

city of saint paul  
 planning commission resolution  
 file number 20-14  
 date April 3, 2020

WHEREAS, Project Paul, LLC (Ryan) and MN Ford Site Apartment Land, LLC (Wiender), File #20-010013 and #20-009995, applied to amend the Zoning Code pertaining to the Ford districts and the *Ford Site Public Realm Master Plan* (Ford MP), including slight adjustments to zoning district boundaries to follow the center lines of platted streets, under the provisions of Zoning Code § 61.801(b) and § 66.951, for property located at 2192 Ford Parkway, et al, Parcel Identification Number (PIN) 17-28-23-13-002 et al; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission, on March 12, 2020, held a public hearing at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of § 61.303 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission on April 3, 2020, based on the evidence presented to its Zoning Committee at the public hearing as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

**1. Proposed Townhouse Amendments:**

	Description	Code Section	Ford MP Pages	Recommendation
1a	Add townhouse to the allowable building type in F1 zoning district	66.912, 66.931	31, 34, 72, 92	Approval
1b	Adjust townhouse minimum lot width from 30' to 20'	66.931	93, 97	Approval with new footnote that it's a per unit figure
1c	Adjust townhouse maximum building width from 150' to 350'	66.931	93, 97	Approval for F2-F4 districts, but not for the F1 district
1d	Adjust townhouse maximum lot coverage by buildings from 50% to 60%	66.931	93, 97	Lot coverage increase not needed; add note that it applies to the entire parcel, not lot under each unit
1e	Adjust townhouse minimum setback from shared bike/ped paths from 10' to 4'	66.931	93, 97	Denial

In 2017 and 2018 the Planning Commission expressed a desire for more density near the river. Allowing a denser building type such as townhouse in the F1 district meets that goal.

moved by Baker  
 seconded by Grill  
 in favor Unanimous  
 against \_\_\_\_\_

Reducing the lot width from 30' to 20', with a footnote to make it clear that this is a per unit standard that applies to the entire zoning lot on which the townhouse building is built, is consistent with the 20' per unit minimum lot width requirement for a townhouse in RT2 townhouse and T1-T3 traditional neighborhood districts. The minimum lot width standards for the Ford districts in Zoning Code Table 66.931 and in the building type standards tables in the Ford MP are not otherwise written as "per unit" standards.

Expanding the maximum building width from 150' to 350' meets the intent of Ford MP Table 6.2 to allow a townhouse building with up to 16 units, which would be at least 320' wide for the smallest 20' wide townhouse units. Keeping the 150' maximum building width in F1 is consistent with the intent of the F1 district to provide for buildings with up to 6 dwelling units.

The residential district dimensional standards table has a footnote that townhouse lot size standards apply to the entire zoning lot on which the townhouse building is built, not to an individually described lot under an individual unit. Adding the following new footnote (b) to Zoning Code Table 66.931 Ford District Dimensional Standards and to Ford MP Table 6.2 Building Type Standards Summary Table would make it clear that floor area ratio (FAR), lot width, and lot coverage standards for townhouses similarly apply to the entire zoning lot in the Ford districts.

- (b) The minimum lot width figure for townhouses is per unit. Where land under each unit constitutes an individually described lot and all other land required for yards, parking and access constitutes "common" properties jointly owned by the owners of the units, the floor area ratio, lot width, and lot coverage requirements shall be applied to the entire parcel.

This new footnote (b) appears to make increasing the maximum lot coverage by townhouse buildings from 50% to 60% unnecessary. Existing footnote (b) of Table 6.2 Building Type Standards Summary Table in the Ford MP can be combined with footnote (a). These footnotes, currently (f) and (g), can also be combined in Zoning Code Table 66.931 Ford District Dimensional Standards.

The minimum public right-of-way setback for a townhouse is 10 feet. The application states that this setback from bicycle and pedestrian paths identified in the plan for Beechwood, Saunders, and Yorkshire ROW results in a side yard condition where it is unclear where the right-of-way and the private property intersect. However, the Ford MP has specific design standards to delineate between public and private space. Specifications for lawns and gardens, pavements and surfaces, and walls, fences, and furnishings apply to the entire site and can be used to demark public ROW and private space. Given the options in the Ford MP to delineate between public and private space, amending this minimum public right-of-way setback is not recommended.

