



DATE: February 13, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Dave Perrault, City Administrator

FROM: Jessica Jagoe, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Planning Case #22-023 – Public Hearing Required
Applicant: Arden Hills RE, LLC on behalf of New Perspective Senior Living
Property Location: 3565 Pine Tree Drive
Request: Planned Unit Development Amendment

Budgeted Amount:	Actual Amount:	Funding Source:
N/A	N/A	N/A

Council Should Consider the Following

Hold the required public hearing for Planning Case 22-023 for an application from Arden Hills RE, LLC (“Applicant”), on behalf of New Perspective Senior Living, for an Amendment to the approved Planned Unit Development for the property located at 3565 Pine Tree Drive (“Subject Property”). The proposal is for flexibility from the City Code on a proposed signage plan for the New Perspective Senior Living building. The Applicant is seeking flexibility on the location, number, and size of the proposed freestanding and wall signs. The City Council will be asked to make a formal decision regarding the application under Agenda Item 10A.

Background

1. Overview of Request

The Applicant has submitted a land use application for a Planned Unit Development Amendment, seeking flexibility on the location, number, and size of wall and monument signs at the New Perspective Senior Living building. The Applicant shares an existing multi-tenant sign with Bethel University. The Applicant is proposing three additional signs as part of their signage plan, a main entrance monument sign, a wall sign, and a directional sign. The proposed main entrance monument size requires flexibility on the location and number/size. The proposed wall sign requires flexibility on the size. The directional sign as proposed complies with city code.

2. Planning Case Background

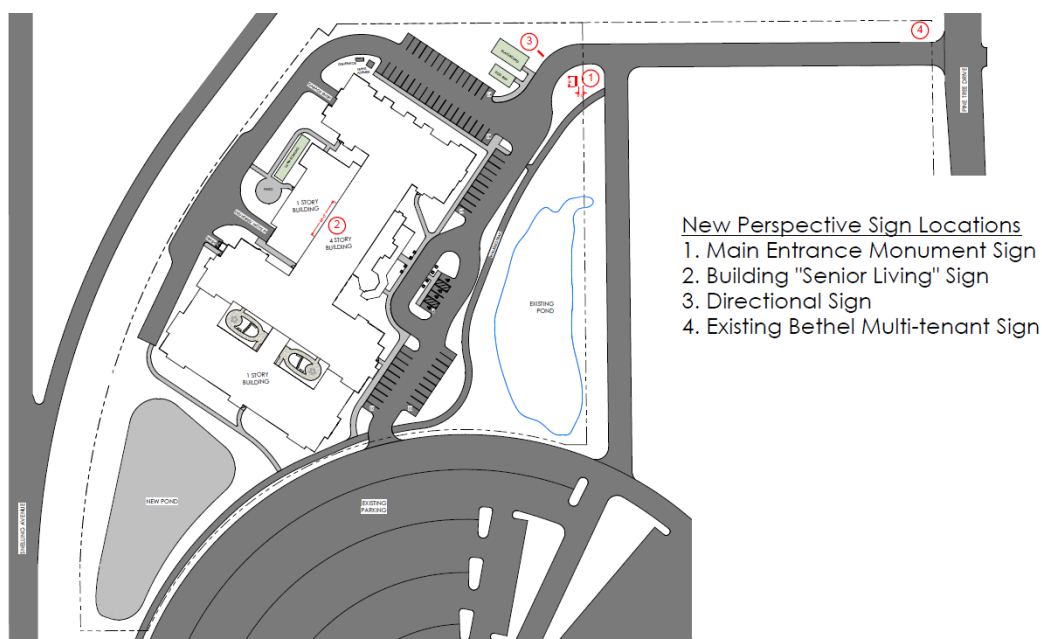
At its January 25, 2021 meeting, the City Council approved a Conditional Use Permit for the property at 3665 Pine Tree Drive. On February 8, 2021, the Council subsequently approved a

Planned Unit Development and a Site Plan for this development, allowing for the construction of a four (4) story multi-family senior living facility. This approval did not include signs. A Condition of Approval was included in the City Council's approval that required a separate sign permit for all proposed signage and for all signage to meet the requirements of Sign District 4. The Conditions of Approval also required the Applicant to provide City staff with written approval from Bethel University, the owner of Outlot A, permitting the construction of the proposed monument sign on Bethel's property. In a letter dated September 27, 2021, the Applicant agreed to forego the right to an individual monument sign on Outlot A to be part of a multi-tenant sign with Bethel University. The multi-tenant sign has since been constructed and is currently located on Outlot A, where Pine Tree Drive meets the access road to New Perspective Senior Living and Bethel University's Anderson Center. The location of existing multi-tenant monument sign and the three proposed signs is shown below.

