



ITEM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE

REQUESTED:

January 3, 2018

**NAME & NUMBER
OF PROJECT:**

425 W. Riverside Planned Unit Development
C814-2017-0001

OWNER:

Ronald Nelson and Molly Belle Properties, LP (Ronald
Nelson, Trustee)

AGENT:

Armbrust & Brown, PLLC (Richard Suttle, Jr.) / Stream
Realty (David Blackbird)

LOCATION:

425 W. Riverside Dr.

PROJECT FILING DATE:

December 30, 2016

**WATERSHED PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT STAFF:**

Andrea Bates, 974-2291
andrea.bates@austintexas.gov

**PLANNING AND ZONING
CASE MANAGER:**

Andrew Moore, 974-7604
andrew.moore@austintexas.gov

WATERSHED:

Lady Bird Lake watershed (Urban)
Desired Development Zone

ORDINANCE:

Watershed Protection Ordinance (current Code)

REQUEST:

Review and consider for recommendation the
environmental aspects of the proposed Planned Unit
Development (PUD), including environmental superiority
elements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommended with conditions.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Marisa Perales, Chair, and Members of the Environmental Commission

FROM: Chuck Lesniak, Environmental Officer
Watershed Protection Department

DATE: December 19, 2017

SUBJECT: 425 W. Riverside Planned Unit Development – C814-2017-0001

This summary is being provided to the Environmental Commission as a supplement to the Planning and Zoning Department's analysis for the 425 W. Riverside Planned Unit Development (PUD). This memo provides an overview of the property's environmental features, the requested modifications to environmental code requirements, and the elements of the project that provide environmental superiority. Staff finds that the proposed development is environmentally superior to what could be built without the PUD under otherwise applicable regulations, as required by City code.¹

Description of Property

The 425 W. Riverside PUD consists of approximately 1.4 acres of land located in central Austin just south of downtown, between S. 1st Street, Barton Springs Road, and Riverside Drive. The property is currently zoned commercial-liquor sales-vertical mixed use building-neighborhood plan (CS-1-V-NP) and contains a restaurant and surface parking lot. The site is within the South Central Waterfront, a 118-acre area located on the south side of Lady Bird Lake between S. 1st Street, Riverside Drive, and Blunn Creek.²

The PUD site is located in the Lady Bird Lake watershed, which is classified as Urban and is within the Desired Development Zone. The site is not within the Edwards Aquifer recharge or contributing zones. The property does not contain a creek buffer or any critical environmental features, but the northern corner and western edge of the site are within the 100-year fully developed floodplain (see Attachment A: Site Map).

¹ Chapter 25-2, Subchapter B, Article 2, Division 5, Section 1.1.

² For more information and a map of the South Central Waterfront, visit <https://www.austintexas.gov/waterfront>.

Existing Topography / Trees

The site is very flat, with elevations ranging from approximately 446 to 450 feet above mean sea level. The northern corner and western edge of the site are elevated a couple of feet above the adjacent right-of-way. The site is nearly 100 percent impervious cover and contains only one tree: an invasive white mulberry located at the corner of S. 1st Street and Barton Springs Road (see Attachment B: Site Photos).

Project Description

The PUD proposal is for a mixed-use project that includes approximately 270,525 square feet of office, 21,045 square feet of retail, and ten residential units. See the applicant's Exhibit C: Land Use Plan for a conceptual site layout.

Requested Environmental Code Modifications

The PUD is not proposing any modifications to environmental or drainage requirements. See the applicant's Exhibit B-2: Code Modification Table for proposed modifications to other code requirements.

Proposed Environmental Superiority Elements

The project is proposing to provide the following environmental superiority elements (please see the applicant's Exhibit B-1: Superiority Table for additional details):

1. The PUD will exceed the minimum code requirements for landscaping as follows:
 - a. The PUD will include at least 100 caliper inches of street trees. The preliminary design calls for at least 20 5-inch caliper trees, but the exact number and size of the street trees shall be determined at site plan. The applicant estimates that 27 caliper inches of street trees (18 1.5-inch caliper trees) would be required under current code.
 - b. All planted trees shall be native species selected from Environmental Criteria Manual (ECM) Appendix F: Descriptive Categories of Tree Species.
 - c. The PUD will provide at least 1,000 cubic feet of soil volume per required street tree. Load-bearing soil cells shall be used to meet the soil volume requirement if necessary. However, the City Arborist may reduce the minimum soil volume requirement if needed due to utility conflicts or other constructability issues. The PUD also establishes tree selection and soil composition criteria that exceed the City's minimum requirements. See the applicant's Exhibit G: Tree Planting Details for additional information.
 - d. The PUD shall provide at least 4,300 square feet of landscaped area, including a minimum of 2,500 square feet of green roof, 800 square feet of landscaped area, and 1,000 square feet of either rain gardens or additional landscaped area. The project would have a minimal amount of required landscape area under current code, which would only require landscaping in 20 percent of the total area between the building and the street right-of-way.
 - e. All planted landscape materials shall be selected from the Grow Green Native and Adapted Landscape Plants guide, shall be drought tolerant, and shall be non-toxic.

At least 15 percent of planted landscape materials shall be pollinator plants from the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center list of pollinator plants for Texas.

