



June 1, 2021

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 1426-44 N 6th Street
(Application No. ZP-2020-008563)**

Dear Ms. Dahal,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at **1426-44 N 6th Street**.

This proposal is to build 45,025 square feet comprised of 55 multi-family units, amenities, and 15 vehicular parking spaces. The site is bound by 6th Street to the east, Marshall Street to the west, and private parcels to the north and south. The site is across the street from the Cruz Recreation Center and is zoned RM-1. There are zoning refusals for the building's setback and for the building's height.

At its meeting of June 1, 2021, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. Asociacion Puertorriquenos En Marcha (APM),RCO:

The RCO representative noted that at the RCO meeting with the applicant, no attendees expressed an opinion about the project.

2. CDR Committee Comments:

At the meeting, the CDR Committee offered the following comments, which include Planning Commission staff observations adopted by the CDR committee.

The Committee commended the development team for providing affordable housing and phasing the project in a manner that maintained a place for existing residents who currently live on the site. They also noted that the project would be an asset to the community and that it was a strong design. They supported the use of fiber cement panels, but had reservations about the use of EIFS and encouraged the team to detail its installation so that it will hold up over time.

For site design, they encouraged the applicant to make sure that there were articulated pedestrian routes through the parking lot and to consider more shade trees in the open space between the buildings. They also supported the orientation of the building to create the plaza space across from the recreation center, but encouraged the development team to provide more amenities in that space such as benches.

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For the building layout, the committee praised the larger units which can support families with children. This can add vibrancy to the public realm as families with children may have a wider range of activities and more people coming and going at various times of day. The committee also encouraged the development team to explore creating a basement to accommodate mechanical and utility spaces. This could make more space available on the ground floor for active programming and present a friendlier environment towards properties to the north.

For sustainable design, the committee supported the applicant's pursuit of Energy Star certification and a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) score of 50, a significant improvement over current building code standards. The committee also recommended exploring pervious site surfaces and heat island reduction metrics.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director

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June 3, 2021

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Re: Civic Design Review for 3600 Grant Avenue (Application No. ZP-2020-000912)

Dear Mr. Ngaba,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at **3600 Grant Avenue**.

This proposal is to construct a total of 90,678 square feet of gross floor area comprised of thirty detached and semi-detached residential units, fronted on a private street, and 86 vehicular parking spaces. The site is zoned RSA-3, RTA-1, and SP-PO-A. There are zoning refusals for the building's use, rear yard, side yard, and parking.

This case was heard first at the May 4, 2021 CDR meeting. At its meeting of June 1, 2021, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments.

Northeast Community Civic Alliance RCO:

The coordinating RCO was not present at either Civic Design Review meeting.

CDR Committee Comments:

At the meeting, the Civic Design Review Committee focused primarily on the proposed front parking pads for each unit. The two-car concrete pads dominate the street and sidewalks and have a negative impact on the walkability and aesthetics of the proposed development. It was noted that the development of walkable communities with rear parking is a national trend. There is a strong precedent for this kind of development in Philadelphia, yet it's not being done here, even though there's an existing rear driveway on the site.

Additionally, the Committee pointed out that it made little practical sense to fence off this existing driveway – a 6-foot strip of land that will be owned by homeowners, but they will be unable to use it. Questions were raised as to (1) how the 6-foot strip of driveway will be maintained going forward since it will be out of sight and out of mind and (2) how home buyers will be informed, in plain language, that they own and are responsible for maintaining a small strip of land but cannot use it.

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The Committee commended the development team for committing to giving prospective homebuyers an option for the installation of solar panels. Questions were raised as to the mechanism for providing the option and how they will be constructed. One Committee member mentioned Solarize Philadelphia (<https://solarizephilly.org>), a City organization that serves as an honest broker or disinterested party, that developers can use to strategize on the best way to make rooftop solar available to homeowners.

The Committee recommended that shade trees be planted in the front and rear yards of all units. The development team agreed to this revision.

Moreover, the CDR Committee adopted the following Planning Commission staff comments (exclusive of those above):

Site Design

- Staff recommended that the proposed private street be narrowed from 24 feet to 20 feet in order to widen the sidewalk and/or provide more street trees.
- Staff recommended that the existing hard median on Grant Avenue be extended to the west to prevent left turns from westbound Grant Avenue onto the proposed private street.

