

# Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of the Plan Commission

From: Johanna Leonard, Community Development Director  
Scott Mangum, Planning and Zoning Administrator  
Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner

Subject: Planned Development  
1450-1508 Sherman Avenue, 17PLND-0052

Date: August 8, 2017

## **Request**

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The applicant is requesting approval of a Planned Development to construct a 16-story, 287-unit residential building with 9,616 square feet of ground floor commercial space and 182 parking spaces. The applicant seeks site development allowances for: number of dwelling units (287 units proposed where a maximum of 93 units are allowed by code), building height (192 feet proposed where 105 feet is allowed by code), floor area ratio (6.9 proposed where 5.4 is allowed by code), number of parking spaces (182 spaces proposed where 389 spaces are required by code), and a ziggurat setback that is less than 40 feet at a height of 42 feet. In addition, the applicant may seek and the Plan Commission may consider additional Site Development Allowances as may be necessary or desirable for the proposed development.

## **Notice**

The Application has been filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements.

## **General Information**

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**Applicant:** Andrew Yule  
Albion Residential  
188 W. Randolph St. Suite 202  
Chicago, IL 60601

**Owner(s):** Nevins RE, LLC  
7900 Joliet Road  
Willowbrook, IL 60527

Sherman Avenue I, LLC  
 Sherman Avenue II, LLC  
 718 Ridge Avenue  
 Evanston, IL 60202

**Existing Zoning:** D4 Downtown Transition District

**Existing Land Use:** Commercial and Vacant

**Property Size:** 37,279 sq. ft. (0.86 acres)

**PINs:** 11-18-317-010-0000, -011-0000, -012-0000, -013-0000, -014-0000, -021-0000, -022-0000, -023-0000

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses	Zoning	Land Use
North	D2, Downtown Retail Core	Commercial (Restaurant, Office)
South	D4, Downtown Transition	City of Evanston Park (Harper Garden Park)
East	D2, Downtown Retail Core D4, Downtown Transition	Hotel, Parking Garage, Commercial
West	D1, Downtown Fringe	CTA Railroad ROW

**Analysis**

Project Description

The applicant is proposing to construct a 16-story (192 feet high) multiple-family building with 287 dwelling units, 9,616 square foot commercial area and 182 parking spaces.



*1450-1508 Sherman Avenue Proposed Planned Development*

The site consists of eight parcels north of Lake Street and west of Sherman Avenue for a total of .86 acres. It is improved with a one-story restaurant (Tommy Nevin's Pub), a small parking lot, a 2<sup>nd</sup> one-story building housing a restaurant (Prairie Moon) and a fitness studio (Pilates Connection) next door, and a largely vacant two-story building with office space on the second floor.

The uses surrounding the site include Harper Park directly south of Lake Street and Emmanuel Lutheran Church and a six-story residential building on the block southeast of the proposed development site. To the east is the thirteen-story Holiday Inn Express Hotel, a two-story parking deck owned by Holiday Inn with public parking, and a two-story commercial building. Just north of the site on the same block are a two-story building and one-story building housing restaurants and office space. To the immediate west is a public alley and Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and METRA railroad right-of-ways.

