

# Planning Commission

## Staff Report

November 29, 2021



<b>Case No:</b>	21-ZONE-0013
<b>Project Name:</b>	KJS Multi-Family
<b>Location:</b>	4805 – 4907 Bardstown Road, 8004 Watterson Trail
<b>Owner(s):</b>	KJS LLC
<b>Applicant:</b>	KJS LLC
<b>Jurisdiction:</b>	Louisville Metro
<b>Council District:</b>	22 – Robin Engel
<b>Case Manager:</b>	Dante St. Germain, AICP, Planner II

### REQUESTS

- **Change in zoning** from R-4 Single Family Residential and C-1 Commercial to R-7 Multi-Family Residential
- **Variance** from 5.1.12.B.2.a to permit structures to be closer to Bardstown Road than permitted by the required infill setback (requested variance of 48') (21-VARIANCE-0016)
- **Detailed District Development Plan** with Binding Elements

### CASE SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

The subject site is located on Bardstown Road at the intersection with Watterson Trail, and consists of seven contiguous parcels. The applicant proposes to rezone the property in order to construct a new 348-unit multi-family development.

The site is generally surrounded by a mix of residential and commercial uses, with single-family residential to the north and west, and commercial to the south across Bardstown Road. The parcel at the intersection is currently developed commercially. The parcel to the east is developed with an institutional use. The parcels to the west across Watterson Trail are partially developed with commercial mini-warehouses, although development on that site has ceased for the time being.

### STAFF FINDING

Staff finds that the proposed zoning change meets the guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan. The site plan meets the requirements of the Land Development Code with the exception of the requested variance, and generally meets the guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff finds that the requested variance is adequately justified and meets the standard of review.

### TECHNICAL REVIEW

Plan 2040

Land Development Code (Louisville Metro)

MSD and Transportation Planning have provided preliminary approval of the proposal.

## **INTERESTED PARTY COMMENTS**

Numerous emails and phone calls have been received by staff in opposition to the request. Additionally, a petition for a night hearing was received on October 19, 2021. This petition was verified to contain in excess of 300 valid signatures.

## **STANDARD OF REVIEW FOR REZONING**

Criteria for granting the proposed form district change/rezoning: KRS Chapter 100.213

1. The proposed form district/rezoning change complies with the applicable guidelines and policies Plan 2040; OR
2. The existing form district/zoning classification is inappropriate and the proposed classification is appropriate; OR
3. There have been major changes of an economic, physical, or social nature within the area involved which were not anticipated in Plan 2040 which have substantially altered the basic character of the area.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS FOR CHANGE IN ZONING**

The site is partially located in the Neighborhood Form District

The Neighborhood Form is characterized by predominantly residential uses that vary from low to high density and that blend compatibly into the existing landscape and neighborhood areas. High-density uses will be limited in scope to minor or major arterials and to areas that have limited impact on the low to moderate density residential areas.

The Neighborhood Form will contain diverse housing types in order to provide housing choice for differing ages, incomes and abilities. New neighborhoods are encouraged to incorporate these different housing types within a neighborhood as long as the different types are designed to be compatible with nearby land uses. These types may include, but not be limited to, large lot single family developments with cul-de-sacs, traditional neighborhoods with short blocks or walkways in the middle of long blocks to connect with other streets, villages and zero-lot line neighborhoods with open space, and high density multi-family housing.

The Neighborhood Form may contain open space and, at appropriate locations, civic uses and neighborhood centers with a mixture of uses such as offices, retail shops, restaurants and services. These neighborhood centers should be at a scale that is appropriate for nearby neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Form should provide for accessibility and connectivity between adjacent uses and neighborhoods by automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and transit.

Neighborhood streets may be either curvilinear, rectilinear or in a grid pattern and should be designed to support physical activity for all users and invite human interaction. Streets are connected and easily accessible to each other, using design elements such as short blocks or bike/walkways in the middle of long blocks to connect with other streets. Examples of design elements that encourage this interaction include narrow street widths, street trees, sidewalks, shaded seating/gathering areas and bus stops. Placement of utilities should permit the planting of shade trees along both sides of the streets.