- f. The primary water sources for all landscape irrigation shall be rainwater harvesting and air conditioning condensate. Potable water shall only be used as a backup supply if the primary sources are depleted. (Reclaimed water shall not be used for landscape irrigation due its high nutrient content and the site's proximity to the lake.)
2. The PUD will provide superior water quality controls by meeting the proposal for high impervious cover sites to be included in draft 3 of CodeNEXT. Up to 25 percent of the required capture volume shall be treated with a rainwater harvesting system sized to meet the irrigation demands of the required landscaping and street trees over a 28-day period. The remainder of the capture volume shall be treated by green water quality controls. See the applicant's Exhibit B-1: Superiority Table for additional details.
3. The PUD will use only green water quality controls, as described in ECM Section 1.6.7, to treat 100 percent of the required water quality volume.
4. The project will provide water quality treatment for a portion of Barton Springs Road by constructing at least 800 square feet of rain gardens in the Barton Springs Road right-of-way.
5. The PUD will help extend the City's reclaimed water system into the South Central Waterfront by installing a reclaimed water line along Riverside Drive between S. 1st Street and Barton Springs Road. The building will also be plumbed to allow for interior use of the reclaimed water supply.

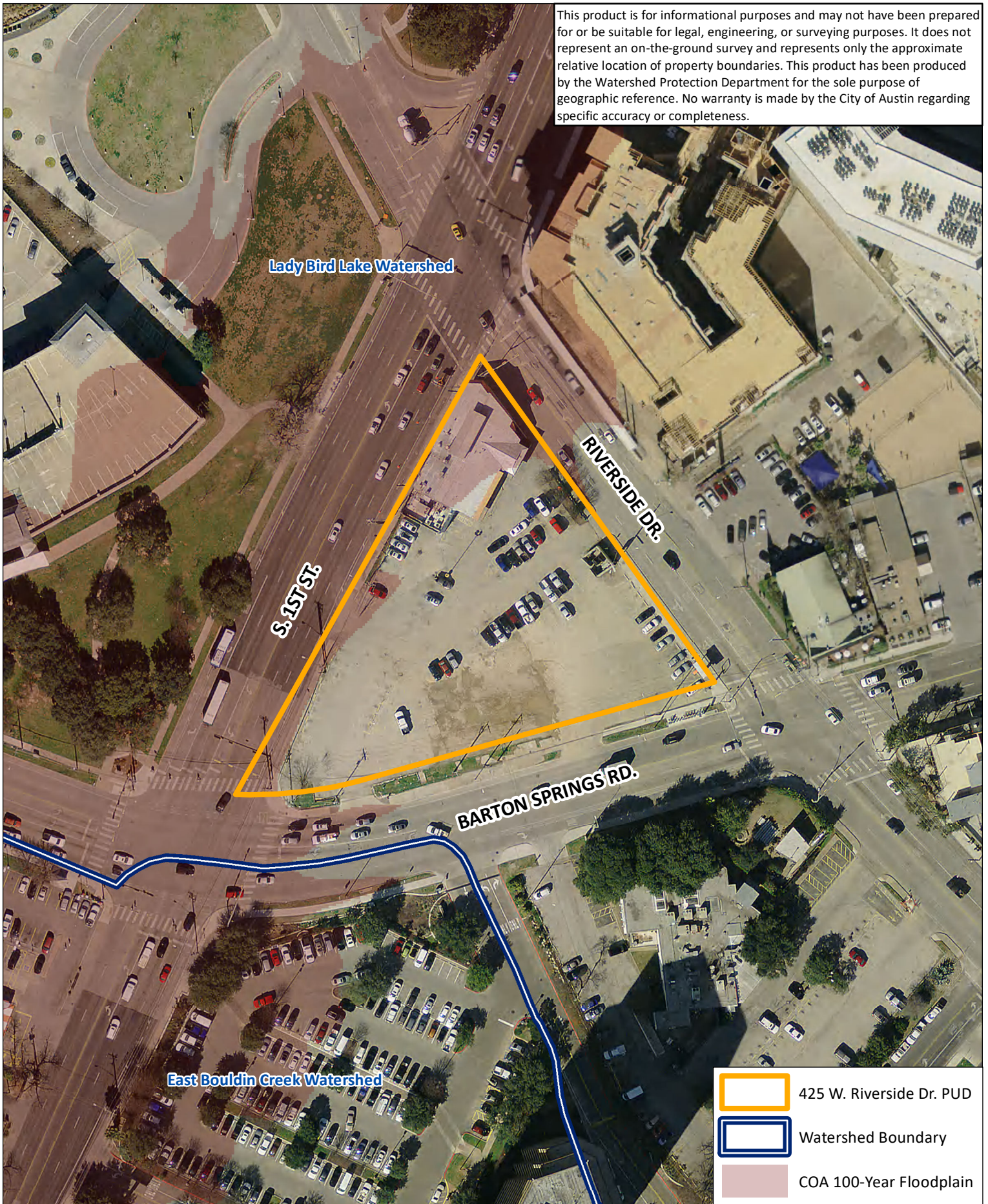
Determination

Based on the superiority elements described above, staff finds that the proposed development is environmentally superior to what could be built without the PUD. The proposed project is a very urban development, with high levels of impervious cover and minimal natural open space. However, the proposal is consistent with the site's setting, and the selected environmental superiority elements help implement the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan. The PUD is not requesting any environmental code modifications, and the proposed street trees, landscaping, water quality treatment, and water conservation measures will provide environmental benefits that are well suited to the site's urban setting.

Attachments

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| A | Site Map |
| B | Site Photos |

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. This product has been produced by the Watershed Protection Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



Attachment A
425 W. Riverside PUD - Site Map

Attachment B
425 W. Riverside PUD – Site Photos



View of the site from Barton Springs Road near the intersection with S. 1st Street (southwest corner of the property)

Attachment B
425 W. Riverside PUD – Site Photos



White mulberry tree near intersection of S. 1st Street and Barton Springs Road