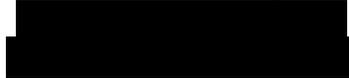
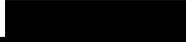


William G. Dixon, Jr.



Telephone:



e-mail:



Naperville Planning and Zoning Commission
400 South Eagle Street
Naperville, IL 60540

September 4, 2020

Dear Planning and Zoning Commission:

This is in regard to the newest plan for the Little Friends property re-development described in a recent edition of the *Naperville Sun*. My interest is from the standpoint of a 32-year resident of a home two lots north of the property in question.

As stated in the newspaper, the proposal is a modern use of the property that unequivocally relates to the form and architecture of the mansion. I would much prefer to see a development that reflects the character and architecture of the surrounding Historic District. My preference would be to remove the mansion and have two north-south rows of ten lots separated by an alley. This would blend in seamlessly with the surrounding neighborhood. Rather than demolishing the mansion, it could be relocated to the Naperville Settlement if feasible.

It is my understanding that the Historic Preservation Commission voted 6-2 in opposition to this proposal. I would hope that you agree with their decision.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me by any of the means listed at the top of the page.

Sincerely,

William G. Dixon, Jr.

September 9, 2020

Via email: planning@naperville.il.us

Naperville Planning and
Zoning Commission

Dear Commissioners:

We recently wrote to the Naperville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to express our opposition to the proposed certificate of appropriateness and petition for conditional use and variances submitted by RAM West Capital LLC (“RAM”) for the Heritage Place development. We were gratified with the HPC’s rejection of the certificate of appropriateness and recommendation that the conditional use and variances not be granted, and we urge you to take those decisions into account in your deliberations.

We write today not to object to anything contained in RAM’s petition; rather, we write to raise our concerns about what is not there. Specifically, the petition does not contain the facts required by the Naperville Municipal Code (the “Code”) in order for the Planning and Zoning Commission (“PZC”) to make an informed decision on whether the greater weight of the evidence supports “findings of fact” that justify issuance of the conditional use and variances.

A. Conditional Use

Conditional uses are essentially land uses that, because of their harmful potential, require the issuance of a special permit. Single-family attached dwellings are a conditional use allowed for in the R2 zoning district under the Naperville Municipal Code (the “Code”) so long as the criteria set forth in §6-3-8 of the Code are satisfied. The petitioner has a right to the conditional use for attached dwelling units if the criteria set forth in the Code are satisfied, but it must provide evidence supporting such a determination. The Illinois Municipal Code instructs:

“A special use shall be permitted only upon evidence that such use meets standards established for such classification in the ordinances, and the granting of permission therefore may be subject to conditions reasonably necessary to meet such standards.”

Thus, a prerequisite to the issuance of a conditional use is the production of evidence supporting findings of fact on the part of the PZC that the conditional use satisfies all of the criteria set forth in the Code.

Under subsection 2.2 of §6-3-8 of the Code, a conditional use requires evidence showing “[t]he conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate area for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.” To our knowledge, no evidence has been provided by the petitioner regarding whether the use will substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood. Without such evidence, there is simply no basis to grant the conditional use.

If and when such evidence is ever presented, we request the PZC consider the following in any deliberations regarding impairment of value:

- The definition of the “highest and best use” of a property is: “The reasonable, probable and legal use of vacant land or an improved property, which is physically possible, appropriately supported, financially feasible, and that results in the highest value.” In that regard, note that at the November 19, 2019 City Council meeting, Matt Ishikawa, Senior Vice President of the Land Services Group of CBRE Group, Inc. provided expert testimony regarding the usage of the subject property. In his testimony, Mr. Ishikawa stated that “single family homes would be the highest and best use of the property.” Although Mr. Ishikawa did not use the exact language of the Code, it is generally understood that a “single family home” refers to a stand-alone, detached property that does not share common walls or a roof with any other dwelling. In the matter at hand, if RAM is requesting the subject property to be used for any purpose other than its “highest and best use,” then common sense dictates the PZC should, as a matter of good planning practice, require RAM to provide evidence demonstrating such “lower” use will not impair property values.
- The “neighborhood” in question is a “micro-market” in which the demand for homes and typical home buyer, as a practical matter, are different than other areas of Naperville. The Historic District is comprised of approximately 253 homes. While the homes vary in style, size and market value, they all have one thing in common: the Naperville Historic Preservation Ordinance. As such, the decision to purchase a home in the Historic District is for many a cost-benefit analysis. Undoubtedly, living in the Historic District provides distinct benefits that are unique from other locations in Naperville. Yet the “cost” of such benefits is that the homeowner cedes a degree of freedom he or she otherwise might have because many aspects of the use of the property are subject to review and approval of the HPC. As such, a unique type of buyer is required to purchase a home in the Historic District. Consider the potentially disruptive effect of the proposed Heritage Place development on the delicate balance of the Historic District micro-market. In terms of relative size, we have not been able to find any example of any development in the United States that increased the available housing within a historic district on the scale contemplated by Heritage Place.
- Introducing 47 new dwelling units into the limited 253 home Historic District housing market (and thereby increasing the number of available units by greater than 15%) is likely to have the effect of increasing supply and decreasing demand under traditional

economic analysis. To allow Heritage Place to be built as proposed in effect creates a one-block “island” where the Historic Preservation Ordinance does not apply surrounded on all sides by blocks where the Historic Preservation Ordinance does apply. It’s understandable why the opportunity is attractive to RAM: the location offers all the benefits of the Historic District without any of the burdens, and the design allows for new attached dwelling units that look out upon surrounding historic single-family detached homes. This will in all likelihood be an attractive selling point for the units. Yet no evidence of any correlation between market demand for the Heritage Place units and market demand for the homes surrounding Heritage Place has been presented, and there is at least a *prima facie* case of potential harm.

- It is also interesting to consider Heritage Place in the overall context of the future of real estate development throughout the United States. A variety of publications have noted a trend towards the development of townhomes that do not entail the typical burdens of ownership of larger lots. This trend, like all trends, is driven by the market. As members of the “Boomer” generation retire, they are understandably looking for opportunities to remain in their communities without the upkeep and maintenance obligations required by ownership of a traditional detached residence. Yet this trend, like all trends, will end. Real estate demand in the years to come is likely to be driven more by Millennials and post-Millennials looking for detached family residences in which to raise their families. And thus, a development such as Heritage Place, which is essentially a long-term solution to a short-term problem, runs the very real risk of being rendered obsolete in a generation with an accompanying drop in value that is likely to affect adjacent properties.