The Applicant originally submitted an application for an Amendment to the approved Planned Unit Development on November 21, 2022. At their meeting on December 7, 2022, the Planning Commission reviewed this application and voted to recommend approval with conditions. The Planning Commission added the following conditions to the conditions of approval recommended by city staff:

- 4) The Planning Commission recommends approval of signs 1, 3 and 4 and recommends denial of sign 2 due to the location as prohibited under the city code requesting the applicant prepare alternate options for a wall sign that is suited to the size of the building, location, and design that will enhance the area, and be consistent with the architecture of the building, or consideration of a freestanding sign.
- 5) Regarding Sign 1, the applicant shall provide a base that extends up the sides of the sign to meet City Code material design standards in Sign District 4.

In response to these conditions of approval, the Applicant submitted an updated sign plan on January 25, 2023. In this updated plan, the Applicant proposes a smaller wall sign (Sign 2) with an updated design and the location is no longer on the roof of the New Perspective Building. The updated plan also proposes a monument sign (Sign 1) that provides a base which extends up the sides of the sign to meet City Code material design standards.



3. Site Data

Future Land Use Plan:	Community Mixed Use (CMU)
Existing Land Use:	Senior Living Facility
Zoning:	General Business District (B-2)
Size:	6.4 Acres

Approvals

1. Planned Unit Development Amendment

A Planned Unit Development (PUD) Amendment to alter the original Planned Unit Development, Conditional Use Permit, and Site Plan for the New Perspective Senior Living building located at 3565 Pine Tree Drive. The original PUD for the Subject Property did not include a request for flexibility on signage. A condition of approval stated that all proposed signage shall meet the requirements of Sign District 4. Installation of future signage would be reviewed by planning staff as part of the permit process for verification of compliance with sign regulations.

Plan Evaluation

Chapter 12, Sign Code

A. Wall Signs, Copy Area– *Flexibility Requested*

The Applicant is proposing one (1) wall sign on the northwest side of the existing building, facing Snelling Avenue. As previously mentioned, the original request was for a roof sign with a sign copy area of 177.5 square feet. The Planning Commission recommended as a condition of approval that the Applicant be denied Sign 2 as a roof sign due to the location as prohibited under the city code requesting the applicant prepare alternate options for a wall sign that is suited to the size of the building, location, and design that will enhance the area, and be consistent with the architecture of the building, or consideration of a freestanding sign. Based on the Planning Commission direction, the Applicant has revised the location, size, and design of Sign 2 as part of their updated sign plan. For this review, the City Council is being asked to consider a wall sign that would have a sign copy area of 68 square feet and would be located 95 feet from the northwest property line. Sign District 4 allows for walls signs with a sign copy area of no more than 50 square feet. The Applicant is requesting flexibility to allow an additional 18 square feet of wall signage to construct the proposed wall sign.

As part of the application, the Applicant submitted a lighting plan for the proposed wall sign, showing the foot candles produced by the sign at various distances. The proposed sign would be located 95 feet from the nearest property line. The internally lit channel letters produce 0.5 foot candles of light at 50 feet and 0.12 foot candles of light at 100 feet. The Arden Hills City Code states lighting shall not exceed 0.4 foot candles at the property line. The proposed wall sign is pictured below.

SENIOR LIVING BY *New Perspective*



B. Monument Signs – Flexibility Requested

1. Number of Freestanding Signs – Flexibility Requested

Sign District 4 also allows no more than one freestanding sign on any site except in cases where properties front more than one public street. For properties that front more than one public street, an additional freestanding sign may be permitted for each street front provided that each additional freestanding sign does not exceed half the size of the maximum sign area allowed for a freestanding sign in the underlying sign district.

