



Our Vision:

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

August 25, 2023

Mr. Jim Duncan, Director
Lexington-Fayette Urban Co Division of Planning
200 E. Main St.
Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Director Duncan:

I represent Lexington Habitat for Humanity, which has filed a zone change application and an associated preliminary development plan for properties located at: 628 Maple Ave, 220, 224, 226 and 228 East Seventh Street. The site is comprised of five parcels totaling 0.56 acres and is part of the East End Small Area plan and downtown neighborhood, which encompasses a variety of different zones.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

We believe that our proposed development is in agreement with the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Goals and Objectives that encourage expanding housing choices (Theme A, Goal #1), support infill and redevelopment (Theme A, Goal #2), provide well-designed neighborhoods (Theme A, Goal #3), and more specifically, creating and implementing housing incentives that strengthen the opportunities for affordable housing.

ENGAGEMENT

We have had several conversations with surrounding neighbors to discuss the proposed development and zone change request prior to filing the application with the Division of Planning. The majority of the neighbors have expressed no concern with the zone change due to the fact that the property already had an existing residential structure standing and that we plan on building another single-story building on the property.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located within a mixed-use neighborhood that currently includes single family residences, multi-family residences, a few businesses and some industrial. The current B-1 zoning does not allow us to build several townhomes that will allow affordable housing for several families.



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PLACE-TYPE, DEVELOPMENT TYPE & REQUESTED ZONE

The Placebuilder defines seven place-types within the Urban Service Area boundary. This location is an **Enhanced Neighborhood** place-type, which is defined as:

An existing residential area that could be enhanced with additional amenities, housing types, and neighborhood-serving retail, services, and employment options that contribute to a sustainable neighborhood. Vibrant neighborhoods include a range of uses. The development that occurs in this place-type should be context-sensitive to the surrounding area and implemented in a way that adds to the sense of place. Multi-modal connections from new elements within enhanced neighborhoods are crucial to their success and long-term viability. (Page 327)

Further, the Enhanced Neighborhood type encourages low density residential, medium density residential, as well as medium density non-residential/mixed-use and medium-high density residential. The most appropriate place-type for the site is Enhanced Neighborhood because the Downtown Neighborhood area is a long-established residential neighborhood that could be enhanced, and it is located within the defined Infill and Redevelopment boundary. In addition, the applicant selected **low density residential** as the most suitable development for the site. We believe that low density residential fits in best with the existing fabric of the neighborhood and is also what will work best with the limited footprint that the proposed site offers.

The Placebuilder also recommends the following potential zoning categories that align with the proposed Enhanced Neighborhood place-type: R-3, R-4, MU-1, MU-2, and B1. The zone that most closely aligns with the applicant's vision for the site is the planned neighborhood residential zone (R3).

The subject site is currently located in Neighborhood Business (B1) zone, and the applicant is proposing to re-zone the parcel to a Low Density Residential (R3) zone. Under the current zone, Lexington Habitat would not be allowed to build any affordable housing opportunities. The proposed plan includes building seven single family attached townhomes.

The applicant understands the vision of the community, as outlined in *Imagine Lexington: The 2018 Comprehensive Plan*. The mission statement, goals and objectives, and the Placebuilder are furthered by the applicant's proposed development and we believe that the request is in agreement with the Comprehensive Plan for numerous reasons. Based upon the context of the site location, the applicant believes the site most closely aligns with the Enhanced Neighborhood place-type. We believe that the proposed low density residential (R3) zone is in agreement with the place-type definition, is a suitable development type and agrees with one of the recommended zones, as established by Placebuilder.

DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

To further address the Placebuilder development criteria, the design team has prepared an annotated graphic of the proposed development plan. However, numerous other development criteria deserved further explanation and you will find the following information helpful in determining that the requested zone change agrees with the Comprehensive plan.



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The following design standards are being met, and are annotated on the development plan:

Site Design, Building Form & Location	Transportation & Pedestrian Connectivity	Greenspace & Environmental Health
A - DS5 - 3	None	B - RE1-1
A - DS7 - 1		B - PR7 - 2
A - DN2 - 1		B - PR7 - 3

In addition, the following information supports our assertion that the proposed zone change is in agreement with *Imagine Lexington: The 2018 Comprehensive Plan*. Based upon Density Policy #1 (page 41), the subject property is not located along a major corridor; therefore, several of the development criteria are not applicable.

