

Development Review Team Memo

FROM: Kelly Douglas, AICP – Senior Planner

DATE: 2025-09-05

RE: PL20250063 Basecamp Phase II 1850 Luna Ln
Development Plan, Conditional Use and Major Variance
Planning Review Submittal #2

Submittal #3

APPLICANT RESPONSE BELOW IN RED

Big Picture Feedback

1. The addition of a commercial use at the Elk River/Lincoln corner is a great step in the right direction and helps move the project closer to meeting the intent for this key intersection. Staff also finds that the proposed approach to parking and snow storage can work. To get to a full recommendation, though, the development plan needs to be shown in full rather than part conceptual and part detailed, because:
 - The multifamily building on Lot 3 relies on a development-wide parking approach. There will be a 26-space parking lot on Lot 2, regardless, as shown in the updated site plan. The construction of the surface parking lot will be completed prior to a Certificate of Occupancy being issued for the Lot 3 apt. building, regardless of the status of approvals or construction for the future commercial building.
 - The size and layout of the parking lot may shift once the Lot 2 commercial building is designed to meet §438 standards. It may or may not, but it will/must contain the quantity needed to meet the holistic needs of Lots 1 and 3 per the shared parking model. We anticipate both the commercial building and residential building will be completed at approximately the same time, and thus the final configuration of the lot should be known/completed prior to Lot 3 Apartments obtaining C of O.
 - For example, 438.C.1.b requires buildings to define the edges of and orient access to primary public and private streets, pedestrian circulation, and gathering areas. Meeting this standard may involve pulling the building closer to the street, which would in turn affect the parking configuration. The parking lot configuration is not anticipated to change, however, if it does, the configuration of the lot will not have a material effect on the proposal for Lot 3, as there will be 14 spaces allocated for Lots 1 and 3 via easement per shared parking model.

To support approval, elevations and floor plans for the Lot 2 commercial building should be provided to demonstrate compliance with Section 438 Commercial and Mixed Use Building Design Standards.

As much as the applicant would like to have had the commercial building designed and included in this application, it is not possible. The applicant is selling this parcel of land to a passionate restaurateur who is planning to perform his own design process with his own consultants. Waiting for this process to occur could delay the project planned for Lot 3 for up to another year and cause the Applicant to lose its financing/investors, further delaying a project that will help provide an additional 80 units of housing to the City.

The applicant humbly requests Planning's full support based on the following:

- 1) A proposed condition of approval whereby Certificate of Occupancy for the Apartments is tied to the completion of the surface parking lot.
- 2) The applicant has provided a parking lot screening scenario that will be installed in the event there are delays with the commercial building approvals and construction (ref sheet L.003).

Section 224 Zone District: Commercial Services (CS)

2. Thank you for revising the parking lot setback along Lincoln Ave. It now conforms. However, the setback along Big Bend Dr. does not meet the standard (similar to Lot 2) and should also be included in the variance request. Please update the variance narrative. **Please see updated variance narrative to include the portion of the parking lot along Big Bend Dr.**
3. Staff findings support the requested variance to Section 224 CS minimum parking lot setback. **Noted.**
4. Staff findings support the requested variance to Section 224 CS minimum ground floor height. **Noted.**

Article 3 Use Definitions and Standards & Section 413 Phasing

5. Staff findings support the requested Multiple-Family Residential and Workforce Unit Conditional Uses. **Noted.**
6. With the addition of commercial uses on Lot 3, a Surface Parking Lot use is no longer applicable since the lot is not a standalone use. However, the phasing shown on the landscape plan indicates both the commercial building and the multiple-family building occurring in Phase 2. Can you confirm whether both buildings are intended to receive building permits and certificates of occupancy at the same time? **Confirmed – both buildings are anticipated to receive certificates of occupancy at the same time. The commercial building will likely obtain a building permit after the residential building (however, the residential building will take approx. 6 months longer to construct).** If not, it appears there could be a period where the Lot 2 parking lot stands alone while serving the multiple-family residential use. Please provide a phasing plan and additional details to determine if a Surface Parking Lot Conditional Use is a component of this application as well as if phasing complies with the requirements of Section 413. **In the event parking lot on Lot 2 stands alone, a plan showing parking lot screening to meet landscaping standards has been shown on L.003.**

Section 406 Off-Street Parking

7. Staff findings support the requested 406.E.2 Off-Site Parking Facilities alternative compliance. **Noted.**

Section 409 Snow Storage

8. Staff findings support the requested variance to Section 409 Snow Storage. **Noted.**

Section 421 Open Space

9. Lot 3 Open Space: While the plan may meet the minimum 15% open space by area, most of the space provided is landscape area, in narrow perimeter strips around the parking lot and building. This configuration does not appear consistent with the 421.A purpose of open space. **Please find revised open space plan that now includes the entire sidewalk adjacent to US40 located within the property line, and puts the Applicant at well over the minimum 15% requirement. While open to the public as well, the sidewalk area is part of the pedestrian corridor for connecting the site to downtown and other adjacent areas and meets the criteria of standard 421.D.2. Further, a "sidewalk" is not listed in section 421.D.3 as an area that does not qualify as "Open Space". The sidewalk area is planted with trees and shrubs on either side, which enhances user experience, and can certainly be viewed as an amenity to building users who may want to use it for walking, running, biking within the site and beyond. Additionally, there are several other areas of Open Space with the adjacent Lot 1 that will be accessible to users of Lot 3 via easement, over and above what is shown in Lot 2.**

437.D Access

10. Section 437.D.1 requires orientation of primary pedestrian entries to predominant public and private streets. Lincoln Ave, Curve Ct, and Big Bend Dr. are all predominant frontages for this site, and the standard does not allow one to be prioritized over the others. While the Lincoln connection is appreciated, the building remains primarily oriented to Big Bend Dr. and does not appear to meet this standard. The design should be amended to provide meaningful entries on all predominant frontages, or a variance should be requested.
Please find a variance included in this resubmission.

437.F Roof Forms

11. Staff is unable to support the requested roof form variance based on the design and justification provided. The outcome does not appear equal to or better than the standard, as the required pitched roof form and variety are not achieved.
Please see revised variance.

437.H Building Scale, Variation, and Fenestration

12. Staff findings support the requested variance to Section 437.H.4 transparency standards. **Noted.**

437.J Building Color

13. Material #1 (corrugated metal wall panel) is described as charcoal in the narrative, which reads as grey. Since Appendix B allows grey only as an accent color, not a primary material, this selection will need to be revised to meet the standard. **Updated elevations have been included which has modified these metal wall panels to be a Dark Bronze.**