

**SUBJECT:** A report and recommendation on a Final Development Plan for a development within Planned Development District #9 (PD-9), Stetson Square, in Corryville.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Village at Stetson Square had special approval through a series of Notwithstanding Ordinances first issued in 2003 (Ord.# 448-2003) then in 2004 (Ord.#54-2004) and again in 2005 (Ord.#374-2005). Building permits were issued prior to the adoption of the current code and this project has not received PD reviews or approvals by the CPC. The notwithstanding ordinance expired in 2006 and PD-9 does not have sign regulations. Since the retail spaces are just starting to become occupied there is need for sign guidelines. Even though Phase I of the project is already built, planning staff is presenting the final development plan with sign regulations and a proposed sign for Starbucks for final approval.

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Village at Stetson Square is the creation of a new urban village in Corryville located at the Eden Avenue and Martin Luther King Boulevard intersection and adjacent to the University of Cincinnati and University Hospital. The project is mixed-use community that contains apartment-housing, condominiums, office and retail uses in a multi-block area of Corryville, consisting of 6.9 acres, which includes both Phase I (5.4 acres) and Phase II (1.5 acres) of the development. Staff is only considering final development plan approval for Phase I at this time. Once the nature of the development for Phase II is decided the final development plan will be presented for approval. The design concept was to recreate the best of Cincinnati's classic neighborhoods, like Clifton and Hyde Park with quality architecture in a pedestrian friendly environment.

Stetson Square consists of a multi-block project that has been planned and will be executed in two phases. Phase I of Stetson Square consists of a mixed use project of 205 multi-family apartment homes and 53 condominium homes of two product types; Rowhouse condominium units (32 units) and City Home units (21 units). Phase I also consists of an office building of 63,000 net leaseable square feet and 12,150 net leaseable square feet of street level retail space. All Phase I components have been constructed with the exception of the construction of Stetson Square Block G, consisting of 12 Rowhouse condominium units. Construction of Block G began in July 2007.

### **FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

A final development plan has been prepared by Humphreys & Partners Architects and submitted by Great Traditions Land and Development Company. Elements of the Final Development Plan include the following:

1. Block A - 165 apartments (203,278 sf) with a garage ( 133,862 sf), 4-story with an elevator, over two levels of parking ( 336 spaces)
2. Block E – 40 apartments (53,466 sf) with a garage (19,118 sf), 3-story with an elevator, over one level of parking (42 spaces)
3. Block F – 20 condominiums (18,594 sf), 3-story with garages, 20 private garages
4. Block G – 12 condominiums ( 20,189 sf), 3-story with garages, 12 private garages
5. Block H – 21 condominiums (23,101 sf), 4-story with elevator over 3 levels of parking, 34 parking spaces

Office (78,932 sf)  
Retail (15,531 sf), 1<sup>st</sup> floor street level retail, 15 parking spaces on the plaza  
Garage (58,060 sf), 366 parking spaces

### **Project Sponsors and Ownership:**

Great Traditions Land and Development Company is the Stetson Square Development Manager and has coordinated the project on behalf of a consortium of owners; Bellevue Gardens Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation, Corryville Community Development Corporation and King Highland Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation. The apartments, office and retail project components are owned by the various community development corporations as detailed below: Great Traditions, through its affiliate, Stetson Square Builders, LLC, is the builder of the condominiums at Stetson Square.

A. Blocks A & E – Apartments & Amenity Center:

Owner: Bellevue Gardens Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation

B. Block H (Office and Retail Component):

Owner: King Highland Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation

C. Blocks F, G & H Condominiums:

Owner: Stetson Square Builders, LLC and individual unit purchasers

D. Blocks D & I (Phase II of Stetson Square – Presently undeveloped)

Owner: Corryville Community Development Corporation

### **Project Investment:**

The Stetson Square Project is an approximate \$90,000,000 project based upon a mixed-use of apartments, condominiums, office and retail.

The City of Cincinnati supported this project in a variety of ways. For the apartments, the City granted an additional abatement in property taxes from 15 years to 25 years. The City provided for the vacation of a portion of Stetson Avenue, which permitted the creation of green space and a park-like environment of Stetson Green. The City also provided a financial subsidy of approximately \$3,800,000 in the creation of the underground parking garage construction for Block H.