#### Site Layout:

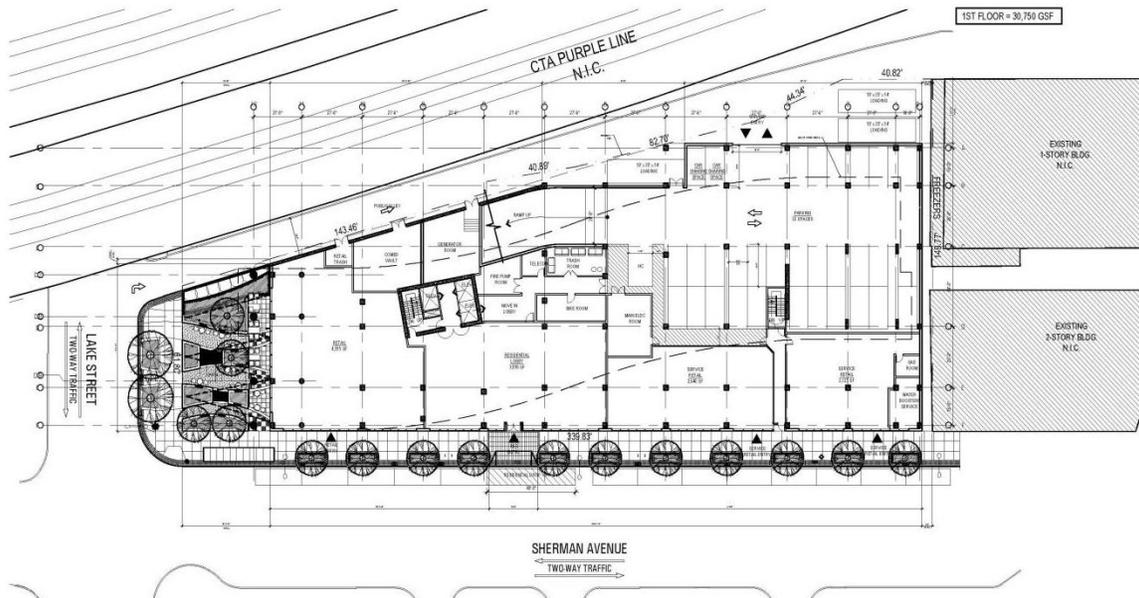
The site is an irregularly shaped area that is approximately 150 feet deep at the north end and 69 feet deep at the south end with approximately 335 feet of frontage on Sherman Avenue. The massing of the proposed building is in 2 sections: a three-story brick veneer building housing the commercial space and parking at street level, two upper parking levels, and a more modern thirteen-story glass and metal veneer residential portion above that is setback from the street to create a "S" shape. The lower portion of the building is built to the east and west property lines. The north side of the building is setback 4 feet 9 inches from the property line while the south end of the building is setback 25 feet 4 inches to accommodate the proposed publicly accessible pocket park along Lake Street. The residential portion of the building meets the ziggurat set back on the northeast end, however, due to the shape of the site and the building, the residential portion curves to the property line on the southeast corner along Sherman Avenue.

The ground floor is dedicated to the 9,616 square feet of commercial space, the southern portion of which will be used as a restaurant space, in addition to the residential lobby and the first level of the parking garage (which is accessible through the western alley). Within the garage on the ground floor there are 32 parking spaces, two of which are dedicated car-sharing spaces and 11 of which are tandem parking spaces. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> levels of the parking garage there are an additional 150 spaces for a total of 182 parking spaces. A 15 minute loading/drop-off zone will be located in front of the lobby entrance and monitored by a 24-hour concierge.

As mentioned above, vehicular access will be off of Lake Street through the existing north-south alley west of the site (the rear of the building). The applicant is proposing to convert this alley one way going from Lake Street north to Grove Street to better control traffic patterns within the area. Both the garage entrance and three loading spaces will

be located near the northern end of the building. Trash collection will also be in this area.

The building meets required setbacks for the D4 Zoning District with the exception of the required upper-level ziggurat setback along Sherman Avenue. The actual building height is 192 feet with a parking podium height of three-stories, which may be deducted from the maximum height allowed per Section 6-11-5-8. With this reduction the portion of the building that counts toward the height requirement is 167 feet tall. This parking podium portion of the building is built to the east and west property lines, except for an approximately two-foot setback from the alley at ground level, is setback 25 feet 4 inches from the south property line and 4 feet 9 inches from the north property line adjacent to two commercial buildings.



*Proposed First Floor Plan*

The applicant will install new streetscape elements along Sherman Avenue and Lake Street including a new approximately 14 foot 4 inch wide public sidewalk with 13 new street trees and 4 new bike racks for building visitors. A Divvy Bike Share station is proposed to be installed near the Sherman Avenue and Lake Street intersection and a bike room for building residents will be located on the ground floor of the building. A small publicly accessible pocket park is proposed off of Lake Street which will have 2 new street trees and a public art display. Landscaping will be included within the pocket park screening the alley access and a clear demarcation wall be provided, separating proposed outdoor restaurant seating from the rest of the pocket park.

