

MEMORANDUM

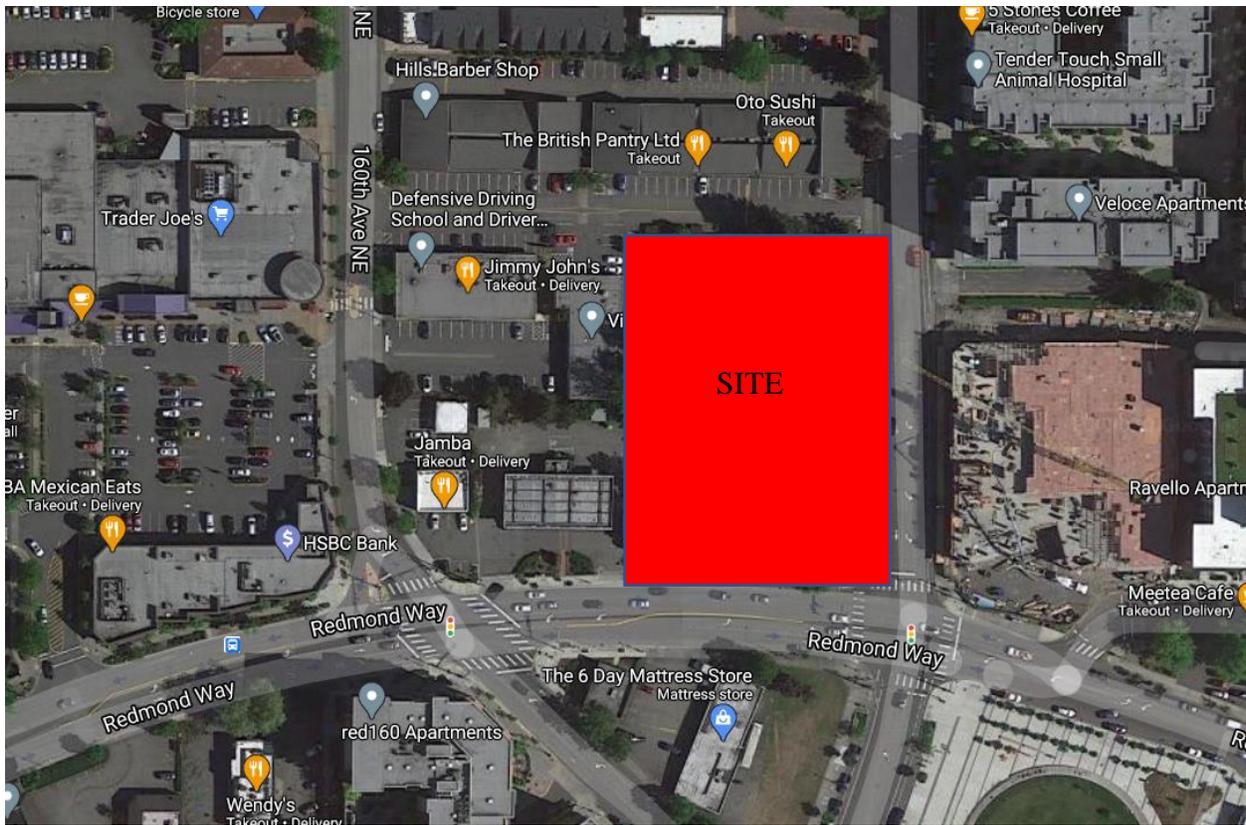
TO: DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

FROM: Ben Sticka, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: LAND-2020-00891
Nelson Legacy Group – Project One
Site Plan Entitlement; APPROVAL

LOCATION: 8005 & 8075 161st Avenue NE, Parcels# 0225059126 & 7198900300

DATE: April 15, 2021



Project Summary

This is the fourth pre-application meeting for the project, however the applicant is requesting approval from the Board at this meeting.

The applicant, as a part of their Site Plan Entitlement application, is proposing the demolition of three existing one-story buildings. The project will be an eight-story building, which will include 251 residential units, seven live-work units and approximately 4,000 square feet of retail space. The proposed building is a new mixed-use residential building located in the Town Square (TSQ) zone. This is the first building to be built as a part of the Nelson Legacy Group

(NLG) redevelopment project, in which NLG hopes to eventually redevelop the entirety of the 22 acres they own. The subject site is 1.40 acres in size and is located on the northwest corner of Redmond Way and 161st Avenue NE. The proposed building will be highly visible, as it is to be located on a parcel that abuts a major intersection (Redmond Way and 161st Avenue NE) and is adjacent to the Downtown Park.

