

Project Narrative

Planning and Zoning Board, Board of Adjustment and Design Review Board Application



Prepared for:

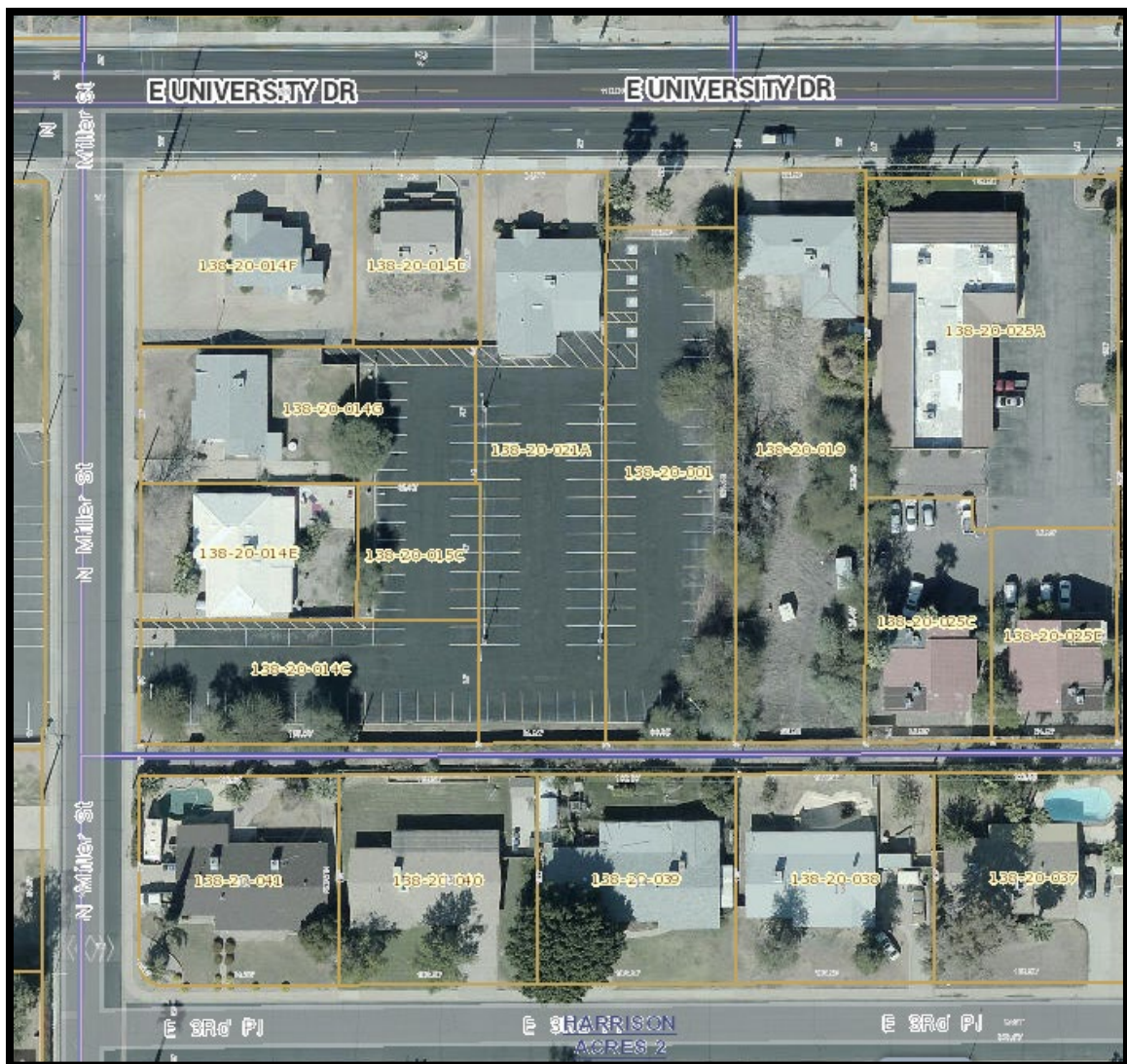
Stalwart Acquisitions, LLC
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PURPOSE OF REQUEST:

The purpose of this request is to seek Design Review approval, Site Plan approval and the granting of a Development Incentive Permit to allow for a multiple-residence project located at the southeast corner of Miller Street and University Drive. The project site (Site) encompasses 9 parcels: (138-20-014F, 138-20-015D, 138-20-021A, 138-20-001, 138-20-019, 138-20-014G, 138-20-014E, 138-20-015C and 138-20-014C). The Site is approximately 2.46 net acres and is zoned both RM-4 and RM-2. The Site is being developed in partnership with Hillsong College to provide modern housing to their students.



DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The proposal is for a 53 unit multiple-residence project that will range between one, two and three stories in height. As proposed, there is a unit mix of 4- one-bedroom units and 49- two-bedroom units. The Site will be fully parked on-site with no requested parking deviation. The proposed development will include a community amenity building and a centralized amenity area for residents. Currently, parcels 138-20-014E and 138-20-014C are zoned RM-2 with the remaining parcels zoned RM-4. The Site is currently underutilized and consists of vacant and boarded up homes, former office buildings and a parking lot.

RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING PROPERTIES:

The project site is surrounded by the following uses and zoning:

Existing Land Uses		
	Use	Zoning
On-Site	Single Residences and Offices	RM-2, RM-4
North (across University Drive)	Offices, Vacant Land	RM-4, OC
South	Single Residences	RS-9
East	Offices, Multiple-Residences	RM-4
West (across Miller St)	Church and Single Residences	RM-2, RS-9

SITE & BUILDING:

At the time of the application, there are several residential homes and boarded up office buildings located on Site.

Site Plan Design:

The Site was designed in such a manner that provides permitted intensity along University Drive and steps down in height further south on the site adjacent to the neighborhood. As the Site is designed, the building adjacent to University Drive is three-stories in height with residential walk-ups provided on the ground floor. The residential buildings on-site steps down to two-stories on the south half of the site to be respectful to our adjacent neighbors. The Clubhouse/Leasing building is one-story in height and was designed to appear as a single-

residence home as it interfaces with the adjacent neighborhood and Miller Street. Adjacent to the Clubhouse/Leasing building is the outdoor resident amenity area which includes a pool, ramada and turf game courts.

Ingress and Egress will be provided from both University Drive and Miller Street. Covered parking will be provided in the parking lot as an added benefit for the residents. In addition to the covered parking, landscape islands are also being provided every 8 parking spaces and are designed in such a way that does not interfere with the parking canopies.

Building Design:

The design of Stalwart Housing will feature high quality architecture and building materials resulting in a safe, comfortable, functional, and attractive development. The buildings range from one-story to three-stories in height and will not exceed an elevation of 40 feet measured as the mean height between the plate line and the ridge of the roof as defined by Mesa Zoning Ordinance. The building has been designed to blend in with the surrounding communities by utilizing stucco in natural tones, brick veneer and a composite single roof. The facades are given interest with varying roof transitions, shutters, pop out areas and massing articulation.

Alternative Compliance:

Our buildings have been designed to reflect the architectural style of the adjacent post-war style homes. The buildings incorporate multi-colored stucco with brick accents to compliment the architecture. To enhance certain visible elevations, more than 25% of the brick was added to the north, east and west elevations. The south elevation, which is only visible from the internal parking lot, includes 10.5% of the brick material. Alternative Compliance to Section 11-5-5-B-5-b is being requested to allow for a percentage less than 25% on the south elevation as the material is better served on other elevations. If calculated as an aggregate of all buildings and not per elevation, our buildings combined comply with the 25% minimum for different exterior materials.

Landscaping:

The landscaping plan has been specifically designed to blend with the existing evergreen landscape palette to the neighborhood to the south.

Community Outreach

Community outreach started early on in this process and before any formal submittal was made to the City of Mesa. On September 9 we held a virtual neighborhood meeting with adjacent neighbors. Neighbors that lived within 1,000 feet and registered neighborhood associations and HOAs within 1 mile were notified of this meeting.

