**Development Committee Notes September 16, 202 0– re: 600 block of Coit**

Members Present: Brian Bremer, Brian Craig, Kara Harrison Gates\*, Bill Hebert, Dan Miller, Alan Otis, Dean Rosendall, John Skryski, Jo Ann Stevenson, Loren Sturrus, Gretchen Warnimont. \*-developer role. Guests: Ted Bingham, Elianna Bootzin, Angel Gonzalez, Marshall Grate, Rob Kennedy. Team: Nick Lovelace, Greg Metz, Tom Ralston, Brian Swem, Stephen Wooden.

Project Introduction

* Name of Project – Union Suites on Coit
* Location – 608-626 Coit Ave NE. The developer will also own, renovate, and manage the three properties at 628-638 Coit. Plans for the 608-626 Coit site were presented and discussed.
* Brief verbal description – Medium density housing. “Attractive, safe, affordable” per the development team. Additional info in description provided by developer.
* See first meeting for
  + Scope of project and developer’s goals
  + Market and needs served
  + Rents or selling prices if applicable
  + How is this project of benefit to the Belknap Lookout Neighborhood?

Discussion regarding affordable housing criteria: Dwelling Place employee, Stephen Wooden, joined as their representative. We learned that “very low income” is not unique, supporting people under 30% of the area median income through Section 8 is insufficient rent to accommodate payroll and operate the rental well. There is definitely a resource issue. This project can take section 8 as a supplement (but is not expressly a section 8 development); leasing agent might be able to help potential tenants get Section 8; 2 people on SSDI together could prob qualify; there were some remaining questions about the process such as referrals for current tenants. Union Suites would naturally be affordable housing rental – can accommodate lowest incomes; they will encourage KMG (the property manager) to do so.

In general affordable housing is difficult and takes a lengthy process to create; one could consider this project to be workforce housing; in Kent County $40k is the area median income (AMI); 30% would be less than ~$1k/month.  
  
The Design Proposal - *As requested by the Development Committee at the last meeting, the architects and developer presented revisions to the project design, including site plans with parking plan, elevations, views along the building and the full streetscape. See first meeting packet for*

* Statement (visual & verbal) of design concept

The group saw views from Fairview south (E, W side), and from Trowbridge north (E, W side). To create a change in scale they considered and discarded a set back (expensive and ineffective) and materials (just looked bad). Presentation brought the solution of porches which are best with scale at sidewalk, and fix the feel for pedestrians. They added doors and patio in courtyard for community room, changed window sizes and added horizontal band above window. Added benches. Brick element to each porch. Band at top of building for cap. Elements at top. Parking plan includes 52 bikes and dumpsters.

Dimensions: 2 bd 800 sq ft, 1 bd 570 sq ft   
Arms of U facing Coit are about 50-55 ft wide  
  
Would it be possible to have larger apts / smaller building? Would not garner needed funding.

Stephen provided a case study for beneficial impact to the school, being Dwelling Place’s Harrison Park Apartments project of a similar size adjacent to the eponymous school. That project also contains 2 bedroom apartments, and while square footage varies slightly it is close to these. There are lots of kids there now and there is a good connection with GRPS.

See first meeting notes for Compliance with regulatory requirements and neighborhood goals

Discussion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pro | Con |
| Overall benefit to the neighborhood – Helps school. | Rpt point abt families not fitting; Rpt location being better suited to Lafayette; rpt traffic concern. Will not help school. |
| The design proposal - precedent on Lafayette as well on GVSU prop. Consistent w Clancy. | Transition from large bldg. on Clancy to more traditional residential housing (Master Plan ch 10, ASP p11 Design c, g). (#/density); rpt scale too large (ASP p 25-6, typical lot size) |
| Compliance with regulatory requirements: MH in ASP. |  |
| Other | Whole block remain rental. |

Requests/Recommendations:

**Additional ideas to help with scale**: 3rd floor relief (comp bridge st market), Take triple window to a single larger one, awnings? Set back whole bldg.? @ current distance; can get closer w support to overrule (possible to also remove 10 feet of depth?) – **15 feet**

**Tenant relocation plan for the current residents**

Motion?

*After discussion it was moved and seconded to not approve this project in this location.*

*This motion passed by a vote of 5 to 4.*

Next step:

Development could proceed to Planning w/o support of Dev