

AGENDA ITEM

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Matt Robinson, AICP, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Conduct a Public Hearing to Consider/Discuss/Act on a Meritorious Exception for Provence Townhomes, Located Approximately 1035 Feet South of Eldorado Parkway and on the West Side of Alma Road

APPROVAL PROCESS: The Planning and Zoning Commission is the final approval authority for the proposed meritorious exception.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denial of the proposed meritorious exception due to the lack of masonry exterior finishing materials used in the construction of the building.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL DATE: December 15, 2014 (Original Application)
December 29, 2014 (Revised Submittal)

ITEM SUMMARY: The applicant is requesting a Meritorious Exception to Section 146-139 (Architectural and site standards) of the Zoning Ordinance for Provence Townhomes, a single family attached residential development, located approximately 1,035 feet south of Eldorado Parkway and on the west side of Alma Road. The applicant has indicated that the proposed elevations for the single family detached residential development feature a "French / Mediterranean" style that utilizes stucco exclusively as the exterior finishing material.

The meritorious exception is being requested because the proposed architectural elevations:

1. Do not meet the required minimum 85 percent masonry for each side of every townhome unit.

The applicant has submitted and received approval of an associated record plat (14-304RP).

COMPLIANCE WITH ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS: The purpose of the architectural standards is to set minimum standards for the appearance of townhome buildings, which are recognized as enhancing property values and are in the interest of the general welfare of the City of McKinney. The proposed use of stucco material exceeds the permitted amount of 15% per side of each townhome unit, and as such, the

respective elevations are not in compliance with the architectural standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

The provisions within the Architectural Standards Ordinance regarding meritorious exceptions states that “it is not the intent of this ordinance to discourage innovation. An architectural and site design that does not conform with the specific requirements of this ordinance, but which has merit by marking a positive contribution to the visual environment and which is appropriate to the site and use, may be submitted for consideration as a meritorious exception.”

The Architectural and Site Standards section of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to granting a meritorious exception states that the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the following factors in determining the extent of any exception to be granted:

1. The extent to which the application meets other specific standards of this ordinance;
2. The extent to which the application meets the spirit and intent of this ordinance through the use of building materials, colors, and façade design to create a building of exceptional quality and appearance;
3. The positive or negative impact of the proposed project on surrounding property use and property values, in comparison to the expected impact of a project which could be built in conformance with the standards of this ordinance; and
4. The extent to which the proposed project accomplishes City goals.

MERITORIOUS DESIGN: The intent of the Architectural Standards Ordinance is to set standards for the appearance of attached single family residential and corresponding site elements, which are recognized as enhancing property values and are in the interest of the general welfare of the City.

The applicant has described in the letter of intent the following building design characteristics:

“The use of stucco in conjunction with the architectural style of the improvements is the most appropriate exterior material creating a Mediterranean or French Coast look.”

Staff is of the opinion that a similar design, as presented, can be accomplished through the use of approved finishing materials (meeting the minimum masonry percentages per side), and therefore cannot support the request. In addition, Staff does not feel that the use of stucco exclusively as an exterior finishing material constitutes a project of exceptional quality or innovative design.

IMPACT ON EXISTING DEVELOPMENT: Staff believes the proposed design would have no significant negative impact on the existing developments to the north and west of the property (Builder's Carpet warehouse and self-storage to the north, and multi-family to the west). However, the use of stucco as a predominant material is not consistent with other townhome uses across the City and may have a negative impact on the single family detached residential homes to the south, which utilize predominantly brick and stone facades.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION: Per the requirement of the Zoning Ordinance, a meritorious exception shall not be granted to serve as a convenience to the applicant or for reasons related to economic hardship. Staff believes that this is not the case with the proposed architectural design and meritorious exception.

OPPOSITION TO OR SUPPORT OF REQUEST: Staff has received one letter in opposition to the request.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Location Map and Aerial Exhibit
- Letter of Intent
- Proposed Architectural Elevations
- Letter of Opposition
- PowerPoint Presentation