



TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Chris Lagerbloom, ICMA-CM, City Manager

DATE: September 21, 2021

TITLE: Quasi-Judicial Resolution for an Alternative Design of a 12-Story Mixed-Use and Mixed-Income Development with Ground Floor Commercial Space Deviating from the Downtown Master Plan Standards for Minimum Building Tower Setback and Maximum Floorplate Size Requirements – Related FAT Village, LLC – 600 North Andrews Avenue – Case No. UDP – S21013 – **(Commission District 2)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission consider the alternative design of a 12-story mixed-use and mixed-income development, consisting of 195 residential units, with ground floor commercial, which deviates from the Downtown Master Plan standards of minimum building tower setback and maximum tower floorplate size requirements, proposed at 600 North Andrews Avenue, in the Downtown Regional Activity Center - Urban Village (RAC-UV) Zoning District, within the “Urban Neighborhood” character area to determine whether it meets the intent of the Downtown Master Plan.

Background

The parcel is owned by Broward County, with the applicant, Related FAT Village LLC, overseeing the development, use and operation of the site through a land use lease agreement. The proposed 12-story (130-foot) mixed-use development contains 195 affordable housing units with ground floor retail along North Andrews Avenue and NE 6th Street, and a total of 226 parking spaces. Of the 195 residential units, 40 units will be restricted to residents whose household income does not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the Broward County median family income (MFI), 110 units will be restricted to residents whose household income does not exceed 120% of the MFI, and 45 units will be restricted to residents whose household income does not exceed 140% of the MFI.

The Development Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the proposal on May 25, 2021. All comments have been addressed and are on file with the Department of Sustainable Development.

The Application and Narratives are included as Exhibit 1. The Site Plan and Elevations are included as Exhibit 2.

Downtown RAC Review Process and Special Regulations

The project is located in the Regional Activity Center Urban Village Zoning District (RAC-UV), within in the Urban Neighborhood Character Area as defined in the Downtown Master Plan (DMP). The Urban Neighborhood Character Area is a mixed-use district that encourages primarily residential development with an intermix of community retail and employment activities. Commercial retail uses are encouraged on the ground floor to support pedestrian activity and streetscape improvements focus on maintaining tree-lined streets with wide sidewalks to support neighborhood connectivity.

Downtown Master Plan

The following is a summary regarding the project's compliance with the DMP:

Quality of Architecture

The proposed building materials consists of stucco, glass, and a decorative metal screening for the garage. The development incorporates a raised ground floor, plazas at both primary corners, a rear elevated amenity space and the integration of balconies with metal railings as well as pedestrian eyebrows for shading along NE 6th Street and North Andrews Avenue. The building has podium height of 6 floors, providing a building setback of 7 feet and 12 feet, along NE 6th Street and North Andrews Avenue, respectively.

Active Uses and Building Program

The proposed site plan incorporates two plazas. The first plaza serves as a primary focal point at the corner of NE 6th Street and North Andrews Avenue, complementing the prominent corner, and the *Motif* project across the intersection. The second plaza offers a full growth canopy tree, spanning 24 feet in width and 34 feet in height, surrounded by wood benches to support street activation and shading for both the plaza and pedestrians. Bicycle parking is available on the ground floor in the bike storage room and along NE 1st Avenue.

The main lobby is at the corner of NE 6th Street and North Andrews Avenue, with retail space placed at the corner of NE 6th Street and NE 1st Avenue, complemented by the plazas. The remainder of the first floor consists of residential units, building services, and parking. The 2nd through 4th floors provides liner units, internalizing the garage along NE 6th Street and North Andrews Avenue. Access to the garage is limited to NE 1st Avenue. The garage is covered with mesh metal screening and decorative murals to reduce the impact of exposed areas. The 5th floor provides residential units, outdoor open space, a swimming pool, and gym amenities. The tower portion of the project (6th floor through 12th floor) incorporates residential units and integrates architectural horizontal modulation, with coloration and variation in balcony placement.

Streetscape Design

The building includes shading devices for pedestrians along NE 6th Street and North Andrews Avenue. A total of 32 street trees line the sidewalks, in addition to a variety of plantings abutting the building's frontages along each right-of-way.