The site is partially located in the Suburban Marketplace Corridor Form District

Suburban Marketplace Corridors are generally located along major roadways with well-defined beginning and ending points and established depths along the length of the corridor. The pattern of development is distinguished by a mixture of medium-to high- intensity uses. Accommodations

for transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians are encouraged in an effort to attract a variety of users as well as to minimize automobile dependency and traffic congestion. Transit-oriented development and park and ride facilities are encouraged to facilitate the creation of transit nodes throughout the community. Connectivity to nearby uses should be encouraged. Developers should be encouraged to design new commercial development in compact groups of buildings, which use the same curb cut, share parking, have a common freestanding sign identifying the uses and have a common buffering or streetscape plan with respect to any abutting uses of lower density or intensity. This form may include medium-to high-density residential uses that are designed to be compatible with both the non-residential uses along the corridor and the lower-density residential uses in adjacent Form Districts. Medium-density residential uses may serve as a transition area from lower-to higher-density residential uses and should be encouraged in this form.

Proposed new commercial uses are encouraged to locate within the boundaries of existing corridors. Reuse of locations within existing corridors is preferred over expansion of a corridor. Proposals to expand defined corridors represent significant policy decisions. When considering proposals that result in an extension of suburban marketplace corridors, particular emphasis should be placed on: (a) use or reuse of land within existing corridors; (b) potential for disruption of established residential neighborhoods; and (c) compliance with the site and community design standards of the Land Development Code.

Following is staff's analysis of the proposed rezoning against the Goals, Objectives and Policies of Plan 2040.

Bardstown Road is a medium-intensity commercial corridor in the vicinity of this site, with a commercial node located at the intersection of Watterson Trail and Bardstown Road, and another, larger node located nearby at the intersection of S Hurstbourne Parkway and Bardstown Road. Higher-density multi-family residential zoning is appropriate in and near commercial corridors. The proposal would increase the provision of housing in the neighborhood, and increase the variety of housing in the neighborhood by offering a rental option without yard maintenance requirements in a neighborhood where the housing options currently include mostly detached single-family and large-lot detached single-family units. Future residents would be able to quickly access Bardstown Road, a major arterial and transit corridor, to reach goods and services, as well as employment opportunities.

The proposed zoning district is generally in compliance with the plan elements and CHASE principles of Plan 2040. All other agency comments should be addressed to demonstrate compliance with the remaining Goals, Objectives and Policies of Plan 2040.

A checklist is attached to the end of this staff report with a more detailed analysis. The Louisville Metro Planning Commission is charged with making a recommendation to the Louisville Metro Council regarding the appropriateness of this zoning map amendment. The Louisville Metro Council has zoning authority over the property in question.

#### **STANDARD OF REVIEW AND STAFF ANALYSIS FOR VARIANCE FROM 5.1.12.B.2.a**

- (a) The requested variance will not adversely affect the public health, safety or welfare.

STAFF: The requested variance will not adversely affect public health, safety or welfare as the decrease in setback will have no impact on sight lines.

- (b) The requested variance will not alter the essential character of the general vicinity.

STAFF: The requested variance will not alter the essential character of the general vicinity as the required setback is fairly far from Bardstown Road, with the result that the decreased setback is unlikely to be noticeable from the right-of-way.

- (c) The requested variance will not cause a hazard or nuisance to the public.

STAFF: The requested variance will not cause a hazard or nuisance to the public as the decrease in setback will not present a hazard or nuisance.

- (d) The requested variance will not allow an unreasonable circumvention of the zoning regulations.

STAFF: The requested variance will not allow an unreasonable circumvention of zoning regulations as there is no noticeable street wall along this section of Bardstown Road to break.

#### ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

1. The requested variance arises from special circumstances which do not generally apply to land in the general vicinity or the same zone.

STAFF: The requested variance does not arise from special circumstances which do not generally apply to land in the general vicinity or the same zone because the site is fairly large and could be designed in a different way so as to provide the required setback.

2. The strict application of the provisions of the regulation would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of the land or create an unnecessary hardship on the applicant.

STAFF: The strict application of the provisions of the regulation would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of the land or create an unnecessary hardship on the applicant because the variance is needed in order to place the detention basins in a logical location given the general grading of the site.

3. The circumstances are not the result of actions of the applicant taken subsequent to the adoption of the zoning regulation from which relief is sought.

STAFF: The circumstances are not the result of actions of the applicant taken subsequent to the adoption of the zoning regulation from which relief is sought as no construction has yet taken place and the variance is being sought at this time.