After all is said and done, it is understandable if you come to the conclusion that it is simply impossible to determine in advance what effect Heritage Place will have on home values in the Historic District. In such a case, common sense dictates that the best preservers of home value are home owners themselves, and our suggestion would be you look to the community responses to the development as “surrogate endpoint” on its eventual likely effect on home values, with particular attention to those homeowners whose residences immediately face the proposed development as they will be affected most, for better or for worse.

B. Variances

Variances grant relief to the owner of a property that cannot or cannot without “practical difficulties” conform to the prescriptive, geometric dimensional restrictions set out in a zoning ordinance. As is the case with conditional uses granted under §6-3-8 of the Code, §6-3-6 of the Code requires that any recommendation by the PZC regarding variances “shall be predicated on evidence” that each of the criteria set forth in the Code have been satisfied, and such evidentiary requirement is also imposed by the Illinois Municipal Code.

With respect to the variances contained in RAM’s petition, once again the petition appears on its face to not provide evidence upon which the relief sought can be granted. We point your attention to the two criteria set forth in §6-3-6 below:

1. *The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood and will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.*

Admittedly, it is not possible for us to argue that the current buildings located on the subject property make a positive contribution to the character of the Historic District. In our view, they are in disrepair and their demolition will be an improvement. In addition, we concede that whatever is eventually built on the subject property will not be an “exact match” to surrounding properties. Finally, the petitioner correctly noted before the HPC that a significant portion of the Historic District borders North Central College, and those institutional buildings do not “match” the residential character of the remainder of the Historic District.

However, none of the observations described above have any bearing on whether the Heritage Place development will alter the essential character of the neighborhood. In its presentation before the HPC, RAM essentially acknowledged that Heritage Place will alter the character of the neighborhood, but that alteration will be a net positive. That may or may not be true (any cost-benefit analysis is inherently subjective in nature), but it has no bearing on the exact language of the Code which asks the simple question: will the essential character of the neighborhood be altered? No cost-benefit analysis is contemplated by the Code.

In our view, RAM has failed to provide any evidence supporting an assertion that the essential character of the Historic District will not be altered by (1) using the subject property for a purpose other than its “highest and best use” through (2) building 47 attached dwelling units that have no other counterparts in terms of style within the Historic District that will result in (3) approximately **one in every six** dwellings in the Historic District being an attached townhome.

We note that RAM has provided an email from an employee of Landmarks Illinois which is supportive of the architectural details of the proposed townhomes. We agree with the substance of that email, which states that the townhomes are designed well and appear to complement the Kroehler mansion. However, the email makes clear it is based on personal opinion, and therefore, should not be taken as a formal position by that organization. More to the point, it exclusively addresses the architectural details of the proposed townhomes alone, but explicitly takes no position on density or placement of the townhomes and thus, has no bearing on whether Heritage Place alters the essential character of the neighborhood.

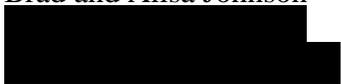
2. *Strict enforcement of this Title would result in practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardships due to special and unusual conditions which are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district*

In each of its proposed variances, no evidence has been presented by RAM that meets the burden of showing “practical difficulties” or “exceptional hardships.” Two of the proposed variances are discussed below:

- Variance for Front Yard Set Back: RAM’s argument, unsupported by evidence, is that the “exceptional hardship” is its voluntary undertaking to preserve the Kroehler mansion. This may be seen by some as a commendable purpose, and in all fairness, may be seen by others as a waste of resources. But no evidence has been presented showing RAM has been legally required to assume that underlying purpose. On the contrary, there is a great deal of evidence discounting the value of the “Kroehler preservation” purpose, including: (1) the City Councils approval of the demolition of the Kroehler mansion in order for the land to be used for its “highest and best” purpose of single family homes, and (2) the HPC’s denial of RAM’s certificate of appropriateness for the Kroehler mansion issued in large part because of density concerns regarding the Heritage Place development.
- Variance from Lot Area in R-2 Zoning District: RAM’s argument, unsupported by evidence, is that developing an entire city block places an exceptional hardship upon it in light of its voluntary decision to dedicate of a significant portion of the development to the preservation of the Kroehler mansion. Evidence contradicting this claim includes: (1) the other offers for the subject property included development consistent with the R-2 zoning district, (2) the “exceptional hardship” results from the number of dwellings RAM desires to place in the subject property, which is an entirely self-created problem; and (3) RAM has not demonstrated it would not be economically viable to develop the subject property in a manner more consistent with its “highest and best” use.

We fully recognize and respect the fact that, following due consideration, in the exercise of your best judgment you may arrive at a different conclusion than ours regarding what is best for the community. Yet even the staunchest advocates for the Heritage Place development would have to concede that it represents an immense and unprecedented development in the midst of the Historic District. Given the stakes, it is in everyone’s best interest, as a matter of good planning and zoning practice, that procedural due process be adhered to and the letter of the Code be followed. That requires your decision to be based on evidence presented, and not conjecture or instinct. Without such evidence, in our view it is improper and premature for RAM to pursue approval of the conditional use and variances with the PZC.

Thank you for your consideration of our input and service on the PZC.

Brad and Alisa Johnson


Mattingly, Gabrielle

From: Ed Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 10:25 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Ram West development at Little Friends

CAUTION: This e-mail originated outside of the City of Naperville (@naperville.il.us).

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Dear Commissioners

I wanted to express my outrage that the subdivision Ram West has proposed for the Little Friends property is far too dense for our neighborhood.

I do not understand how a developer can be allowed to build a project this large that cannot meet the zoning codes. As you know our neighborhood is zoned R2 for single family homes and duplexes. This project with 47 units is not even close to the zoning codes. We purchased our property because we liked the way the neighborhood was zoned. This project as presented would require multiple zoning variances.

The plan they have for the mansion transforms it into something that does not resemble it anymore. If saving the mansion results in projects that are this dense then I would rather see the development fit the character of neighborhood rather than save the mansion.

Ram West has claimed on previous calls he has reached out to the neighbors for input. The call I have been invited to did not allow time for neighborhood comments. On the calls the Lawyer for Ram West would tell us what they had to build for them to be financially viable and take the majority of time allotted to the call. Very few neighbors were allowed time to comment on the project.

Little Fiends does very good work. However they have not been a good neighbor for the last ten years. I would hope you would not force a development that is too dense and out of place like this one just to allow Little Friends to make a little more money.

I would request you that you deny the request for this development.

Thanks. Ed Williams

Ed Williams
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mattingly, Gabrielle

From: Ed & Robin Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 12:19 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Little Friends Development in Historic District

CAUTION: This e-mail originated outside of the City of Naperville (@naperville.il.us).

