



**Our Vision:**

*A world where everyone has a decent place to live.*

November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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 for a zone change application and an associated preliminary development plan for property located at: 213, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225 and 229 Perry St. The site is comprised of 8 parcels totaling .3046 acres. The site is located near downtown in the Irishtown 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 high-density and housing affordability (Theme A, Goal #1, Objective d.)

**ENGAGEMENT**

We met with the surrounding neighbors of Irishtown and Manchester St. area on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to discuss the proposed development and zone change request prior to filing the application with the Division of Planning. During the meeting the neighbors expressed support for the re-development of the vacant properties and expressed support for single family (low density) residential development. One individual present is hoping to build something similar in the future. Neighbors did expressed some concerns about the size of the proposed townhomes, and whether or not the units would "fit on the lots." There were also concerns expressed about the off-street parking for the townhomes, though a single car garage was proposed. There were concerns expressed about the continued gentrification of the Irishtown Neighborhood and discussion about how the neighborhood has been so drastically changed in the last 10 to 15 years. In response to the neighbors' concerns about the property "fitting" on the lot, we assured them that a site survey had been done by a licensed professional and that the proposed structures would fit on the lot. In response to the neighbors' concerns about off-street parking, we have modified the proposed building and site plan to accommodate increased driveway parking in addition to the 1-car garage. Lastly, in response to the concerns about gentrification, we assured the neighbors that a key tenet of our mission at Lexington Habitat is to ensure owner-occupied affordability for all.

**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. Irishtown, as the neighborhood is known, has a long history in Lexington and has been the site of major re-development with the Oliver Lewis Extension, growth of the Manchester St. district and Town-Branch trail coming soon. The site consists of eight contiguous lots which average 25 feet in width. The current zone of R1-D is not as flexible in allowing for re-development of this urban infill site, particularly with the existing old, narrow lot lines.



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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 Irishtown is a long-established residential neighborhood that could be enhanced with mixed housing types 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 Single Family Residential (R1D) zone, and the applicant is proposing to re-zone the eight parcels to a Low Density Residential (R3) zone. Under the current zone, Lexington Habitat could only fit two single family detached homes and the current land shortage for affordable housing requires us to utilize the proposed site in a different manner. The proposed plan includes building five single family attached townhomes with single car garages.

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 is in agreement 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
E-GR9-3		B - PR7 - 3
		B - RE1 - 1

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 (Also Denoted on Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant intends to meet the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere design standard (A-DS5-3) by adding 5' wide sidewalks at the front of the property.</li> </ul>
A -DS7-1 (Also Denoted on Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The attached single car garage provides internal parking for 50% of total parking for the proposed units.</li> </ul>
A-DS10-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed residential units will be located within a mile of the future Davis Park and Town-Branch Park. They are also within walking distance of the Carver Center.</li> </ul>
A-DN2-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It could be argued that we are not increasing density because we are taking 8 lots, and turning that into 5 single family attached townhomes. As referenced in the Newtown Pike Extension Corridor Plan (pg 59), the area includes many nonconforming lots. Site limitations would dictate two detached homes. Thus, we are increasing density by building 5 single family attached homes on the proposed site.</li> </ul>
A -DN6-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This proposal directly aligns with this requirement as it encourages new compact single-family housing types.</li> </ul>
B - PR9 -1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since the site was previously occupied by single family homes, the proposed work to be done on the site will utilize the existing topography.</li> </ul>
B - SU11-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed townhomes will be built to ENERGY STAR 3.0 Standards and will be, on average, 50% more efficient than a standard code built home.</li> </ul>
C - L16 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant builds exclusively affordable housing in Lexington and the proposed units would serve families who are below 60% of AML.</li> </ul>
C - L17-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development differentiates the type of homes that would be in the neighborhood. There is close access the Manchester Street and Distilleries districts for shopping and entertainment. C and P market is the neighboring property.</li> </ul>
C - PS10-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two off street parking spaces per unit have been achieved.</li> </ul>
D - PL7 - 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A neighborhood meeting was held at the Carver Center on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Neighborhood Homeowners, Landlords and Business owners were in attendance to discuss opportunities and constraints of the proposal.</li> </ul>



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D – SP9 – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development includes a zero-step entry for easy access to seniors or people with disabilities. In addition, the laundry room, one accessible bedroom and one accessible bathroom are located on the main floor of the proposed townhome, so that it could be occupied by a senior adult or person with a disability.</li> </ul>
E – GR9-3 (Also Denoted on Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed 5 single family attached units are strategically designed to be less-intense and will be among primarily single family detached homes.</li> </ul>
E – GR9 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site of the proposed development is currently vacant land and is underutilized in the neighborhood. The newly proposed townhomes will enhance this underutilized asset in the neighborhood.</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation &amp; Pedestrian Connectivity</b>	
D – C02-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development includes the addition of 5' wide sidewalks which will increase accessibility for the portion of Perry St. covered in this proposal.</li> </ul>
<b>Greenspace &amp; Environmental Health</b>	
A – DS4 -3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed site for development was previously single family and is very flat, with only the southern end of the property sloping to match that of the road. Several new trees will be planted to replace the few that will be removed for construction.</li> </ul>
B – PR7 -2 (Also Denoted on Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium size street trees and medium size shade trees will be incorporated into the development plan.</li> </ul>
B – PR7 – 3 (Also Denoted on Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately 5 street trees will be planted in the front of the property and several shade trees will be planted in the rear of the property.</li> </ul>
B – RE1-1 (Also Denoted on Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development plan shows street trees.</li> </ul>

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.

	<b>Site Design, Building Form, &amp; Location</b>
A – DS7- 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include non-residential or multi-family.</li> </ul>
A – DS11-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include public focal points.</li> </ul>
A – EQ7- 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include a school.</li> </ul>
C – PS10-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include underutilized parking lots.</li> </ul>
D – PL9 – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include historically significant structures.</li> </ul>
D – SP1 – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include any schools.</li> </ul>
D – SP1- 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include any schools.</li> </ul>
D – SP3 – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include right-of-ways or easements.</li> </ul>
D – SP3 – 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include Cell Towers.</li> </ul>
E – GR4 -1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development site has no existing structures.</li> </ul>
E – GR5 – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development site has no existing structures.</li> </ul>
E – GR9 – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development does not include common areas.</li> </ul>



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



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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 five families 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 January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We are glad to answer any questions about our proposal between now and the public hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Huston Royster". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Huston Royster