



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
Sunnyside in Sevier Park
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Nashville, Tennessee 37204
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION
1515 5th Avenue North
November 14, 2012

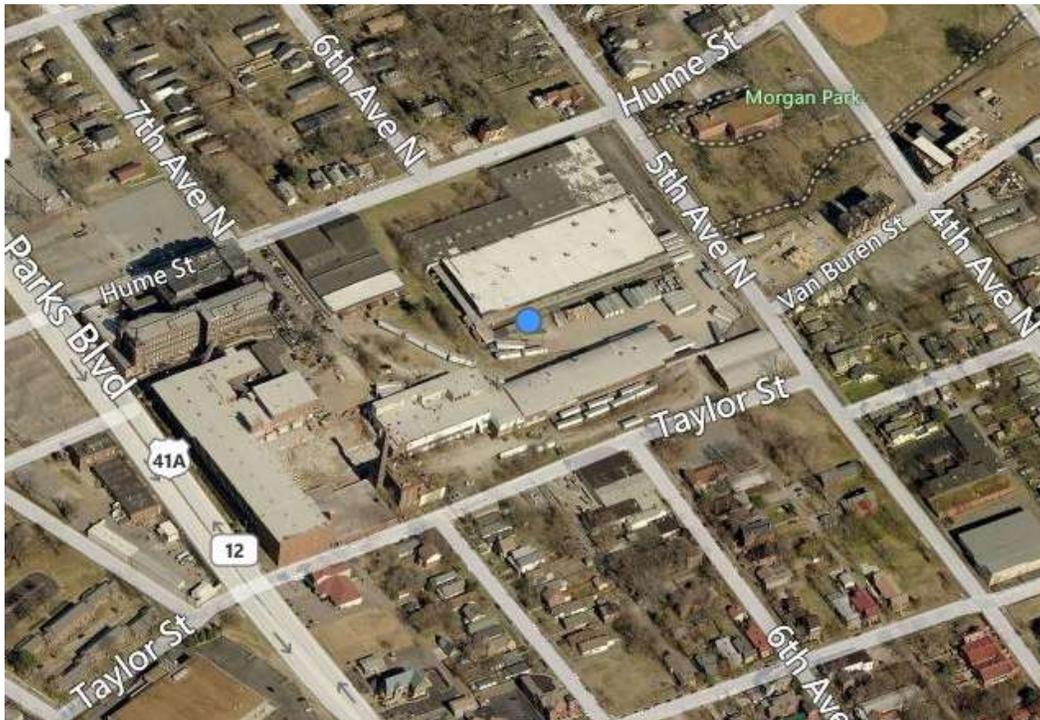
Application: New construction-infill
District: Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay
Council District: 19
Map and Parcel Number: 08112041500
Applicant: SWH Residential Partners, LLC, John Tirill
Project Lead: Michelle Taylor, michelle.taylor3@nashville.gov

<p>Description of Project: The applicant proposes to construct a multi-family development facing 5th Avenue North between Hume and Taylor Streets (a portion of the original Werthan Mill site). The project will incorporate two existing buildings on the lot. Demolition of three other buildings was approved by the Commission in October of 2012.</p>	<p>Attachments A: Photographs B: Site Plans C: Elevations & Street Sections</p>
<p>Recommendation Summary: Recommendation: Staff recommends approval with the conditions that doors be recessed a minimum of two inches (2”), additional drawings be submitted showing greater detail, and that the applicant obtain staff approval for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All materials and detailing of their use;• Location of mechanicals and utilities; and• Exterior lighting and signage. <p>Staff finds the project to meet the Germantown Historic Zoning Overlay’s design guidelines for new construction in a historic context and for the Werthan site.</p>	

Vicinity Map:



Aerial Map:



Applicable Design Guidelines:

2.0 New Construction within historic context

2.1 General Principles

- 2.1.1 Guidelines apply only to the exteriors of new construction. Public facades shall be more carefully reviewed than non-public facades. *Public facades are those that are visible from the public right of way, street or streets. Non-public facades are those not visible from the public right of way, street or streets. Facades facing the alley are generally not considered public facades.*
- 2.1.2 Construction in Historic Germantown has taken place continuously from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries and a variety of building styles and types have resulted. New buildings should continue this tradition while remaining compatible with the existing historic context.
Because a great variety of historic building forms exist within Germantown, more flexibility in design is possible than might be the case for more architecturally homogenous historic neighborhoods.
- 2.1.3 Because new buildings should relate to an established pattern and rhythm of existing buildings, both on the same and opposite sides of the street, a dominance of the pattern and rhythm should be respected and should not be disrupted.
- 2.1.4 New construction should be consistent and compatible with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, setback, relationship of materials, texture and color; roof shape; orientation; and proportion and rhythm of openings.
- 2.1.5 Reconstruction of a historic building which no longer exists may be appropriate if it meets these criteria: it was formerly located on the site on which the reconstruction is proposed; it contributed to the historic and architectural integrity of the area; it was compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding the site; and pictorial documentation supports its accuracy.
- 2.1.7 The MHZC does not review paint colors on wood or metal surfaces.
- 2.1.8 Painting of masonry materials is reviewed by the MHZC.

2.2 Site and Building Planning

2.2.1 Setbacks

1. Maintain the prevailing setbacks from the street within a block.
2. When a definite rhythm of spacing along a street is established by existing lot and building width, infill construction shall maintain that rhythm.
3. Wings, porches, and secondary building elements should be at similar setbacks to existing context.
4. Corner Lots: New construction should appropriately address setbacks on both streets.
5. Alley Setback: Setback from any alley (rear or side) shall be a minimum of 5 feet in order to retain the historic urban street character.
6. Corner Commercial: Historic corner commercial buildings within the NR historic district were typically built to the property line/sidewalk. Setbacks for the construction of new corner commercial structures shall be compatible with this historic precedent.

2.2.2 Orientation: The orientation of a structure's primary facade shall be consistent with that of adjacent historic buildings.

2.2.3 Massing and Scale

1. In new construction, the size of a building, its mass in relation to open spaces and its windows, door openings and porches should be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.
2. The visual mass of the building shall be at or near the same setback as buildings on adjacent sites.
3. When multiple lots or parcels are assembled within the district, buildings shall be designed to be compatible with the adjacent structures. New structures shall employ design techniques that break the facades into multiple vertical elevations.

2.2.4 Height

1. New buildings shall be constructed to a height which is compatible with the height of adjacent buildings.
Characteristics of the following shall be considered in determining compatibility of height; adjacent properties, historical precedent, height of existing historic structures within the District, location within the District, topography and view corridor.
Generally, historic single-family residential structures are one or two stories in height. Special features of limited height such as towers or turrets may be acceptable.
Greater height may be appropriate for commercial and multi-family structures, where there is a lack of historic context along a block.
Consideration may be given to the physical characteristics of a property in determining compatible heights (e.g. exceptional topographic condition, lot size and/or lot shape) In such cases, where height may be greater, height is guided by the Germantown Detailed Neighborhood Design Plan, a component of the General Plan of the Government of Nashville and Davidson County, while ensuring an appropriate transition to smaller historically significant buildings that abut or are across the street or alley from a proposed new building.

2.3 Foundations

- 2.3.1 The foundation height shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with those of surrounding historic buildings.
- 2.3.2 For new structures, brick, limestone or split-face concrete block may be used for either pier or solid perimeter foundations. Intervening spaces may be filled with an open lattice work.
- 2.3.3 Foundation access doors shall be located on the side or rear of the building. Slab-on-grade foundations may be appropriate for commercial buildings. Slab-on-grade foundations are generally not appropriate for residential infill buildings.