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Dear Planning and Zoning Commissioners

I would ask that you vote against issuing the variances that Ram West is requesting at the upcoming meeting. I feel that the development that is being proposed does not fit in our neighborhood. My family has lived in Central Naperville in two different houses since 1980. We like it here. I know that change is coming to the Little Friends campus, but would like to see the property subdivided to allow single family homes or duplex homes. I was under the impression that that is what R2 zoning allows. Mature neighborhoods count on the protection of zoning so that drastic changes don't occur. Despite what the attorney from Ram West argues, the building of 47 residences on that property will greatly alter our neighborhood. Having Krejci Academy and the Little Friends offices in the neighborhood is much different from having numerous tall residence buildings with so much concrete/asphalt that there is not even room close to the homes for a ground floor patio. The development looks very much like urban housing, not a development in the middle of the Historic District. There is no way that the retention of what the developer keeps calling the "architectural details" will make dense, tall, multi-family housing fit. If the only way to accommodate the current zoning is to demolish the mansion, I would prefer that. Please don't allow Little Friends' financial needs ruin our neighborhood. The organization does wonderful work, and I wish them well as they leave Naperville to build their new school/offices. Please don't allow them to leave a negative legacy in our neighborhood.

Best,
Robin Williams
[REDACTED]

Mattingly, Gabrielle

From: Planning
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 2:59 PM
To: Mattingly, Gabrielle
Subject: FW: Objection to Petition, PZC Case #20-1-061 Heritage Place (PZC Meeting 9-16-2020)

Please see the comment below.

Best,
Kathleen
Kathleen Russell
Community Planner | TED Business Group
City of Naperville | 400 S. Eagle Street
630-420-4179 | russellk@naperville.il.us

From: Barbara Ashley [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 2:57 PM
To: Planning <Planning@naperville.il.us>
Subject: Objection to Petition, PZC Case #20-1-061 Heritage Place (PZC Meeting 9-16-2020)

CAUTION: This e-mail originated outside of the City of Naperville (@naperville.il.us).

DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you confirm the incoming address of the sender and know the content is safe.

September 9, 2020

To the Members of the Naperville Planning and Zoning Commission;

Our letter concerns the Petition filed by RAM West Capital, LLC for the Little Friends Property at 140 and 126 N. Wright Street, Naperville, IL 60540. We are residents of the Historic District, and live immediately adjacent to this property, where we have been for thirty-five years. The Petitioner seeks the approval of a conditional use for single-family attached dwellings on this R-2 zoned property, and variances to reduce the front yard setback, to reduce the lot area, and to permit 3.5 story buildings not to exceed 40 feet in height.

We oppose the approval of all aspects of this Petition as it currently stands, and we ask that you follow the action taken by the Historic Preservation Commission on August 27, 2020.

To the extent that this, or any other, purchaser is granted variances of this magnitude raises the question of how the other District homeowners continue to be held to a different and more stringent standard. This effectively eviscerates the whole premise upon which the Historic District is based.

The Heritage Place development as proposed puts 47 residential units, three within the Kroehler Mansion and 44 more in twelve new row home buildings, plus one detached garage, on the property. We vehemently object to putting 47 row homes into a single block because we believe that this type of housing does not fit in the midst of a neighborhood of single-family homes. The style, height, and density of the units within the proposed

development are in drastic conflict with surrounding living structures, will gut the character and purpose of the Historic District, and will negatively impact the quality of life for those who live in proximity to the development.

How did we get to this point? RAM West Capital has been able to rework its plan so that it includes alleyways. We believe that it would be far better to build single-family homes with rear-loading garages that are in keeping with the design of the periods represented within the Historic District rather than a dense block of row homes that fundamentally forever changes the character of the neighborhood.

There are some priorities that any plan for redevelopment must address.

We need a public park to restore what was lost when College Park was removed. College Park was a fixture of the immediate area for at least as long as we have lived here since 1979. Its loss has eroded the quality of life for our neighborhood.

We have questions and concerns about drainage and possible flooding in surrounding streets. What impact will intense redevelopment have on already problematic stormwater issues? Many more residential units will increase the demand for public utilities and put a strain on our existing water and sewer mains, which are some of the oldest in Naperville.

As long-time homeowners in the Historic District, we have accepted and complied with the requirements and restrictions of owning property in the Historic District in return for the benefits of living within it. A future purchaser of our property would have the same obligations, as should RAM West Capital.

As you carefully consider this Petition, we ask that you put yourselves in our shoes for just a moment and imagine how you would feel if this dense development was across the street from your home. Please listen to us. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reimagine this historic property site for the District. It is our one and only chance to get this right. We respectfully ask you to take as much time as is necessary to do that, protecting this unique part of Naperville and ensuring a legacy that we can be proud to leave for future residents.

Sincerely,
Barbara and James Ashley

████████████████████
████████████████████

Planning and Zoning Commission Public Comment for September 16, 2020

PZC #20-1-061 Heritage Place

Dear Naperville Planning and Zoning Commissioners,

Please deny the request for conditional use for the 44 new Heritage Place townhomes, the variance for their reduced front yard setback, and the variance for their decreased lot area. This proposal is not in the best interest of the surrounding neighborhood nor our community at large. I hope the petitioner, neighbors, community preservationists, and city staff will work together on a revised plan that is in harmony with the cultural assets of our Historic District and well serves our community. I hope for an outcome as successful as Main Street Promenade Phase III whose revised plan and spirit of cooperation brought high praise from all parties involved.

Support for Conditional Use for the Existing Kroehler Mansion

I support the proposal for renovating the Kroehler mansion as a 3-unit townhome and agree with the petitioner's argument to do so. It is a unique feature on the property and deserves the designation of a supported rather than primary use with R2 zoning. However, the desire to convert Kroehler Mansion into a townhome, does not imply that every other structure on the 3.79 acre property should or must also be a townhome. There are other alternatives and until an acceptable proposal for the remainder of the property is presented before the PZC, conditional use for a parcel containing the mansion should be put on hold.

Objection to Conditional Use Request for New Single-family Attached Dwellings

Little Friends is not the petitioner, they are simply selling and leaving the property. Their mission and the financial incentive they may receive from the City of Naperville should have no bearing on the decision to grant conditional use for the property. Their institutional use is non-conforming. It conflicts with the current and proposed R2 (Single-Family and Low Density Multiple Family District) zoning not only for their property, but for parcels surrounding their property. Arguments for conditional use should be based solely on the intended future use, not the past or even current use. The merits of adding medium density residential dwellings in a low density residential area should and must be based on the unique characteristics of the property, the surrounding area, and the public need around that particular location. The current non-conforming institutional use by Little Friends and the deteriorated state of the buildings, should not be used to justify redeveloping the property in a more intensive manner than the future land use designates. The property is highly valued and destined to be redeveloped. No proof has been offered that it should or must be redeveloped with a supported rather than a primary use.

