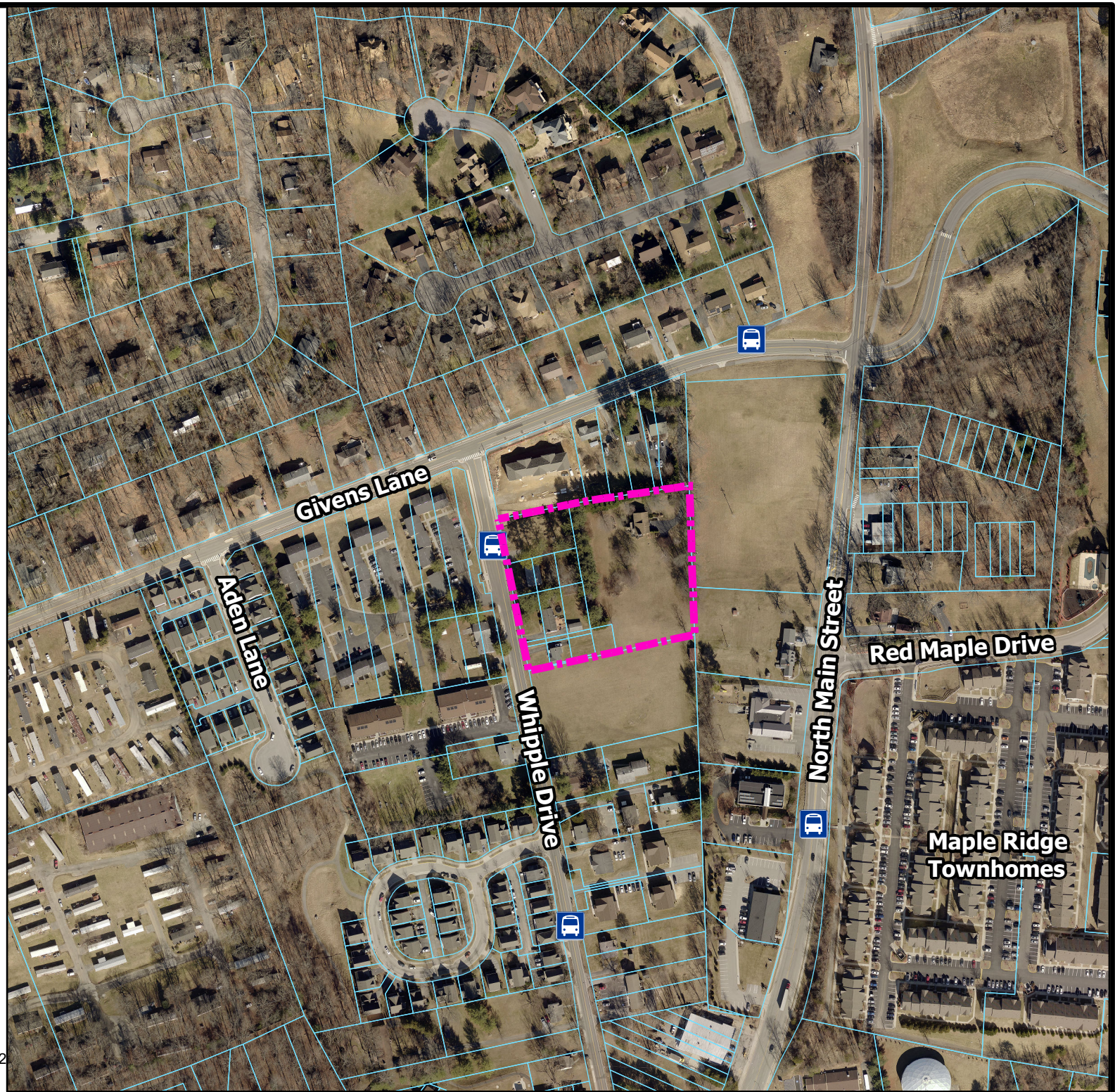
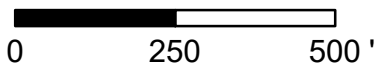
- Staff GIS maps
- Staff Appendix
- Town Staff Water Services memo dated June 27, 2022
- Town Staff Stormwater approval letter dated June 29, 2022
- Town Staff Sanitary Sewer memo dated July 12, 2022
- Town Staff Engineering Transportation memo dated July 13, 2022
- Neighborhood meeting notes & sign-in sheets

