

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

November 15, 2017

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2017-566  
**ADDRESS:** 402 CENTER ST  
406 CENTER ST  
139 N SWISS  
126 N CHERRY  
122 N CHERRY  
120 N CHERRY  
134 N SWISS  
130 N SWISS  
126 N SWISS  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT N 40 FT OF 1  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT N 40 FT OF 2  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT 3  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT S 47.52 FT OF N 87.52 FT OF 1 & 2 ARB A16  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT N 32.5 FT OF S 65 FT OF 1 & 2  
NCB 590 BLK 3 S 32.5 FT OF 1 & 2 ARB A17  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT N 50 FT OF 18 & 19  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT S 45 FT OF N 95 FT OF 18 & 19 ARB A-29  
NCB 590 BLK 3 LOT S 43.45 FT OF 18 & 19 ARB A-30  
**ZONING:** IDZ, HE, C-3  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 2  
**DISTRICT:** Dignowity Hill Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Ricardo Turrubiates  
**OWNER:** K/T TX Holding, LLC  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Conceptual approval of a site plan for a twenty-four unit townhome development  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** October 24, 2017  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** December 23, 2017  
**REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting conceptual approval of a site plan for a twenty-four unit townhome development to be partially bound by N Cherry, Center and N Swiss.

### APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction*

#### 1. Building and Entrance Orientation

##### A. FAÇADE ORIENTATION

- i. Setbacks*—Align front facades of new buildings with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage where a variety of setbacks exist. Refer to UDC Article 3, Division 2. Base Zoning Districts for applicable setback requirements.
- ii. Orientation*—Orient the front façade of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.

##### B. ENTRANCES

- i. Orientation*—Orient primary building entrances, porches, and landings to be consistent with those historically found along the street frontage. Typically, historic building entrances are oriented towards the primary street.

## Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5 Guidelines for Site Elements

### 1. Topography

#### A. TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- i. Historic topography*—Avoid significantly altering the topography of a property (i.e., extensive grading). Do not alter character-defining features such as berms or sloped front lawns that help define the character of the public right-of-way. Maintain the established lawn to help prevent erosion. If turf is replaced over time, new plant materials in these areas should be low-growing and suitable for the prevention of erosion.
- ii. New construction*—Match the historic topography of adjacent lots prevalent along the block face for new construction. Do not excavate raised lots to accommodate additional building height or an additional story for new construction.
- iii. New elements*—Minimize changes in topography resulting from new elements, like driveways and walkways, through appropriate siting and design. New site elements should work with, rather than change, character-defining topography when possible.

### 3. Landscape Design

#### A. PLANTINGS

- i. Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.
- ii. Historic Lawns*—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.
- iii. Native xeric plant materials*—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.
- iv. Plant palettes*—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.
- v. Maintenance*—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

#### B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

- i. Impervious surfaces*—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.
- ii. Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces*—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible, and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. Rock mulch and gravel* - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

### 4. Residential Streetscapes

#### A. PLANTING STRIPS

- i. Street trees*—Protect and encourage healthy street trees in planting strips. Replace damaged or dead trees with trees of a similar species, size, and growth habit as recommended by the City Arborist.
- ii. Lawns*—Maintain the use of traditional lawn in planting strips or low plantings where a consistent pattern has been retained along the block frontage. If mulch or gravel beds are used, low-growing plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. Alternative materials*—Do not introduce impervious hardscape, raised planting beds, or other materials into planting strips where they were not historically found.

## B. PARKWAYS AND PLANTED MEDIANS

- i. Historic plantings*—Maintain the park-like character of historic parkways and planted medians by preserving mature vegetation and retaining historic design elements. Replace damaged or dead plant materials with species of a like size, growth habit, and ornamental characteristics.
- ii. Hardscape*—Do not introduce new pavers, concrete, or other hardscape materials into parkways and planted medians where they were not historically found.

## C. STREET ELEMENTS

- i. Site elements*—Preserve historic street lights, street markers, roundabouts, and other unique site elements found within the public right-of-way as street improvements and other public works projects are completed over time.
- ii. Historic paving materials*—Retain historic paving materials, such as brick pavers or colored paving, within the public right-of-way and repair in place with like materials.

## 5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

### A. SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

- i. Maintenance*—Repair minor cracking, settling, or jamming along sidewalks to prevent uneven surfaces. Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.
- ii. Replacement materials*—Replace those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair. Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material.
- iii. Width and alignment*—Follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways. Alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree.
- iv. Stamped concrete*—Preserve stamped street names, business insignias, or other historic elements of sidewalks and walkways when replacement is necessary.
- v. ADA compliance*—Limit removal of historic sidewalk materials to the immediate intersection when ramps are added to address ADA requirements.

### B. DRIVEWAYS

- i. Driveway configuration*—Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives. Incorporate a similar driveway configuration—materials, width, and design—to that historically found on the site. Historic driveways are typically no wider than 10 feet. Pervious paving surfaces may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration.
- ii. Curb cuts and ramps*—Maintain the width and configuration of original curb cuts when replacing historic driveways. Avoid introducing new curb cuts where not historically found.

