

HEIRLOOM PROPERTIES

Sarah Linnes-Robinson
Kingfield Neighborhood Association
3537 Nicollet Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55408

October 22, 2020

Dear Sarah,

We are proposing a three-story 12-unit residential building at 15 West 37th Street, a currently vacant lot behind Nicollet Square. Heirloom Properties would own and manage the residential units that would be primarily one- and two-bedroom units as well as two live-work spaces. As residents of Kingfield, we are excited to provide additional, much needed, housing to this under-utilized lot.

About the Building

The 12-unit plan includes four 2-bedroom units, six 1-bedroom units, one studio unit and one 5-bedroom multi-level unit. Two units will include live-work spaces, both of which occupy the ground floor facing 37th Street. The project is market rate and the units will fall between 60%-100% AMI ranges for affordability based on the 2020 regional benchmarks set by MetCouncil.

The façade of the proposed building would be primarily brick with metal siding on the back. The metal siding on the rear façade that faces south will have solar photovoltaic thin film on it. There are enclosed structures in the rear of the site for each bike parking and trash/recycling. We are planning to install solar on the roof of the building either concurrent with construction or after construction completion if it is financed separately. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the neighborhood on the stormwater planning grant from the MWMO to design an innovative water management system.

About the Site

The lot at 15 West 37th Street was created in the process of building Nicollet Square and it is still owned by a subsidiary of Beacon Interfaith Housing. Beacon has tried to sell the lot in the past for affordable townhome developments but none of the previous proposals were able to assemble the required funding. The lot is 67' x 107', which is 7,169 square feet. This is about 1.5 times the width of a typical 40' x 122' residential lot in Kingfield which is 4,880. The site is zoned OR2 (Office Residential 2), which allows for a mix of office and residential uses and up to four stories or 56 feet. The required setbacks by code are 9' for the side and rear setback and 15' for the front setback. The small size of the site makes a 4-story building difficult to accommodate as two full staircases and corridor would then be required by the building code. The site has also been informally considered a transitional zone between buildings on Nicollet Avenue to the interior of the neighborhood and so it would be natural for the building's size to be a compatible middle height between Nicollet Square itself and the size of a typical two and a half story Kingfield House.



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Land Use Application and Zoning Summary

The proposed three-story building complies with all of the current requirements of the OR2 zone including building setbacks, height, number of stories, and floor area ratio with no requested changes, re-zonings or conditional uses. Due to the unique configuration (with the alley along the side of the property instead of in the rear) and non-standard lot size (wider, but shallower), there are a number of site and ancillary structure variances we are requesting to create a better configuration of amenities or to fit required elements.

We will be requesting alternate compliance to plant the required canopy trees in the boulevard in front of the site, which will be better both for the trees and for providing summer shade to the street. This is in order to not interfere with Beacon's canopy trees to the east, not interfere with powerlines to the west along the alley, and to not shade the solar on the southern façade. Other variances are being requested to accommodate patio areas along the side and rear areas of the building to improve the livability of outdoor space for residents and provide a more actively monitored alley space which is equally enjoyable to the eye.

There is also a variance requested to not include required screening of an electrical transformer in order for the transformer to fit within conflicting setback requirements between Xcel and the City. Requirements for transformer screening are very uneven across different zones and locations in the city. For instance, the transformer at Nicollet Square is unscreened, even though it is visible from 37th Street and ours will be behind our building and not able to be seen from 37th Street (but ours is required to be screened and theirs is not). In addition, view of our transformer will be obscured almost completely from view from the alley side by the trash enclosure.

Proposed Schedule

We have a Purchase Agreement with the owner of the site, Beacon Interfaith Housing. We have submitted a land use application and are tentatively scheduled to be before the Planning Commission on November 16. We anticipate a spring 2021 construction start and building opening in early spring 2022.

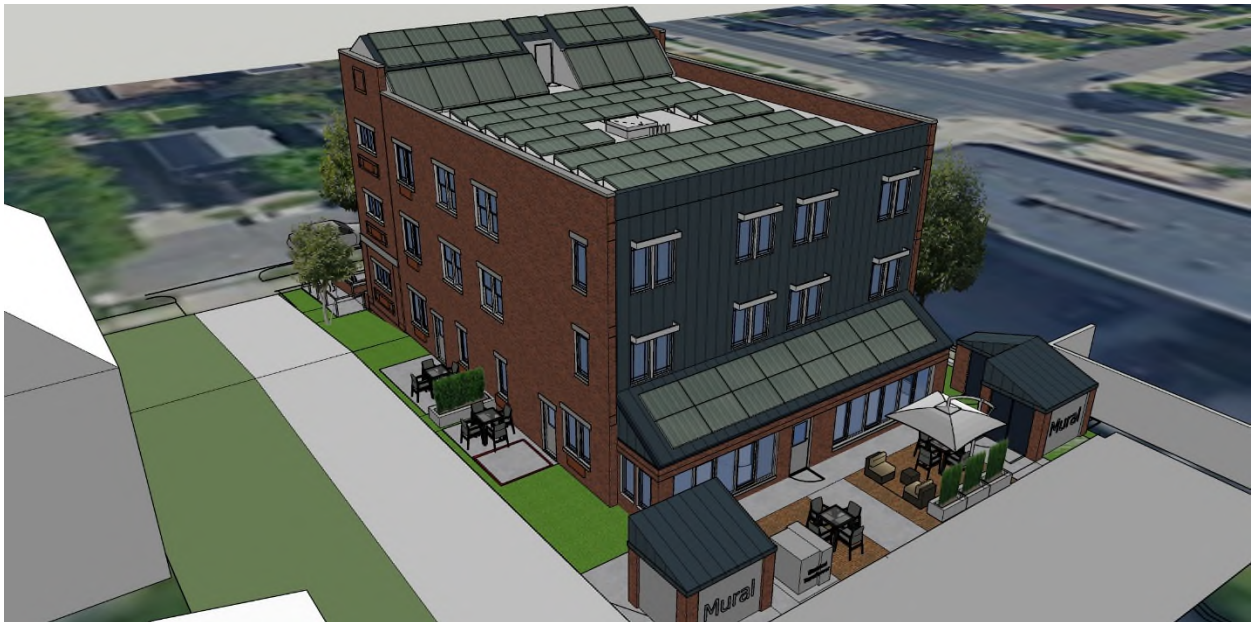
We appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Redevelopment Committee in August and look forward to our public meeting with the neighborhood in November.

Sincerely,

Jim & Faith Kumon
Principals
Heirloom Properties, LLC
612-454-0205



Front Elevation – Facing 37th Street



Rear view of site – Looking north along alley towards 37th Street
Area in grey at the bottom right is the access drive to Nicollet Square's parking lot