

Northville Downs Response to Dan Burden's Walkability Recommendations

Dear Planning Commission of Northville,

Below is a response from the development team to Dan Burden's 20 recommendations he had presented in his Northville Walkability Study from December 21, 2021.

Dan Burden's Proposed Recommendations:

1. *Eliminate the super block*

- a. The northern blocks fronting on Cady Street are broken up into three smaller sites with a one-acre park located between the NW and NE sites. Additionally, tree lined and landscaped pedestrian paths connect north to south through the sites between Beal Street and Cady Street. One is located at the west side of the NW block and the other between the NE and Griswold sites.
- b. The overall site plan addresses the current "super block" by the addition of an extension of Fairbrook St. to the east, extensions of Beal, Hutton and Church streets to the north, addition of the proposed central park and pedestrian promenade to the north and the previously noted pedestrian connection to River St. to the west. The pedestrian connections created throughout the site in the form of walkways, the bridge at the River Park and the promenade at the Central Park enhance the connectivity throughout the site, and its perimeter entry points.

2. *Place the pond in the flood plain*

- a. Wayne County and FEMA will not permit placing the detention pond in the flood plain.

3. *Locate densities to build a center*

- a. The highest density in the site plan is along Cady Street closest to the downtown area. The site plan provides a coherent commercial frontage along Cady Street with breaks at the one-acre park and at the north / south pedestrian paths. Along the park, building frontages step down from Cady to Beal Streets while providing a park enclosure at an ideal 1:3 portion of open space to facade height per New Urbanism design guidelines. The highest concentrated densities in the site plan are adjacent to Cady Street, at the northern most point of the site.

4. *Heal the citywide street system*

- a. We defer on Northville's Mobility Network team with regards to Mr. Burden's recommendations of improving the citywide street system.

5. *Open access and views to the water*

- a. The River Park will be designed to provide access from the North, East, and West sides of the park. Due to the location of the Johnson Drain to the south and the site, as well as the absence of a pedestrian sidewalk along 7 Mile Road, we do not provide access into the River Park from the south. Although, we are putting a pedestrian sidewalk along the

east side of the site along the west side of River Street, which will connect from 7 Mile road to Beal Street.

- b. Views to the water are incorporated in the plan, the daylighted river will be exposed along River Street, Beal Street, the end of Fairbrook Street, and the roadway off of Beal that goes through the Toll Brothers' site.
6. *Place density toward downtown*
 - a. Higher density is concentrated in the northern portion of the site, closest to the Downtown Northville area.
 - b. See answer #3
7. *Build lighter density single family toward 7-Mile*
 - a. Due to the high water table at the southern portion of the site, single-family homes with basements are not permissible within this area.
8. *Townhomes toward center and 7 Mile*
 - a. The updated site plan includes townhomes on Center Street towards 7 Mile Road.
9. *Mixed Income residential*
 - a. The diverse selection of housing types in the current plan addresses the desired price-points for a wide range of demographics for home buyers and renters, from entry-level apartments to luxury condos, and every price-point between.
10. *Age friendly*
 - a. The updated plan offers a diverse selection of housing types planned to accommodate a wide array of home buyers and renters; products for empty nesters, young families, millennials who choose to rent and millennials who choose to be homeowners
11. *Biophilic Design/Blend nature with urban form*
 - a. The recommendation to incorporate biophilic design is an architectural recommendation, it is the development team's opinion that the open park space provided in the plan, specifically in the form of the Central and River Parks, provide an exceptional blend of nature with urban form.
12. *Walk-first street design*
 - a. The site plan offers a pedestrian friendly, walk first street design. These conditions are indicated in the streetscape sections which are shown at key locations throughout the development. Sidewalks are provided along all roadways with a separation or "amenity" zone between the sidewalk and parallel parking for safety. The amenity zones contain street trees and within the Cady Street Overlay District, City standard lighting as well.
 - b. The pedestrian friendly, walkable streets integrated throughout the development provide a high level of connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and downtown district.
13. *Eyes on streets, parks and public spaces*
 - a. The three northern sites provide ground level entries and terraces that both activate and engage with the sidewalks and park space. The upper level residential levels, many with balconies, provide activated facades.
 - b. The townhomes in the southern portion of the site will have front-facing entry, and views onto the public streets and greenways. The single family homes and row houses will all have porches that will also activate the relationship between the homes and public streets.
14. *At least one social/retail street*

- a. Cady Street will feature active commercial space along the northwest and northeast sites. Two important restaurant locations with outside dining will be located at the opposing park corners on Cady Street. The park will create a grand outside living room for Northville providing a diverse range of social experiences from passive activities to larger programmed events. The central park this will be a 24-hour social space for anything from morning coffee and conversation with neighbors, to group yoga classes, to larger group activities and organized events.
15. *Green Spaces and pocket parks within 3 minutes of all homes*
- a. Green spaces and pocket parks incorporated into the site plan are within 3 minutes walking distance from every unit and/or home in the development.
16. *No street to operate above 20 mph*
- a. We agree with Dan Burden's speed limitations but defer to the City Northville and Mobility Task Force to determine the speed limits of each street.
17. *Maximize on-street parking, especially on perimeter*
- a. In addition to the 1,342 parking space that are being provided to residents in The Downs development, 226 spaces are being created for public on street parking.
18. *Block perimeters of 800-1600 perimeter feet*
- a. The placement of the apartments, Central Park, condos, and row housing breaks up the block along Cady Street and further eliminates the notion of a "super block". The significant landscaped pedestrian access via the Central Park and its pedestrian promenade also provides two significant north and south landscaped paths at the apartments and condos.
19. *Consider 90 degree angled parking on both sides of Beal Street and reduce parking lot size*
- a. 90 degree angled parking on both sides of Beal Street is not feasible in the current plan and would have a negative effect on the street scape of Beal street.
20. *Consider a festival street or open street at the center*
- a. The Central Park along with the adjacent promenade, and the extension of Hutton to Beal street can be considered a festival block. In addition, the tree lined streets allow for activities at different scales within the neighborhoods.