## 2. Proposed Affordable Housing Amendments

	Description	Code Section	Ford MP Pages	Recommendation
2a	Adjustment to allow Multi-Family Medium building types in the F2 zoning district	66.913, 66.931	75, 92	Approval
2b	Adjustment to allow Multi-Family Medium building types in the F5 zoning district	66.916, 66.931	80, 92	Approval

2c	Adjustment to allow Supportive Housing in the F6 zoning district	66.921	42, 84	Approval
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An affordable housing project on Block 9 in the F2 district can house more units in a multifamily medium building type with the same F2 height and FAR restrictions as a multifamily low building type because the Ford MP limits multifamily low buildings to between 6 and 40 units. Given that the massing of the building will not change (the FAR and height restrictions remain, and the use remains multifamily), this would be a minor change. This simplest way to do this would be to combine the multifamily low and multifamily medium building types into a single multifamily building type.

The Ford district use tables in both the Zoning Code and the Ford MP list both multiple-family dwelling and mixed residential & commercial use as permitted uses in the F5 business mixed district. However, while Ford MP *Table 6.1 Building Types Allowed by Zoning District* includes the mixed residential & commercial building type in the F5 district, it does not include multifamily building types in the F5 district. As Ryan continues to refine the development plan, commercial uses are clustered in the F5 district. Allowing an affordable multifamily building along with mixed residential & commercial buildings in F5, similar to how both building types are allowed in T3 and T4 districts, will not detract from commercial components of the district. Providing for this includes adding a multifamily building type row under F5 in Zoning Code *Table 66.931 Ford District Dimensional Standards* as well as adding multifamily as a building type in F5 in Ford MP *Table 6.1 Building Types Allowed by Zoning District*.

Amendments were approved by City Council in 2019 to allow multi-family dwellings in the F6 district, expanding the use categories allowed in the F6 district. Allowing supportive housing in F6 is in-line with that, consistent with supportive housing being allowed in all other Ford districts and in all of the T districts.

### 3. Proposed Land Use Amendments

	Description	Code Section	Ford MP Pages	Recommendation
3a	Adjustment to the minimum commercial in the F6 zoning district from 10% to 0%	NA	40	Denial
3b	Adjustment to allow religious institution, place of worship in the F1 zoning district	66.921	42	Denial

The 10% minimum commercial requirement in the F6 district is consistent with the general intent of the Ford districts, stated in Zoning Code § 66.911 and in the Ford MP, to provide a desired mix of commercial uses across the site. It is also consistent with the intent of the F6 gateway district, stated in Zoning Code § 66.917 and in the Ford MP, to serve as the economic heart of the Ford redevelopment site, providing for a variety of business and office uses, focusing on employment activity and complementary retail and service establishments. Reducing the 10% minimum commercial requirement in the F6 district to 0% is inconsistent with the general intent of the Ford districts and the intent of the F6 district, and therefore is not recommended.

In order to preserve the character of Mississippi River Boulevard, religious institutions and places of worship should not be permitted in the F1 river residential district.

**4. Proposed Amendments to Building Type Requirements**

	Description	Code Section	Ford MP Pages	Recommendation
4a	Adjust the maximum lot coverage by buildings from 70% to 95% for all applicable building types	66.931	93, 98-104	Denial. Add underground parking exclusion instead.
4b	Allow all usable rooftop space to count towards minimum open space	NA	57	Approval with condition for visibility from public ROW if below 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor

Lot coverage is defined as *the part or percent of the lot occupied by the above-grade portion of buildings*. Proposed construction of mixed use and multifamily residential buildings over underground parking that covers much of the lot to maximize land use and parking structure efficiency is consistent with Land Use Plan Policy LU-8 to ensure that zoning and infrastructure support environmentally and economically efficient land use development. Use of the top of an underground parking structure for amenity space is also consistent with this. Slopes on the Ford site result in portions of underground parking structures to be above grade and count as part of the lot coverage by buildings, making it problematic to be land-use efficient and meet the 70% lot coverage maximum. Adding the following new footnote (f) to Zoning Code *Table 66.931 Ford District Dimensional Standards*, and adding the same as new footnote (b) to Ford MP *Table 6.2 Building Type Standards Summary Table*, would solve this problem.

- (f) Portions of a parking structure that are less than one story above grade as defined in section 60.208 and serve as amenity space shall be excluded from lot coverage by buildings in lot coverage calculations

The Ford MP allows usable rooftop space (*green roofs and amenity roofs*) to count toward 50% of the open space requirements of the site only if it is above the third floor. Rooftop space below the third floor can also serve as functional open space but should be visible from the public right-of-way. The new language in the MP would be as follows:

**Green Roof Areas as Open Space**

Where a rooftop surface ~~above the third floor~~ includes Functional Green Roof Area, visible from the public right-of-way if below the third floor, adjacent open-air outdoor space intended for use by building occupants or other persons that does not meet the definition of Functional Green Roof Area, such as a patio or deck, is eligible to meet up to 50% of the open space requirements of the property/site, as measured in gross square feet of the usable adjacent space. All such usable outdoor space shall be set back at least one (1) foot from all outer roof edges, and shall be located and oriented in relation to adjacent properties to minimize potential visual, noise and privacy impacts to abutting uses.