Conditional use to convert the Kroehler mansion into townhomes may benefit the general welfare of the community, but that argument does not apply towards new structures on the property. In the petitioner's May concept, new dwellings were single family detached homes and duplexes which may be built by right. There have been other concepts, though not by this developer, showing preserving the mansion is possible with all single family homes, all duplexes, or a variety of residential types. Please see [Figure 1](#) for an example showing a variety of residential types, including the units similar to the historic [Larkin Center Project in Elgin](#) as suggested for consideration in the August 26, 2020 letter from Landmark Illinois.

Neighborhoods create a unique sense of place—anyone who has spent time walking through them knows this. That sense can be wonderful whether it consists of skyscrapers, brownstones, bungalows, '50s style homes, townhomes, or any building sort. Overtime they evolve, which is wonderful as well. Different is good, but it must also be respectful of the particular sense of place. The [1998 Update to the Naperville East Sector Comprehensive Plan](#) recognizes this by including the Historic District as a unique feature and major asset that should be given special consideration. It states:

- "The placement of buildings and uses adjacent to these areas should not threaten their long-term viability."
- "All redevelopment/infill development shall be of a type and density that is compatible with the surrounding area."

Under goals for future land use, the comprehensive plan calls for retaining "the overall low density residential character of the sector as indicated on the future land use map" and states that "medium/high density residential development should be located to provide accessibility and a transition between low density residential and more intensive uses." Heritage Place, as proposed, fails to meet these goals and considerations.

The petitioner recognized that historic preservation benefits the general welfare of the community in his argument for renovating Kroehler mansion. Maintaining the historic character of the Historic District benefits the community's general welfare as well. But, the proposed placement, style, and number of building in Heritage Place threatens the long-term viability of the Historic District. While the townhome rendering is appealing and compatible with the Kroehler mansion, 11 such 3 ½ story buildings will wraparound 3 ⅔ of the perimeter of the city block. It will give the appearance of a 40' grey wall. With the proposed reduced front setback and lot area, this wall will appear even more massive. As *Figure 4* illustrates, it is monotonous rather than diverse. By contrast, consider *Figure 5*, a mock-up of eclectic single family 1 to 2 ½ story homes. While not historically appropriate, it illustrates that monotony can be avoided and a more evolved look may be achieved. The massing of townhomes Heritage Place proposes is out of harmony with the variety of styles that characterize the majority of the 1 to 2 ½ story surrounding homes. Diluting the Historic District's character in this manner would be detrimental to the general welfare of the community. Altering the character would be injurious to the enjoyment of surrounding properties. Were Heritage Place to be located in an area where tear downs were imminent, I'm sure property values would not be harmed. But the purpose of the Historic District is to preserve and maintain individual properties and overall character. I fear changing the feel of the neighborhood in this manner will actually harm the value of existing properties. To avoid these detriments, future proposals for Heritage Place should pay close attention existing styles and the new construction guidelines specified in the [Naperville Historic Building Design and Resource Manual](#).

Conditional use should ensure that there is a good transition between the unique characteristics of the surrounding area. This would not be the case for Heritage Place. The property is surrounded by conforming R2 residences. Please see *Figure 2* for a zoning map of the surrounding area including the boundaries of the East Central Homeowners Organization (ECHO), the Historic District, the Heritage Place parcels, and a few other notable parcels. Searching through 2016 and later City Council meetings, I found only 2 instances where conditional use for townhomes in R2 zoning had been granted: Chicago Commons and Charleston Row II. Neither of those properties are entirely surrounded by R2 zoning. Instead, they have a mixture of other zoning types such as B5, OCI, R3A, or TU either adjacent to them or within a few parcels. The importance of the surrounding area was noted when the conditional use for those cases were approved:

- Regarding Chicago Commons, city staff stated, "Though denser than previously planned, staff finds the proposed development to be compatible with this designation given the subject property's adjacency Chicago Avenue, a minor arterial roadway, and Sunrise Assisted Living to the east."
- Regarding Charleston Row II, "The Planning and Zoning Commission found the project to be a good transitional use between the Central Business District north of Aurora Avenue and the residential area to the south and supported the requests."

Included in my search were properties recently rezoned to include medium density residential housing either by right or conditional use. I also included some particular properties recently rezoned as R2. (I apologies for any omissions.) Please see *Figure 3* for a summary of all such properties including Chicago Commons and Charleston Row II. Among these properties, Heritage Place stands out as a very large and medium density development placed in the midst of what is intended to be a single-family and low density multiple family district:

- It is 3.79 acres. Excluding the proposed park, the townhomes would sit on 3.35 acres. That would make it 5.49 times larger than Charleston Row II, 4 times larger than Chicago Commons, and 3.35 times larger than the nearby Ellsworth Station Apartments. It is only 1.40 times smaller than Columbia Park Townes which were annexed as R3A and are surrounded by R1B, R2, unincorporated parcels, and the BNSF tracks.
- It would have 47 total units and 13 buildings. That is over 5 times as many units as either Chicago Commons or Charleston Row II. It would have more units than the Ellsworth Station Apartments zoned OCI or the Columbia Park Townes zoned R3A.

No garbage pickup plan has been present with this proposal. However, most single-family attached complexes use centralize pickup at the driveways entrances. Having, say, 23 recycling 23 garbage carts along Franklin and 24 recycling 24 garbage carts along School seems impractical and detrimental to the area. Smaller medium density developments such as Chicago Commons and Charleston Row II do not have such a problem.

The Traffic Study attached to the petition consists of 3 images of the morning drop off and cuing of school buses. Lacking as this traffic study is, the non-conforming past institutional use should not be used to justify conditional use for a medium density residential development in a low density area. Instead, the study should compare the difference in the projected traffic generated by the primary use to the proposed supportive use.

Because the new townhomes would be surrounded by all R2 zoned parcels, because there is no unique characteristic

inherent to the property justifying medium density use, and because massing of the townhomes is not in harmony with the surrounding area, granting conditional use for these new townhomes would set a precedence for medium density conditional use that could be applied to practically any other R2 parcel or parcels in Naperville. Our zoning and standards for conditional use are important and should be taken seriously.

This is not to say that conditional use is completely inappropriate for this property. I believe a mix of medium density dwellings along with R2 permitted dwellings would be acceptable as long as attention were paid to their visual appropriateness for the Historic District and the resultant density of the block. High-end townhomes though do not meet the greatest housing need in Naperville. Naperville is much more lacking in relatively affordable housing. I believe that is why in part Landmark Illinois referenced the redeveloped historic Larkin Center in Elgin. The "Trends and Best Practices" in [Naperville's Draft Land Use Master Plan](#) cites development such as School Street in Libertyville, The Legacy in Glen Ellyn, Woodlawn Park in Chicago, and Tiny Homes in Tallahassee for ideas to be applied in our community. I believe a truly diverse and neighborhood compatible mixed use development is possible, just not the current proposal.

