CLINE DESIGN

IMAGINE A PLACE

April 21, 2017

Project: Fordham Blvd Apartments

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness Application

The proposed development is a new 273-unit apartment community located on an approximate 3.9 acre site at the corner of Fordham Boulevard and South Elliott Road. The site combines a portion of vacant land at the Village Plaza South shopping center with the current Days Inn property. The new apartment community will be a single building with a 6-story southern section with resident amenities and a leasing office and a 5-story north section wrapping a structured parking garage. The north and south building sections converge at a recessed motor court fronting the service road along Fordham Boulevard.

The project will include a mix of studios, one and two bedroom apartments along with several resident amenities including two courtyards overlooking Booker Creek, a club room, and a fitness center. A public walkway beside the motor court passes through the building and leads to a pocket park overlooking Booker Creek. The project has been designed to accommodate the proposed widening of South Elliott Street as well as future greenway along Booker Creek.

Part 1a:

Our materials will be a combination of masonry, cementitious siding and cementitious panels. We will use a phenolic siding in certain locations as well as EIFS or stucco for cornices. The Fordham elevation will have a masonry base and vary in height. Atop the base will be a combination of the cementitious panels and siding as well as the phenolic siding. As the elevation turns to South Elliot, the base will remain masonry of varying height that changes to siding and panels. The masonry will wrap the base around the pool deck and eventually give way to primarily siding and panels on the west and north elevations with the NE corner returning to a brick base as it turns the corner to Fordham. The North elevation will also have exposed concrete as part of the parking structure. This will either be a painted or sand blasted finish. The siding will be painted in earth tones ranging from beige/tan to greens and warm grays. The phenolic panel will have a stained wood look finish. All unit windows will be vinyl. Windows along the leasing office and club will be aluminum storefront with aluminum entry doors. Unit balcony rails will be a factory coated aluminum with color ranging from dark bronze/dark gray to black.

Part 1b:
Most of the building will have a cornice, however, there will segments that won't. Openings in brick facades will have a soldier course header. Openings in cementitious and phenolic siding will be trimmed out with flat stock. Openings in panels will be wrapped in battens. The base of the building along Fordham and Elliot will be masonry for varying heights. Along the west elevation, it will be primarily siding with the exception of the pool deck which will be masonry. Along the north façade, the base will vary from masonry to siding as you get closer to the back of the property.

Part 1c:
The base of the building facing Fordham is designed to have the building appear to be a set of smaller buildings with the motor court/main entry providing a large recess that creates two distinct segments. Each side has stoops at the masonry base. The masonry base steps up and down across the façade creating a variety of scale across the different segments of the building giving the appearance of smaller buildings adjacent to each other. The balconies on the right side vary in location to help break up the far-right segment of the elevation. The next segment uses a change in material as a distinguish element.

In turning the corner to the Elliot elevation, the building naturally steps back for the pool deck and again past the motor court. The masonry base is maintained along Elliot throughout the pool deck and changes to siding along the rear. The color and material palette remains in segments to continue the pattern of vertical proportions.

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The rear of the building is primarily panel and siding with some unique design queues around window projections. This façade has a natural segmental break due to the way the floor plan steps in and out but color and material change continues to be used to define building segments.

The north façade is broken into three distinct segments with the parking garage segment splitting the residential. The segment closest to Fordham has a masonry base that continues from the front. This steps down to one story as the cementitious panel increases. The parking garage façade will be precast concrete with paint to give some definition and maintain the color palate. As the building moves to the rear, the siding from the rear elevation turns the corner and makes up the primary finish material for the last segment.

Part 1d:
We have provided a sheet of light fixtures and proposed outdoor furniture for the project. The site plan will require retaining walls given topography along Booker Creek. Fencing will also be required around the pool deck. This will be an aluminum fence similar in color to the balcony rails in a vertical picket pattern. The project will have a pass through in the center giving pedestrian access to a public pocket park and providing a connection to a future town greenway along the creek behind as well as a sidewalk access across the rear of the building. The sidewalks will be a combination of ramps (for ADA access) as well as stairs.

