



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

April 4, 2013

REQUEST: Multiple Principal Structures on a Residential Lot: Orchard Ridge – Phase IV
Multi-Family Housing

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Eric Tiso

PETITIONER(S): Nichole Doye Battle, Pennrose Properties, LLC

OWNER: Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC)

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: This phase is made up of three general parts: First, properties facing St. Clair Court east of Maple Shade Drive; Second, properties facing Grape Vine Way between St. Clair Court and Maple Shade Drive; and Third, properties on the west side of Orchard Ridge Boulevard between St. Clair Court and Friarfeld Run. The site is currently zoned R-6.

General Area: This phase of the Orchard Ridge redevelopment project is located in the Claremont Freedom neighborhood, which is characterized by a mixture of commercial, industrial and residential uses. To the north of the site is the primarily residential Belair Edison neighborhood. To the east is the Herring Run valley and to the south, across Federal Street and the power lines is the Armistead Gardens community.

HISTORY

- The original 292 unit Claremont Family Homes was completed by the Housing Authority of Baltimore City in 1954. Freedom Village is a former Federal housing property that the HABC acquired in 2002 in order to undertake this comprehensive redevelopment.
- On July 13, 2006, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision and Development Plan for Orchard Ridge Phase I (Formerly known as (FKA) Claremont Freedom Village Phase I)
- On August 9, 2007, the Planning Commission approved the Amended Final Subdivision and Development Plan for Orchard Ridge Phase I (FKA Claremont Freedom Village Phase I)
- On November 1, 2007, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision and Development Plan for Orchard Ridge Phase II (FKA Claremont Freedom Village Phase I)
- On December 17, 2009, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision and Development Plan for Orchard Ridge Phase III

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The proposed Final Subdivision and Development Plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan's Live Section, Goal #1: Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods, Objective 1: Expand Housing Choices for all Residents.

ANALYSIS

Background: Orchard Ridge is a phased housing development in northeast Baltimore. The combined 54.9 acres formerly contained 752 rental units, including 600 family garden apartments and a 152 unit, nine-story mixed population building. Between 2006 and 2009, the redevelopment was approved to create about 461 units of high quality, mixed income housing, both for rental and homeownership. The new units were to be configured mostly as townhouses, with a 4-5 story, 100 unit rental mixed population building. Phases I, II and III are mostly complete, and the developer now wants to build a Phase IV, which will come out of portions of Phases I and II.

Multiple Principal Structures: Due to the proposed consolidation of the previously subdivided lots, this action requires approval for multiple structures on lot. Per the requirements of §3-301 in the Baltimore City Zoning Code (BCZC), whenever more than one principal detached structure or any other free-standing structure is located on a lot, it may only be approved if the development otherwise would conform to the requirements of the zoning code and if the Planning Commission approves the design of the development. For that reason, the Planning Commission's design approval is required to satisfy this requirement of the BCZC.

Project: This fourth phase is made up of three general areas. To simplify the descriptions of the three portions of this proposal, they will be referred to in this report as Areas A, B and C: Area A includes properties facing St. Clair Court east of Maple Shade Drive; Area B includes properties facing Grape Vine Way between St. Clair Court and Maple Shade Drive; and Area C includes properties on the west side of Orchard Ridge Boulevard between St. Clair Court and Friar field Run.

The fourth phase of this project is an amendment to the eastern portion of the first phase, and the southern portion of the second phase. Area A was included in Phase I and is remaining the same from a design perspective, though the buildings will be consolidated into two lots for management purposes. In the last approval of Phase I, Area B was planned to have eighteen townhomes, but is now proposed to have 24 dwelling units in a mix of multifamily semi-detached buildings and townhomes. This area will be consolidated into two lots for management purposes. Area C was last approved as a part of Phase II, and is remaining the same from a design perspective, though the buildings will be consolidated into one lot for management purposes. The designs of the new arrangement of dwellings include a mix of visitable and accessible units. In total, these three areas will have 64 dwelling units (an increase of six units).

Elevations: As in previous approvals, the buildings proposed will be three stories in height with pitched roofs, first-level porches, and bay window elements. The buildings are wood-frame construction with a combination of brick cladding and fiber-cement lap siding with fiber-cement trim. The bay windows are clad in PVC panels with PVC trim. Each unit has a concrete porch at the front or side entry with fiberglass columns on brick piers and vinyl porch railings. These elevations are consistent with prior approvals by UDARP.

Site Plan: Staff has reviewed the proposal and finds that the design is consistent with prior approvals. The infrastructure for public rights-of-way has already been installed, to include curb cuts and aprons. For that reason, no site access changes are proposed, and the project will rely on existing infrastructure. For 64 dwelling units, 65 parking spaces will be provided.

Landscaping: The previously approved landscaping plan will be installed as this phase is developed. As the landscaping was focused on street-edge improvements, this portion of the project is unaffected by the minor change in building types and unit mixes. Staff approved the continuation of the previously approved landscaping plan.

Community Input: The Frankford Improvement Association has been notified of this action.

Thomas J. Stosur
Director