

STAFF REPORT

Case Number: 15-ZA-03
Request: Zoning map amendment from “Commerce” subdistrict to “Mid-Density Residential” subdistrict within Planned Development No. 88 (PD-88)
Address: future Knightsbridge Road, 600 feet east of Luna
Lot Size: Approximately 8.795 acres
Petitioner: Provident Realty Advisors

Summary

Site design: *4 multifamily buildings - 3 and 4 stories in height, 1 amenity center - 1 story high*

Units: *approximately 260 dwelling units (DU)*

Masonry: *minimum 75% brick*

Parking: *416 parking spaces, combination of “tuck-under” garages and surface parking lots, 1.6 ps/DU*

Landscape: *26% of the property will be used as a linear park and landscaped open space, new trails and a boardwalk along the new lake shore*

Existing Conditions

The “Medium Density Residential” subdistrict within Planned Development 88 (PD-88) zoning district, commonly known as Mercer Crossing Code, was created in 2012 for the development of Mercer Crossing Apartments, a new mid-density multifamily community along Luna Road, just south of Farmers Branch Creek and LBJ Freeway. This zoning request will represent the next phase of that development and is located immediately east of the recently completed Mercer Crossing Apartments.

The site is located approximately 600 feet east of Luna Road and 1,000 feet south of LBJ Freeway. The site will be accessible only by the future eastward expansion of Knightsbridge Road.

The site is bordered to the west by Mercer Crossing Apartments community and to the east by the future multifamily community to be developed by JPI Real Estate Acquisition. To the north of the site is the newly created retention lake. The plat for this new lake was approved in August 2016.

This site is currently located within the “Commerce” subdistrict of PD-88 which does not allow the multifamily use. Both tracts east and west of the proposed site are already zoned “Mid-Density Residential” subdistrict. (See Location Map).

Conceptual Site Design

The applicant, Provident Realty Advisors, is proposing to develop a mid-density residential community containing approximately 260 dwelling units. This community will consist primarily of one and two bedroom units. The dwelling units will be averaging in size from 700 sf to 1,400 sf. The proposed density for this development is 30 dwelling units per acre which falls within the standards established by the Mid-Density Subdistrict. (See Conceptual Site Plan)

The proposed site plan was designed to complement the existing communities on both sides. Special design considerations were made to take advantage of the two major amenities: the new lake on the side of the property and a proposed linear park on the western side of the property. The entire site is bordered on all sides by trails, and connects with the surrounding multifamily developments. There are no proposed fences around this development, thus a continuous walkable community is created south of the new lake.

This new community will include an amenity center (approximately 5,200 sf) located along Knightsbridge Road. The center will include a leasing office and clubhouse with a community pool and outdoor area orientated towards the linear park. (See Colorized Landscape Plan)

The estimated cost for the proposed development is approximately \$36 million.

Elevations

All elevations will comply with the 75% masonry requirement, with accents of cementitious siding and metal panels. The buildings will have pitched shingle roofs. All units will contain an outdoor patio or balcony.

The three buildings on the south side will be 3 stories high and the building along the lake will be 4 stories in height. This building will have an elevator for access to the upper levels. (See Renderings)

Parking

The proposed community will be served by 416 on-site parking spaces with a combination of “tuck-under” garages (96 parking spaces) and surface parking lots (317 parking spaces). All buildings will have “tuck-under” garages that will be connected into a common semi-open hallway system. The surface parking lots are grouped within small (open) courtyards behind the buildings. 78 parking spaces will be covered with carports. In order to create a walkable community, the applicant included a generous system of pedestrian and shared trails and landscaped open spaces throughout the surface parking system. (See Conceptual Site Plan)

Landscaping and Open Space

To create an inviting outdoor environment throughout the proposed residential community, the applicant has proposed an inclusive Conceptual Landscape Plan that connects into the wider trail and open spaces network throughout the surrounding multifamily developments along Knightsbridge Road and the new lake. This Conceptual Landscape Plan includes a north-south linear park that ties in all three phases of Mercer Crossing Apartment development, trails and adequate pedestrian access to the new lake. For example, a 12-foot wide boardwalk trail is proposed along the lake shore, a 10-foot wide trail along Knightsbridge Rd and three east-west trails to connect to the adjacent sites. The applicant has worked an agreement with the developer to the east side, JPI Real Estate Acquisition for the construction of the trail along the western property line that is going to be a public trail shared by both future communities.

The proposed Conceptual Site Plan contains approximately 26% landscaped open space. A dense cluster/canopy of trees will be planted along Knightsbridge Road, the internal trails, all pedestrian walkways, and in the parking lots. The applicant is proposing a tree ratio of 1 tree for every 5 parking spaces for the parking areas. (See Conceptual Landscape Plan)

Comprehensive Plan

The 2003 West Side Plan, the Comprehensive Plan for the western portion of the City, designated this area as a future Employment District and Open Space. In the 2003 Plan, residential development was limited to the north side of Colinas Crossing Lake (PD-81). In addition, the West Side Plan specified that no more than 5,000 additional dwelling units should be permitted west of Stemmons Freeway (US 35East).

Currently there are 1,310 existing units in multifamily communities and another approximate 5,958 units in multifamily developments entitled or under construction on the West Side, for a total of 7,268 units. Therefore, the city exceeds the Comprehensive Plan's threshold for multifamily units in this area of the city.

Market Study

The applicant submitted a Depth of Demand Analysis completed by the Meyers Research Company. In their analysis of this area and the specific location of this site, the research projected that the average absorption of 372 units a year. The study concluded:

- Farmers Branch apartment market is growing strongly tied to the Metroplex's strong job growth,
- Farmers Branch apartment market will absorb an average of 890 units per year and occupancy will remain strong, in anticipation of four years of solid job growth (2.8 pe year).

Thoroughfare Plan

Knightsbridge Road is currently a four lane divided boulevard. This road is proposed to be extended to connect with Crown Road. The City recently approved the plat and civil plans for

the new configuration of Knightsbridge Road, the land owner will start the construction of the roadway soon.

The City of Farmers Branch recently conducted a Traffic Impact Analysis for Luna Road between LBJ Freeway and Royal Lane, to assess the impact of the upcoming developments in this area of the city. The analysis identified the intersection of Luna Road and Knightsbridge Road as a needed location for a new traffic signal that will ease traffic fluency on this tract of this major thoroughfare. Provident Realty Advisors has agreed to participate in the cost associated with the installment of this new traffic signal.

Public Response:

Five (5) zoning notification letters were mailed to the surrounding property owners on August 12th, 2016. Two zoning notification signs were also placed on the site on the same day. As of August 19th, no letters of opposition have been received.