**RZN22-0002  
Whipple Townhomes  
PRD**

**1800 Whipple Drive**

**Legend**

-  Subject Area
-  BT Stops
-  Parcels



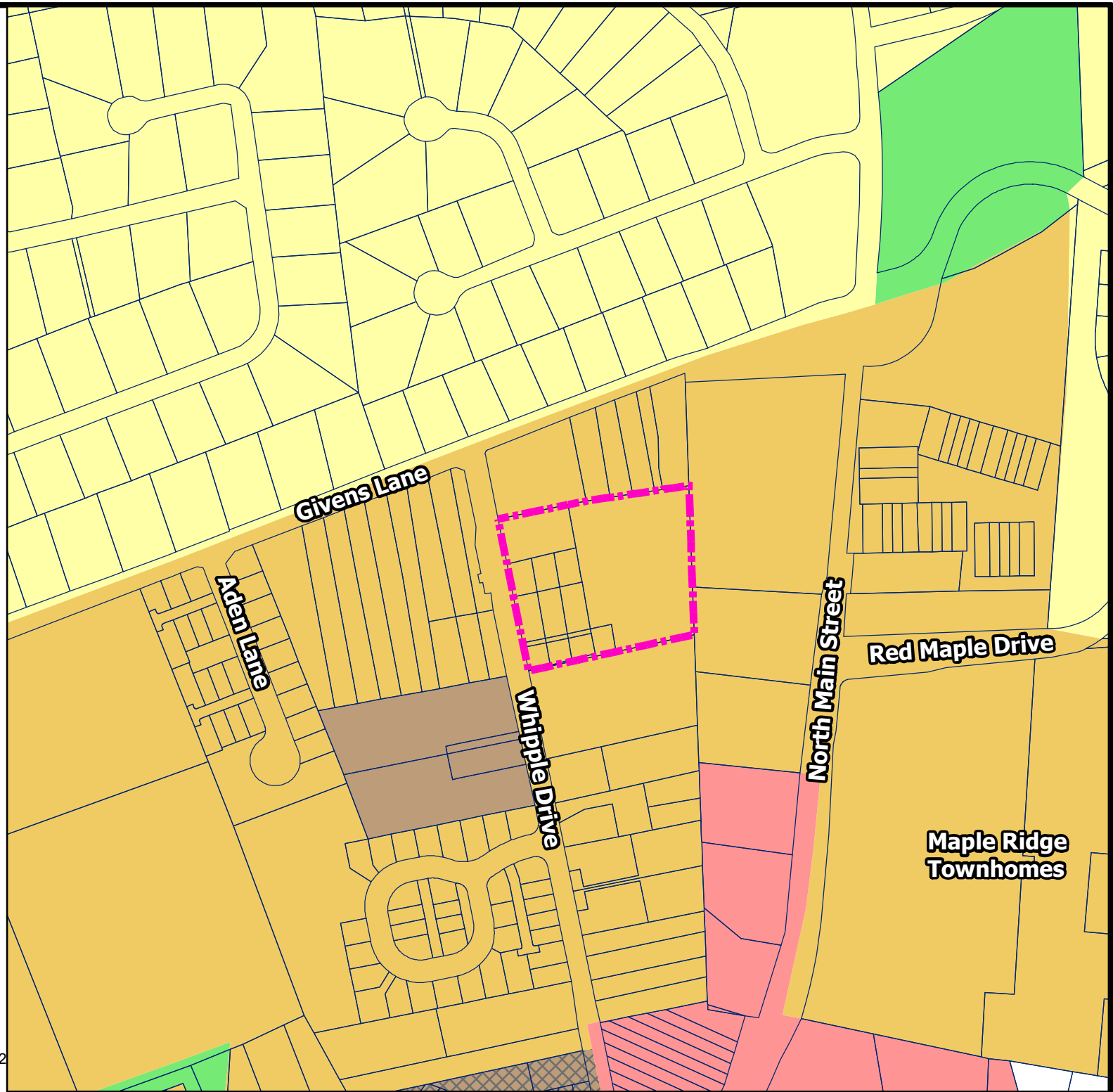
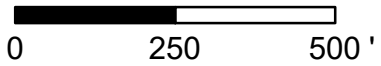
**RZN22-0002  
Whipple Townhomes  
PRD**

**1800 Whipple Drive**

**Future Land Use**

**Legend**

-  Subject Area
-  Parcels
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Limited High Density Residential Development
-  High Density Residential
-  Park Land / Open Space / Resource Protection
-  Commercial











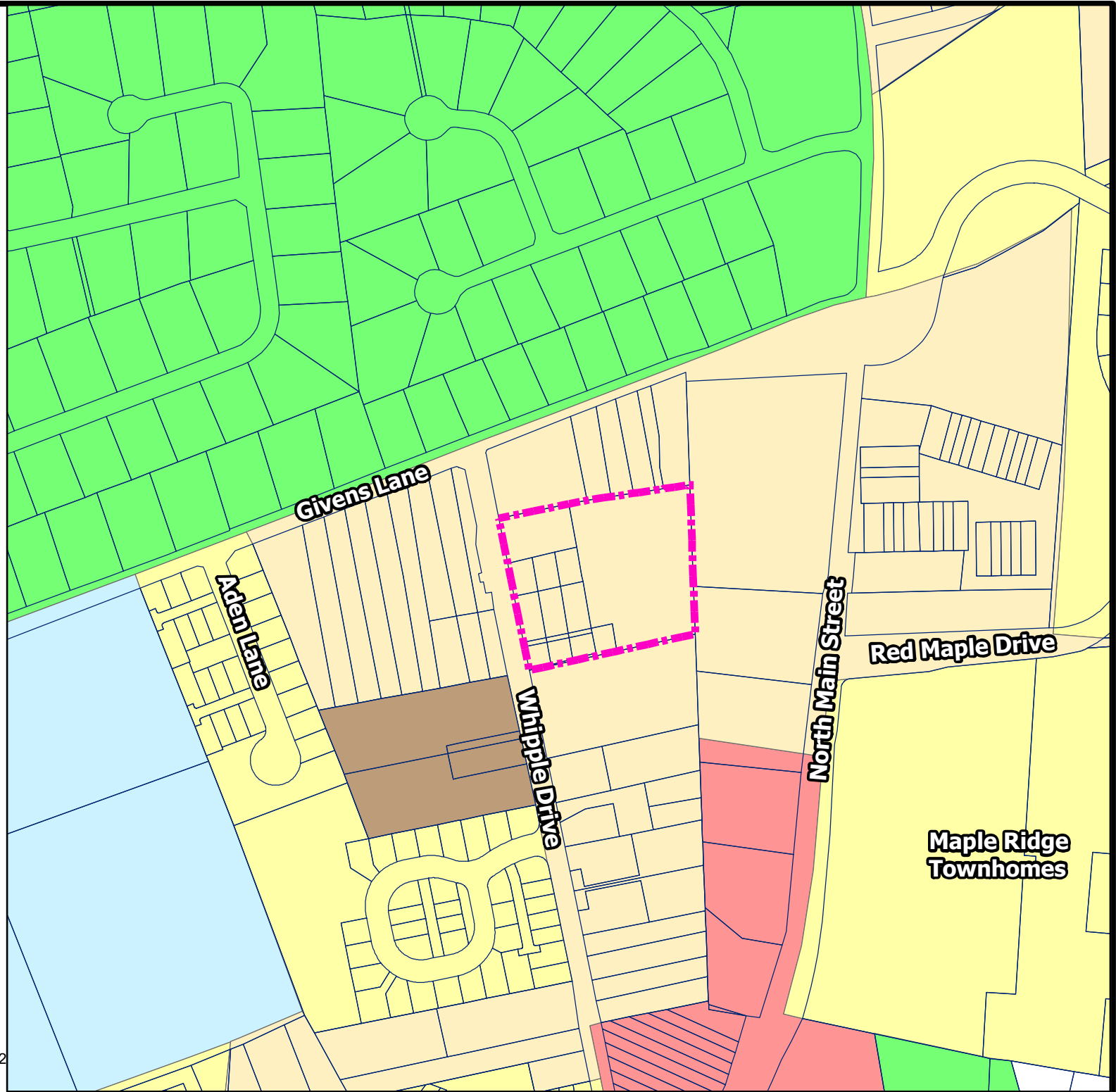
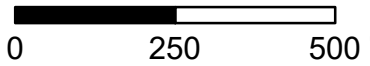
**RZN22-0002  
Whipple Townhomes  
PRD**