### C. CURBING

- i. Historic curbing*—Retain historic curbing wherever possible. Historic curbing in San Antonio is typically constructed of concrete with a curved or angular profile.
- ii. Replacement curbing*—Replace curbing in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair. Where in-kind replacement is not be feasible, use a comparable substitute that duplicates the color, texture, durability, and profile of the original. Retaining walls and curbing should not be added to the sidewalk design unless absolutely necessary.

## 7. Off-Street Parking

### A. LOCATION

- i. Preferred location*—Place parking areas for non-residential and mixed-use structures at the rear of the site, behind primary structures to hide them from the public right-of-way. On corner lots, place parking areas behind the primary structure and set them back as far as possible from the side streets. Parking areas to the side of the primary structure are acceptable when location behind the structure is not feasible. See UDC Section 35-310 for district-specific standards.
- ii. Front*—Do not add off-street parking areas within the front yard setback as to not disrupt the continuity of the streetscape.
- iii. Access*—Design off-street parking areas to be accessed from alleys or secondary streets rather than from principal streets whenever possible.

### B. DESIGN

i. Screening—Screen off-street parking areas with a landscape buffer, wall, or ornamental fence two to four feet high—or a combination of these methods. Landscape buffers are preferred due to their ability to absorb carbon dioxide. See UDC Section 35-510 for buffer requirements.

## **FINDINGS:**

- a. The applicant is requesting conceptual approval of a site plan for a twenty-four unit townhome development to be partially bound by N Cherry to the west, Center to the north, intersected by N Swiss and bound on the east by a surface parking lot. Each lot is currently void of a structure. Information regarding height, massing and façade composition have not been submitted to staff and are not included in this conceptual review.
- b. **CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL** – Conceptual approval is the review of general design ideas and principles (such as scale and setback). Specific design details reviewed at this stage are not binding and may only be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval.
- c. **MASSING, HEIGHT & FAÇADE ARRANGEMENT** – At this time, the applicant has not provided information regarding massing, height or façade arrangement. Staff finds that this information should be provided prior to the issuance of conceptual approval of site or building design.
- d. **SITE PLAN** – The applicant has provided a site plan that notes that construction of twenty-four residential structures in row house form. The ground level of each structure features an automobile garage. The applicant has proposed for thirteen of the proposed units to front N Cherry Street or N Swiss.
- e. **SETBACKS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.i., the front facades of new construction should be aligned with the front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Where a variety of setbacks exist, the median setback of buildings should be used. The surrounding structures, many of which are not historic, feature varying setbacks. Staff finds that the applicant should provide a diagram noting the relationship of proposed setbacks with those found historically in the adjacent blocks. On N Swiss, the proposed new construction should feature a greater setback than the adjacent single family historic structure.
- f. **ORIENTATION** – The applicant has proposed an orientation that results in thirteen of the proposed twenty four units to front either N Cherry or N Swiss Streets. Eleven of the proposed units will feature an inward orientation. Generally, staff finds the units that have been proposed to front N Swiss and N Cherry to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines. There are currently four units that are adjacent to Center Street but do not feature an orientation toward Center. Staff finds that the applicant should incorporate porch and other architectural elements to reorient these units toward Center Street.
- g. **SITE DESIGN** – The applicant has noted the installation of natural lawn areas that are to include planting beds at the front of each structure. Additionally, the applicant has provided information regarding site design including the location of driveways, walkways and sidewalks and trees. Generally, the proposed locations of grass and plants are appropriate.
- h. **WALKWAYS** – The applicant has proposed sidewalks to extend between row structures as well as sidewalks to extend from front porches to the connecting sidewalks. Staff finds this appropriate; however, sidewalks that extend to Center Street should feature a width that is consistent with that found historically in the district.
- i. **DRIVEWAYS** – The applicant has noted driveway entrances that are to be located on N Cherry, Center and N Swiss Streets. Each of the propose driveway widths as well as curb cut and apron widths are wider than what is found historically in the district. Staff finds the location of the proposed driveways to be generally appropriate; however, staff finds that the applicant should provide additional information regarding exact widths, materials and curb cut and apron widths.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff does not recommend conceptual approval based on findings a through h. Staff finds that without information regarding building heights, massing or façade arrangement, staff cannot recommend conceptual approval. If the HDRC finds that the provided information is sufficient for conceptual approval, staff recommends the following be addressed:

- i. That the applicant provide a diagram noting the relationship of proposed setbacks with those found historically in the adjacent blocks.
- ii. That the proposed new construction which fronts N Swiss feature a greater setback than that of the neighboring historic structure.
- iii. That units which feature a side elevation toward Center Street be reoriented to feature a primary orientation

toward Center.

- iv. That all sidewalks which intersect the sidewalk at Center feature a width and profile that is consistent with those found historically in the district.
- v. That the applicant provide information regarding the width, profile and materials of each driveway, apron and curb cut.