#### STANDARD OF REVIEW AND STAFF ANALYSIS FOR DDDP

- (a) The conservation of natural resources on the property proposed for development, including: trees and other living vegetation, steep slopes, water courses, flood plains, soils, air quality, scenic views, and historic sites;

STAFF: The site is lightly wooded and few natural resources exist on the site currently. Required tree canopy will be provided.

- (b) The provisions for safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian transportation both within the development and the community;

STAFF: Provisions for safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian transportation within and around the development and the community has been provided, and Metro Public Works has approved the preliminary development plan.

- (c) The provision of sufficient open space (scenic and recreational) to meet the needs of the proposed development;

STAFF: Open space is being provided in compliance with the requirements of the Land Development Code.

- (d) The provision of adequate drainage facilities on the subject site in order to prevent drainage problems from occurring on the subject site or within the community;

STAFF: The Metropolitan Sewer District has approved the preliminary development plan and will ensure the provision of adequate drainage facilities on the subject site in order to prevent drainage problems from occurring on the subject site or within the community.

- (e) The compatibility of the overall site design (location of buildings, parking lots, screening, landscaping) and land use or uses with the existing and projected future development of the area;

STAFF: The overall site design is in compliance with existing and planned future development in the area. The proposal would provide an increase in the variety of housing in the neighborhood by permitting higher-density multi-family housing along a commercial corridor and major arterial street. The proposal would be less intensive than commercial uses which would also be appropriate at this location.

- (f) Conformance of the development plan with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. Revised plan certain development plans shall be evaluated for conformance with the non-residential and mixed-use intent of the form districts and comprehensive plan.

STAFF: The development plan conforms to applicable guidelines and policies of the Land Development Code and Plan 2040 with the exception of the requested variance.

**REQUIRED ACTIONS**

- **RECOMMEND** that Metro Council **APPROVE** or **DENY** the **Change-in-Zoning** from R-4 to R-7
- **APPROVE** or **DENY** the **Variance**
- **APPROVE** or **DENY** the **Detailed District Development Plan** with **Binding Elements**