#### Compliance with the Zoning Ordinance

The intent of the D4 Downtown Transition district is:

“...to provide for business infill development and redevelopment within downtown

Evanston. The massing and scale of structures within the D4 district should be reflective of established uses and should provide suitable transition between downtown districts and those districts adjacent to the downtown. The district is also intended to encourage and sustain a mix of office, retail, and residential uses. Planned developments are encouraged as a special use in the D4 district. Where a lot zoned D4 is overlaid with an oRD redevelopment overlay district designation, a planned development is required in order to ensure that proposed development in these areas is consistent with the objectives and policies of the adopted plan for downtown Evanston.”

*Planned Development*

The applicant is requesting Special Use approval for a Planned Development to construct the 16-story (192-foot high) multiple-family building with 287 dwelling units, 9,616 square foot commercial space and 182 parking spaces.

The applicant is requesting approval of five site development allowances:

<b>1454-1508 Sherman Ave. Site Development Allowances</b>	<b>Required / Max. Permitted</b>	<b>Site Development Allowance</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Lot Size (# of dwelling units)	93 (400 sq. ft. /DU)	N/A	287
Building Height	105 ft.	+40 ft. = 145 ft.	192 ft. (167 ft. not including parking levels)
FAR	5.4	+0.6 = 6.0	6.9
# of parking spaces	389	N/A	182
Ziggurat setback <40 feet at a height of 4 feet	40 feet	N/A	Less than 40 ft.

It should be noted that in Downtown Districts, building levels with at least 75% of the gross floor area dedicated to parking are excluded in the zoning calculation of building height. In this case, the actual building height is 192 feet, however discounting the parking levels, the zoning height is then reduced to 167 feet. Because the proposed development exceeds the site development allowances set forth in Section 6-11-1-10(C) for number of dwelling units, building height and FAR a super-majority (two-thirds) vote by the City Council is required for approval. The proposal will meet all other bulk requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Major bulk requirements for the D4 Zoning District are outlined below:

<b>1454-1508 Sherman Ave. Zoning Requirements</b>	<b>Required / Max. Permitted</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Building		
Front Setback	0 ft.	25.3 ft.
Side Setback (West)	0 ft.	0 ft.
Rear Setback	0 ft.	4.8 ft.
Loading Dock(s)	3 short (10 ft. x 35 ft.)	3 short (10 ft. x 35 ft.)

### Parking and Traffic

Based on the number and type of dwelling units proposed (161 studio units, 68 one-bedroom units, 56 two-bedroom units and 2 three-bedroom units) and 9,616-square foot commercial space, the proposed building is required to have a total of 389 parking spaces. The applicant is proposing a total of 182 parking spaces (0.63 per dwelling unit and .52 per bedroom) for the proposed development.

The applicant has submitted a Parking and Traffic Study prepared by Kenig, Lindgren O'Hara & Aboona, Inc. (KLOA) that analyzes the proposed parking arrangement. The property is located approximately ¼ mile from the Davis Street Metra and CTA stops and less than ¼ mile from the Dempster Street CTA station. Considering that the building is located in close proximity to transit stops, multiple bus lines (CTA Bus Routes 201 and 205), an existing Divvy Bike Station at Benson Avenue and Church Street and an existing Zipcar car sharing station at 1603 Orrington Avenue, the study concludes the proposed parking arrangement will meet the parking demand of the building tenants.

With the available parking spaces on site, the proposed building will have 0.63 parking to unit ratio. It is worth noting that if the project is approved, the residents of the development would not be eligible for residential on-street parking permits in the area. The site is not located within any parking districts but is in close proximity to residential parking districts F to the west and B to the south.