Respectfully, please deny conditional use for the new single family attached dwellings until a more suitable proposal for our community is submitted.

Objection to the Variance for a Reduced Front Yard Setback

Reducing the setback for the 44 Heritage Place townhomes is not in character with the neighborhood, but instead would be creating a far more egregious noncompliance. It would be most off-balance along the east side of Columbia where it seems that all but one home conforms to R2 zoning. Granting the variance would alter the essential character of the neighborhood and would be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.

More homes in the surrounding area comply with the 25' building setback than do not. The map in *Figure 6* has a pink overlay showing a 15' setback and a yellow overlay showing an additional 10' setback. Although the porches and eaves are indistinguishable from the building, the typical style of the 1 to 2 ½ story homes indicates the non-compliance is primarily be due to deep porches that extend further into the front setback than 5'. For example, *Figure 7* is the home at the southwest corner of Columbia and Franklin. It seems to have a 25' building setback and a 10' porch causing the front of the porch to be about 15' from the property line. This non-compliance is for a single story, not the entire height of the home. A Heritage Place townhome would have a reduced front setback of 15' for the entire height of 40' building. Its porches would extend 5' further to be only 10' from the property line. They are uncharacteristic of the neighborhood and will not create harmony.

Charleston Row II, Chicago Commons, nor any of the other townhomes in *Figure 3* have a front setback variance. The the Ellsworth Station Apartment building, see *Figure 8*, is the most comparable property, in terms of mass, height and setback to the Heritage Place town homes. Located across from Burlington Square Park, these apartments are 43' tall and are setback approximately 16' from the sidewalk edge. Despite their lack of porches, the setback appears quite narrow. A similar structure, as proposed for Heritage Place would not be harmonious with the more typical setbacks for the existing homes surrounding the block.

Strict enforcement of the required front yard setback will not impose difficulties in redeveloping the property both maintaining the Kroehler Mansion and designing in accordance to the [Naperville Historic Building Design and Resource Manual](#) standards (e.g. rear driveways). The petitioner's May concept consisted of only 28 residential units, excluding the Kroehler Mansion. I estimate that concept would accommodate about 76 residents. The August concept in contrast has 44 residential units and an estimated 90 to 106 residents. Please see *Figure 9* for a comparison between the May and August concepts. If townhome units #6, #20, #28, #32, #33, and #41 were removed from the August concept, the remaining townhomes could be moved in such a way that no front setback would be required. That would create a concept with 41 total townhomes (including the mansion) which is what city staff suggested could be done without even needing a lot area reduction. Such a modified concept would also create open space behind the mansion along Columbia St. I believe other less dense, historically appropriate, and still profitable concepts are possible that consist of single family homes, duplexes, or a diverse mixture of residential housing types. I see no compelling reason that they all must be townhomes with the density and reduced setback as proposed.

Respectfully, please deny the variance for a reduced front yard setback.

Objection to the Variance for a Reduced Lot Area

The current non-conforming institutional use by Little Friends, should not be used to justify redeveloping the property in a more dense manner than the future land use designates, nor should the zoning code for Chicago or other urban areas be considered. While there is nothing evil about dense housing, the standard for granting a variance must be based on Naperville's existing code. Its designated future land use for Heritage place is R2 with lot area requirements for a single family detached home to be 6,000 sq ft and the lot area for single family attached home to be 4,000 sq ft. The size of the property is 3.79 acres. This offers more flexibility to accommodate the zoning requirements, not less, than other infill properties that are tightly restrained. There is no compelling reason that 44 new town homes must be built. The rationale that 44 could be built and therefore should be built does not demonstrate a hardship or an unusual condition. As previously mentioned, eliminating townhome units #6, #20, #28, #32, #33, and #41 from the August concept would allow a concept with 41 total townhomes (including the mansion). This is what city staff suggested could be accommodated without needing a lot area reduction.

Of the other townhome developments in *Figure 3*, only Charleston Row II has a smaller lot area than requested for Heritage place, i.e. 3,307 sq. ft., rather than 3,514 sq ft. Most redevelopments are able to comply. Court Place is the only other townhome needing a variance. It was built on a 0.26 acre lot and still managed to have a lot area of 3,807 sq ft — closer to 4,000 sq ft than being requested for Heritage Place.

While a park would be a wonderful addition to the area, I do not believe the potential Land Donation should be a consideration in granting this variance. Outlot B is 0.44 acres and the number of residents 90 to 106. That appropriate land donation seems to be 0.774 to 0.9116 acres, considerably more than Outlot B. Adding 90 to 106 more residents to the area and giving them 80% less of the required lot area does not seem to be a gain at all for park space or open space in the area either for the new residents or the residents who lost the 0.23 acre College Park when Little Friends terminated the lease.

Respectfully, please deny the variance for a reduced lot area.

Thank you for your consideration,

Marilyn L. Schweitzer
Naperville Resident for over 30 years
September 9, 2020



The Kroehler Mansion is preserved as a 3-unit townhome with a detached garage. It is visible from a public park.



6 market rate single-family homes align Wright St with rear access garages.



A 4-unit, 3½-story townhome sits adjacent to the mansion and compliments its craftsman style.



11 Larkin-type 2-story homes along Columbia. As suggested by Landmark Illinois, they would compliment styles the Historic District. E.g. 9 two-flats with 3 bedrooms and 2 four-flats with 1 or 2 bedrooms.

Figure 1: Other Concepts Could More Diverse, Better Fit the Neighborhood Character and Serve the Community