Site & Background

The site is located in the Town Square (TSQ) zone near the northwest corner of Redmond Way and 161st Avenue NE. The property is adjacent to an existing gas station and retail shops and a restaurant to the west and north. 161st Avenue NE is east of the subject site along with mixed-use residential developments. Redmond Way is located to the south, along with existing retail and fast food, which are both now vacant, but will soon be redeveloped into a new mixed-use project known as “Porch and Park”. Zoning to the north, west and east of the site is Town Square (TSQ) zones and to the south is Old Town (OT) zone.

The Town Square (TSQ) zone is one of four distinct mixed-use residential/office zones in the Downtown Neighborhood: Sammamish Trail (SMT), Town Square (TSQ), Anderson Park (AP), and River Bend (RVBD). All four zones are intended to provide for significant residential growth, as well as opportunities for growth in professional, business, health, and personal services. These zones provide for a range of employment uses, such as financial and professional services, public administrative offices, health services, advanced technology industries, universities and technical colleges, and other activities normally conducted in multistory office structures. These zones are intended as areas for the densest employment and residential uses in the Downtown, but also provide for supporting retail, service, and entertainment uses located within walking distance of each other. Some of the quieter streets in these zones allow residential uses on the ground floor, whereas the primary streets are intended for active, pedestrian-friendly, and activating commercial uses. The Town Square zone encourages new transit-oriented development in order to take advantage of the zones proximity to local and regional transit opportunities.

Several surrounding properties in the Town Square zone have been redeveloped or underway with multi-family structures where single-story commercial buildings once stood. Recent projects include: Alexan Central Park, directly east of this site and Porch and Park to the south of the subject site. The prominent location of site at the corner of Redmond Way and 161st Avenue NE, provides an opportunity for a new building, which will be located on a prominent corner.

The 251-unit building helps achieve the City’s stated Comprehensive Plan goals of creating a vibrant urban center in Downtown capable of accommodating one-third of Redmond’s planned housing growth by 2030. The Town Square (TSQ) zone has seen a significant amount of new residential development in recent years.

Comprehensive Plan Policies

The site is located within the Town Square (TSQ) district of the Downtown neighborhood. The intent of this district is to encourage higher intensity, multi-story, developments. It is envisioned that new development in this district be six (6) to eight (8) stories tall and include office, retail, and residential uses.

The following Comprehensive Plan Policies speak to the proposed development:

1. DT-3: Enhance the Downtown Neighborhood by creating visually distinctive, pedestrian-oriented zones as follows: Town Square mixed-use residential office zones adjacent to the retail core that accommodate employment and housing growth in high-quality environments.

Response: Staff notes that the proposal includes a new 251-unit mixed-use multi-family residential development with seven live-work units, 4,316 sf of retail space and 221 parking spaces. This building will serve the housing and retail needs for users of the building as well as Redmond residents, thereby demonstrating compliance with DT-3 of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. HO-2: Promote a mix of new residential units and use other strategies that are designed to at a minimum meet the targets called for in the King County Countywide Planning Policies for creating residences that are affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

Response: The proposed NLG project is required to provide affordable housing pursuant to RZC 21.20.060. The project will be required to provide a minimum of 25 affordable rental units, thereby demonstrating compliance with HO-2 of the Comprehensive Plan.

3. HO-11: Encourage the development of a variety of housing types, sizes, and densities throughout the City to accommodate the diverse needs of Redmond residents through changes in age, family size and various life changes.

Response: The project includes: 251 total units in the mixed-use building. This project advances this Policy by supporting the diverse needs of Redmond residents by providing variety in housing options.

Process & DRB Decision

The Nelson Legacy Group – Project One is a Type II Site Plan Entitlement. The DRB is tasked with rendering a decision on the design of the building under Article III of the Redmond Zoning Code and providing their decision to the Technical Committee for approval.

Downtown Design Standards & Design Implementation

The primary purpose of the Downtown Design Standards is to establish design criteria for properties within the Downtown Neighborhood that will guide development to be attractive in appearance and functionally integrated, and to promote pedestrian and recreational activities within the neighborhood. RZC 21.62.020.A

The Downtown Design Standards include standards for corner lots building design, open space, residential standards, and other requirements specific to the zone of the property. This property is in the Town Square (TSQ) and therefore is subject to general objectives and specific guidelines in RZC 21.62.020 *Downtown Design Guidelines*.