The Subject Property shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign as it has frontage on one (1) public street, Snelling Avenue. The Applicant is proposing a main entrance monument sign on the east side of their property. This would be their second freestanding sign. New Perspective Senior Living currently has freestanding signage installed on the multi-tenant sign owned by Bethel University located off of Pine Tree Drive. As part of the multi-tenant signage PUD review in a letter dated September 27, 2021, the Applicant agreed to forego the right to an individual freestanding/monument sign on Outlot A in order to be part of a multi-tenant sign with Bethel University. According the Applicant, the existing multi-tenant sign shall not be considered their one permitted freestanding sign for the Subject Property as it is located on Outlot A, owned by Bethel University.

Existing Freestanding Sign



Proposed Second Freestanding Sign



2. Size of Freestanding Signs, Copy Area – Complies with Requirements subject to flexibility granted for Number of Freestanding Signs

Sign District 4 allows freestanding signs up to 10 feet in height with a sign copy area no more than 50 square feet. The proposed freestanding sign is 7.4 feet in height and includes a sign copy area of 24.82 square feet.

As noted above, the Applicant currently has freestanding signage as part of the multi-tenant sign owned by Bethel University and is seeking flexibility as part of this PUD Amendment to allow a second freestanding sign. The sign code does allow for an additional freestanding sign for each street front provided that each additional freestanding sign does not exceed half the size of the maximum sign area allowed for a freestanding sign in the underlying sign district. Again, the maximum sign copy area allowed in Sign District 4 is 50 square feet. For any additional freestanding signs, the maximum sign copy allowed would be 25 square feet. The Applicant's sign copy area on the existing multi-tenant monument sign is 10.875 square feet, less than half the size of the maximum sign area allowed for a freestanding sign in Sign District 4.

If a second freestanding sign was approved under the PUD Amendment, both the proposed and existing freestanding signs would comply with the maximum copy area allowed in Sign District 4. However, due to the request for flexibility to allow a second freestanding sign, staff also asks the Planning Commission to take into consideration the size of existing and proposed freestanding signs as part of this review.

3. Location of Freestanding Signs – Flexibility Requested

The Applicant is seeking flexibility on the location of the second freestanding sign. The proposed sign will not face the Subject Property's public street front and will instead face the private drive (i.e. Outlot A) the Property shares with Bethel University.

It should be noted that freestanding signs shall be located at least five (5) feet from any property line and shall not project over the property line. The proposed freestanding sign will be located on the south side of their driveway access and setback eight (8) feet from the east property line abutting Outlot A in compliance with this sign code requirements.

4. Type/Design of Freestanding Signs – Complies with Requirements

The Arden Hills Sign Code requires freestanding signs in Sign Districts 4 and 5 to be monument type ground signs with the copy resting on and supported by a solid base of brick or rock-faced

block in a color similar to or complimentary to the main structure on the site. The material of the base must extend at least one-half way up the sides of the sign face. The Planning Commission recommended as a condition of approval that the base materials be modified to comply with the Sign District 4 requirements. The updated sign plan submitted by the Applicant now meets this requirement.

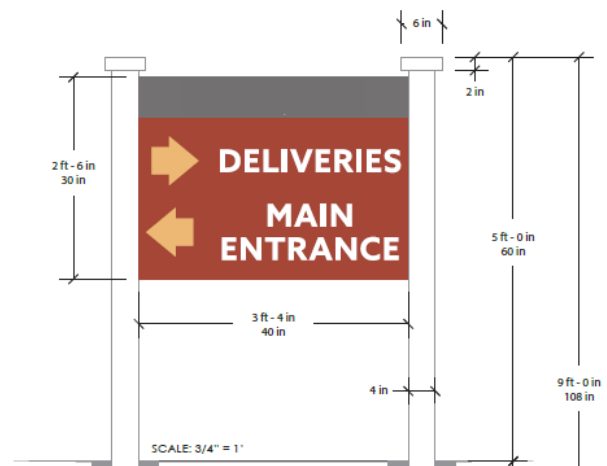
5. Size of Freestanding Signs, Total Sign Area – Flexibility Requested

The Applicant is seeking flexibility on the total sign area of the proposed monument sign. The Arden Hills Sign Code prohibits the total area of a freestanding sign from exceeding 1.5 times the permitted sign copy area of a freestanding sign. The permitted sign copy area of a freestanding sign in District 4 is 50 square feet, allowing for a total sign area of 75 square feet. The total area of the proposed sign is approximately 87.5 square feet, 1.75 times the permitted sign copy area of 50 square feet. The Applicant is requesting flexibility to allow an additional 12.5 square feet of sign area to construct the proposed monument sign. Lastly, the freestanding sign will be externally lit using ground lighting, as permitted by Sign District 4.



