

Development Review Committee Addendum to Staff Report

October 1, 2014



Case No:	14WAIVER1031
Project Name:	Hanover Trace
Location:	6414 Billtown Road
Owner/Applicant:	Dominion Homes of Kentucky, Ltd.
Representative:	Mindel, Scott & Associates, Inc.
Project Area/Size:	54.78 acres
Existing Zoning District:	R-4, Single Family Residential
Existing Form District:	N, Neighborhood
Jurisdiction:	Louisville Metro
Council District:	22 – Robin Engel
Case Manager:	Matthew R. Doyle, Planner I

9/25/2014 MEETING – SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Julia Williams and I met with the applicants on Wednesday afternoon to discuss a compromise on the design of the landscape plan at the request of the Development Review Committee.

The applicants showed us revisions to the landscape plan that was presented to DRC on the 17th of September. They added more trees where the original plan had already had clusters (i.e., on the corners and the open space). They also varied the species of Type A trees in the verges. So, for example, instead of 17 Sugar Maples planted consecutively on one street, they would alternate Sugar Maples and Japanese Zelkovas. Additionally, they showed us some pictures of the clearing that they did in the open space earlier that day, showing us several trees that were preserved. The street trees in the verges and medians shown on the revised landscape plan were nevertheless spaced equally, rather than planted in groupings.

We reiterated the waiver request and asked how these changes addressed the issue of clustering the street trees. They asked us to show them where they could cluster trees in the 5- or 7-ft. verges on the plan. We marked up areas on the plan where there was sufficient space adjacent to the Type A trees shown on the plan to plant another tree, perhaps a Type C, that didn't conflict with the location of the driveways. We were told that they wouldn't plant anything but Type A trees in the verges because smaller trees would interfere with the homeowners use of the sidewalks. They used a Redbud to illustrate this potential issue. Julia responded that Frankfort Avenue, while in an urban area, has multiple Type C trees planted along sidewalks in a 5-ft. verge that do not interfere with pedestrians using the sidewalk. She suggested a different species with less spread than a Redbud, perhaps a columnar tree. They reiterated that you can't cluster trees in a 5- or 7-ft. verge, however they didn't provide us with any technical evidence to support the claim.

We asked them to consider clustering the trees in the medians. Their initial response was that they would prefer to keep it the way it is because they liked the appearance of the canopy that the Type A trees would provide in the medians; furthermore, that the canopies of the Type A trees would overlap if planted any closer to one another, leaving gaps in the canopy and possibly hindering the health of the trees. Again, we suggested Type C trees next to the Type A trees in the medians to achieve the clustering effect. They reiterated that they didn't want to plant Type C trees. Julia then suggested adding evergreen trees in the medians since it would help mitigate the equal spacing effect. They seemed to be responsive to her idea.

We suggested adding more trees at the entrance. They said that they'd consider that.

Given that the applicants were unwilling to cluster the street trees and that they were only going to plant Type A trees in the verges and medians, Julia suggested more of a variety of species of the street trees so that it appears less orderly and more natural. So, for example, instead of alternating Sugar Maples and Japanese Zelkovas on one street, they could plant various species of the Type A trees listed on the plan in no particular order. This wouldn't negate the waiver request since they'd still be spaced equally, but it would help make it appear more natural.

While there was further discussion of the landscape plan, I don't believe that there was a compromise. The applicants made it very clear that they were unwilling to cluster trees other than in the open space and in the areas of the plan where there were already clusters proposed.

They agreed to submit their final proposal by noon Friday.