

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development—Planning Division**  
**Site Plan Review (revision of BZZ-2470)**  
**BZZ-2698**

**Hearing Date:** 11/14/05

**Date Application Deemed Complete:** 10/21/05

**End of 60-Day Decision Period:** 12/21/05

**End of Second 60-Day Period:** N/A

**Applicant:** CommonBond Communities, Jon Weiss, 328 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102-1900

**Address of Property:** 4550 Humboldt Ave. N. After replatting, the proposed Planned Residential Development will include three parcels, two with separate addresses:

- Shingle Creek Commons at 4600 Humboldt Ave. N.
- Kingsley Commons at 4550 Humboldt Ave. N.

**Contact Person and Phone:** Bekah Padilla, Miller Hanson Partners, 1201 Hawthorne Ave. Minneapolis, MN 55403, 612-332-5420, fax: 612-333-5425, bpadilla@millerhanson.com.

**Staff Contact Person and Phone:** J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner. Phone: 612-673-2347; facsimile: 673-2728; TDD: 673-2157; e-mail: [michael.orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:michael.orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

**Ward:** 4      **Neighborhood Organization:** Shingle Creek Neighborhood Revitalization Program and Lind-Bohanon Neighborhood Association

**Existing Zoning:**

- R5, Multiple-Family District
- Shoreland Overlay District (northeast corner of site only, refer to Attachment X)

**Zoning Plate Number:** 2

**Proposed Use:** Application by CommonBond Communities to develop, own, and manage an affordable housing community for low-income people with multiple sclerosis and similar diseases. The project, Kingsley Commons, will be a 2-to-3-story development with 25 units (including a caretaker unit) and 25 parking spaces, all of which will be handicap accessible.

**Prior approvals (BZZ-2470 approved by the Planning Commission on 8/29/05):**

- Conditional use permits:
  - Required as a Planned Residential Development
  - To increase the height in the Shoreland Overlay District from 2 ½ stories or 35 ft., whichever is lower, to 3 stories and 41 ft.
- Site plan review

**If you need more information or have special needs, please call the  
Minneapolis Planning Department at 612-673-2597.**

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- Preliminary plat (PL-175)

**Concurrent Review:** Revision of the approved site plan review permit per Chapter 530 of the Zoning Code.

**Applicable zoning code provisions:** Site plan review permit per Chapter 530 of the Zoning Code.

## **BACKGROUND**

The staff report for this project (BZZ-2470 for the 8/29/05 Planning Commission hearing) included a detailed project description. The applicant proposes to modify the building materials and make other modifications to the site plan. The proposed site plan changes are minor and will have no substantive effect on the approved site plan. Attachment 7 includes a description of the proposed changes and Attachments 5 and 6 provide site drawings that show the plans that were previously approved (BZZ-2470) and currently proposed (BZZ-2698) respectively.

It is worth noting that the applicant previously sought a fence height variance to install a 20-ft. sound barrier on the south side of the site to mitigate the noise from the adjacent railroad operations. Planning staff recommended denial and that the applicant use additional landscaping measures as an alternative. The Planning Commission agreed and denied the variance. The revised site plan includes the additional landscaping as proposed by staff.

The proposed building material changes include an upgrade from rock face CMU (cementitious masonry unit) to brick, and replacement of higher grade cementitious lap siding and standing seam metal siding with vinyl siding. The proposed use of brick and vinyl siding will match the materials on the existing building included in the Planned Unit Development, Shingle Creek Commons.

## **SITE PLAN REVIEW**

### **Findings as Required By the Minneapolis Zoning for Site Plan Review**

#### **Required Findings for Site Plan Review**

- a. The site plan conforms to all applicable standards of Chapter 530, Site Plan Review. (See Section A Below for Evaluation.)**
- b. The site plan conforms to all applicable regulations of the zoning ordinance and is consistent with applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable small area plans adopted by the city council. (See Section B Below for Evaluation.)**

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**Section A: Conformance with Chapter 530 of Zoning Code**