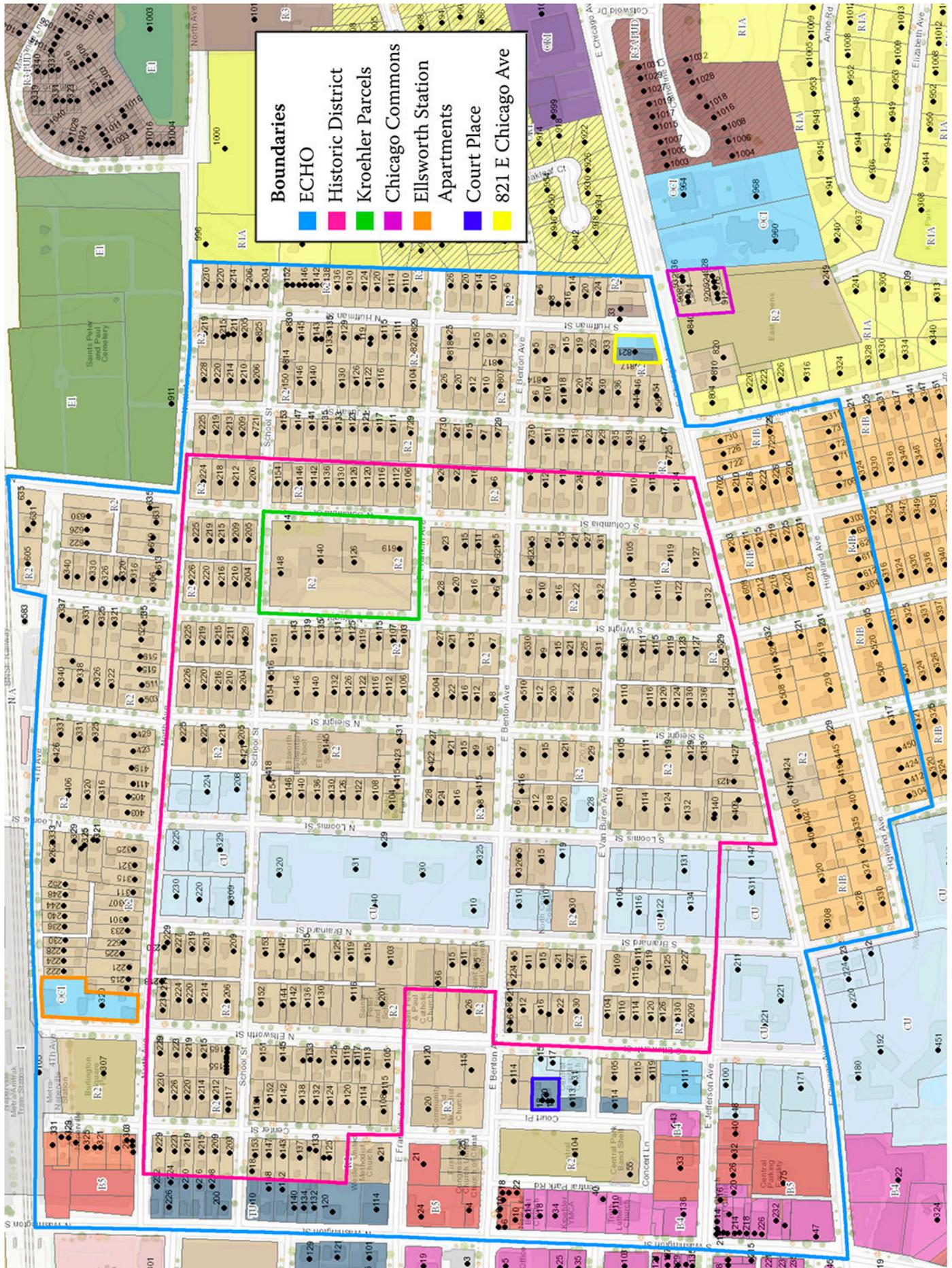


Figure 2: Zoning Map with Various Boundaries



Charleston Row II (approved 10/16/2018)

Southeast Corner of Aurora Ave and Main St

R2 0.61 acre

- 8 townhomes: one 6-unit building, one 2-unit building
- Conditional use for townhomes • Lot area 3307 sq ft per unit rather than 4000 sq ft • rear yard setback reduced from 25' to 10' • Height is increased to 42' from 40'.
 - Property is transitional in nature: B5 North, OCI East, R2 South, and R2 west where there is a dental office.

Chicago Commons (approved 12/18/2018)

920-930 E. Chicago Ave

R2 0.82 acre

- 9 townhomes: one 5-unit building, two 2-unit buildings
- Conditional use for townhomes • on the two 2-unit buildings height increased to 40' from 35' • on the two duplexes, stories increased to 3.5 from 2.5 • No setback variances.
 - Property to east is OCI.

Ellsworth Street Apartments (approved 4/19/2016)

306-336 N Ellsworth St

OCI 1 acre

- 39 apartments: one building with fourteen 1-bedroom and twenty-four 2- bedroom apartments
- Rezoned from R2 and B3
 - Conditional use multifamily use in OCI • front yard setback reduced to 1' from 20' • lot area reduced from 1047 sq ft from 2600 sq ft. • parking variances.
 - The petition says the sidewalk on Ellsworth is 8' and the parkway about 15'. Thus, the building is setback about 16' from the sidewalk. The front yard setback on the west side of Burlington Square Park was already 0'.

Court Place (approved 5/16/2017)

17 Court Pl

TU 0.26 acre

3 townhomes: one 3-unit building

- Lot area 3807 sq ft per unit rather than 4000 sq ft.

821 E. Chicago Avenue (approved 9/18/2018)

821 E. Chicago Ave

TU 0.36 acre

- Rezoned from OCI with a restriction that part of the property have residential use.

Columbia Park Townes (approved 6/20/2017)

26W161 Old Plank Rd

R3A 4.7 acres

- 35 townhomes: five 4-unit buildings, three 5-unit buildings
- Annexed and rezoned to R3A.
 - Rear yard setback reduced to 12.7' from 25' to 12.7' on one 4-unit building • height increased to 38' from 35' • buildings are 27.5' from the Plank Road property line, but there is a 7' roadway easement for the sidewalks making the buildings be 22.5' from the sidewalk edge • the minimum setback from Plank Road is 20'.

Auburn Manor (approved 2/6/2018)

9S364 Naper Blvd

R3A 1.1 acres

8 townhomes: two 4-unit buildings

- Annexation and zoned to R3A.

Bauer Place Phase 3 (approved 9/5/2017)

Southwest Corner of Bauer Rd and East Ave

R3 1 acre

9 townhomes: three 3-unit buildings

- Rezoned from B3 — surrounding properties are R1B, R3, and B3
- No variances.

Wagner Farms (approved 2/5/2020)

Northeast northeast corner of Route 59 and 103rd St

R2 114.28 acres

312 single family detached homes

- Annexed and rezoned to R2.
- Sign placement variance

Lot 4 on the Nokia Campus (approved 2/19/2020)

Northeast corner of Naper Blvd and Warrenville Rd

R2 67.6 acres

- Rezoned from ORI
- Conditional use for PUD — no plans yet submitted.