**1800 Whipple Drive**

**Zoning**

**Legend**

-  Subject Area
-  Parcels
-  R-4 Low Density Residential
-  R-5 Transitional Residential
-  RM-48 Medium Density Multiunit Residential
-  GC General Commercial
-  PR Planned Residential
-  PMH Planned Manufactured Home



## **RZN22-0002 Whipple Drive Townhomes PRD**

### **Staff Appendix**

This appendix is provided to give additional supporting information from the Comprehensive Plan, the Residential Infill Guidelines, and the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the staff report to focus on the analysis of the application.

### **Comprehensive Plan**

- **Housing Objectives & Policies H.2.** Through the development review and decision-making processes, ensure a wide range of housing choices that are integrated and balanced across the Town.
- **H.3.** Provide a range of affordable, energy efficient, and appropriate housing options based on the income levels of the people that live and work in the Town.
- **H.4.** Provide a range of housing options to support aging in place and aging in community.
- **H.5.** Provide housing available to special populations, including people with physical and mental disabilities, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and elderly residents with low incomes.
- **H.6.** Provide a range of housing types for young families, young professionals, and graduate students.

### Map A Future Land Use Designation

- **Medium Density Residential:** Up to and including ten (10) dwelling units per acre; or up to 20 bedrooms per acre, whichever is less. Bedrooms-per-acre is the primary measurement for multifamily residential uses. Typical implementing zoning districts: Transitional Residential (R-5), Old Town Residential (OTR), Planned Residential (PR), and Planned Manufactured Home (PMH)

### Map B Neighborhood Employment & Services Map Designation

- **Comprehensive Plan Multi-Unit Residential Neighborhood Issues and Opportunities for the Future**  
These neighborhoods are primarily apartment developments rented to students due to the proximity to the Virginia Tech campus. There is a limited amount of multi-family housing available to meet the needs of other market segments, either for rental- or owner-occupancy.
  - Transit service in these areas should continue to meet the needs of students and be expanded to meet the needs of non-students.
  - Enhancing the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that link these densely populated areas with Downtown and the University core campus can reduce car dependency.
  - There is limited land designated for the development of multi-family residential uses in Town. The Town encourages the redevelopment of aging, existing multi-family complexes. The Town has actively approved approximately 3,800 bedrooms of multi-family housing over the last five years, primarily for purpose-built student housing, and has approximately 20,000 bedrooms of existing multi-family housing. Proposals for purpose-built student housing should be guided by Town Council resolution 2-F-19.
  - There is a limited supply of multi-family residential housing that is oriented to non-students. The Town encourages the development of multi-family residential uses that are oriented to non-students. For example, non-student oriented developments may include units without bedroom/bathroom parity and provide leasing for units rather than individual bedrooms.
  - New developments and redevelopments should:
    - Provide open areas and recreational opportunities within their developments to serve residents.

- Provide buffered and landscaped pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure for students commuting to campus and for residents commuting to employment areas.
- Provide high-quality sustainable building and site design that integrates universal design concepts.
- Provide high-quality property management and maintenance.
- Lifestyle conflicts may occur in the neighborhood interfaces where higher density student developments are adjacent to non-student neighborhoods. Property management, education, and code enforcement can mitigate some of these conflicts.
- New multi-family developments in these areas should de-emphasize parking areas, maximize the use of transit, be walkable and bikeable, connect to other developments, have a street presence, and use other principles as detailed in the Residential Infill Guidelines.
- It is not the Town's burden to provide all of the residential housing needs to accommodate growth in the University's undergraduate enrollment. The University should provide on-campus housing to accommodate ongoing and future growth, particularly because the University owns the lands most suitable for new undergraduate housing. The University should retain on-campus housing to serve at least one-third (1/3) of undergraduate students. With locations on or proximate to campus, infrastructure and land use impacts to the Town can be minimized.