Staff Analysis

In summary, the proposed project involves the construction of a 251-unit mixed-use multi-family residential development with seven live-work units on approximately 1.40 acres of land located at both 8005 & 8075 161st Avenue NE. The new 251-unit building is comprised of:

- Approximately 370,710 total gross square feet;
- 4,316 square feet of commercial area; and
- 221 parking stalls, but seeking a parking reduction to allow 221 parking spaces where 335 are required. This request will go before the Technical Committee on February 24th.

As mentioned before, this is the applicant’s fourth appearance before the DRB, but the applicant is requesting approval from the Board at this meeting.

The following is a combination of comments, responses and images resulting from the applicant’s third DRB meeting held on March 4, 2021. The comments and responses include the following “options” and “preferred option” posed by the applicant:

Comment/Response #1 – Northwest & Southwest Corner	
Board Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Board felt that the height of the metal panels were unresolved and requested further analysis of the termination point at the northwest and southwest corners.• The Board indicated that the metal panels were a little low causing the upper parapet to feel heavy.• The Board suggested that the design team reference other architectural elements around the extent of the building to help locate a better termination point.	Applicant Response: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The design team focused on the southwest and northwest corners. As a part of the analysis we studied the upper elements around the building.• Option A – The metal panels were raised 12-inches. This was an improvement and helped to reduce the weight of the upper parapet. However, there was no relationship with other elements of the building.• Option B - The team studied the metal panel with the lower parapet on the west façade and the addition of a horizontal panel joint. This felt like the most logical point of termination. However, the panel joint did not align with the roof deck soffit.• Option C – This option explored aligning the metal panel with the roof deck soffit and maintaining a consistent detail at the roof edge. Although this option seemed to work, the coping detail felt a bit heavy and lacked consistency around the building.• Preferred Option – The preferred option maintains a consistent language around the building and helps to reduce the weight of the upper parapet. The location of the metal panel and proportions of the adjacent fiber cement panel feel aesthetically balanced.
Staff response: Staff believes the applicant has effectively responded to the Board’s comment by evaluating and exploring multiple options. Staff agrees that the “preferred option” provides the best design balance as the weight of the parapet balances the metal panel and proportions of the adjacent fiber cement panel and effectively responds to the Board’s comments.	

“Before and “After” Images Respond to Board’s Comment #1 – Northwest & Southwest Corner



Comment/Response #2 – Solar Study

Board Comment:

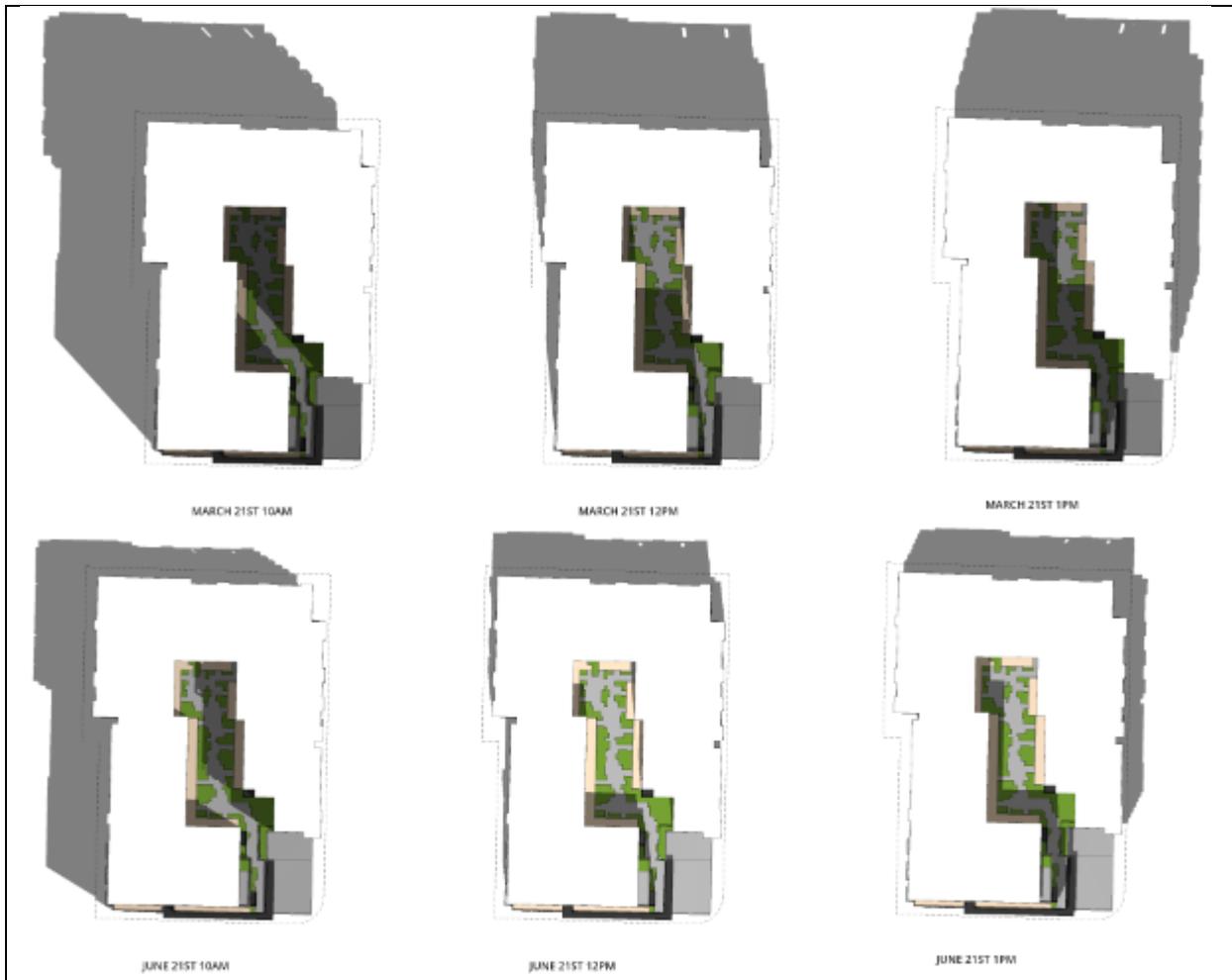
- Does the courtyard receive enough sunlight for planting? Can the design team provide a solar study?