	Site Design, Building Form & Location
A- DS5-3	The applicant intends to meet the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere design standard by creating 5’ sidewalks down Seventh Street and Maple Avenue.
A -DS7-1	There will be parking in the rear off the alley that will accommodate two vehicles for each proposed unit.
A -DS10-1	The proposed residential units will be located within a mile of Castlewood park and Greyline station.
A - DN2 -1	The proposed number of 7 units is more than the number of detached single-family homes that could be built on the property after a zone change.
A -DN6-1	This proposal directly aligns with this requirement as it encourages new compact single-family housing types.
B – PR9 -1	The proposed work to be done on the site will utilize the existing topography.
B – SU11-1	The proposed home will be built to ENERGY STAR 3.0 Standards and will be, on average, 50% more efficient than a standard code-built home.
C – L16 – 2	The applicant builds exclusively affordable housing in Lexington and the proposed units would serve families who are below 60% of AMI.
C – PS10-3	The rear parking provides enough parking for two vehicles.
D – PL7-1	Stake holders were consulted and discussions were held over site opportunities and restraints.
D – SP9 – 1	The proposed development includes a zero-step entry for easy access to seniors or people with disabilities. In addition, the floor plan for the proposed home incorporates many ADA aspects within the layout so it could be occupied by a senior adult or person with a disability.



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E - GR9 - 4	The site of the proposed development is currently vacant land and is underutilized in the neighborhood. The newly proposed home will enhance this underutilized asset in the neighborhood.
	Transportation & Pedestrian Connectivity
D -C02-2	Development includes the replacement of the existing sidewalks.

	Greenspace & Environmental Health
A - DS4 -3	The proposed plan for site development will include several new plants and keep a lot of the current greenspace.
B - PR7 -2	One medium species tree will be incorporated into the development plan for each unit.
B - PR7 - 3	One medium medium species tree will be incorporated into the development plan for each unit.



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Lastly, there are several Placebuilder development criteria that are not applicable to the proposed zone change. Those are listed below, along with a brief explanation of why they are not pertinent to our proposal and/or our site.

	Site Design, Building Form, & Location
A -DS7- 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include non-residential or multi-family parking.
A -DS10-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development is not within walking distance to a focal point.
A -DS11-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include public focal points.
A - EQ7- 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include a school.
C - LI7-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include a mixed use neighborhood.
C - PS10-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include underutilized parking lots.
D - PL9 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include historically significant structures.
D -SP1 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include any schools.
D - SP1- 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include any schools.
D - SP3 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include right-of-ways or easements.
D - SP3 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include cell towers.
E - GR4 -1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site has no existing structures.
E - GR5 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site has no existing structures.
E - GR9 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include common areas.
E - GR9 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not include any multi family housing.



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	Transportation & Pedestrian Connectivity
A - DS1 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is not a transit line at the site of the proposed development.
A - DS1 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalks will be replaced but will not connect to transit line.
A - DS4 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development of the small site does not allow for connected multi-modal network to adjacent neighborhoods, greenspaces, etc.
A - DS5 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major infrastructure is not included in this proposed development.
A - DS5 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadways are not being built as a part of this proposed development.
A - DS10 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development of the small site does not allow for new neighborhood focal points.
A - DS13 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stub streets are not included in the proposed development.
B - SU4 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for new greenspace/community centers.
D - CO1 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
D - CO2 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
D - CO4 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs are not included in the proposed development.
D - CO4 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
D - CO4 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
D - CO5 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
D - SP1 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
	Greenspace and Environmental Health
A - EQ7-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community spaces are not included in the proposed development plan.
B - PR2 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known environmentally sensitive areas border the proposed site.
B - PR2 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known floodplains exist on the site.
B - PR2- 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known floodplains exist on the site.
B - PR7 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
B - RE1 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
B - RE2 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
D - SP2 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no schools in this proposed development.
D - SP2 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no schools in this proposed development.
E - GR3 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited development area of the proposed plan does not allow for this criteria.
E - GR3 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New focal points are not included in the proposed development.



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CONCLUSION

Again, we would ask that you favorably consider the proposed zone change and its relationship to fulfilling the mission goals, objectives and policies of *Imagine Lexington: The 2018 Comprehensive Plan*. Lexington Habitat has a long history of providing affordable housing and carrying out our mission to build homes, communities and hope throughout our community. This mission has become more and more difficult as viable land has become scarcer. The proposed change would allow Lexington Habitat to serve a family with an affordable place to live and would truly change the trajectory of those families' lives. Thank you for your consideration of our proposed zone change and we look forward to presenting our case in full at the public hearing on October 26, 2023. We are glad to answer any questions about our proposal between now and the public hearing.

Sincerely,

Huston Royster