## Physical Site Development

### Setbacks

- ***Townhouse Use & Design Standard for building design §4231:*** Front yard setbacks for adjacent units shall vary a minimum of 3' and a maximum of 8'
- ***Residential Infill Guidelines Site Design & Parking:***
  - In residential neighborhoods, multi-family housing should adopt the predominant setback, but should also vary the building façade to relieve the appearance of mass.
  - Setbacks should be proportional to the height and mass of a building.
  - Front porches are encouraged and may extend into the required front yard setback.
  - Streets [that] feature consistent front building setbacks...help define neighborhood character.
  - Provide a front yard consistent with those found on the block facing the street.
  - Front porches are encouraged and may extend into the required front yard setback.

### Landscaping, Buffering, & Screening

- ***Residential Infill Guidelines Site Design & Parking:***
  - Natural features and existing trees should be retained.
  - Parking lots should be generously landscaped to provide shade, reduce glare, and provide visual interest.
  - All site areas not covered by structures, walkways, driveways, or parking spaces should be landscaped.
  - Street trees and planting strips also help buffer pedestrians from vehicle traffic.
  - The "green edge [landscaped setbacks between the...buildings and sidewalks]" provides residential streets with a clearly identifiable character; [landscaping] and fences are often used for transition between public and private space; provision of open space is critical for multifamily developments...
- ***Zoning Ordinance Landscaping Development Standards §5425:*** Tree Replacement Requirements: Any trees on the site which are a caliper of five inches or more at a height of one foot above the ground, or ornamental trees over twelve feet in height which are to be removed during site development shall be replaced up to the maximum canopy coverage required in §5426.

- **ZO §5426:** Canopy Coverage Requirements: Trees shall be provided within the limits of construction to the extent that at twenty years from the date of planting, tree canopies or covers will provide at least the following minimums: Planned Districts—Per [similar] Uses: RM-48 = 10%; R-5 = 20%
- **ZO §5427:** Parking Lot Landscaping:
  - The following provisions are intended to require that 5% of the entire parking lot, excluding the access drive, is landscaped with trees and vegetative ground cover. The area of the parking lot is the square foot of the parking spaces and aisles and interior parking lot islands, excluding access drives that do not contain either parallel or perpendicular parking spaces.
  - Within the parking lot there shall be planted one tree per ten spaces, rounded down to the closest whole number.
  - Planter islands or peninsulas containing trees shall be located within the parking lot, such that each island or planter is surrounded on at least three sides by parking lot or an access road to the parking lot. Their size shall be eighteen feet square in area, or equal total area in irregular shapes such that adequate space is provided for adequate tree canopy maturation.
- **Environment Objective & Policy E.35.** Promote, protect and enhance the Town’s urban forests through Town initiatives and in the development process.

Physical compatibility with surrounding neighborhood

- **Land Use Objective & Policy LU.5.:** Consider the compatibility of development with surrounding uses. Utilize strategies such as landscaping or other buffering techniques along with modification of site design to minimize impacts and facilitate compatibility.
- **Residential Infill Guidelines Best Practice #1:** Respect neighborhood context and enhance community character.
- **Residential Infill Guidelines Best Practice #2:** Provide...transitions...of building scale, building design, form and color...Complementary architectural design, materials, scale, massing and the use of landscape, screening, and open space are strategies to achieve compatibility within the neighborhood and the Town.
- **Residential Infill Guidelines Building Design:** Buildings should be designed to fit within the context of the surrounding structures and provide visual interest to pedestrians.

**Building Construction & Orientation**

Scale & Mass

- **Residential Infill Guidelines Building Design:**
  - The mass and scale of new infill residential buildings should appear to be similar to the building seen traditionally in the neighborhood.
  - The width of a building face of an infill project should not exceed the width of a typical residential structure on adjacent lots.
- **Townhouse Use & Design Standard for building design §4231:**
  - Except in the DC District a maximum of eight (8) dwelling units may be constructed in a contiguous series of townhouses. No more than two (2) contiguous series shall be constructed adjacent to each other.
  - Townhouse design, scale, and building materials shall be single-family residential in appearance.



### Building Orientation and Appearance

#### ■ **Residential Infill Guidelines Site Design and Parking**

- The scale and style of porch and portico elements should be consistent with the scale and style of the home, and should strive to respect the scale and style of porch and portico elements in the other homes on the block.
- Building roof forms that are similar to those seen traditionally in the neighborhood, such as gabled and hip roofs, should be used.
- Buildings oriented toward streets are a key characteristic of Blacksburg’s residential neighborhoods.
- Locate the primary entrance towards the street.
- Clearly define the primary entrance of the structure by using a front porch or stoop, and other architectural details.
- Retain space in front of the structure to relate to the street or sidewalk without intervening elements such as parking.
- Entry porches and porticoes in two-story homes should be one story to minimize the appearance of bulk.

### **Operational/Use Characteristics**

#### Parking & Access

- **Community Character Principle CCP15:** Increasing safety and efficiency for all modes is important in maximizing the functionality of the transportation network. This can be accomplished for both residential and nonresidential development by using and expanding the street grid pattern, minimizing curb cuts and driveways, adding internal connections between properties, optimizing signal timing to accommodate all modes and minimizing conflicts between modes. This is a high priority for arterial and collector roads.
- **Transportation Objective & Policy T.33.:** During the development process, ensure:
  - Surface parking facilities are landscaped and appropriately lighted
  - Consideration is given to pervious parking surface materials with lower environmental impacts
  - New parking lots minimize impacts on stormwater
  - Surface and structured parking provide an adequate number of electric vehicle charging stations and provide the infrastructure for additional stations
- **Zoning Ordinance Planned Residential Zoning District Standards §3113(f)** Parking in the PR district shall either be as contained in Section 5200 or as approved through:
  - A rezoning to the PR district based on demonstrated parking needs, housing types and potential impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.

