

November 30, 2023

City of McKinney  
Planning Department  
221 N Tennessee Street  
McKinney, Texas 75069

**RE: Westridge Townhome Rezoning Request**

This is a request to amend the zoning on approximately 6.6 acres of land in the Westridge community. The property is located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Virginia Pkwy and Independence Pkwy, approximately 440' west of Independence Pkwy. At present, the property is zoned R-1 (Retail) as a portion of the Westridge Planned Development (PD). The owner of the property, D.R. Horton, is requesting to rezone the property to a Planned Development to allow for a townhome neighborhood. The development standards for the neighborhood will be based on the TR1.8 - Townhome Residential District standards.

As can be seen on the accompanying Zoning Exhibit, the property has limited frontage on Virginia Pkwy and no frontage on Independence Pkwy. Therefore, there has been very little interest in purchasing and/or developing the property for any type of nonresidential use. The site located east of the property has been recently platted and will be developed with retail/service uses.

Rezoning the property for a townhome neighborhood will establish a transitional use between the retail center and the existing single-family neighborhood west of the site.

The attached Illustrative Plan, which is for informational purposes only, depicts a 53-home neighborhood (7.9 homes/ac). The neighborhood will have direct access to Virginia Pkwy. A second point of access will be provided at the northeast corner of the neighborhood through the adjacent retail development. The developer of the retail site is agreeable to this access.

Public spaces (street, alley, HOA open space) will be separating the townhomes from the existing homes to the west. In addition to that separation, screening shrubs will be planted on an HOA owned and maintained lot to provide visual relief. Even though this type of visual relief is not required by the city's codes, providing it will help to soften the transition between neighborhoods.

A hedge row and trees will also be provided on an HOA owned and maintained lot along the north property line of the neighborhood. While the hedge row is one of the city's allowed screening alternatives between residential and nonresidential uses, the nonrequired trees will provide additional visual relief from the adjacent NTMWD water tank, since at present, only a chain link fence separates the two properties.

The townhomes will be alley served. Each home will have a 2-car garage and a minimum 20' driveway to access the garage.

An open space area is being provided at the south end of the neighborhood adjacent to Virginia Pkwy. This open space will provide an attractive entrance to the neighborhood as well as serve as a buffer to Virginia Pkwy.

In addition to the neighborhood design enhancements highlighted above, slight revisions are proposed to the development standards of the TR1.8 Zoning District. The applicant is proposing to increase the minimum lot size from 1,800 sq ft to 1,900 sq ft and to decrease the minimum front yard from 20' to 10' to allow for larger homes to be built in the neighborhood.

Secondly, the applicant is requesting changes to the minimum side yard adjacent to a street from 15' to 10'. The triangular shape of the site does not lend itself to an efficient design as compared to a rectangular shape. A 15' side setback adjacent to a street will eliminate 3 lots, which in turn will make the development of the neighborhood unviable.

Finally, the applicant is requesting the minimum tree requirements for the neighborhood be amended. Presently, the McKinney UDC requires 1 canopy tree be planted in the front yard of each home. Many of the trees designated as such on the Approved Plant List have mature canopies of 30'-50' in width. If the tree is planted at the midpoint between the home and the sidewalk, as they typically are, it will be located 5' from the home. Within 10 years, that tree's canopy will be growing into the face of the home and will shade out any plantings under the tree, which is basically the entire front yard.

The path of least resistance for the applicant is to plant the canopy trees and let the homeowners deal with the "problem" in 10 years +/- . This is not the applicant's preferred path, however. The applicant prefers to create a neighborhood where owners can take pride in their homes and neighborhood both when they first move in and over time as the neighborhood matures.

To provide an attractive streetscape, the applicant is proposing 1 Ornamental Tree be planted in the front yard of each home. Since the variety of ornamental trees available on the Approved Plant List is quite large, planting a variety of them will minimize monotony and create a more attractive streetscape. Additionally, the applicant is proposing to provide trees from the Street Trees section of the Approved Plant List throughout the neighborhood to create shaded walks, where none are required, and visual screening of adjacent land uses. The total number of trees provided (Ornamental and Street) in the neighborhood will be at a minimum, 2X the number of homes. The applicant believes this self-initiated alteration of the standards represents an improvement in quality over what is possible through strict application of the tree requirements outlined in the city's development standards.