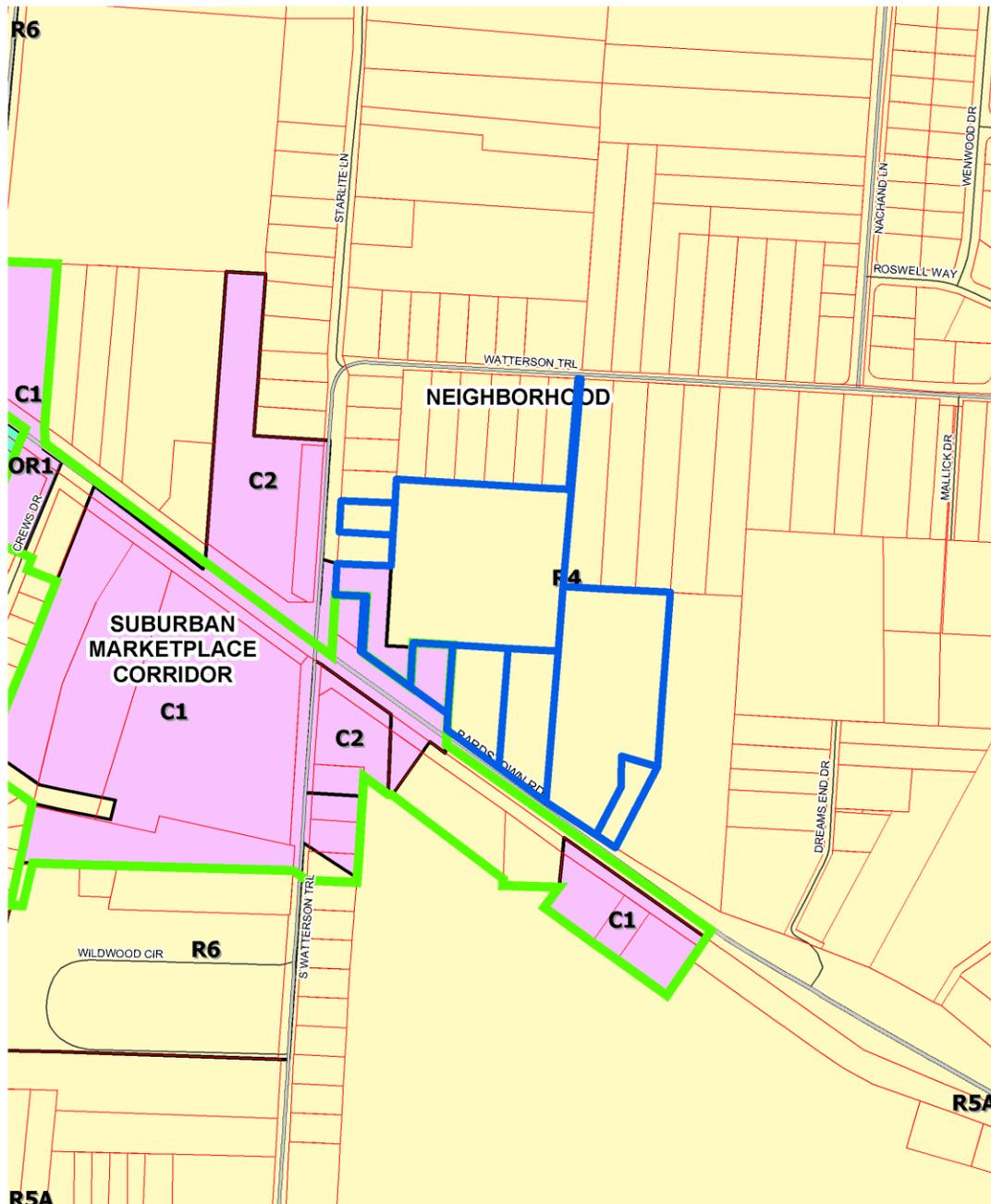
**NOTIFICATION**

Date	Purpose of Notice	Recipients
10/01/2021	Hearing before LD&T	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier adjoining property owners and current residents Registered Neighborhood Groups in Council District 22
11/15/2021	Hearing before PC	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier adjoining property owners and current residents Registered Neighborhood Groups in Council District 22
11/09/2021	Hearing before PC	Sign Posting on property
11/17/2021	Hearing before PC	Legal Advertisement in the Courier-Journal

## **ATTACHMENTS**

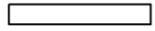
1. Zoning Map
2. Aerial Photograph
3. Staff Plan 2040 Checklist
4. Proposed Binding Elements

1. Zoning Map



KJS Apartments

feet



450

Map Created: 10/6/2021



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2. Aerial Photograph



**KJS Apartments**

feet



450

Map Created: 10/6/2021



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### 3. Staff Plan 2040 Checklist

- + Exceeds Guideline
- ✓ Meets Guideline
- Does Not Meet Guideline
- +/- More Information Needed
- NA Not Applicable

#### Neighborhood: Residential

#	Plan 2040 Plan Element	Land Use & Development Policy	Staff Finding	Staff Analysis
1	Community Form: Goal 1	7. Locate higher density and intensity uses near major transportation facilities and transit corridors, employment centers, in or near activity centers and other areas where demand and adequate infrastructure exists or is planned.	✓	The site is located on Bardstown Road, a major arterial road and transit corridor.
2	Community Form: Goal 1	9. Ensure an appropriate transition between uses that are substantially different in scale and intensity or density of development. The transition may be achieved through methods such as landscaped buffer yards, vegetative berms, compatible building design and materials, height restrictions and setback requirements.	✓	The required buffer yards will be provided in order to provide a transition between the site and the adjacent single-family residential uses.
3	Community Form: Goal 2	9. Encourage new developments and rehabilitation of buildings that provide commercial, office and/or residential uses.	✓	The proposal would permit new development providing residential uses.
4	Community Form: Goal 3	10. Encourage development to avoid wet or highly permeable soils, severe, steep or unstable slopes where the potential for severe erosion problems exists in order to prevent property damage and public costs associated with soil slippage and foundation failure and to minimize environmental degradation.	✓	No severe, steep or unstable slopes are evident on the site. Wetlands on the site are small and non-jurisdictional. They are proposed to be removed.
5	Community Form: Goal 4	2. Encourage preservation of distinctive cultural features including landscapes, natural elements and built features.	✓	No distinctive cultural features are evident on the site.

