

MEMORANDUM

TO: Northfield Mayor and City Council Members

CC: Ben Martig, City Administrator and Mitzi Baker – Community Development Director,
Mikayla Schmidt - City Planner

FROM: Rebound/Stencil/Schmidt Development Team

DATE: September 15, 2021

RE: **Kraewood Development** Summary Items (Fact Sheet)

Thank you for the opportunity to present this important information to you in written form prior to your Council meeting on September 21st to discuss the preliminary plat for the Paulson Property. As a greater amount of information, and unfortunately, *misinformation*, has been shared through the community regarding the proposed Kraewood development, the Rebound/Stencil/Schmidt team working on the project thought it would be helpful to the Mayor and Council to provide a set of bullet points to summarize the project. In addition, several of the summary sections below are designed to directly address the main areas where misinformation has been disseminated. Although others may lead you to believe otherwise, the team is very comfortable that the proposed development fits the requirements of the City of Northfield, provides needed, quality housing (both market rate and at a level of affordability) and would do so in a fashion that is safe, within all legal standards, and that leads to benefits for the community. We welcome any questions or dialogue with the Mayor and Council, whether that be indirectly through City staff or directly at your meeting, in terms of the information provided below, or any other aspects of the development. Our goal remains to work closely with City staff and elected officials, within the City framework and process, to provide a development that is an asset to Northfield, providing needed housing for up to 130 families.

Project components

Development to include:

- 12-acre Total Development
- 22 Single family homes
- 2 Twin homes
- 1 Fourplex style homes
- 100 Unit Apartment Building

N2 Zoning: Proposed Development is in N2 Zoning District:

- Intended for residential neighborhoods that may include larger vacant areas within the city limits or areas that will be within city limits with a future annexation
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment
- Provides for a range of housing types and architectural styles
- Street Connectivity & Sidewalks
- District will include greenways and natural areas

Development meets infill, density, connectivity, and affordability goals of the city

Need for Housing

Rental:

- 2021 vacancy rate is .4%
- 525 rental units- Market rate and affordable needed between 2021-2026
- Current example: 5th Street Lofts:
- 100% occupied + waiting list
- 40 % of residents from outside of Northfield

Single Family:

- Extremely short market times for sale (45 days as of May 2021)
- Low inventory of available lots

Tree Preservation

- Property is not a “Forest.” This term typically applies to national parks, nature reserves, or protected areas.
- 0 trees on property when Paulson family acquired
- Primary trees planted became a Christmas tree farm
- Single family lots will be deeper than typical, in addition, a recommendation to ‘narrow’ the required ROW, will provide additional opportunity for existing tree preservation
- Project is working within the tree preservation guideline of the City of Northfield
- 244 nonexempt trees being removed: replacement requirement is 547 trees
- If ‘undesirable’ trees (which include box elder, cottonwood, willow, elm (invasive Siberian elm) and ash (ash borer disease) are excluded, the required replacement trees are reduced to 230. These undesirable trees would not be approved by the City of Northfield as replacements.

Traffic

- Multiple traffic studies have been completed
- Results indicate the project has a negligible effect on the traffic in the area.
- Studies from both Swing Traffic consultants and city staff indicate the intersections around the neighborhood remain at level A or B. All well below city standards
- Traffic concerns voiced by others are not an outcome of the project, but either from past experience or perceived concerns
- Development is on record that it will work with the school district and city regarding the pedestrian crossing of Lincoln Parkway at the school property.

Rusty Patched Bumblebee

- The US Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that critical habitat is not warranted for the rusty patched bumble bee
- The Service found that the rusty patched is a habitat generalist and can find the habitat it needs in a variety of areas including prairies, woodland marshes and agricultural landscapes
- “Modification or curtailment of the rusty patched bumble bees’ habitat or range is not the primary threat to the species”

- Development is not aware that any specific portion of the Kraewood development contains the bumble bee.
- Current property owner states that they have never seen the rusty patched bumble bee on the property
- Development plans indicate that the open spaces, retention areas, etc. should be planted "... specific pollinator friendly perennial species...as recommended by the U of M extension, and U of M bee lab"

Carbon Footprint

- Carbon footprint of an apartment is roughly ½ of single-family home
- Carbon emitted from typical single-family home: 4.35 tons
- Carbon emitted from typical apartment unit is: 2.165 tons
- 100 single family homes: 435 tons/year
- 100 apartment units: 216.5 tons/year

Dedicated Open Space

- The project has always proposed providing a dedicated open space
- The Park Board has indicated they would prefer dedicated park land versus a fee in lieu of park dedication
- The development will make adjustments to provide the required .66 acres of dedicated park space, in addition to the other open spaces of **1.02 acres** provided in the development for storm retention, pollinator landscaped areas, etc.

Economic driver

- Project will create significant tax income for the city
- Current tax: \$3,636
- Future tax capacity potential of overall development: \$250,000 (during the TIF period request for the 100 apartments) up to an estimate of \$350,000 for the 100 apartments, 22 single family, 2 twin home units, and 1 fourplex

Housing TIF

- Request for TIF assistance to provide 40% of the apartments to residents earning 60% of area medium income
- Affordable rents: \$848-\$1,075 for studio-2-bedroom units:
- Market rate rent: \$950-\$1,450 for studio-2-bedroom units
- Project will bring 40 affordable apartments to Northfield that will allow employers the ability to promote housing options to their employees that commute to Northfield due to the lack of affordable units available in Northfield.