#### Lifestyle conflicts

- **CCP2:** Lifestyle conflicts are inherent in a college town, where neighborhoods may have a mix of students and non-students.
- **LU.9.:** Encourage developers to work with surrounding property owners and tenants to resolve community concerns prior to formalizing development plans.
- **LU.23.:** Regulate the amount of noise and light produced by land uses to minimize impacts on the nearby properties.

## Open Space

- **CCP19:** Creation of public and private parks and recreation amenities, both for active and passive uses, is an important part of land use development decisions.
- **CCP20:** The preservation of open spaces is highly valued by the community.
- **Zoning Ordinance Townhome Use & Design Standard §4231(b)(11)**
  - Except in the MXD and DC Districts, for any development of 5 or more townhouses a minimum of 20% of the gross land area shall be preserved as open space for community recreation use. A specific recreational activity area or areas shall be developed and maintained for the residents of the development as part of this open space, as follows:
    - The size, location, shape, slope, and condition of the land shall be suitable for a specific recreational activity
    - The amount of land devoted to recreation shall be a function of the population to be served. Consideration shall be given to the size of the development, number, and characteristics of expected residents, proximity to other available recreational facilities, topography, and natural features on the site.
    - Safety buffers shall be provided for users of recreational facilities and equipment using recognized engineering and recreation standards.
    - Indoor recreational areas may be used as a specific recreational activity area. The indoor recreational area shall count as a part of lot coverage, as regulated by the district standards.
- **Zoning Ordinance Planned Residential District Standard §3113(b)(1)**
  - (1)Minimum open space:
    - a. A minimum of twenty (20) percent of the total district area shall be designated as open space, except as provided in subsection b.
    - b. For projects less than two (2) acres in size, the applicant may apply for a reduction or elimination of the open space requirement. The determination of the need for open space for such projects shall be evaluated based on a combination of the following project criteria:
      - i. Maximizing developable area;
      - ii. Proximity to downtown;
      - iii. Walking distance to services and transit;
      - iv. Density and intensity of use in relation to neighborhood context;
      - v. Demonstrated access to nearby public open space;
      - vi. Alternative recreational space (e.g., workout room); and
      - vii. Proposed improvements to the adjoining streetscape, which may include construction of additional sidewalks or trails adjoining the street, buffer strips between the sidewalk and the street, or other streetscape amenities or improvements to public space as part of the project.
    - c. An applicant may also include a request to modify or eliminate the use and design standards for open space and recreational space contained in Sections 4216(a)(6) for multifamily dwellings 4220(b)(7) for single-family attached dwellings, 4231(b)(11) for townhouses, and 4241(a)(3) for two-family dwellings. Such a request should be made for the purpose of eliminating any conflicts between development standards in the PR district and use and design standards, or as otherwise necessary to achieve the proposed development form in a manner consistent with the purpose of the district.
    - d. If phases are proposed for the planned residential development, the percentage of required open space included in each phase shall meet or exceed the percentage of dwelling units included in each phase.

- e. When twenty (20) percent of open space is required, a compact area of at least five thousand (5,000) square feet shall be provided for active or passive recreational activities.
- f. When a site is part of a public master plan adopted by town council, the required open space percentage may include off-site open space and parcels under separate ownership, provided that all the parcels are being developed under the common master plan. Off-site open space cannot be counted as required open space for more than one (1) development. The cumulative total of open space utilization shall be determined as part of each rezoning where open space is required.

### **Infrastructure Considerations**

#### Streetscape, Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Improvements

- **CCP1:** Well-designed pedestrian and bicycle friendly infrastructure is essential to the Town’s identity as a walkable and bikeable community.
- **CCP16:** Transit connections and bus stop amenities encourage ridership and are important components of the transit system. These elements should be part of the design of new developments and be coordinated with Blacksburg Transit regarding service availability.
- **CCP21:** The Town is committed to minimizing light pollution by adhering to International Dark Sky Association standards.
- **T.7.:** Complete the construction of a connected sidewalk system
- **T.8.:** Minimize pedestrian and vehicular conflicts.
- **T.9.:** Maintain and improve the aesthetic quality of the pedestrian environment by planting street trees and other landscaping, and installing street furniture where appropriate.
- **T.51.:** During the development review process, ensure that transit service and access to/from the transit stop and the development are provided.
- **Residential Infill Guidelines Best Practice #3:** Create a pedestrian friendly streetscape.
- **Residential Infill Guidelines Site Design & Parking:**
  - The design of the space between the edge of the curb and the front of a building is essential for encouraging pedestrian activity and promoting safety and security.
  - [Sidewalks] contribute to the character of the neighborhoods by providing safe places for people to travel and interact with one another.
  - Walkways should connect public sidewalks and parking areas to all main entrances on the site. For townhouses...fronting on the street, the sidewalk may be used to meet this standard.
- **Townhouse Use & Design Standard for sidewalks §4231 (b)(4):** Sidewalks shall connect each townhouse to the parking area serving that townhouse, to other buildings within the site, and to other buildings or uses on adjacent lots.

### **Environmental Considerations**

- **CCP17:** Blacksburg is a responsible headwaters community for Southwest Virginia.
- **CCP18:** Responsible site design and development practices should be used to minimize environmental impacts within the Town.
- **CCP21:** The Town is committed to minimizing light pollution by adhering to International Dark Sky Association standards.
- **LU.25:** Protect the integrity and quality of water resources in Town.