Figure 3: Other Properties for Consideration



Figure 4: A Block of Non-diverse Townhomes

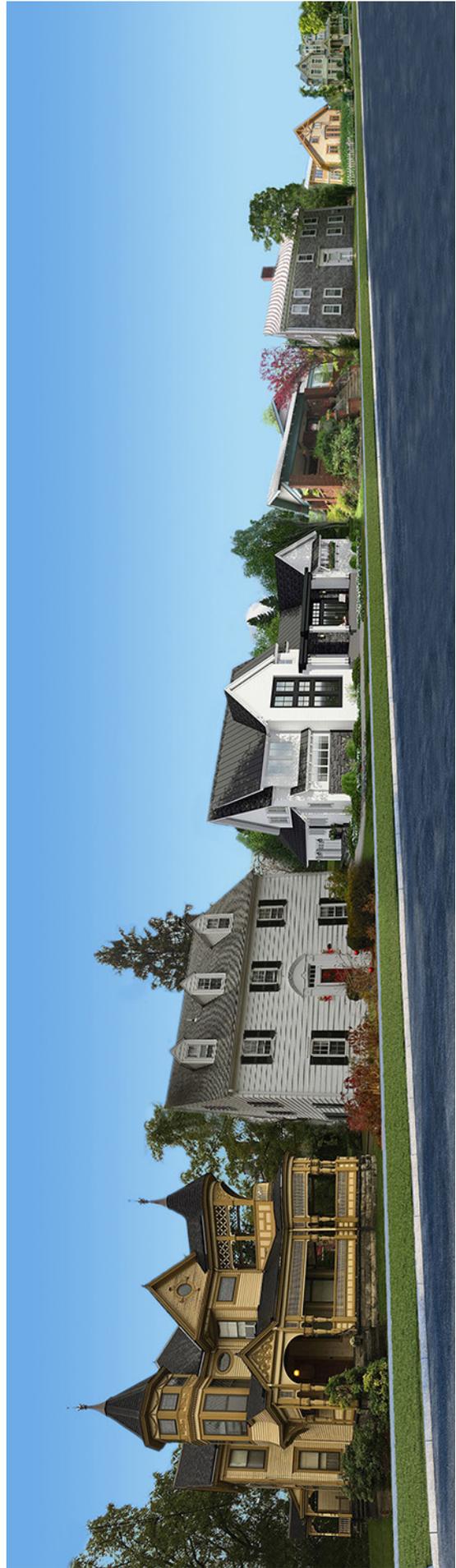


Figure 5: A Block of Diverse Single Family Homes

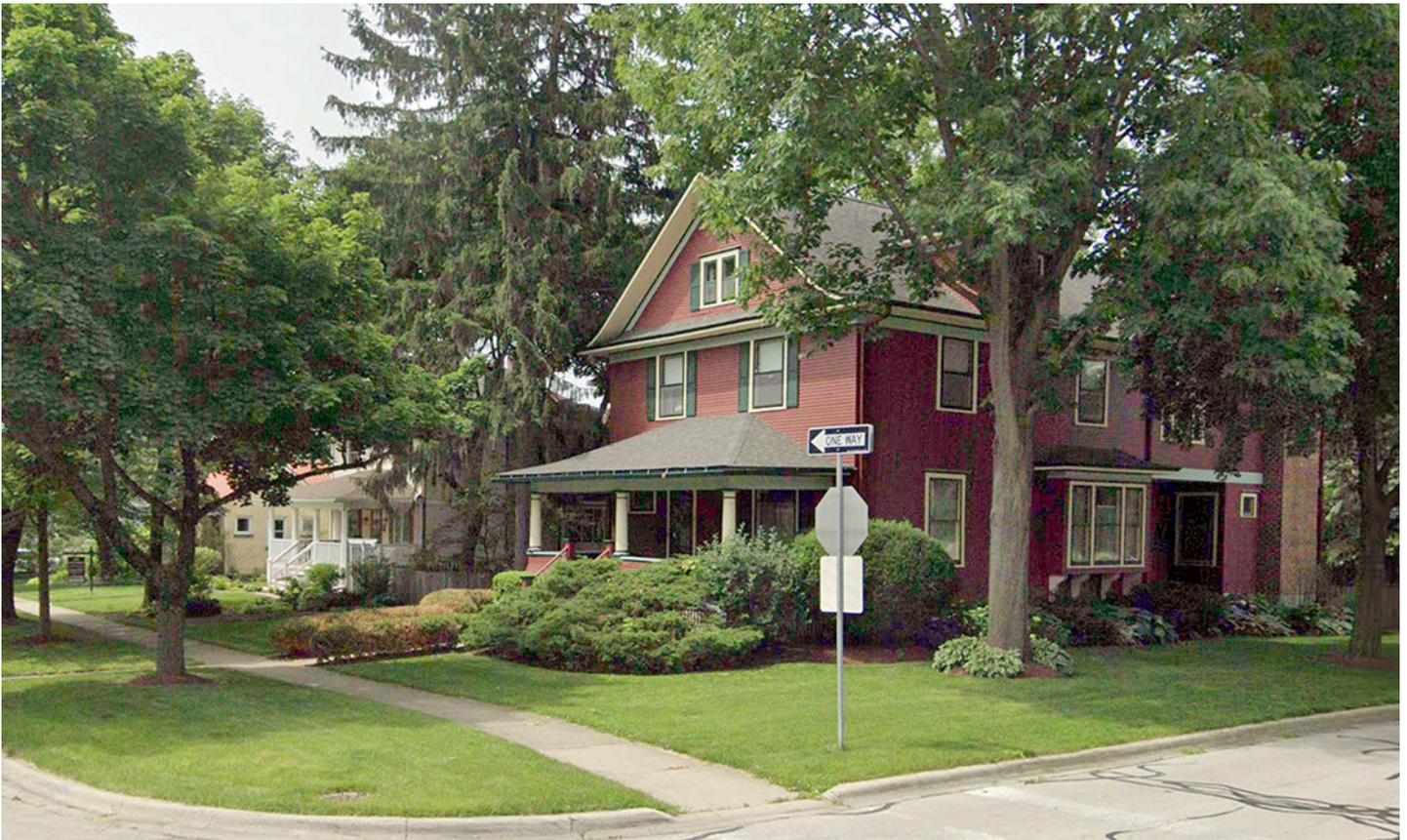


Figure 7: Southwest Corner of Franklin St. and Columbia St. — ~25' Setback with an Extending Porch