Due to the unique existing conditions of the site, two Design Alternatives are being proposed.

Design Alternate 1 - increase block length from 400' to 540' under the following criteria of the Ordinance:

Where the Community Design Commission makes a finding that a proposed design alternative for block length will provide access and supports a walkable public realm consistent with that at a minimum meets the purpose and intent of Section 3.11.2.1.B. and where one or more of the site constraints listed below applies, the Community Design Commission may approve an alternatively designed block length up to 600 feet as part of a Certificate of Appropriateness:

i. Proposed to protect sensitive natural areas or save healthy existing trees;
ii. Required to protect natural conditions, such as watercourses, riparian buffers, natural rock formations or topography;
iii. Required based on to compensate for some unusual aspect of the development site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners generally within the Ephesus/Fordham district (e.g., unusual lot size, or configuration, or surrounding parcellation patterns);
iv. Required due to the presence of existing utilities or other easements;
v. Required for traffic safety, site distance considerations, intersection spacing, or intersection alignment and/or adequate site distance; or
vi. Proposed because there are no other options for ingress and egress.

As shown on the Existing Conditions plan, the site is bound on the west side by Lower Booker Creek, associated Jordan Lake Buffers, floodway and wetlands. In addition, this area has been proposed by the Town of Chapel Hill in the Lower Booker Creek Watershed Study as an important opportunity for flood control and water quality improvement. The project team is working closely with the Town to facilitate the goals of the watershed study as it relates to this site by providing access and pedestrian connections for a potential flood control and greenway project.
Because of these environmental barriers, a vehicular connection through this area does not fit within the goals of the Ordinance. This was documented in the Town's block study diagrams (refer to Connectivity Plan) which illustrate the next block connector north of Elliot Road occurring just to the north of this site. Based on these factors, site constraints (i), (ii) and (iii) listed in the Ordinance above apply to this project.

To support a walkable ream consistent with the purpose of Section 3.11.2.1.B the project is providing the following connectivity features as documented on the Block Diagram and Connectivity Plan:

-12' wide multi modal path along the entire Fordham Blvd frontage which provides an important link in the Town's long term plan for this area

-Numerous direct access points with stoops and porches to residential units along the multi-use path

-Greenway connector off of Elliot Rd to the east side of Booker Creek and access to a future greenway
-Intermediate passageway that links the multi-use path to the future greenway

-Park Amenity / Outdoor Amenity Space at the intersection of the passageway and future greenway overlooking Bolin Creek

-Pedestrian access along the north property line that will also connect the multi-use path to the future greenway

-Vehicular courtyard that provides opportunities for drop-off, turnaround and other vehicular movements within a pedestrian friendly environment.

Design Alternate 2- Provide alternate to Canopy trees along Type B frontage of Fordham Blvd under the following criteria of the Ordinance:

Canopy trees are required unless utility conflicts exist, in which case an equivalent or better alternative can be reviewed and approved by the Community Design Commission

As shown on the Existing Conditions Plan and associated photographs, existing power lines span the Fordham Blvd. frontage. These lines must remain in their general location with poles being relocated out of the location of the proposed multi-use path. As a result, they will be within the 8' landscape zone.
To provide a better alternative given the constraints, the following is being proposed:

-Increase total quantity of trees well above the minimum required with varieties that will be allowed under the power lines *
-Provide matching trees on opposite side of multi- use trail
-Provide large canopy trees just outside the power line zone where feasible *
-Provide continuous 8' wide shrub / groundcover bed below trees to decrease impervious surface and to provide more buffer between the multi-use path and service road/ Fordham Blvd. *
-On the south side of the site where there is no service road, provide additional shrub / groundcover massing to improve the Fordham Blvd streetscape image as well as provide an amenity for the multi-use path *

* Some aspects of these will require final approval and encroachment agreements from NCDOT