#	Plan 2040 Plan Element	Land Use & Development Policy	Staff Finding	Staff Analysis
6	Community Form: Goal 4	3. Encourage preservation and/or adaptive reuse of historic sites listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and/or recognized by the Louisville Metro Landmarks Commission or other national, state or local government historic preservation agencies.	✓	No historic assets are evident on the site.
7	Mobility: Goal 1	4. Encourage higher densities and intensities within or near existing marketplace corridors, existing and future activity centers, and employment centers to support transit-oriented development and an efficient public transportation system.	✓	The site is located near (and partially overlapping) the Suburban Marketplace Corridor form district, and is located in proximity to an existing activity center and transit corridor.
8	Mobility: Goal 2	4. Avoid access to development through areas of significantly lower intensity or density development if such access would create significant nuisances.	✓	Access to the site is via Bardstown Road, a major arterial at this location.
9	Mobility: Goal 3	2. To improve mobility, and reduce vehicle miles traveled and congestion, encourage a mixture of compatible land uses that are easily accessible by bicycle, car, transit, pedestrians and people with disabilities. Housing should be encouraged near employment centers.	✓	The site is easily accessible by bicycle, car, transit, pedestrians and people with disabilities.
10	Mobility: Goal 3	5. Evaluate developments for their impact on the transportation network (including the street, pedestrian, transit, freight movement and bike facilities and services) and air quality.	✓	Transportation Planning has approved the proposal.
11	Mobility: Goal 3	6. Ensure that those who propose new developments bear or share in rough proportionality the costs of transportation facilities and services made necessary by development.	✓	Transportation Planning has approved the proposal.
12	Mobility: Goal 3	9. When existing transportation facilities and services are inadequate and public funds are not available to rectify the situation, the developer may be asked to make improvements, roughly proportional to the projected impact of the proposed development, to eliminate present inadequacies if such improvements would be the only means by which the development would be considered appropriate at the proposed location.	✓	Transportation Planning has approved the proposal.

#	Plan 2040 Plan Element	Land Use & Development Policy	Staff Finding	Staff Analysis
13	Mobility: Goal 3	10. Ensure that necessary improvements occur in accordance with long-range transportation plans and level of mobility criteria for all modes of travel.	✓	Transportation Planning has approved the proposal.
14	Mobility: Goal 3	21. Prevent safety hazards caused by direct residential access to high speed roadways.	✓	No direct residential access to high-speed roadways is proposed.
15	Community Facilities: Goal 2	1. Locate development in areas served by existing utilities or capable of being served by public or private utility extensions.	✓	The relevant utilities have approved the proposal.
16	Community Facilities: Goal 2	2. Ensure that all development has an adequate supply of potable water and water for fire-fighting purposes. Locate only very low-density land uses on sites that use on-lot sewage disposal systems or on a private supply of potable water.	✓	Louisville Water Company has approved the proposal.
17	Community Facilities: Goal 2	3. Ensure that all development has adequate means of sewage treatment and disposal to protect public health and to protect water quality in lakes and streams as determined by the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD).	✓	MSD has approved the proposal.
18	Livability: Goal 1	5. Encourage development that recognizes and incorporates the unique characteristics of identified general landscape types and native plant communities (e.g., upland hardwood forest) throughout Louisville Metro.	✓	Relatively little tree canopy exists on the site. Tree canopy will be provided with preference to native species.
19	Livability: Goal 1	17. Determine site susceptibility to erosion; identify the presence of on-site carbonate conditions and features that are vulnerable to site disturbance; identify the extent of existing groundwater use and the impacts of the project on groundwater resources, flow patterns, and existing and proposed surface drainage. Then mitigate potential hazards to such systems resulting from the project.	✓	Karst features exist on the site. Karst will be mitigated upon development.
20	Livability: Goal 1	21. Mitigate negative development impacts to the integrity of the regulatory floodplain by encouraging development patterns that minimize disturbance and consider the increased risk of more frequent flooding events.	✓	The site is not located in the regulatory floodplain.