Building Design

- Staff noted that surrounding Academy Gardens neighborhood is characterized by homes constructed with brick face, and recommended that (1) a brick veneer be used instead of the proposed “El Dorado” stone veneer and (2) brick veneer also be incorporated into the side facades of end units that face Fordham Road and Grant Avenue

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director

cc: Michael Johns, Chair, Civic Design Review, mdesigns@msn.com
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Department of Planning and Development

Civic Design Review

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June 1, 2021

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Re: Civic Design Review for 4340 Byberry Road (Application #ZP-2020-010579)

Dear Ms. Dahal,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed wholesale distribution warehouse at **4340 Byberry Road**.

The project site is bounded by Byberry Road to the east, 4425 Woodhaven Road to the north, and Woodhaven Road itself to the west. The CDR submission focuses on the northern half of the parcel, excluding the non-wooded area surrounding the existing single-family house and accessory buildings at the same address. Consequently, the project site is bounded to the south by the open area surrounding the buildings at 4340 Byberry Road. The project site area is 116,898 square feet. The proposal is for a 3-story self-storage facility with 105,000 square feet of floor area, two service bays accessed by two curb cuts, and 25 parking spaces. The proposal includes the demolition of all existing structures on 4340 Byberry (i.e., the single-family house on the southern portion of the parcel, and its accessory structures). Construction will require the removal of a densely wooded area, to be replaced with ornamental landscaping trees. The site is zoned RSA-1, and variances are required for use, parking, and loading.

Access to the site is via Byberry Road. Byberry Road is 'open to the public and on the City Plan' for the first 137 feet of the parcel's frontage, at which point it converts to 'open to the public and not on the City Plan' until it terminates in a dead end at the Poquessing Creek.

At the meeting on June 1, 2021, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the comments below, followed by responses from the applicant:

1. RCO Comments

The coordinating RCO for the project is the 66th Republican Ward. While the required meeting between the applicant and the RCO was completed April 13th, there was no RCO representative present at the CDR meeting to comment on the project.

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2. CDR Committee Comments

One member of the CDR committee posted a comment to the ZOOM comment board advocating for native plantings. She stated that native plantings are an opportunity to give something back to the stream and the pollinators, and is an example for how these types of businesses could give back to communities and to protect the health of all. There was a desire from the committee for the applicant to commit to more trees, greenspace, and solar panels to offset the project's large amount of impervious surfaces.

The Committee incorporated staff comments which include:

Site Design:

- Connect the existing sidewalk on the 4300 block of Byberry Road to the site, and across the entire frontage. Coordinate with the Streets Department and with Franklin Mills to identify a point of crossing Byberry Road, as the existing sidewalk is across the street, and terminates before the project site.
- Update the lighting along the 4300 block of Byberry Road.
- Provide bicycle racks at the site.

Building Design:

- Consider widening the loading bay driveways and doors to accommodate more vehicles.
- 38 feet for 3 stories of self-storage appears to be short for such an operation.

Sustainability:

- PCPC noted that the proposed loss of so many trees, so close to the Poquessing Creek will have a significant impact on the creek and its biodiversity without specific mitigation strategies.
- The applicant's zoning plans call out two "tree protection" areas. PCPC noted that the larger of the two has very few if any trees currently on it. PCPC requests formally dedicating the "tree protection" areas by working with a non-profit such as the Community Land Trust to plant and preserve in perpetuity through the property deed.
- Please use native species that will help promote and protect the area's biodiversity.

Applicant Responses

The applicant responded to some of the staff and Committee comments during the meeting.

- The CDR presentation included sidewalk installation between the proposed driveways, however during the meeting's discussions, the applicant stated interest in extending the sidewalk to cover the entire street frontage of the project.
- Regarding the low amount of loading bays, the applicant anticipates a low trip count, but will reconsider the amount and size if deemed necessary.
- Regarding the building height, 38 feet is typical, if not tall for 3 stories.
- Regarding the lighting update for the 4300 block of Byberry Road, plans include street light in front of building, but they will work with the Streets Department to continue lighting to the Franklin Mills Circle intersection.
- Regarding the non-native plantings, the applicant will revise landscape plans to use native species.



In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for the proposed warehouse and distribution center at 4340 Byberry Road. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director

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