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Date: July 13, 2022

To: Planning Commission

From: Cary Teague, Community Development Director

Re: Sketch Plan Review – Life Time Living at Southdale

The Planning Commission is asked to consider a sketch plan proposal for a residential infill project in the northeast quadrant of Southdale Mall. The proposed location in the northeast quadrant of the mall is currently a surface lot parking and a bus transit station.

The applicants, Life Time and Simon Property group, are proposing a 300-unit, 32 story residential building. The site would be accessed from the mall property by the ring road and would require the relocation of the bus transit station to the north side of the mall property. The building would be set back roughly 140 feet from the curb of York Avenue. The apartment building would be connected to Life Time Fitness by a skyway located on the 3rd level.

To accommodate the request the following is required:

- Site Plan
- Building Height Variance
- Building Setback Variance to R-I Property
- Parking Stall Variance
- Conditional Use Permit for Residential Use

As with all sketch plan reviews; the Planning Commission is asked to provide non-binding comments and direction on a potential future development request. Areas of focus should be on the proposed building height, the Southdale design experience guidelines, and how this proposal fits in to the surrounding area. Because this parcel is part of the Greater Southdale District, Mic Johnson of AFO, the City's consultant has provided his review of the project. (See attached.) Mr. Johnson has raised concerns and provided some recommendations on development of the site including reducing the footprint of the building and creating three building pads, to closer resemble the recommended 200 x 200-foot blocks; and designing the buildings at street level to more closely resemble the street typologies recommended in the Southdale design experience guidelines. The applicant has responded to the review by Mic Johnson. (See attached response.)

***General information and considerations for discussion:***

- CAC, Community Activity Center. The following is the land use description for CAC, Community Activity Center (which this site is guided) in the Comprehensive Plan: “Contains larger scale uses, height and coverage. Primary uses: Retail, office, lodging, entertainment, and residential uses, combined or in separate buildings. Secondary uses: Institutional and recreational. Buildings should be placed in appropriate proximity to streets to create pedestrian scale. Buildings may “step down” at boundaries with lower-density districts and upper stories “step back” from street. More stringent design standards for larger buildings. Emphasize pedestrian circulation; re-introduce finer-grained circulation patterns where feasible.”
- Zoning. The site is zoned PCD-3; apartments are a conditionally permitted use within the PCD-3 District.
- Residential Density. The Southdale site is 79.44 acres in size. There are 232 units at the Southdale One Apartments; therefore, with the added 300 units proposed the overall density would be 7 units per acre. The Comprehensive Plan allows for up to 150 units per acre on the site.
- Affordable Housing. The applicant is not proposing to include affordable housing units within the project, they are proposing the buy in amount (\$100,000 per affordable unit) for the City of Edina to put toward affordable housing in another location in the City.
- Building Height. The proposed building height is 32 stories and 400 feet tall; City Code requirement is 12 stories and 144 feet. The Southdale area design experience guidelines contemplate greater height in this exact area in between France and York Avenues. Edina City Code requires buildings over nine stories to be setback six times the height of the building from R-I zoned property. This 400-foot-tall building would require a 2,400-foot setback to the nearest R-I property or single-family home lot. The nearest lots are 854 feet to the east in the City of Richfield, and 2,132 feet to the west in the City of Edina. (See attached map.)
- Building Materials & Facades. Buildings must be made of natural materials (stone, brick) on the first vertical 60 feet of a building, and first floor ceiling heights must be 20 feet tall. As suggested in the Southdale Design Experience Guidelines and by City Code; all new front building facades that face the public realm must have 75 percent transparency (ability to see inside the building) at the ground level. When designing the final plans, the “street typologies” suggested in the Design Experience Guidelines should be more closely considered, especially on the south and west sides of the building.
- Parking ramp/liner buildings. As recommended in the design experience guidelines, the parking would be hidden on the north and east side of the building by apartment units. (See the attached first floor plan.) These are the areas facing outward toward the public green space. The parking ramp on the south and west side of the building faces the parking lot to the south and Southdale to the west. This area on the south side of the development slopes downward toward Southdale mall. There is a skyway connection to the Lifetime Club on the 3rd level. The proposed tower does sit on a podium as recommended in the design guidelines and does step back on the north and east side of the building.



- **Pedestrian Connections.** Pedestrian sidewalks are proposed on all sides of the building, including connections from the proposed building and Southdale outward through the proposed public park/public realm areas to the Southdale Center perimeter sidewalk along York. A public use easement should be established over the proposed park areas.
- **Sustainability.** Any submittal for a rezoning will require compliance with the City's Sustainability Policy.
- **Traffic & Parking Study.** Would be required as part of any formal application. The proposed parking would be considered as part of the entire Southdale site. The housing project on its own would be code compliant with the parking within the building, however, parking stalls would be removed that are required as part of the Southdale Shopping Center. Variances have been granted over the years for the Southdale Center with the development around the perimeter of Southdale. A parking variance for Southdale Center would be required.
- **Metro Transit Station Relocation.** This project would require the relocation of the Metro Transit Station. The preliminary relocation site is on the Southdale Center site, west of the Firestone building. The applicant and the City of Edina have begun the discussions with Metro Transit on the relocation.
- The table on the following page demonstrates how the proposal would comply with the PCD-3 Zoning District standards, and the designated future land use plan in the Comprehensive Plan. Please note that variances would be required centered around the height of the building.



COMPLIANCE TABLE

	City Standard (PCD-3)	Comp. Plan	Proposed
Structure Setbacks (Measured to the curb) East – York Avenue South – 69 th Street North – 66 th Street West – France Ave. R-I District Proximity (Setback requirement)	50 feet from base of building (step back 10 feet above the building height at 60 feet 6 times the building height = 2400 feet		140 feet (+20 on York and to south) 400+ feet 400+ feet 400+ feet 854 feet (from Richfield R-I property)* 2132 feet (from Edina R-I property)*
Parking Stall	Residential Use – 1 space per unit = 300 stalls		540 enclosed stalls
Height	12 stories and 144 feet		32 stories and 400 feet*
Density		150 units per acre	7 units per acre

*Variance Required