**CASE MANAGER:**

Edward Hall



Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

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# CITY CENTER

## Preliminary Site Plan

Sept. 15, 2017

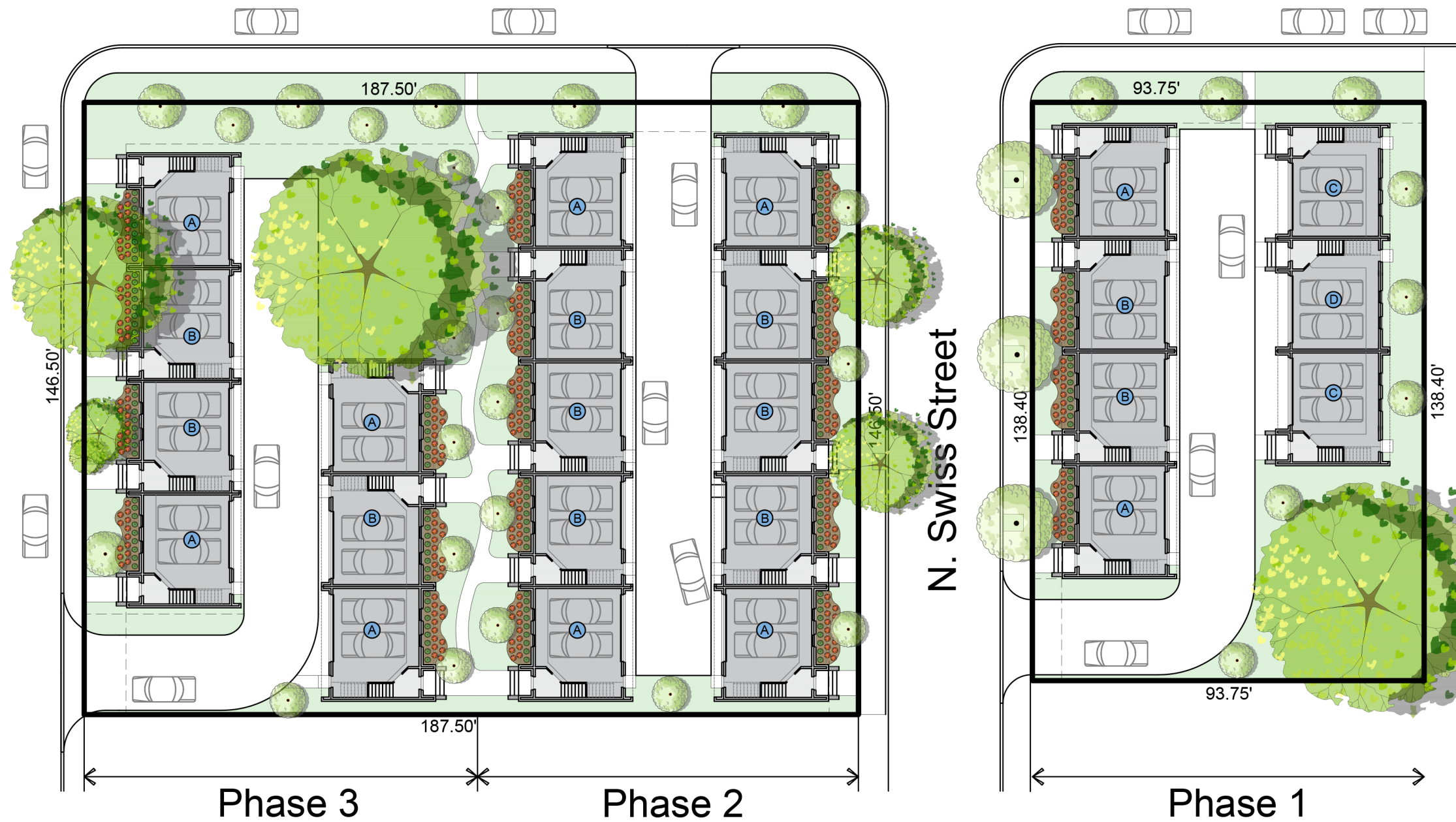
Current Zoned: IDZ H

Scale: 1:30

Center Street

N. Cherry Street

N. Swiss Street



Phase 1	
Land Area:	0.29 Acre
Total Units:	7
Units Per Ac:	24.14
Resident Parking:	14

Phase 2	
Land Area:	0.31 Acre
Total Units:	10
Units Per Ac:	32.25
Resident Parking:	20

Phase 3	
Land Area:	0.32 Acre
Total Units:	7
Units Per Ac:	21.88
Resident Parking:	14

Total Project	
Land Area:	0.92 Acre
Total Units:	24
Units Per Ac:	26.08
Resident Parking:	48

































N Mesquite St

N Mesquite St

N Mesquite St

N Mesquite St

Center St

Center St

Center St

Center St

Center St

N Swiss St

N Swiss St

N Swiss St

N Cherry St

N Cherry St

N Cherry St

N Cherry St

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