Applicant Response:

- The solar exposure for the courtyard supports the proposed planting and provides a well illuminated space. From early March through late September, sunlight enters the courtyard in the morning and provides direct exposure from 10 am to 1 pm. Overcast skies are also present during this time, providing an even distribution of diffuse light. Overall, the courtyard receives good light conditions to help support the growth and life of the planting.
- The landscape designers used the solar studies to help select native ground cover species for the different light conditions and micro habitats.
- During the summer season, the sun angle is higher in the sky and provides more direct sunlight than in spring and fall. Sunlight enters the courtyard in the morning, but more surface area receives light due to the higher angle. We see good direct solar exposure from 8 am until 3 pm.

Staff response: Staff believes the applicant has effectively responded to the Board’s comment by evaluating solar studies in the courtyard in various seasons to ensure adequate lighting is achieved. The solar studies make it clear that the courtyard will receive ample sunlight in any season.

Images Respond to Board’s Comment #2 – Solar Study



Open Space

Staff would also like to share that it is still reviewing the applicant’s open space proposal. The Town Square (TSQ) Zone has a 5-story height limit. An increase to 8 stories is allowed when a project provides public benefit above and beyond the minimum requirements. The proposed project is attempting to achieve the “bonus” to 8-stories. The final open space areas are still being reviewed by City staff, but staff will ensure that the applicant can meet the open space intent and dimensional requirements.

Staff Request

Tonight is a request for approval of the Site Plan Entitlement for the NLG Project One building. The focus of tonight’s meeting is to update the Board on changes from its most recent meeting (third pre-application meeting) held on March 4, 2021. Staff would like the Board to look at the updates since the previous meeting. Staff has reviewed the applicant’s updates and believes the applicant has addressed all remaining comments from the Board and is recommending approval of this project.

As a reminder, the Board did approve a request for a Administrative Design Flexibility (ADF) for the level 3 courtyard which is 9,633 sf in area and is open at the southwest corner and provides

light, air and views/connectivity to Plaza “A” and Downtown Park. There are two areas of the courtyard that are 50 feet minimum in width, while the remaining areas exceed 55 feet. RZC 21.62 Urban Standards requires the minimum dimension (width and depth) of any courtyard shall be no less than 55 feet.

Draft approval language is available below for the Board’s consideration should they feel ready to approve. Thank you for your time and consideration of the NLG Project One proposal.

Draft Motion Language

“Move to approve the design of NLG Project One (LAND-2020-00891) as shown in the Design Review Board materials dated April 15, 2021. This approval is subject to the standard conditions as drafted in the staff memo.”

The standard conditions are as follows:

Where inconsistencies between the floor plans and elevations are found after the Design Review Board has approved this project, the elevations approved by the Design Review Board at their meetings will prevail.