**BUILDING PLACEMENT AND FAÇADE:**

- Placement of the building shall reinforce the street wall, maximize natural surveillance and visibility, and facilitate pedestrian access and circulation.
- First floor of the building shall be located not more than eight (8) feet from the front lot line (except in C3S District or where a greater yard is required by the zoning ordinance). If located on corner lot, the building wall abutting each street shall be subject to this requirement.
- The area between the building and the lot line shall include amenities.
- The building shall be oriented so that at least one (1) principal entrance faces the public street. In the case of a corner lot, the principal entrance shall face the front lot line.
- Except in the C3S District, on-site accessory parking facilities shall be located to the rear or interior of the site, within the principal building served, or entirely below grade.
- For new construction, the building walls shall provide architectural detail and shall contain windows as required by Chapter 530 in order to create visual interest and to increase security of adjacent outdoor spaces by maximizing natural surveillance and visibility.
- In larger buildings, architectural elements, including recesses or projections, windows and entries, shall be emphasized to divide the building into smaller identifiable sections.
- Blank, uninterrupted walls that do not include windows, entries, recesses or projections, or other architectural elements, shall not exceed twenty five (25) feet in length.
- Exterior materials shall be durable, including but not limited to masonry, brick, stone, stucco, wood, metal, and glass.
- The exterior materials and appearance of the rear and side walls of any building shall be similar to and compatible with the front of the building.
- The use of plain face concrete block as an exterior material shall be prohibited fronting along a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or adjacent to a residence or office residence district.
- Entrances and windows:
  - Residential uses:

Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as porches and roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Twenty (20) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:

    - a. Windows shall be vertical in proportion.
    - b. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.
  - Nonresidential uses:

Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Thirty (30) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:

    - a. Windows shall be vertical in proportion.
    - b. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.
    - c. The bottom of any window used to satisfy the ground floor window requirement may not be more than four (4) feet above the adjacent grade.
    - d. First floor or ground floor windows shall have clear or lightly tinted glass with a visible light transmittance ratio of 0.6 or higher.
    - e. First floor or ground floor windows shall allow views into and out of the building at eye level. Shelving, mechanical equipment or other similar fixtures shall not block views into and out of the building in the area between four (4) and seven (7) feet above the adjacent

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grade. However, window area in excess of the minimum required area shall not be required to allow views into and out of the building.

- f. Industrial uses in Table 550-1, Principal Industrial Uses in the Industrial Districts, may provide less than thirty (30) percent windows on the walls that face an on-site parking lot, provided the parking lot is not located between the building and a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway.

Minimum window area shall be measured as indicated in section 530.120 of the zoning code.

- The form and pitch of roof lines shall be similar to surrounding buildings.
- **Parking Garages:** The exterior design shall ensure that sloped floors do not dominate the appearance of the walls and that vehicles are screened from view. At least thirty (30) percent of the first floor building wall that faces a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall be occupied by active uses, or shall be designed with architectural detail or windows, including display windows, that create visual interest.

**Conformance:**

- The building is set back 255 feet from the property line on Humboldt Ave. N. and the principal entrance faces Humboldt Ave. The proposed plat designates the large area between the building site and the street as Outlot A. The applicant intends to develop this lot for housing at some undetermined date in the future. As a Planned Residential Development, the official front lot line is in front of the existing Shingle Creek Commons project. This building is 20 ft. from the property line.
- Pedestrian access is via an existing bituminous walkway from the sidewalk on Humboldt Ave. to the building's front entrance, which faces Humboldt Ave.
- Six parking stalls are located to the south side of the building. Until there is development on Outlot A, the other 19 parking stalls are between the building and Humboldt Ave. The west side of Lot 1 is a side lot line and these stalls are thus located to the side of the building consistent with the Code's requirement that on-site accessory parking facilities to be located to the rear or interior of the site. The applicant will landscape Outlot A such that it will serve in the interim as the required amenity between Humboldt and the building and parking. When Outlot A is developed, these concerns will be moot.
- Building materials include vinyl lap siding and vertical vinyl siding on the walls for accent. The first 7 or so feet of the base of the building will have brick. . The proposed use of brick and vinyl siding will match the materials on the existing building included in the Planned Unit Development, Shingle Creek Commons. The roof will be pitched and have asphalt shingles. All sides of the building will be compatible with each other, and all include windows and architectural details.
- There will be no blank walls in excess of 25 feet in width.
- The windows will be of clear glass; they are evenly distributed, and will have a vertical orientation.
- The percentage of glass is as follows:

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	<b>Elevations</b>			
	<b>West</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>
Fronts on	Humboldt Ave. (entrance)	Vacant land	Side of Shingle Creek Commons	Parking lot and railroad ROW
First Floor Code*	20%	N/A	20%**	20%
First Floor Plan	40%	40%	21%***	17%
Other Floor Code*	10%	N/A	10%**	10%
Other Floor Plan	23%	23%	17%	17%
<p>* Code applies to walls that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot (does not apply to alleys).  ** This assumes the public pathway on the north side of the building will continue to be owned by Hennepin County.  *** Not shown on the north elevation is the single-story community room. This increases the window percentage to 21%.</p>				

- Architectural details and a projected foyer make the building entrance more prominent.