#	Plan 2040 Plan Element	Land Use & Development Policy	Staff Finding	Staff Analysis
21	Housing: Goal 1	1. Encourage a variety of housing types including, but not limited to, detached and attached single family, multi-family, mixed use, zero lot line, average lot, cluster, and co-housing. Allow for accessory residential structures and apartments. Housing types should reflect the Form District pattern.	✓	The proposed zoning district would permit a variety of housing types.
22	Housing: Goal 1	2. Promote housing options and environments that support aging in place. Encourage housing for older adults and people with disabilities to be located close to shopping and transit routes and, when possible, medical and other supportive facilities.	✓	The proposed zoning district would support aging in place by increasing the variety of housing in the neighborhood. The site is in proximity to transit routes.
23	Housing: Goal 2	1. Encourage inter-generational, mixed-income and mixed-use development that is connected to the neighborhood and surrounding area.	✓	The proposed zoning district would permit inter-generational mixed-income development that is connected to the neighborhood and the surrounding area.
24	Housing: Goal 2	2. Locate housing within proximity to multi-modal transportation corridors providing safe and convenient access to employment opportunities, as well as within proximity to amenities providing neighborhood goods and services. Higher density, accessible residential uses should be located along transit corridors and in or near activity centers.	✓	The site is located in proximity to a multi-modal transportation corridor providing safe and convenient access to employment opportunities, as well as within proximity to amenities providing neighborhood goods and services. The proposed zoning district would permit higher density, accessible residential uses along a transit corridor.
25	Housing: Goal 3	1. Encourage provision of fair and affordable housing by providing a variety of ownership options and unit costs throughout Louisville Metro. Expand opportunities for people to live in quality, variably priced housing in locations of their choice by encouraging affordable and accessible housing in dispersed locations throughout Louisville Metro.	✓	The proposal would increase the provision of fair and affordable housing by increasing the variety of ownership options and unit costs in Louisville Metro.
26	Housing: Goal 3	2. As neighborhoods evolve, discourage displacement of existing residents from their community.	✓	No existing residents will be displaced by the proposal.
27	Housing: Goal 3	3. Encourage the use of innovative methods such as clustering, mixed-use developments, co-housing, and accessory apartments to increase the production of fair and affordable housing.	✓	The proposed zoning district would permit the use of innovative methods of housing.

#### **4. Proposed Binding Elements**

1. The development shall be in accordance with the approved district development plan, all applicable sections of the Land Development Code (LDC) and agreed upon binding elements unless amended pursuant to the Land Development Code. Any changes/additions/alterations of any binding element(s) shall be submitted to the Planning Commission or the Planning Commission's designee for review and approval; any changes/additions/alterations not so referred shall not be valid.
2. No outdoor advertising signs, small freestanding signs, pennants, balloons, or banners shall be permitted on the site.
3. Construction fencing shall be erected when off-site trees or tree canopy exists within 3' of a common property line. Fencing shall be in place prior to any grading or construction to protect the existing root systems from compaction. The fencing shall enclose the entire area beneath the tree canopy and shall remain in place until all construction is completed. No parking, material storage or construction activities are permitted within the protected area.
4. Before any permit (including but not limited to building, parking lot, change of use, site disturbance, alteration permit or demolition permit) is requested:
  - a. The development plan must receive full construction approval from Construction Review, Louisville Metro Public Works and the Metropolitan Sewer District.
  - b. The property owner/developer must obtain approval of a detailed plan for screening (buffering/landscaping) as described in Chapter 10 prior to requesting a certificate of occupancy. Such plan shall be implemented prior to occupancy of the site and shall be maintained thereafter.
  - c. A Tree Preservation Plan in accordance with Chapter 10 of the LDC shall be reviewed and approved prior to obtaining approval for site disturbance.
  - d. The materials and design of proposed structures shall be substantially the same as depicted in the rendering as presented at the November 29, 2021 Planning Commission meeting. A copy of the approved rendering is available in the case file on record in the offices of the Louisville Metro Planning Commission.
5. A certificate of occupancy must be received from the appropriate code enforcement department prior to occupancy of the structure or land for the proposed use. All binding elements requiring action and approval must be implemented prior to requesting issuance of the certificate of occupancy, unless specifically waived by the Planning Commission.
6. The applicant, developer, or property owner shall provide copies of these binding elements to tenants, purchasers, contractors, subcontractors and other parties engaged in development of this site and shall advise them of the content of these binding elements. These binding elements shall run with the land and the owner of the property and occupant of the property shall at all times be responsible for compliance with these binding elements. At all times during development of the site, the applicant and developer, their heirs, successors; and assignees, contractors, subcontractors, and other parties engaged in development of the site, shall be responsible for compliance with these binding elements.