The University of Cincinnati through its endowment resources has provided loans in the approximate amount of \$18,000,000 to various community development corporations for the acquisition of land and construction of the apartments of Blocks A and E.

The Village at Stetson Square Master Association, an Ohio non-profit corporation, was formed in July 2006 for the purpose of maintaining the common areas of the project and to provide for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the common areas.

### **Schedule**

Phase I of the development is essentially complete except for the construction of Block G, which is underway. No decision has been made on when Phase II will begin, although the developers will return to the Planning Commission for final development approval on Phase II when the project is prepared.

Given the fact that most of this project is built out there is a full set of construction drawings on file at the Department of Buildings and Inspections. Landscaping and lighting are shown in the photos and renderings in the final development plan packet.

This project was reviewed throughout the process by numerous city staff from various departments in regular progress meetings. Availability and capacity of utilities were dealt with through this process.

### **Signs**

The proposal is to adopt the CC-A Commercial Community Auto sign regulations to apply to all future sign proposals for PD-9. The Planning Commission will review any sign proposals that do meet these sign regulations. All future text amendments to the CC-A zoning chapter will also apply to this PD-9. See the attached sign regulations.

### **Proposed Starbucks Sign in retail space**

Starbucks will be occupying the first floor retail space at the corner of Martin Luther King and Highland Avenue. They are proposing to install two wall signs, one along Highland above the awning and storefront window and one wrapping around the corner above the entrance. The wall signs will feature 14” pin mounted letters with no illumination. Both wall signs will measure 18’-93/4” long and 1’-2” tall (21.8 sf). One additional internally illuminated, projecting sign will be installed along Martin Luther King measuring 7.07 sf and positioned 10’-10” above grade. See the attached drawings.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING PLANS**

Although this project is not within the University Village Urban Renewal boundary it is adjacent to the boundary. The plan encourages more mixed-use infill development such as Stetson Square.

### **CODE REQUIREMENTS**

Under Section 1429-15, the City Planning Commission may approve a Final Development Plan for a development in a PD District on consideration of the following:

#### **(a) Consistency**

This Plan is consistent with the purpose of the PD District because it:

- Allows for more efficient development of property
- Allows the developer to be more creative with the use of the space, creating a mixed-use development that would not be possible with conventional zoning.
- Includes open space areas interspersed throughout the development, and features landscaping that creates an aesthetically pleasing environment.

#### **(b) Adequate Streets**

- The development has an adequate street network

#### **(c) Adequate Infrastructure**

The following statements relate to the site infrastructure:

- The developer worked with MSD to determine sufficiency of sewer credits and impact
- The developer worked with GCWW to ensure no interference with water mains, and appropriate

hydrants and sprinkling.

- The developer worked with DOTE to determine roadway design.

**(h) Sufficiency of Provisions for Maintenance of Common Areas**

The Village at Stetson Square Master Association, an Ohio non-profit corporation, was formed in July 2006 for the purpose of maintaining the common areas of the project and to provide for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the common areas.

**(f) Compatibility**

The proposed uses and arrangement are compatible with surrounding land uses because:

- The site is located near commercial uses, but is also adjacent to several residential streets. The mix of uses proposed in the Stetson Square development is consistent with uses found in the area, but the low-intensity of the residential and office uses are compatible with the nearby residential neighborhood.
- The development will assist in the continued revitalization of this important commercial corridor.

**FINDINGS**

The *Stetson Square* development has been a huge success and asset to the Corryville community and has helped to spur additional revitalization efforts in the neighborhood. This project offers a good mix of uses, high quality construction and design that is compatible with the neighborhood.

Therefore, it is the opinion of staff of the Department of Community Development and Planning that the proposed *Stetson Square* development is in compliance with Section 1429-15 “Planning Commission Approval of Final Development Plan”. The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Planned Development District Regulations.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The staff of the Department of Community Development and Planning recommends that City Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. **Approve** the Final Development Plan for Planned Development (PD) District #9 Phase I Stetson Square with the attached CC-A sign regulations authorizing the development to proceed.
2. **Approve** the proposed signs as submitted for Starbucks at 242 Stetson Street finding that they meet the required sign regulations of the CC-A zoning district.

**APPROVED:**

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Wuerstle, AICP  
Chief Planner

Caroline Hardy Kellam  
Senior City Planner

Attachments