**ACCESS AND CIRCULATION:**

- Clear and well-lighted walkways of at least four (4) feet in width shall connect building entrances to the adjacent public sidewalk and to any parking facilities located on the site.
- Transit shelters shall be well lighted, weather protected and shall be placed in locations that promote security.
- Vehicular access and circulation shall be designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic and surrounding residential uses.
- Traffic shall be directed to minimize impact upon residential properties and shall be subject to section 530.150 (b) related to alley access.
- Site plans shall minimize the use of impervious surfaces.

**Conformance:**

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- Hennepin County maintains an existing 10-ft.-wide asphalt path which extends from the sidewalk on Humboldt Ave. to sidewalks to be built on the northern side of the site. The sidewalks connect to the three building entrances on the front (west side) of the building and to the Shingle Creek Commons building. There is a rear access to the patio and gazebo.
- Vehicular access is via the Shingle Creek Commons property and there are clearly marked intersections with crossing pedestrian sidewalks and the County's path.
- The project minimizes impervious surfaces. All areas not used for buildings, access or patios are fully landscaped.
- The project will have no substantive effect on traffic, parking, and access.

**LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING:**

- The composition and location of landscaped areas shall complement the scale of the development and its surroundings.
- Not less than twenty (20) percent of the site not occupied by buildings, including all required landscaped yards, shall be landscaped as specified in section 530.160 (a).
- Required screening shall be six (6) feet in height, unless otherwise specified, except in required front yards where such screening shall be three (3) feet in height.
- Except as otherwise provided, required screening shall be at least ninety-five (95) percent opaque throughout the year. Screening shall be satisfied by one or a combination of the following:
  - A decorative fence.
  - A masonry wall.
  - A hedge.
- Parking and loading facilities located along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall comply with section 530.170 (b), including providing landscape yards along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway and abutting or across an alley from a residence or office residence district, or any permitted or conditional residential use.
- The corners of parking lots where rows of parking spaces leave areas unavailable for parking or vehicular circulation shall be landscaped as specified for a required landscaped yard. Such spaces may include architectural features such as benches, kiosks or bicycle parking.
- In parking lots of ten (10) spaces or more, no parking space shall be located more than fifty (50) feet from the center of an on-site deciduous tree. Tree islands located within the interior of a parking lot shall have a minimum width of seven (7) feet in any direction.
- All other areas not governed by sections 530.160 and 530.170 and not occupied by buildings, parking and loading facilities or driveways, shall be covered with turf grass, native grasses or other perennial flowering plants, vines, mulch, shrubs or trees.
- Installation and maintenance of all landscape materials shall comply with the standards outlined in section 530.210.
- The city planning commission may approve the substitution or reduction of landscaped plant materials, landscaped area or other landscaping or screening standards, subject to section 530.80, as provided in section 530.220.

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**Conformance:**

- As regards Lot 1, the lot area less the building footprint (55,707-6,647) yields a net site of 46,060 sq. ft. The Code requires a minimum of 9,212 sq. ft. of landscaping, 19 trees and 93 shrubs. With the exception of the service drive, sidewalks, and the patio, the entire site is landscaped (22,120 sq. ft.). This equals 48% of the net site. The project will include 40 canopy trees, and 715 smaller trees and shrubs.
- A row of canopy trees and under-story trees and smaller shrubs on the east and north sides the of the parking lot effectively screen it from the street and the County's path that leads to the Parkway.
- Outlot A has a noise berm on the south side and numerous existing trees and shrubs primarily on the south and east sides. The applicant will plant the site with sod and preserve existing trees. When this lot is ready for development, the owner will submit a landscape plan with the application to amend the Planned Residential Development.

**ADDITIONAL STANDARDS:**

- All parking lots and driveways shall be designed with wheel stops or discontinuous curbing to provide on-site retention and filtration of stormwater. Where on-site retention and filtration is not practical, the parking lot shall be defined by six (6) inch by six (6) inch continuous concrete curb.
- Lighting shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 535 and Chapter 541. A lighting diagram may be required.
- Parking and loading facilities and all other areas upon which vehicles may be located shall be screened to avoid headlights shining onto residential properties.
- To the extent practical, site plans shall minimize the blocking of views of important elements of the city.
- To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize shadowing on public spaces and adjacent properties.
- To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize the generation of wind currents at ground level.
- Site plans shall include crime prevention design elements as specified in section 530.260 related to:
  - Natural surveillance and visibility
  - Lighting levels
  - Territorial reinforcement and space delineation
  - Natural access control
- To the extent practical, site plans shall include the rehabilitation and integration of locally designated historic structures or structures that have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated. Where rehabilitation is not feasible, the development shall include the reuse of significant features of historic buildings.