- **E.34:** As a part of the development review process, evaluate a proposed development's impact and proposed mitigation measures for the following:
  - Open Space
  - Urban forest canopy
  - Viewsheds
  - Mineral resources
  - Cultural resources
  - Threatened and endangered species
  - Watersheds

**Additional Applicable Use and Design Standards for Townhomes – Section 4231(b)**

(3) Except in the DC District, the minimum separation between any contiguous series of townhouse units shall be twenty (20) feet from any other contiguous series of townhouse units. The minimum separation between any contiguous series of townhouse units shall be forty (40) feet from any other adjacent principle structure. Zoning district setback requirements do not apply to individual townhouse lots. Setback requirements do apply to the lot or parcel from which the individual townhouse lots are subdivided.

(5) The principal orientation of all townhouses shall be the street or parking area on which the lot has frontage. There shall be at least one (1) entrance facing the street, and the principal windows of the townhouse shall also face this street.

(6) Shared driveways are permitted, with the recordation of perpetual easements to provide for the use and maintenance of the shared driveway. Courtyard style parking is permitted. Only one (1) yard, either the front yard or the rear yard, or in the case of an end unit, the side yard, shall be improved with a driveway or parking spaces. All parking spaces shall be located behind the front building line. Town Council may grant a special exception to this requirement as authorized by § 1112.

(7) Entrances to the townhouse development shall be minimized and designed in such a way as to maximize safety, maximize efficient traffic circulation, and minimize the impact on any adjacent residential neighborhood.

(8) All accessory structures must be located behind the rear building line of the townhouse.

(9) A subdivision plat shall be submitted with the site development plan or with the conditional use permit application, where individual attached units are to be constructed on individual lots. The subdivision plat shall meet the standards of the Subdivision Ordinance, except the dedication of park land shall not be required where twenty (20) percent open space is provided per subsection (11), below.

(10) The final subdivision plat shall not be submitted for review until the foundation has been constructed.

(12) The site development plan or the conditional use permit application shall contain a floor plan of the proposed townhouses, showing the location, size, and type of rooms proposed.

(13) The floor to area ratio shall be computed as the gross floor area of all dwelling units to the parent parcel.

(15) Public street frontage shall not be required for any lot of record platted for townhouse development.

**Comparative PRD Densities**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Development Name</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Proposed Density</b>	<b>Parking</b>
2012	Roper Energy Apartments	approved, not constructed	60 br/ac	0.71 sp/br; 30 sp
2012	Terrace View PRD	withdrawn	43 br/ac	
2012	The Edge PRD	approved, completed	62 br/ac	1.00 sp/br
2012	Copper Beech to RM-27	withdrawn	27 br/ac	
2012	Grissom Lane PRD	approved, completed	7 units/ac	
2013	University City Center PRD	denied	145 br/ac	
2013	Blacksburg Estates PRD	withdrawn	7 units/ac SF & TH	
2014	Progress St Townhomes PRD	withdrawn	42 br/ac	1.00 sp/br
2014	Whipple South Townhomes	approved	25 br/ac	1.02 sp/br
2014	Eheart & Main PRD	approved	65 br/ac	0.95 sp/br
2014	Warren Street PRD	withdrawn	154 br/ac	0.77 sp/br
2014	Fieldstone PRD	approved, completed	25 br/ac	1.0-1.75 sp/br
2014	The Retreat PRD	approved, completed	20 br/ac	1.01/br
2016	Sturbridge Square/Union	approved, under construction	89 br/ac	0.75 sp/br
2017	Preston Row	approved, completed	55 br/ac	0.88 sp/br
2017	Stonegate II	approved, under construction	20 br/ac	1.05/br
2017	Whipple Duplexes (Uptown Village)	approved, completed	27 br/ac	0.95 sp/br
2017	Habitat for Humanity	approved, completed	31 br/ac	0.67/br; 2 sp/unit
2017	Warren Street Stadium View	withdrawn	73 br/ac	0.82 sp/br
2017	OBMS/Midtown	approved with amendments	48br/ac - PR & DC	specific to parcel
2017	Hearthstone Redevelopment PRD	approved, completed	48 br/ac	0.78 sp/br
2018	Cedar Run Overlook	approved, under construction	32 br/ac	0.93 sp/br
2018	Uptown Commercial Phase III PRD	approved, under construction	48 br/ac	1.2 sp/br
2018	Frith/The View	approved	68 br/ac	0.89 sp/br
2018	Terrace View PRD 2018/The Hub	approved, under construction	114 br/ac	0.77 sp/br
2018	30-R	approved, under construction	56 br/ac	0.80 sp/br
2018	1222 Patrick Henry	approved, completed	66 br/ac	0.75 sp/br
2019	The Standard	withdrawn	147 br/ac	0.80 sp/br + comm.
2019	OBHS	approved	30 br/ac	1.1 sp/br
2019	1310 North Main Street PRD	denied	59 br/ac	0.85 sp/br + comm.
2019	The Farm-Glade Road	approved	32.06 br/ac	0.97 sp/br
2019	The Flats at Uptown-Amendment	approved	68 br/ac	0.90 sp/br
2020	Berewick PRD Subdivision	approved	1.88 unit/ac	2 sp/unit
2021	Clover Valley Phase II	approved	47 br/ac	0.99 sp/br
2021	Marlington Townhomes	approved	24 br/ac	1 sp/br
2021	Legacy on South Main	approved	52br/ac	0.85sp/br
2022	402 Clay Street	currently under review	28br/ac	1.1sp/br



**DATE:** June 27, 2022

**TO:** Kinsey O'Shea

**FROM:** Lori Lester, Water Resources Manager  
Randy Formica, Director-Engineering and GIS

**TITLE:** Water Comments for RZN22-0002, Whipple Drive Townhomes PRD Rezoning

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**Water Comments:**

- The Town can provide the minimum required pressure (20psi) at the water meter based on the information provided.
- Additional water infrastructure or changes to proposed water infrastructure may be required to meet Town of Blacksburg Water Standards and Specifications, fire hydrant spacing, Building and Fire Code, etc.
- All utility trenches, including trenches for laterals, shall require that stone backfill be utilized since the utilities are under pavement.
- Typically, the Town requires that water meters be installed either at the edge of an easement or at a property line. In the case of this proposal, for Units 5 through 34, if the water meters are installed at the edge of the easement line, they will be located in the parking area and will require traffic bearing meter boxes, and potentially make accessing them difficult. As an alternative, the applicant could install the meters for these units behind the proposed sidewalk in front of the units, however, that would require that the public utility easement be extended and widened to include the meter in the easement.