The Traffic Study also provides an analysis of the existing traffic conditions (including vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic) and assesses the impact of the proposed development on the existing road network. Based on the traffic counts on roadways surrounding the site taken on March 9, 2017 during peak commuting periods (7:00 to 9:00 A.M. and 4:00 to 6:00 P.M.) and the adjacent public alley on July 20, 2017, the peak traffic volume is expected to occur weekday mornings between 8 am - 9 am and weekday evenings between 5 pm - 6 pm. According to the most recent Census Data, 52% of residents renting in the area do not own a vehicle and over 50% of area

residents use alternative modes of transportation to and from work, resulting in a reduction in the traffic generated by nearby residential developments.

The traffic study's projected traffic conditions include "the existing traffic volumes in the area, background growth from regional growth and planned developments and vehicle traffic estimated to be generated from the new development". Considering this, the location of the development within a denser area and proximity to other modes of transportation, the anticipated morning and evening peak hour traffic is reduced by 50%. As a result, the traffic study anticipates approximately 75 new trips generated by the development during the morning peak hour and 109 vehicular trips during the evening peak hour on weekdays.

The Study also indicates that with the addition of development traffic, all surrounding streets will continue to operate at generally similar acceptable levels of service. The Study also recommends that the signalized intersection at Sherman Avenue and Grove Street be improved to include countdown pedestrian signals on all four legs of that intersection. Staff is requesting that the applicant provide a financial contribution towards upgrading the traffic signals at this intersection as a public benefit of the project. The final amounts of public benefits will be finalized prior to City Council consideration of the project.

#### Public Benefits

The proposed development will replace two existing one-story commercial buildings and an underutilized two-story commercial building. The applicant will be providing two on-site affordable studio apartments at 60% Area Median Income (AMI) in addition to the meeting the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requirements (a fee-in-lieu payment of \$2,900,000). As there is some contamination from previous uses on site, environmental remediation will occur prior to construction.

The applicant has committed to provide the following public benefits as part of the Planned Development proposal:

1. A \$50,000 contribution to the City of Evanston towards capital improvement for landscaping and park revitalization.
2. Maintenance Program for Harper Park.
3. A publicly accessible pocket park on the south end of the site.
4. A \$50,000 contribution for public art and a light program.
5. CTA/Metra viaduct restoration for two lifecycles of the life of the restored paint in the form of painting and lighting upgrades.
6. \$60,000 towards the installation of a Divvy Bike Share station at the site.
7. Incorporation of two car-share spaces on the site.
8. Memberships for Divvy and Maven Car Sharing for residents who do not bring a vehicle to the development.
9. 18 Month training workshops in construction for Evanston Township High School Students on-site and in class.

10. Resurfacing of Sherman Avenue post construction and restoration of the alley to the west adjacent to the property.
11. Streetscape improvements along Lake Street and Sherman Avenue including lighting, new sidewalk and landscaping.
12. Utilization of measures to mitigate harm to migratory birds. Including achieving LEED Credit 55 for Bird Strike Glass.
13. Wayfinding signage pointing to transit services at the Davis St. Metra/CTA/Pace/Divvy stations and directing safe pedestrian routes to the Dempster St. CTA Station.
14. Installation of a real-time transit arrival board in the lobby of the building.
15. Waiving move-in fees for Evanston's Top 10 Employers by size.
16. Achieving LEED Gold Certification.

Staff is also presently working with the applicant to include these additional public benefits:

17. Burying of overhead utility lines in the alley adjacent to the property.
18. The installation of pedestrian countdown timers for nearby traffic signals.

The complete list of public benefits will be finalized prior to the consideration by the City Council and will be explicitly required within the Planned Development Ordinance.

#### Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed Planned Development is consistent with the 2000 Comprehensive General Plan. The guiding principal of the Plan is to encourage new development that improves the economy, convenience and attractiveness of Evanston while simultaneously working to maintain a high quality of life within the community where new developments should be integrated with existing neighborhoods to promote walking and the use of mass transit.