2.4 Walls/Exterior Materials

- 2.4.1 Masonry materials and wood siding were primarily used in the district and should continue to be predominant. Other materials may be used if they possess characteristics similar in scale, design, finish, texture, durability, and detailing to historic materials and meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.
- 2.4.2 The relationship and use of materials, texture, details and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with and similar to or shall not contrast conspicuously with those of adjacent historic buildings.
- 2.4.3 Large expanses of featureless wall surface are not appropriate. It is most appropriate for materials to change between the foundation and the first floor.
- 2.4.4 Exterior Insulation Finish Systems (E.I.F.S) and vinyl siding are not appropriate exterior materials.
- 2.4.5 Traditional brick colors range from dark red-orange to dark red. The use of "antique" reproduction or multi-colored brick is not permitted.
- 2.4.6 Clapboard siding should exhibit an exposure of 3 to 5". Wood or composite siding and trim (ex. Hardi-plank) are appropriate. Composite materials must match the visual and durability characteristics of wood.

2.5 Doors

- 2.5.1 The relationship of width to height of doors and the rhythm of solids (*walls*) to voids should be compatible with surrounding buildings. (*Exterior doors often have transoms, giving them a tall, narrow proportion.*)
- 2.5.2 Primary entrances shall be in locations similar to those used historically for primary entrances.
- 2.5.3 Door openings should be recessed (2" minimum) on masonry buildings, as they are traditionally, rather than flush with the rest of the wall.
- 2.5.4 Front doors shall be wood and at least half-glass.

2.6 Windows

- 2.6.1 The relationship of width to height of windows and the rhythm of solids (*walls*) to voids should be visually compatible with surrounding buildings. (*Exterior windows are generally tall and narrow in proportion*)
- 2.6.2 Tinted, reflective, or colored glass are generally not appropriate.
- 2.6.3 Window openings should be recessed (2" minimum) on masonry buildings, as they are traditionally, rather than flush with the rest of the wall.
- 2.6.4 For new commercial structures a significant portion of the street level façade shall be transparent (i.e., doors and windows) to provide visual interest and access for the pedestrian.
- 2.6.5 On corner commercial buildings, glazing shall address both streets.

2.6 Porches / Entrance/ Recessed Entries

- 2.6.1 Primary building entrances should be oriented towards the street.
- 2.6.2 Within the district front porches and recessed entries are common on residential and commercial buildings. New construction (specifically of single and multi family homes) shall provide an entry that utilizes elements of a porch to create a transition from the outside (*public domain*) to the inside (*private domain*).
- 2.6.3 The height of porch roofs shall be compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with those of surrounding historic buildings.
- 2.6.4 Entrances to commercial buildings should be recessed.

2.7 Roof

- 2.7.1 The roofs of new buildings should be visually compatible by not contrasting significantly with the roof shape, pitch, and orientation of surrounding buildings. (*Predominant roof shapes are gables and hips with slopes ranging from 35 to 50 degrees, 7/12 to 14/12*).
- 2.7.2 Roof-top equipment, skylights, solar panels, and roof penetrations located on or attached to the roof shall be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street. *Generally, they should be placed rear of the mid-point of the building.*
- 2.7.3 Within the district are surviving examples and/or pictorial evidence of commercial, multi-family, and institutional buildings having a low slope roof behind a parapet wall. Therefore, low slope roofs may be appropriate for buildings of similar use within the district.

2.8 Utilities / Mechanical

- 2.8.1 Utility connections such as gas meters, electric meters, electric service mast and power lines, phone, cable, satellite TV and HVAC condenser units should be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street. Exterior utilities and mechanical equipment shall generally be located in the rear or side yard and/or screened when visible from the street.
- 2.8.2 Appurtenances related to new buildings and additions, should be visually compatible with the environment established by surrounding existing buildings and the site on which they are located.

2.9 Outbuildings / Garages / Carports / Accessory Buildings

- 2.9.1 Historically, outbuildings, garages and carports were either very utilitarian in character, or (particularly with more extravagant houses) they repeated the roof forms and architectural details of the houses to which they related. Generally, either approach is appropriate for new outbuildings. Brick, weatherboard, and board-and-batten are typical siding materials. Outbuildings with weatherboard siding typically have wide corner boards and window and door casings (trim).
- 2.9.2 Outbuildings, garages, carports and accessory buildings shall be located to the rear of the property. When a definite rhythm along a street/alley is established by uniform lot and building width, infill construction shall maintain that rhythm.
- 2.9.3 The predominant vehicular access to properties within the District should continue to be through the use of alleys. Garages and carports shall be accessed from the service alley as is typical for historic buildings in the district. For most residential lots new curb cuts on public streets are generally not appropriate. The removal of unnecessary existing curb cuts

on primary streets is encouraged. It is acknowledged that in some cases alley access may not be possible or practical.

