

BLUE ASH CITY COUNCIL

April 25, 2024

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1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

A Council Work Session of the City of Blue Ash, Ohio, was held on April 25, 2024. Mayor Jill Cole called the meeting to order in the Blue Ash Conference Room at 7:05 PM.

2. OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Cole led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilman Jeff Capell, Councilman Lee Czerwonka, Councilman Brian Gath, Councilman Pramod Jhaveri, Councilman Marc Sirkin Vice Mayor Katie Schneider, and Mayor Jill Cole

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager David Waltz, Assistant City Manager Kelly Harrington, Economic Development Director Dan Johnson, Deputy Clerk of Council Julie Kipper, Mike Schuster - MSA Architects, Rob Smyjunas, Bob Fessler, Steve Dragon - Vandercar Holdings, representatives from M/I Homes, and interested citizens.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilman Czerwonka moved, Councilman Gath seconded to accept the agenda. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted yes. Motion carried.

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
2. OPENING CEREMONIES
3. ROLL CALL
4. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA
5. WORK SESSION
 - a. Neighborhoods at Summit Park Master Plan update
6. EXECUTIVE SESSION
 - a. Property Acquisition – to consider the purchase of property for public purposes, or for the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest
7. ADJOURNMENT

5. WORK SESSION

Mr. Waltz provided a summary of the City’s economic development trends analysis and strategic updates conducted in the fall of 2023. In February, Council met in a work session to discuss the various results from that strategic analysis, and one of the key outcomes of the discussion was to revisit the Neighborhoods at Summit Park Master Plan. He explained that the purpose of tonight's work session is for Council and the developer team to engage in deliberative conversations to discuss the evolving nature of the Neighborhoods at Summit Park from the original concept plan to what the developer envisions as a potential future development due to changing market conditions and common community interests.

Mr. Bob Fessler with Vandercar Holdings introduced the rest of the development team, and gave a brief overview of their presentation for the meeting. He explained that there have been significant changes in consumer and business trends, and cultural and economic shifts, so in order to meet those demands and deal with the new realities, the developer needed to create a new master plan. He highlighted some of the recommendations from the City’s recent economic study report, noting that Blue Ash needs more rooftops of all types; single-family homes, townhomes, apartments, and other multi-family housing options,

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because the residents create the energy necessary to support community amenities such as parks, bars, restaurants, retail spaces, etc. He mentioned several surrounding communities that have recently revised their zoning regulations to allocate more land towards high density and multi-family residential developments including Springdale, Montgomery, Liberty Township, and Mason. Secondly, Blue Ash needs a business class hotel and business class restaurants, because they are desirable amenities for the higher-end Class A office tenants to have available for their guests and employees. The last recommendation relates to the changing office market, and the shift to a hybrid work model. Employers are trying to bring workers back in the office, and those employees that do go back are returning to a different office configuration. Employers indicate that office locations in vibrant communities with attractive neighborhoods and a variety of amenities are beneficial features for them to recruit and retain their employees. In talking with various tenants and brokers of the Class A office spaces in Blue Ash, Mr. Fessler noted that they would like to see a variety of restaurants, various levels of retail, multifamily housing options, and improved connectivity to community amenities like Summit Park. He explained that the development teams' vision and goal with the remaining area in the Neighborhoods at Summit Park is to create a viable, dynamic, unique environment that helps attract a higher percentage of office tenants to this area, that blends seamlessly with Blue Ash's enthusiasm for sports, wellness, health, entertainment, and luxury living into the most desirable area of Cincinnati. He introduced Mike Schuster with MSA Architects.

Mr. Schuster explained the development team's plan for the site, noting that one of the hallmarks of Summit Park was to create a year round multi-generational active environment. One of the things people are looking for is a unique environment with vibrancy and activity, so the connectivity to the park and the activation of the park are significant factors in bringing people and businesses to the area. The development team is looking at concepts that include athletics training, hospitality, and fun, entertainment-type places, but also active living spaces, and employment innovation zones, with the idea that the activity at the site will bring in the office users, who are looking for density, parking, and walkability for their employees.



The focal point of the project is a 5,000 seat multi-use stadium venue that can accommodate sporting events, but also be programmed for other uses such as concerts, festivals, and other community activities. The venue is designed to host activities and events that compliment the programming and uses of Summit Park. The second part of the plan is a 200+ residential unit development containing a mix of studios, 1BR, 2BR, and penthouse apartments with premium amenities that serve the residents. Additionally, there is an upscale hotel and restaurant, along with street level restaurant and retail tenants, which will activate the streetscape for the residents and patrons of the venue, as well as the surrounding residents of The Neighborhoods at Summit Park. Adjacent sites are future phase

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opportunities for sport rehab facilities, commercial facilities, and unique office/innovation work environments for office users which create the continuation of a commercial corridor to reinforce the live+work+play goals of Summit Park and surrounding private redevelopments. The idea is to create opportunities so that there is light and life through the buildings after five.