Wednesday, June 29, 2022

Balzer and Associates  
Attn: Steve Semones  
448 Peppers Ferry Road  
Christiansburg, VA 24073

RE: RZN22-0002 Whipple Drive Townhomes PRD

Dear Steve Semones:

The Engineering Department has completed the review of the Clay Street Townhomes PRD rezoning request Stormwater Concept Plan. The Concept Plan is **approved** at this time. These parcels total 3.08 acres of land which is proposed to be re-developed into a Townhome complex. In the post-development condition, stormwater quantities will increase due to the addition of a higher amount of impervious coverage.

The stormwater management mitigation is provided by an on-site underground detention pond to meet the quantity requirements for the energy-balance equation and 10 year storm flows. The purchase of **2.85 lbs/year** of off-site nutrient credits is the proposed method to meet 100% water quality requirements. This complies with the local water quality regulations, but will not provide any benefits within the Town of Blacksburg. *The Town **recommends** that this development provide some on-site stormwater quality treatment instead of only off-site methods. An on-site facility will provide lasting beneficial water quality value to the Cedar Run watershed, whereas the current layout may degrade our local water quality.*

**Items to be addressed prior to Site Plan Approval:**

1. Additional access points to the underground stormwater facility will need to be addressed.
2. The drainage area to the point of analysis will need to be revised. Areas on 006210 are unaccounted for in the total drainage.
3. A private easement agreement will need to be established for the connection from the Ratcliff Townhomes stormwater facility to the Town Right of Way.
4. VSMP permit coverage will be required for this site.
5. **Note:** The Town of Blacksburg Town has implemented a stormwater utility fee based on total impervious lot coverage. This proposed development area would generate a stormwater fee of somewhere between **\$127.27 and \$145.45** dollars per month for this site.

Please contact Kafi Howard with the Engineering Department at (540) 443-1354 or via email [khoward@blacksburg.gov](mailto:khoward@blacksburg.gov) if you have questions or concern regarding this review. If you would like to schedule a post review meeting please also contact me.

Sincerely,

Town Engineer – Stormwater  
400 S Main St., Blacksburg VA 24060  
[khoward@blacksburg.gov](mailto:khoward@blacksburg.gov)  
(540) 443-1354

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Kinsey O'Shea, Development Administrator  
FROM: Randy Formica, Director-Engineering and GIS  
DATE: July 12, 2022  
SUBJECT: RZN 22-0002-Whipple Drive Townhomes-Sanitary Sewer Memo

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A downstream analysis was performed for this proposal to determine and locate any sanitary sewer capacity deficiencies. The analysis shows that there are no capacity issues associated with this proposal.

The following comments are based on the review of the sanitary sewer extension as shown on the Master Plan.

1. If there is an intention of making the units for sale at some point in the future, the applicant shall provide a separate sanitary sewer lateral for each unit that is located on the lot it serves.
2. All utility trenches, including trenches for laterals, shall require that stone backfill be utilized since the utilities are under pavement.
3. Typically, the Town requires that sanitary sewer cleanouts be installed either at the edge of an easement or at a property line. In the case of this proposal, if the cleanouts are installed at the edge of the easement line, traffic bearing cleanouts would need to be installed for Units 5 through 34. As an alternative, the applicant could install the cleanouts for these units behind the proposed sidewalk in front of the units, however, that would require that the public utility easement be extended and widened to include the cleanout in the easement. Another alternative would be to relocate and install the sanitary sewer under the sidewalk where possible which would shorten the length of the laterals, decrease the width of the public utility easements in the parking area, and eliminate the need for traffic bearing cleanouts.



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Kinsey O'Shea, Development Administrator

FROM: Joshua Middleton, Town Engineer

DATE: July 13, 2022

SUBJECT: Whipple Drive Townhomes PRD – Transportation Comments – Review 1

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### **Overview**

As represented in the rezoning application, the proposed thirty-four (34) townhome units, containing 98 bedrooms, would generate additional traffic volumes to the existing road network, particularly on Whipple Drive and North Main Street. ITE trip generation data indicates the total number of vehicle trips generated by the new units to be 390 trips per day with AM Peak Hour volumes of 16 trips and PM Peak Hour volumes of 30 trips. The proposed connection for the new units would be directly to Whipple Drive where they are further distributed to Givens Lane and North Main Street.

Based on traffic volume data provided by the applicant's engineering consultant, the existing adjacent traffic volume on Whipple Drive is approximately 1,500 ADT (average daily traffic), with AM Peak Hour volumes of 98 trips and PM Peak Hour volumes of 119 trips. Therefore, the proposed development traffic represents a 16.3 – 26.0% increase in volumes on Whipple Drive.

The addition of 390 trips will have a moderate impact on operational and safety aspects of the adjoining road network. However, as indicated by the submitted traffic impact analysis, no turn lanes or other mitigating measures are required or recommended.