In this case, curb cuts and driveways at the public street should be minimized and the width of parking access should be limited. Curb cuts and driveways shall be located so they are visually less dominant.

- 2.9.4 The design of outbuildings, garages, carports and accessory buildings shall not be visually disruptive to the character of surrounding buildings.
- 2.9.5 The size and mass of outbuildings, garages, carports and accessory buildings in relation to open spaces and its windows and openings shall be visually compatible with the primary building and surrounding buildings.
- 2.9.6 Swimming pools are to be located in the rear yard or appropriately screened from view and set back from the street; fencing around swimming pools required by zoning ordinance must comply with these design guidelines.
- 2.9.8 Portable storage buildings less than 100 square feet are not reviewed by the MHZC.

3.2.5.3 The Werthan Site

The Werthan site bounded to the south by Taylor Street, west by Rosa L. Parks, north by Hume Street and to the east by 5th Avenue North, is a unique property within the District. At inception the site, large structures and use were an anomaly in the neighborhood. Its initial use and planning made it a center and focal point within the community. Future development on the site should recognize these unique features and new structures are encouraged to enhance the sites presence within the neighborhood.

The Werthan site is unique regarding building height. It shall take its context from within the boundaries of the site as opposed to adjacent properties providing context.

5.0 Site Improvements/ Appurtenances

Site improvements or appurtenances include fences, walls, sidewalks, paving or driveways, parking areas, exterior lighting, utility connections, and other permanent landscape features.

Historic architecturally-significant site improvements should be maintained, and repaired using historically appropriate materials and methods.

5.1 Fences & Walls

Character-defining features of historic fences and stone retaining walls including gates, decorative pickets, finials, and hardware should be preserved. Repair rather than replace fence and wall materials. For irreparable elements replacement features shall match the original features.

5.1.2 Fences or walls may be utilized to demarcate property lines and screen private areas from public view.

5.1.3 New fences and walled areas shall be compatible with the building site and streetscape in terms of location, height, opaqueness; design, style, materials composition, scale, proportion, color and texture.

Consideration of the physical characteristics of a property and its use will be given in determining appropriate fence heights and location (e.g. exceptional topographic condition, lot location within the District (street corners etc), adjacent to non compatible use, lot size and/or shape)

Walls of solid masonry construction within the front setback are permitted up to 24" in height. Fences shall be constructed of wood, metal or masonry. Vinyl is generally not an appropriate fencing material.

The combination of fences and walls in front setbacks shall not exceed 48". Generally side yard fences from the street to a distance of 10' behind the front (public) façade shall not exceed 48".

Side yard fences shall be located a minimum of 10' behind the front (public) façade and shall not exceed 72" in height. (Exception: Fences may be 96" in ht. when the top 24" is open in nature).

Rear yard / privacy fences shall not exceed 72". (Exception: Fences may be 96" in height when the top 24" is open in nature).

5.1.4 Coordination of style and materials with adjacent properties is encouraged where appropriate.

5.1.5 In general chain link fencing is not appropriate. Black or dark green chain link fencing may be used for pet enclosures or at the rear of the lot when it is screened from public view.

5.2. Sidewalks

5.2.1 New sidewalks or walkways should remain visually compatible with the materials and placement of historic walkways.

5.2.2 Curb cuts on public streets are generally not appropriate. The removal of existing curb cuts on primary streets (where a lot can be accessed from the alley) is encouraged to bring non conforming properties into conformance.

5.2.3 Original sidewalks and walkways, including details such as original curbstones, brick, etc., should be preserved in their original state as closely as possible. Special care shall be taken to preserve existing specimen trees and significant landscape elements.

5.2.4 Pathways and walkways providing access to buildings shall be serviceable and relate to the building in scale, width, placement and material.