The proposed development is also consistent with the Plan objective to maintain the appealing character of Evanston's neighborhoods while guiding their change. The new building will have a façade which fits within the context of the masonry construction of adjacent buildings as well as the more contemporary buildings that are along Sherman Avenue while also providing the mixed-use amenities stated above. Additionally, the proposal will be in line with the objective to "recognize the benefits of mixing residential, commercial, and institutional uses in neighborhoods." The proposed Planned Development will include 9,616 square feet ground floor commercial space with a goal of retaining a restaurant use and providing additional commercial space on the site.

The proposal is largely consistent with the Plan's objective to maintain and enhance property values and positive perceptions of housing in Evanston. It will be taking an under-utilized property and replacing it with a mixed-use building that will provide both commercial space and 287 new housing units that would positively contribute to the

City's economy. As a higher density development located within walking distance of the Davis Street and Dempster Street transit stations, this Transit Oriented Development (TOD) will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's vision to provide higher density housing near transit stations and along major corridors. There is some concern, however, that the mix of the units provides fewer 2 and 3 bedroom units than may be needed. Additionally, while the affordable housing payment is compliant with the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, an increase in the number of on-site affordable units (currently at two) would be more immediately beneficial for residents.

#### Compliance with the 2009 Downtown Plan

This site is designated as South Traditional subarea which calls for mixed-use development with heights between 3 to 5 stories to keep a walkable commercial stretch for this section of the Downtown. The overall height of the proposed development is well above this suggested height, however, it does provide a building massing consisting of a three-story masonry base to more closely match adjacent buildings and the residential portion is setback for a significant amount of the development site, lessening the effects of the height at the Sherman Avenue property line. The Downtown Plan also highlighted the need to maintain a compact, walkable mixed-use transit oriented character while promoting sustainable development that can be an economic engine, which staff believes the proposed development will provide.

#### Compliance with the Design Guidelines for Planned Developments

The proposed building is consistent with the Design Guidelines for Planned Developments. The proposal was reviewed by the Design and Project Review committee on July 26, 2017 and August 2, 2017 (approved minutes of July 26, 2017 meeting and draft minutes of August 2, 2017 meeting are attached) and received a recommendation for approval with the condition that the plans be revised based on staff comments made during the meetings and in the project review letter. The building height is similar to that of other nearby buildings along Sherman Avenue (Rotary Building, Holiday Inn Express, etc.) providing a three-story walkable scale base for the development with similar materials to adjacent buildings on the block.



*Overall landscaping plan*

Parking access is provided in the rear of the building, off of the adjacent alley, with parking spaces on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> levels of the development. The loading area and trash enclosure located on the western portion of the property will be accessed off of the alley as well. The proposal will eliminate one existing curb cut on Sherman Avenue, restoring a continuous streetscape. New streetscape elements with street trees and bike parking will be installed along Sherman Avenue and Lake Street. A new public pocket park will be installed on the south end of the site, incorporating a four season art installation and landscaping to shield the alley access.

The proposed brick and metal veneer materials are appropriate given the materials of surrounding buildings. The massing of the building is broken up into two portions. The front façade is in line with the right-of way for the ground 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> levels and the design for the residential portion of the building above has more contemporary design that creates a curved setback from Sherman Avenue on the northeast end of the site. Staff will continue to work with the applicant on the overall building design, materials and colors throughout the formal review process.

#### DAPR Committee Review

The Design and Project Review Committee reviewed the proposed Planned Development on July 26, 2017 and on August 2, 2017. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed development at the August 2, 2017 meeting with the condition that the plans be revised based on staff comments made during the meetings and in the project review letter.

#### Standards of Approval

The proposed development must satisfy the standards for Special Use in Section 6-3-5-10, the Standard for Planned Development in Section 6-3-6-9 and standards and

guidelines established for Planned Developments in the D4 Downtown Transition District. (Section 6-11-1-10)

Staff finds that the proposed development meets all standards for approval.