Downtown Master Plan Deviation

In accordance with ULDR Section 47-13.20.J.3, in the event the developer of a parcel of land in the Downtown RAC districts desires to deviate from the requirements of Section 47-13.20.B, Downtown Master Plan Standards, the developer may submit the design of the proposed development for review and approval by the City Commission if the alternative design meets the overall intent of the Downtown Master Plan. The applicant is requesting alternative site design solutions for the tower step-back requirement along NE 6th Street and an increase in the maximum floorplate size requirement, described in more detail as follows:

Building Stepback Requirements

Maximum shoulder height in the Urban Neighborhood Character Area is 6 floors, with a minimum building setback of 12 feet along primary and secondary streets. The applicant meets the step-back requirements along North Andrews Avenue but is proposing a 7-foot setback along NE 6th Street, requesting five feet of relief.

With a turning lane having been previously constructed on the applicant's property, existing conditions are unique, proving it difficult to meet the setback requirements. The streetscape design standard requires that buildings be placed 35 feet from centerline of the abutting right-of-way, but with the existing turning lane located on the applicant's property, the building setback from the centerline of NE 6th Street is 49 feet, affecting the building's location, and therefore also affecting the tower step-back. The intent of the DMP's tower step-back requirement is still upheld, with light and air circulation penetrating the area, due to the building's location being further from the centerline of the street than typically required.

Building Floorplate Square Footage

The maximum residential floorplate size for towers in the Urban Neighborhood Character Area is 10,000 square feet. The applicant is requesting a floorplate size of 16,345 square feet, 6,345 square feet above the permitted square footage. The applicant has indicated that based on site constraints the additional square footage is required in order to develop a successful affordable housing project at this location and construct the number of units necessary to offset the lower rental rates. This request meets the intent of the City's Comprehensive plan, as outlined herein and is supported by the 2021 City Commission Priorities which focus on addressing housing needs and affordability.

Table 1 provides a summary of the quantitative dimensions in the DMP and those proposed for the project.

Table 1. Downtown Master Plan Design Standards Comparison Summary

DMP Standard	Required	Proposed	Complies or Deviates
Maximum Building Height	12 Stories	12 Stories (130 feet)	Complies
Maximum Building Streetwall Length	300 Feet	241 Feet	Complies
Maximum Tower Floorplate Size (Square Feet)	10,000 SF	16,345 SF	Deviation Request
Maximum Building Podium Height	6 Floors	6 Floors	Complies
Minimum Building Tower Stepback	12 Feet	12 Feet / 7 Feet* (*along NE 6th Street)	Deviation Request
Minimum Tower Separation	30 Feet	NA	Complies
Minimum Residential Unit Size (Square Feet)	400	928	Complies

Infrastructure Capacity Analysis

The adequacy criteria of ULDR Section 47-25.2 are used to evaluate the demand created on public services and facilities by a proposed development. A capacity letter has been issued by the City’s Public Works Department dated July 29, 2021, which identifies the facilities and associated infrastructure servicing this project and the project’s impact on capacity. A review of the utility services impacted by the development indicate that improvements to the sanitary sewer mains would be necessary to adequately serve the development. Approximately 250 linear feet of gravity sewer shall be upsized to at least an 18-inch pipe along NE 1st Avenue. These minimum improvements would allow the gravity mains to sufficiently handle the existing and proposed flows in the contributing area. The aforementioned comment is a condition of project approval.

Transportation and Traffic Analysis

A traffic impact statement was prepared by the applicant’s traffic consultant, Traf Tech Engineering, inc. on June 28, 2021, using the trip generation equations published in the Institute of Transportation Engineer’s (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual (10th Edition)*. The statement indicates the development is projected to generate 868 new daily trips, approximately 60 AM peak hour trips (14 inbound and 46 outbound) and approximately 41 PM peak hour trips (25 inbound and 16 outbound). The anticipated number of daily trips to be generated within one-half hour is approximately 3.2% of new daily trips. Based on the projected daily trips being less than 1,000 new daily trips, and less than 20% of the new daily trips being generated in one half hour, a traffic study is not required.

The City of Fort Lauderdale Public Works Department Capacity Letter and Applicant's Traffic Impact Statement are attached as Exhibit 3.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The Comprehensive Plan and ongoing City initiatives support the development of additional affordable housing options, specifically Housing Element Policy HS 1.2.9 which states that the city shall support the construction of diverse affordable housing types, include multi-family homes. The proposed project provides a mixed-income development, supporting households with incomes ranging from 50% to 140% of the MFI.

The project supports Urban Design Element Policy UD 1.1.6 which states that where buildings engage the streets, high quality building design will be promoted through the use of high-quality materials and building façade features such as transparency that include plenty of windows.