At this meeting, we presented our proposed site plan and graphics of our intended architectural style. At the time, we were proposing 59 units, a parking reduction of 13 spaces, three-stories throughout the site and the proposed setback deviations.

The neighbors expressed concerns about the proposed height of three-stories adjacent to the neighborhood. Concerns were also expressed regarding the parking deviation and potential for overflow parking in the neighborhood. We explained to the neighbors that most of the residents will be Hillsong College students and not all will have vehicles. After listening to the concerns from the neighbors, the development team decided to remove 5 units from our proposed site plan, which allowed the southernmost building to be two-stories in height and eliminated the need for the parking reduction.

The other main concern the neighbors had was regarding our proposed architectural style. At the time of the neighborhood meeting, elevations had not yet been rendered. The development team felt it was important for the neighbors to be part of the discussion regarding the architecture. For the presentation, we included pictures of modern apartment complexes with clean and modern lines. The neighbors expressed concern that the style shown in the pictures was not compatible with the post-war era homes located in the area. After the meeting, we engaged with neighbors that sent suggested architectural standards and graphics of designed building styles. Our development team pivoted the vision for this development and embraced the community's vision, which led to the proposed building elevations.

Justification Statement for Development Incentive Permit

A Development Incentive Permit (DIP) is being requested to accommodate several slight development standard deviations that are needed to redevelop this underutilized parcel assemblage.

Required Findings:

- A. The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan, any other applicable Council adopted plans and/policies, and the permitted uses as specified in this Ordinance;***

The subject Site falls with the Central Main Street Planning area and is identified as “Neighborhood” Future Character type. This plan also identifies University Drive as a “Semi-Urban Arterial” Character Type. Within this character type, it is encouraged to provide a safe pedestrian space and identifies medium-intensity residential use as an encouraged land use.

The slight setback deviation proposed along University Drive allows for urban style walk up units to be provided on the ground floor. By the granting of this deviation, there will be additional pedestrian activity along University Drive which promotes a safer pedestrian environment. The trees proposed along University Drive and Miller Street are 36-inch box in size, which will provide urban comfort to pedestrians sooner than if smaller trees were provided along these street frontages.

The development is consistent with the “Neighborhood” Land Use category as depicted on the Mesa 2040 General Plan Land Use Map.

- B. The incentives do not allow development that is more intense than the surrounding neighborhood; commensurate with existing development within a 1,200 foot radius of the by-passed property;***

The Site is located on a stretch of University Drive that is primarily zoned RM-4 but is developed as single-residences that are mostly being utilized as office buildings. The proposed development is consistent with the zoning entitlements and the General Plan Land Use Map designation of “Neighborhoods”.

- C. The architectural elements, construction and landscape materials, and other site improvements of the proposed development meet the intent of the Design Standards of this Ordinance.***

The buildings and landscape design were thoughtfully designed after the neighborhood meeting held on September 9th. In that meeting, the neighborhood expressed the importance of designing the buildings to blend with the architectural style of the post-war era

neighborhoods to our south. As seen on the elevations, the style of the complex provides a nod to the post-war era while providing some modern craftsman style.

Proposed Deviations:

Standard	Requirement	Proposed
Landscape Setback along University	20 feet	10 feet
Building Setback along University	20 feet	10 feet
Foundation Base	15 feet	8-foot minimum, 10-foot average
Parking Stall Location Miller St.	50 feet	20 feet
Parking Stall Location University Drive	50 feet	30 feet
Landscape Setback to the South	20 feet	10 feet
Proximity of Parking Canopies to a one-story building	20 feet	9 feet
Building Separation	35 feet	18 feet

Conclusion:

The development of Stalwart Housing will improve an underutilized parcel in a part of west Mesa that has not seen substantial development investment in decades. The partnership with Hillsong College provides surety to the level of building quality, property maintenance and the intent to be a good neighbor.