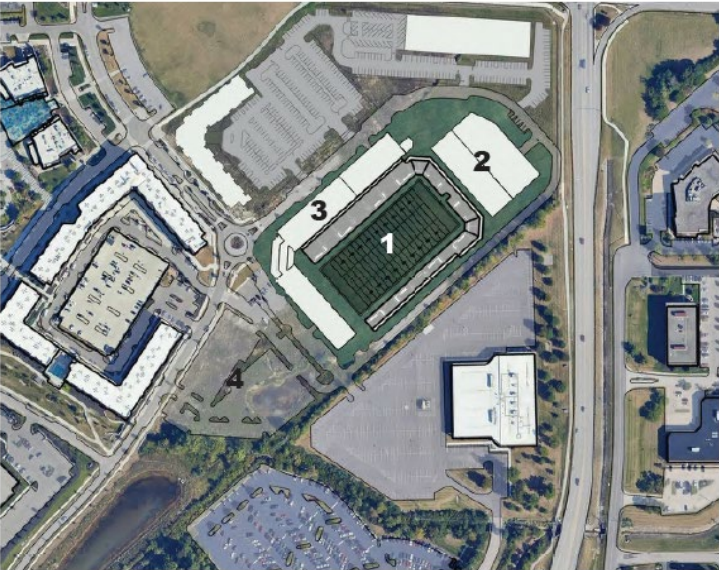
SITE PLAN ZONES

- 1. RESIDENTIAL
- 2. ATHLETICS & TRAINING
- 3. EMPLOYMENT



SITE PLAN ATHLETICS & TRAINING: OPTION 1

- 1. STADIUM
- 2. ATHLETICS, FITNESS, & LIFESTYLE
- 3. RESIDENTIAL
- 4. PARKING



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SITE PLAN ATHLETICS & TRAINING: OPTION 2

- 1. STADIUM
- 2. ATHLETICS, FITNESS, & LIFESTYLE
- 3. RESIDENTIAL
- 4. TRAINING ATHLETIC CENTER



BLUE ASH SUMMIT PARK MSA DESIGN



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Council members expressed concerns and asked questions about the density of the development and the developer’s plans for parking. After some thoughtful discussion between Council and the development team, the presentation concluded and Mr. Schuster introduced representatives of M/I Homes to discuss a new townhome development.

Greg Williams and Jason Brown of M/I Homes presented a new proposed townhome community on a 10-acre site adjacent to Summit Park. Mr. Williams explained that this development is catering to today’s homebuyers who are looking for active lifestyle communities that offer walkability and connectivity to a variety of activities and amenities.



He explained the proposed layout of the site and the variety of elevations for the townhomes, noting that they have definition and detail both vertically and horizontally, and they’re not just linear buildings. The units will be three or four story townhomes with parking to keep the front elevations really clean and neat. Base units square footage start right around 2,100 square feet to 2,600 square feet, and all units will have elevators included to access all floors. The second floor is the main living floor with kitchen and family room, and in most of the units, the bedrooms are up on the third floor. There is one plan where the bedrooms are

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on the first floor with a first floor master bedroom. The top floors will have options for a pavilion, a rec room, with two walkouts to the front and back side of the building offering a 360-degree view. Some units have wrap-around front porches to draw residents out to the park, while other units have steps out to a nice courtyard area within the neighborhood. There are just over a hundred units shown on this particular plan with green spaces already adjacent to the site, as well as inside the plan.



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The developer showed a video fly-through of the proposed development, and concluded their presentation. Council members inquired about the pricepoint of the units and if there will be a community HOA. The developer stated that the three-story units start around \$600K, and the four-story units will be closer to \$800K to \$900K depending on the buyer's selection of custom options. They expect the average unit will be over \$700K with options on the lower end and to probably about \$850K. The community will have its own individual HOA, just like the Daventry neighborhood. The developer stated that they are excited about this project, and they want to build something that is unique, and the site's proximity to Summit Park and the amenities around it will make it valuable and draw people to it. Assuming the approval and rezoning process is completed, they could have engineering almost finished by the end of 2024, and then start building units in 2025 with an expected build-out by 2028.

Mr. Waltz thanked the developers and briefly summarized tonight's discussion, noting that Council raised a lot of good questions concerning the overall development plans and parking. He stated the key point of tonight's meeting is for Council to be thinking about the economic development vitality of Blue Ash, and whether this type of project could help support the environment around Summit Park and continue to keep Blue Ash a vital and vibrant community for the residents, businesses and visitors. He added that there is a lot of evidence that successful communities are constantly reinvesting and experimenting with different approaches to economic development, and Council will need to decide if they are willing to do that or whether you want to take another approach, but the group needs to be spending some time thinking about what the benefit of this could be for the overall economic vitality of Blue Ash.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

After all items on the agenda were acted upon, Councilman Sirkin moved, Councilman Czerwonka seconded to convene an Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to:

- a. Property Acquisition – *to consider the purchase of property for public purposes, or for the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest.*

The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Capell, Czerwonka, Gath, Jhaveri, Sirkin, Vice Mayor Schneider, and Mayor Cole voted. Seven yes votes. Motion carried.

After matters pertaining to property acquisition were discussed, Councilman Gath moved, Vice Mayor Schneider seconded to convene to the regular meeting. A voice vote was taken. All Council members voted yes. Motion carried.

7. ADJOURNMENT

All items on the agenda having been acted upon, Councilman Czerwonka moved, Vice Mayor Schneider seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members voted yes. The Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 PM.

Jill Cole, Mayor

Julie Kipper, Deputy Clerk of Council

MINUTES RECORDED AND WRITTEN BY:

Julie Kipper, Deputy Clerk of Council

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