5.2.5 Brick, concrete, concrete pavers, stone, and stepping stones are appropriate walkway materials.

5.3. Paving/Driveways/Parking Areas and Parking Lots

5.3.1 The predominant vehicular access to properties within the District should continue to be through the use of alleys. It is acknowledged that in some cases alley access may not be possible or practical. In this case, curb cuts and driveways at the public street should be minimized and the width of parking access should be limited. Curb cuts and driveways shall be located so they are visually less dominant.

5.3.2 Vehicular access to new developments (specifically large lot developments) shall be executed with techniques that minimize interruption to the sidewalk network and the pedestrian environment. Cross access between parking areas to minimize street curb cuts and adjacent driveway is encouraged.

5.3.3 Parking structures should generally be located below or behind buildings and landscaped to mitigate their visual impact.

5.3.4 Parking structures that are located close to the sidewalk are encouraged to include retail uses at street level to minimize the visual impact of the structure and engage the pedestrian network - Where street level retail uses are not feasible, architectural treatments shall be used to modulate the façade breaking the mass and horizontal lines typical of parking structures. Facades of parking structures facing public streets shall have flat (non sloping) floor plates.

5.3.5 Shared parking facilities that efficiently utilize parking spaces are encouraged.

5.3.6 Garages and carports shall be accessed from the service alley as is typical in the district. For residential lots new curb cuts on public streets are generally not appropriate. Where a lot can be accessed from the alley, the removal of existing curb cuts on primary streets is encouraged.

Where an existing lot cannot be accessed from the alley executed vehicular access shall be executed with techniques that minimize interruption to the sidewalk network and the pedestrian environment.

5.3.7 Swimming pools are to be located in the rear yard or appropriately screened from view and set back from the street; fencing around swimming pools required by zoning or inance must comply with these design guidelines.

5.3.8 Portable storage buildings less than 100 square feet are not reviewed by the MHZC.

5.4 Exterior Lighting/ Miscellaneous

- 5.4.1 Dumpsters and other trash containers shall be located with techniques that minimize interruption to the sidewalk network and the pedestrian environment. The most appropriate location for dumpster and trash containers is in the rear yard or alley and screened from public view.
- 5.4.2 Exterior lighting fixtures shall be compatible in style, size, scale and material with the character of the structure and neighborhood.
- 5.4.3 Avoid spilling light onto adjacent structures, signs, or properties.
- 5.4.4 Ground mounted light fixtures/spotlights shall be screened from public view.

Background: The earliest portion of the Werthan Mills complex has been rehabilitated as multi-family and a different developer now seeks to develop this later portion of the campus for mixed-use. The applicant received approval in October 2012 to demolish three of the five buildings present. One of the two remaining buildings will be included in the development and the other one will be continued to be used by Werthan Packaging for an indefinite period. The property will be developed in phases, with the first phase to include the construction of a multi-story apartment building and interior parking at the corner of 5th Avenue North and Hume Street; the rehabilitation of an existing industrial building at the corner of 5th Avenue North and Taylor Street; and parking, streets and appurtenances.

The developers shared this exact plan with the neighborhood in October. The meeting took place at the Morgan Community Center, across the street from the planned development, and all property owners in Germantown and neighboring Salmestown were invited. Staff who attended the meeting did not note any opposition to the project. There were multiple questions about issues such as access, traffic flow and improvements that seemed to be satisfactorily answered by the development team.

Analysis and Findings:

The design guidelines state that development of the Werthan property should take its context from the historic Werthan development rather than the surrounding smaller-scaled residential development.