**5. Proposed Roadway Amendment**

	Description	Code Section	Ford MP Pages	Recommendation
5	Adjustment to the Woodlawn Ave. roadway section	NA	120	Denial

Woodlawn was originally planned with no demarcation to separate cars, pedestrians and bicycles. Parking and a curb were added as part of a previous Ford MP amendment. Ryan has worked with City planning, public works and fire safety staff on the proposed street section amendments to address safety concerns and provide for fire truck access. Sidewalk easements along the ROW were added as part of the approved Ford plat. Woodlawn should remain as approved in 2019 with a curb, parking, and a shared street concept.

**6. Proposed Signage Amendment**

	Description	Code Section	Ford MP Pages	Recommendation
6	Addition of F Districts to Zoning Code § 64.502	64.502	NA	Approval

Signs in Ford districts are currently regulated under Zoning Code § 64.503 as for T1-T4 traditional neighborhood and OS-BC business districts. Entirely residential uses in T1-T4 are regulated under § 64.502 as for RL-RM3 residential districts. This is appropriate for Ford districts as well, and can be accomplished by the following amendment:

**Sec. 64.502. RL-RM3 residential and entirely residential uses in T1-T4 traditional neighborhood and F1-F6 Ford districts.**

**7. Proposed District Boundary Adjustments to Match Platted Streets**

New streets were platted as part of the Ford site plat approved by City Council on November 20, 2019. This amendment would adjust zoning district boundaries slightly to match the center line of platted streets in the following locations: Montreal between Finn and Mount Curve, Saunders between Cretin and Finn, and Finn north of Saunders.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 462.357 and Legislative Code § 61.801, in response to the application of Project Paul, LLC (Ryan) and MN Ford Site Apartment Land, LLC (Wiender) to amend the *Ford Site Public Realm Master Plan* and the Zoning Code pertaining to the Ford districts including district boundary adjustment to match platted streets, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission hereby makes the following recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.

1. Amend Table 6.1 of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.931 to allow townhomes as a building type in the F1 River Residential District.
2. Amend Table 6.1 of *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.931 to change the minimum lot width for the townhome building type in the F Districts from 30 feet to 20 feet.
3. Amend Table 6.1 of *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.931 to expand the maximum building width for the townhome building type in the F2-F4 districts from 150 feet to 350 feet.
4. Amend Table 6.2 of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.931 to add a new note as follows: *The minimum lot width figure for townhouses is per unit. Where land under each unit constitutes an individually described lot and all other land required for yards, parking and access constitutes “common” properties jointly owned by the owners of the units, the floor area ratio, lot width, and lot coverage requirements shall be applied to the entire parcel.*

5. Amend Zoning Code § 66.931 and relevant pages and tables of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* to eliminate multi-family low and multi-family medium building types and replace them with multi-family building type.
6. Amend Table 4.6 of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.921 to allow *supportive housing* in the F6 Gateway District.
7. Do not amend Table 4.2 of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* to reduce the minimum commercial use required in the F6 Gateway District from 10% to 0%.
8. Do not amend Table 4.6 of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.921 to allow *religious institution, place of worship* in the F1 River Residential District.
9. Amend Table 6.2 of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan* and Zoning Code § 66.931 to add a new note as follows: *Portions of a parking structure that are less than one story above grade as defined in section 60.208 and serve as amenity space shall be excluded from lot coverage by buildings in lot coverage calculations.*
10. Amend the Green Roof section of the Ford MP to allow Functional Green Roof Area below the third floor to count towards minimum open space if it is visible from public right-of-way.
11. Do not amend the Woodlawn Avenue South section of the *Ford Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan*.
12. Amend Zoning Code § 64.502 sign regulations to include entirely residential uses in F1-F6 Ford districts.
13. Amend Ford zoning district boundaries slightly to follow the center lines of platted streets in the following locations: Montreal between Finn and Mount Curve, Saunders between Cretin and Finn, and Finn north of Saunders.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission directs the Planning Administrator to forward the attached amendments to the Zoning Code and the *Ford Site Public Realm Master Plan* to the Mayor and City Council for their review and adoption.