C. Directional Signs – Complies with Requirements

The Applicant is proposing one (1) directional sign in compliance with Chapter 12 – Sign Code of the Arden Hills City Code. As stated in the application, the directional sign will direct visitors to either the delivery area or the main entrance. According to the Applicant, this is necessary because the loading/off-loading area is located at the back of the building, and the directional sign is placed at the point at which truck deliveries need to be notified to turn. It will also help quickly identify the main entrance for family visitors as well as emergency services.



D. Sign Standard Adjustments, Section 1260.01

The Applicant requests flexibility on the design, location, and number/size of freestanding and wall signs. City Code Section 1260.01, Sign Standard Adjustments states “adjustments to the requirements and standards for the height, number, type, lighting, area, and/or location of a sign or signs established by this Chapter may be approved with a Site Plan Review or a Planned Unit Development process.” In order to approve an adjustment, the Planning Commission will need to make a determination that the following criteria in the sign code has been satisfied:

1. Subd. 1 There are site conditions which require a sign adjustment to allow the sign to be reasonably visible from a street immediately adjacent to the site.

According to the Applicant, the size and location of the wall sign is necessary for it to be legible due to the speed of the traffic on Snelling Avenue, which is the only public street that the building borders. The Applicant also states that due to the proximity to the Bethel Anderson Campus, the New Perspective building needs identification on Snelling Ave to identify that the building is not student housing for Bethel University. The proposed wall sign will help the community easily recognize the building’s use and avoid confusion for potential residents, families, and students. The sign is slightly under the optimal building sign letter height per the United States Sign Council guidance. The Applicant would like to maintain this minimum letter height in order to not sacrifice legibility any further.

2. Subd. 2 The sign adjustment will allow a sign of exceptional design or a style that will enhance the area or that is more consistent with the architecture and design of the site.

According to the Applicant, the main entrance sign will be the Subject Property’s stand-alone monument sign. It will have the New Perspective community logo and will contain colors, materials and design elements that match the exterior of the building. This sign is proposed to be lit using flood lights.

Based on Planning Commission comments, the Applicant states their team enhanced the wall sign to the overall view of the building and sign area as well as incorporated aspects of the other signage on-site by including the New Perspective logo. They have noted that a freestanding sign along Snelling Avenue was not feasible due to visibility concerns due to landscaping, guard rail and fencing. Additionally, the retaining wall was not structural designed to support a sign.

3. Subd. 3 The sign adjustment will not result in a sign that is inconsistent with the purpose of the zoning district in which the property is located or the current land use.

According to the Applicant, all proposed exterior signs, with the exception of the wall sign, are within the City’s Sign Ordinance.

As noted above, the Applicant is asking for flexibility on the Monument Sign as well.

Application Review

1355.04 Procedural Requirements for Specific Applications

A public hearing for a PUD Amendment request is required before the request can be brought before the City Council. The applicant or its representative shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Planning Commission to answer questions or give explanations regarding the proposal. Upon completion of the public hearing and its study and consideration of the application, the

Planning Commission shall submit its written report, containing its findings, conclusions, and recommendations as to the application, to the City Council.

Under Section 1355.06 subd.4, an application for an amendment shall be administered in the same manner as required for a new application. Any structural alteration, enlargement or intensification change in site plan, or similar change not specially permitted, shall require City Council action and all procedures shall apply as if a new application were being requested; provided, however, that when such changes are deemed to be insignificant by the Zoning Administrator, the requirements of a public hearing may be waived.

Public Comments

Notice was published in the *Pioneer Press* on January 31, 2023. Notice was prepared by the City and mailed to property owners within 1,000 feet of the subject property. Staff has not received any public comments regarding this case.

Attachments

- A. Land Use Application
- B. Location Map
- C. Narrative
- D. Proposed Sign Plan
- E. Planning Commission Memo
- F. Draft Planning Commission Minutes
- G. Public Hearing Presentation