Setbacks: The proposed setbacks along 5th Avenue North vary slightly from approximately seven feet (7') to eight feet (8') and the proposed setback along Hume Street is seven feet (7'). There will be two courtyards with entrances off Hume Street, each with approximately nine foot (9') wide openings, which will provide variation along Hume Street. The proposed setbacks are similar to the existing historic buildings on the Werthan site, which vary but are primarily close to the streets surrounding the complex. The project meets section 2.2.1

Orientation: The project includes one multi-family building and an enveloped parking structure at the corner of Hume Street and 5th Avenue North. The primary entrance to the building will be towards the interior lot, just off 5th Avenue North. All of Werthan's historic primary entrances are also towards the interior of the lot. In addition, the façade will be peppered with along 5th Avenue North and Hume Street. Two vehicular entrances

into the development are proposed off 5th Avenue North and Hume Street. The main entrance will include a centralized pedestrian-friendly vehicular plaza. Multiple entrances are planned to further orient the building towards the two streets. The proposed orientation will maintain the historic orientation but also orient more of the development towards the outside of the campus, so that the project meets both the historic orientation for Werthan and the orientations of the single-family dwellings in the neighborhood. The orientation meets section 2.2.2.

Massing, Scale and Height: The number of stories varies due to the dramatic changes in grade but is between three and four stories compared to the historic buildings which are between one and four stories. The height of existing buildings will not change. The historic buildings maintain large massings close to the street with varied setbacks. The new development will retain these massing and break them up in similar ways to the historic development by using courtyards, varied setbacks, material changes and by setting back a portion of the upper level. Open space is retained through the use of courtyards, a plaza and a dog park. The project meets section 2.2.3 and 2.2.4.

Foundations: The design guidelines call for the foundation line to be apparent with a change in materials; however, most of the industrial buildings on the campus are brick to grade, as proposed here at least for Hume Street and 5th Avenue North elevations. The project meets section 2.3.

Walls/Exterior Materials: The majority of the project will utilize a brick façade, as seen on the historic buildings. Walls will be broken up with vertical changes in materials. The details of materials is not known at this time. With the condition that final materials be approved by staff, the project meets section 2.4 of the design guidelines.

Doors/Entrances, Windows & Porches: The windows are twice as tall as they are wide, following the proportion of windows on the historic buildings. Their verticality is further enhanced in some locations with panels between windows. The rhythm of openings also matches the historic buildings. Section 2.5.3. requires wood half-lite doors. Since this is an industrial complex, staff suggests that other materials such as metal can also be appropriate. The proposed doors have approximately a third of vertical glazing, which again, is appropriate for the industrial context. Staff recommends the conditions that door openings be recessed a minimum of two inches (2”) to meet section 2.5.3. There are no porches, as required by the design guidelines, as these are inappropriate for the industrial context. Above the main entrance, which is located behind the sculpture garden, the building is not connected at the ground floor. This feature is a modern interpretation of the elevated/covered walkways present on the historic portion of the campus. The project meets sections 2.5 and 2.6 of the design guidelines.

The existing corner building will be altered with additional windows and doors of greater dimension than the existing. Since the building is non-historic these alterations are appropriate and the proposed rhythm and proportions also meets the design guidelines.

Roof: The roof is predominately flat in keeping with the design of the historic buildings. A hipped corner roof portion seen at the corner of Hume Street and Rosa Parks Boulevard has a contemporary (pyramidal) interpretation on this development at the corner of New Street B and Hume Street. The project meets section 2.7 of the design guidelines.

Utilities/Mechanical: The location of the mechanicals is unknown at this time.

Site Improvements/ Appurtenances: The project includes a sculpture plaza, fountain, new streets, and a terrace attached to the existing building at the corner of 5th Avenue and Taylor Street. The fountain plaza is a modern interpretation of the historic water tower and public access sulfur spring that used to be on the property. Sidewalks will be added to 5th Avenue North and Hume Street as well as to the interior of the project.

The majority of parking will be a structure within the development but a smaller parking lot will be added along Taylor Street to accommodate the business to be located in the two existing buildings. It will be screened but the details are unknown at this time. The project meets section 5.0 of the design guidelines.

Exterior Lighting: Exterior lighting is unknown at this time.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval with the conditions that doors be recessed a minimum of two inches (2"), additional drawings be submitted showing greater detail, and that the applicant obtain staff approval for:

- All materials and detailing of their use;
- Location of mechanicals and utilities; and
- Exterior lighting and signage.

Staff finds the project to meet the Germantown Historic Zoning Overlay's design guidelines for new construction in a historic context and for the Werthan site.