### **Entrance Design & Layout**

The entrances proposed along Whipple Drive generally conform to VDOT CG-11 Design Guidelines. Specific design elements pertaining to sizing, grading and sight distance can be fully evaluated during site plan development. However, additional considerations are required for the southern (entry) entrance, as it pertains to the entrance throat. Access Management Guidelines for entrance design for the proposed one-way circulation, require the throat distance, which precludes parking, to be no less than 50-ft (see Figure 4-1A). The proposed layout provides a throat length of approximately 38-ft. Therefore, two (2) of the proposed parking spaces need to be relocated, or the parking layout otherwise modified, to facilitate a minimum 50-ft throat length.

Changes to the proposed parking arrangement, necessary to facilitate the required entrance throat, could have a significant impact on the proposed master plan. The required adjustment should be fully incorporated into master plan, as part of the PRD process, to ensure the overall layout is constructible and substantive changes are not required during development.

### **Crosswalk Layout**

The development master plan proposes several public crosswalks to provide access along the sidewalk and to the existing bus stop on Whipple Drive. Crosswalk installations require adequate transitions from the road surface to the adjacent pedestrian path. This would be

facilitated with a VDOT CG-12, which facilitates all applicable ADA requirements including a ramp, landing and detectable warning surface. For all locations where a crosswalk is proposed, that would not be served by an existing CG-12, a new CG-12 must be installed.

### **Public Utility Easements**

The proposed rezoning includes a 10-ft setback on all sides except along Whipple Drive, which has a 15-ft setback. Consequently, sheet Z6 identified a 10-ft Public Utility Easement (PUE) to be dedicated within the 10-ft perimeter setback. However, Section 5-901 of the Town subdivision ordinance requires a 15-ft wide PUE interior to all perimeter lot lines. PUE's are a critical component of subdivisions as they facilitate the installation of franchised cable television, fiber optic, gas, telephone and electric services to not only the proposed development but the surrounding community at large.

In order to facilitate the required 15-ft perimeter PUE the proposed perimeter setback should be increased to 15-ft in all locations. Changes to the setback, necessary to facilitate a 15-ft PUE, could have a significant impact on the proposed master plan. The required adjustment should be fully incorporated into master plan, as part of the PRD process, to ensure the overall layout is constructible and substantive changes are not required during development.

### **Recommendations**

1. Revise the parking layout to facilitate a minimum throat length of 50-ft at the southern (entry) entrance.
2. Provide CG-12 applications in conjunction with all proposed public crosswalks.
3. Revise the proposed perimeter setback to be 15-ft in all locations to facilitate a 15-ft perimeter PUE.

Neighborhood Meeting

RZN 22-0002-Whipple Drive PRD Rezoning at 1800 Whipple Drive

Date: Thursday, July 7, 2022 6:30 pm.

Name	Address	Email	*
Roger Auerhart	1502 Whipple Dr.	roger2@vt.edu	
Allen Linkow	1603 Whipple Dr		
ADAM CADE	343 COURTNEY CIR	acade@vt.edu	
MICHELLE CADE	" " "	Michelle.Winning-Cade@gmail.com	
Ben Price	901 Derby Ln	ben@greenvalleybuildersinc.com	
JOEL HERBEIN	515 FARMINGDALE	JHERBEIN@TECHLAB.COM	
Javad Torabinejad	1609 Windsor St	jtorabinejad@yahoo.com	X

Please Print Legibly

\*PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY OF THE STAFF REPORT EMAILED TO YOU

Neighborhood Meeting for RZN 22-0002  
Whipple Drive PRD Rezoning for Townhomes at 1800 Whipple Drive

Thursday, July 7, 2022

6:30 pm

Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Municipal Building  
300 South Main Street, Blacksburg.

A neighborhood meeting was held to discuss a rezoning request from R-5 Transitional Residential to PR Planned Residential at 1800 Whipple Drive.

The meeting began at 6:37 pm.

Town staff present were Kinsey O'Shea, Senior Planner; Kasey Thomsen, Planning Technician and Cat Woodsen, Planning Intern.

Steve Semones and Gretchen Merix of Balzer and Associates and Ben Price of Green Valley Builders were in attendance as the applicants and property owner.

Kinsey O'Shea gave a brief overview of the project request, purpose of the neighborhood meeting and overall meeting timeline in the public hearing schedule. O'Shea directed everyone in attendance to the Town of Blacksburg website where the current application, meeting schedule and any and all future documents and additions to the application can be found.

Steve Semones of Balzer and Associates gave a small overview of the Planned Residential zoning district request.

Those in attendance had the following questions and comments:

- An attendee asked how efficient the solar panel systems would be for the units, and what savings tenants may receive.
- An attendee asked how the applicant would maintain stormwater quality, and whether all of the stormwater quality management was handled with nutrient credit purchases.
- An attendee asked how the parking ratio for this project compares to the Uptown Village project.
- An attendee noted that the proposed density represents 60% over what is allowed, and felt that solar panels as a "green" commitment is not enough to offset the increased impact from the development.
- An attendee asked if the water systems that would serve the project could handle the extra stress of the increased residential density.
- An attendee expressed concern about the nutrient credits purchased and hoped that the applicant could maintain the system in a healthy manner.
- An attendee asked if the existing structures on the site would be torn down.
- An attendee stated that they are not against development but is concerned that the increase in impact of the project may overwhelm existing infrastructure systems.
- A citizen asked if this would be student housing and asked about the proposed occupancy

- An attendee asked if the development would have assigned parking spaces and spaces for visitors.
- An attendee asked if there would be additional restrictions regarding short term rentals (AirB&B etc.) besides the already imposed Town regulations.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.