*Standards for Special Use (Section 6-3-5-10)*

A Planned Development is listed as a permitted special use in the D4 Downtown Transition district. As indicated above, the proposal is in keeping with the purposes and policies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed building with a ground floor commercial space will not cause a negative cumulative effect when considered in conjunction with other special uses in the area. Most other surrounding uses are commercial or mixed-use, allowed by right and therefore compatible with the proposed residential building. Commercial use already exists on the site without any negative effect on surrounding uses. As such, the proposal will not interfere with or diminish the value of other properties in the neighborhood.

As indicated above, the proposal can be adequately served by public facility infrastructure already available. The street and sidewalk network, as well as water, sewer, electricity and gas infrastructure already exist and service the existing buildings on the site.

The proposal will not cause undue traffic congestion. The applicant has submitted a parking and traffic study that confirms there will be minimal effect to the level of service on existing surrounding roadways. The access to the parking garage will be provided via the alley as will residential and commercial loading docks. A new 15 minute loading/drop-off area will be located in front of the lobby entrance and monitored by a 24 hour concierge. The applicant will close one existing curb cut on Sherman Avenue.

There are no significant historical and architectural resources or environmental features present on the site. One of the public benefits of the project is the proposed remediation of the existing environmental contamination on site. Finally, the proposal meets all zoning requirements except for the five site development allowances requested and outlined above.

*Standards and Guidelines for Planned Developments in D4 District (Sections 6-3-6-9 and 6-11-1-10)*

The proposed Planned Development is in harmony and complies with general purposes and the intent of the Zoning Ordinance. The proposal is compatible in bulk, scale and land use with surrounding properties. The proposal is consistent with the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan for redevelopment of underutilized properties with uses compatible with surrounding neighborhood.

The site layout, with the building located along Sherman Avenue and Lake Street and parking accessible in rear and hidden from the street will create a more continuous walkable area. The loading docks and parking for the commercial use are located adjacent to the railroad tracks and away from Sherman Avenue reducing the effects of the traffic flow on this street and minimizing effects on adjacent uses.

The proposed site development allowances are necessary for a desirable redevelopment of the site with public benefits. The proposed development is compatible with other similar developments in the area and is not of such nature in height, bulk and scale to exercise any influence contrary to the purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance.

The applicant states that the proposed development would result in 394 residential occupants. Within the application it is stated that the recent developments within downtown Evanston have reported that approximately 6.5% of renter households include 1.2 to 1.5 children under 18 years of age with approximately 50% of these households having school aged children. Considering those statistics, an estimated 14 residents will be of school age. Additionally, it is estimated that the development would generate approximately \$577,110 in annual property tax payments to Evanston school districts.

### **Recommendation**

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Based on the analysis above, and the DAPR Committee recommendation, staff recommends the Plan Commission make a positive recommendation for the approval of the Special Use for the proposed Planned Development at 1454-1508 Sherman Avenue to the City Council subject to the following conditions:

1. The proposed planned development shall substantially conform to the plans and documents attached to this report.
2. The building residents will not be eligible for residential on-street parking permits in the area.
3. The applicant must agree to a Construction Management Plan (CMP) before issuance of the building permit.
4. Any change in use must be approved as an amendment to the Planned Development.
5. Within one year of the issuance of the final Certificate of Occupancy for the building, the applicant must submit a traffic study analyzing the turning movements and parking utilization within the garage accessed off of the alley immediately west of the site including analysis of any traffic incidents adjacent to the site. Based on the analysis of the traffic study, the City reserves the right to require additional traffic calming measures.
6. Prior to issuance of the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant must submit an approval letter from the Illinois Environmental Agency that any environmental contamination on site has been remedied.

7. Deliveries for the on-site commercial use must be performed from the alley and are prohibited during the hours of 7 AM – 9 AM and 4 PM – 6 PM Monday through Friday.

### **Attachments**

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1454-1508 Sherman Avenue Proposed Development Plans

Comments received as of August 4, 2017

Approved Minutes from July 26, 2017 DAPR Meeting

Draft Minutes from August 2, 2017 DAPR Meeting

Link to coUrbanize Project Site: <http://courb.co/sherman>