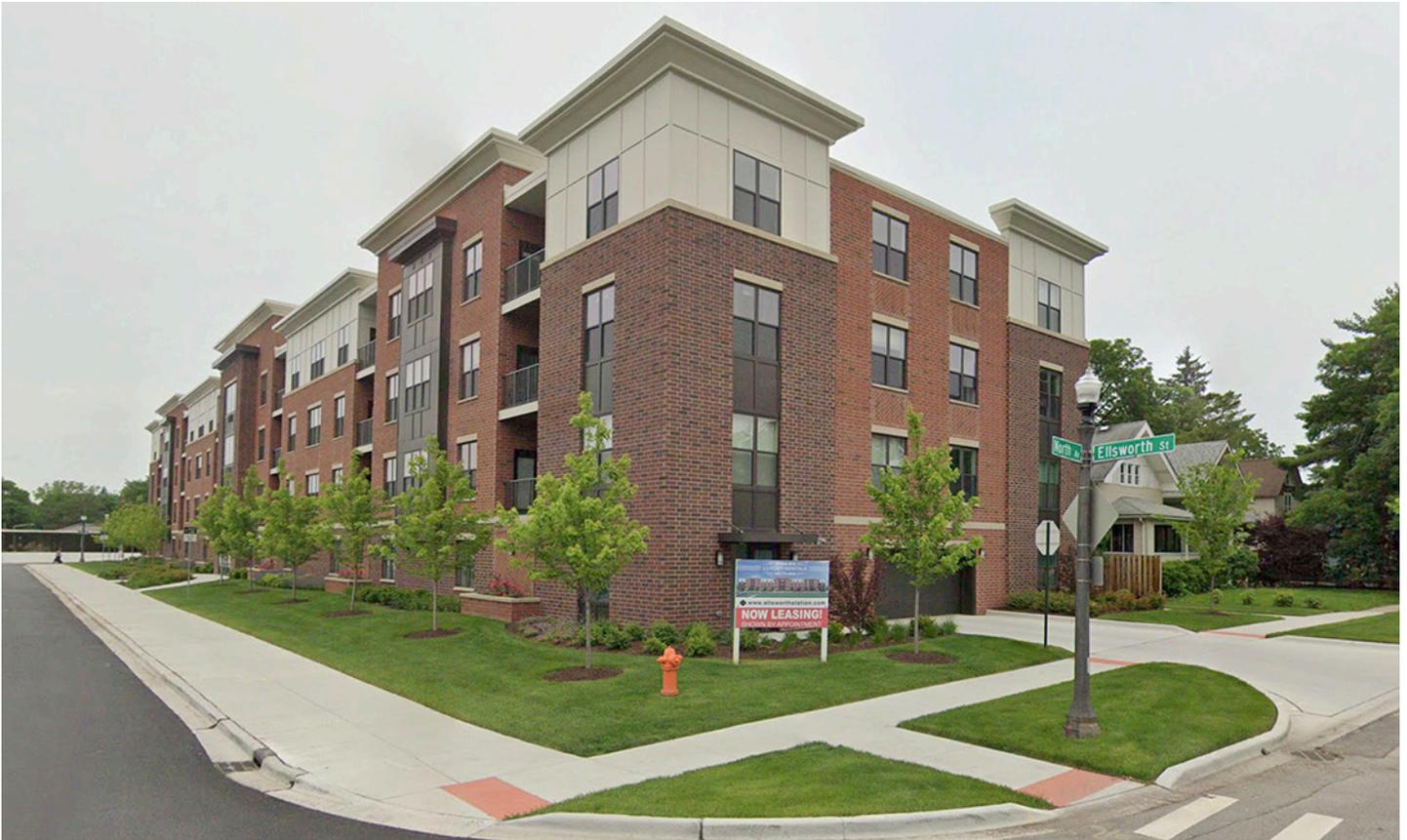


Figure 8: Ellsworth Station Apartments — 1' Property Setback an approximate 15' Parkway.

Comparing the May, 2020 to the August 2020 Concept

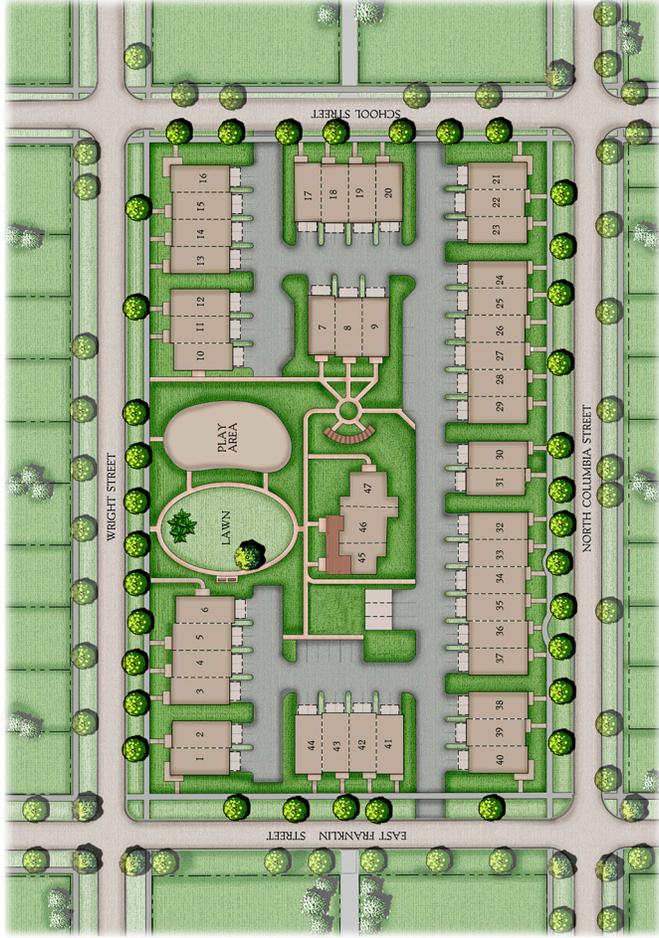


MAY 2020 CONCEPT PLAN

In May, feedback was requested from City Council on the above concept.

The plan had 11 single-family homes selling for \$1,100,000 and 17 duplexes selling for \$725,000 = \$23,325,000 excluding the selling price of the mansion. These residence types may be built by right in R2 zoning and the buildings appear to require no front setback variance.

Two concerns from the public and council were the lack appropriate design for the Historic District (e.g. front driveways) and the lack of view of the Kroehler Mansion from Wright St.



AUGUST 2020 CONCEPT PLAN

In August, the above concept went before the HPC. The COAs were denied and the variances not recommended. This concept is announced to go before the PZC in September.

The plan has of 44 townhomes selling for \$900,000 = \$39,600,000 excluding the mansion. It requires conditional use in R2 for townhomes and variances for front setbacks, lot area, and height.

It is understandable that the buildings and driveways had to move. But why push them out and add more units? Why must they be townhomes?

Surely, there are less dense, historically appropriate, and still profitable concepts, including concepts with single family homes, that still preserve the mansion.

- 18 single family homes selling for \$800,000 = \$14,400,000
- 18 single family homes selling for \$1,100,000 = \$19,800,000
- 20 duplexes selling for \$725,000 = \$14,500,000
- just 28 townhomes selling for \$900,000 = \$25,200,000 gets above May's price

Figure 9: Comparing the May, 2020 to the August 2020 Concept