The project fulfills Objective FLU 2.4 which states that the City will direct growth to designated Urban Redevelopment/Downtown Revitalization Areas to discourage urban sprawl, maximize the use of existing public facilities and centralize commercial, governmental, retail, residential, and cultural activities. It supports Policies FLU 2.4.1, 2.4.1a and 2.4.2b by creating a vibrant mixed-use Downtown, combining new homes with office space, shops, and restaurants, and implementing the Downtown Master Plan principles.

Conditions of Approval

Should the City Commission approve the development, the following conditions apply:

1. At the time of the issuance of building permit, applicant will be required to pay a Park Impact Fee for the proposed residential units in accordance with ULDR Sec. 47-38A.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall provide a final School Capacity Availability Determination (SCAD) letter that confirms that school capacity is available, or if capacity is not available, that mitigation requirements have been satisfied.
3. Trees encroaching the public realm of the sidewalk are to have a canopy height clearance of a minimum 7 feet per ULDR Sec. 47-13.20.H.2.iii and those encroaching the sight triangle to have a minimum 8-foot canopy clearance per ULDR Sec. 47-35.
4. The utility boxes on the northwest corner of the intersection of NE 6th Street and NE 1st Avenue will be relocated outside of the required 7 foot sidewalk prior to Certificate of Occupancy ("CO").
5. Prior to certificate of occupancy (CO), the required improvements to the wastewater system as detailed in the Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability letter issued by the City Public Works Department dated July 29, 2021, must be fully functional.

6. In accordance with the Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability letter issued by the City Public Works Department dated July 29, 2021, prior to issuance of building permit, approximately 250 lineal feet of 10-inch gravity sewer must be upsized to a minimum 18-inch diameter pipe along NW 1st Avenue. Should the Applicant voluntarily assume responsibility for the design, permitting and construction of said improvements in order to meet adequacy requirements per ULDR section 47-25.2. the Applicant is required to coordinate the design, permitting and construction of these improvements with the City's Public Works Department.
7. Prior to issuance of building permit, the Applicant must provide proof that the 15-foot alley vacation is in full force and affect in accordance with ordinance no. C-06-17.
8. Prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy, applicant shall record a 9-foot Right-of-Way dedication or permanent Right-of-Way Easement along east side of North Andrews Avenue (coordinate with Broward County Highway Construction and Engineering Division (BDHCED)), to complete half of 88' Right-of-Way section per the most current Broward County Trafficways Plan as approved by BCHCED.
9. Prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy, applicant shall record a permanent Sidewalk Easement as appropriate along north side of NE 6th Street to accommodate a portion of the 5-ft pedestrian clear path located beyond public Right-of-Way Easement dedication.
10. Prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, 10' x 15' (min.) utility easements dedication shall be recorded for the proposed 4-inch water meter and first manhole on private property.
11. Approval of a Maintenance Agreement by the City for the maintenance of proposed special improvements within adjacent City right-of-way along NE 6th Street and NE 1st Ave. The maintenance agreement shall provide that the improvements are maintained in perpetuity by property owner include: pedestrian lighting, curb and gutter, valley gutter, landscape, structural soil, irrigation, root barriers, pedestrian lighting, paver driveways, and specialty paving sidewalks as depicted on maintenance exhibit. Perpetual maintenance of newly constructed exfiltration system within adjacent City Right-of-Way will typically revert to the City, upon successful inspection/acceptance by Public Works after 1-year warranty period.
12. Prior to issuance of final Certificate Occupancy, applicant shall coordinate an ancillary Maintenance Agreement with the City for property frontage along N. Andrews Ave (County jurisdiction). Proposed special improvements for this project within adjacent County right-of-way to be maintained in perpetuity by property owner include landscaping and structural soil and irrigation.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *2021 Commission Priority*, advancing the Homelessness and Housing Opportunities initiative.

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2024*, specifically advancing:

- Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area.
- Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.
- Objective: Ensure a range of affordable housing options

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Community*.

This item supports the *Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan* specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Housing Element
- Goal 1: The Comprehensive Plan shall support the provision of adequate sites for future housing, including affordable workforce housing, housing for low-income, very low-income, and moderate-income families, mobile homes, and group home facilities and foster care facilities, with supporting infrastructure and public facilities.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Applications and Narratives

Exhibit 2 – Site Plan and Elevations

Exhibit 3 – Capacity Letter and Traffic Impact Statement

Exhibit 4 – Resolution Approving

Exhibit 5 – Resolution Denying

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