**Conformance:**

- Lighting will be consistent with the Code through the use of full cut-off fixtures and proper placement.
- The project will not block views of important elements of the city nor create any substantive shadows on adjacent buildings and open spaces.
- At only 3 floors, the building will have no significant impact on the generation of pedestrian-level winds.
- The site design and landscape plan allows views from the public sidewalk and the County's path into the site. The landscape plan includes rows of canopy trees and lower shrubs which will allow visibility in the important 2-to-5-foot range. Lighting will include full cut-off fixtures that will minimize glare while providing an overall acceptable level of lighting.

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Section B: Conformance with All Applicable Zoning Code Provisions and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Applicable Small Area Plans Adopted by the City Council

**Zoning Code:** The proposed use is conditional in the R5 District and approved on 8/29/05.

**Off-Street Parking and Loading:** Chapter 541 requires not less than one parking space per dwelling unit in the R5 District. The project meets the minimum parking requirements and meets the loading requirements. Loading will be accomplished via the elevator that accesses all levels of the building.

**Maximum Floor Area:** The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) in the R5 District is 2.0. Lot 1 is 55,707 sq. ft. and the project has a gross floor area of 26,027 sq. ft., which equals an FAR of 0.5.

**Building Height:** Building height in the R5 District is limited to 4 stories or 56 feet, whichever is less. The project will be 3 stories and 41 ft. high.

**Minimum Lot Area:** The minimum lot area in the R5 District for Planned Residential Developments is 900 sq. ft. per unit. The lot area per unit for the project is 2,228 sq. ft.

**Yard Requirements:** The R5 District includes the following yard requirements for this three-story Planned Residential Development: Front yard (west side of Outlot A): 15 ft. Side yard (south side: 9 ft. Rear yard (east side): 9 ft. The enclosed site plan shows a parking stall encroaching into the south side yard. The applicant shall revise the site plan to eliminate this inconsistency. The following table describes the yards in the event the applicant splits off Outlot A for development outside of the Planned Residential Development:<sup>1</sup>

	Lot 1		Outlot A
	Required	Proposed	Required
West side:	Side: 9 ft.	11 ft.	Front: 15 ft.
East side:	Rear: 9 ft.	19.5 ft.	Rear: 9 ft.
North side:	None	50 ft.	Side: 9 ft.
South side:	Side: 9 ft.	9 ft.	Side: 9 ft.

**Specific Development Standards:** Section 536.20 requires Planned residential Developments conform to the standards of Chapter 527. The project does conform to these standards as described in the section of this report addressing the conditional use permit.

**Hours of Operation:** N/A

**Signs:** Table 543-1 in the Zoning Code allows the conditional use permit to determine appropriate signage for Planned Residential Developments. The 6-ft. high, 33 sq. ft. Shingle Creek monument sign at the entrance to the campus will be replaced with a new sign of the same size that will contain the

<sup>1</sup> The PRD without Outlot A would still meet the 2-acre minimum in size at 3.74 acres.

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names of both buildings. The Code allows multiple-family dwellings (not in PRDs) to have an 8-ft. monument sign with 32 sq. ft.

**Refuse storage:** All storage of refuse and recyclable materials will be enclosed in the building and serviced by a truck that will come on to the site.

***Minneapolis Plan:***

**a. The City's Goals (selected goals):**

**Goal 1:** Increase the City's population and tax base by developing and supporting housing choices city-wide through preservation of existing housing and new construction.

**b. The *Minneapolis Plan* (adopted by the City Council in 2000):**

**Policy 4.2:** Minneapolis will coordinate land use and transportation planning on designated Community Corridors streets through attention to the mix and intensity of land uses, the pedestrian character and residential livability of the streets, and the type of transit service provided on these streets.

**Implementation Steps (selected):**

- Strengthen the residential character of Community Corridors by developing appropriate housing types that represent variety and a range of affordability levels.
- Promote more intensive residential development along these corridors where appropriate.

**Policy 4.9:** Minneapolis will grow by increasing its supply of housing.

**Implementation Steps (selected):**

- Support the development of new medium- and high-density housing in appropriate locations throughout the City.

**Policy 4.11:** Minneapolis will improve the availability of housing options for its residents.

**Implementation Steps (selected):**

- Increase the variety of housing styles and affordability levels available to prospective buyers and renters.
- Provide and maintain moderate and high-density residential areas.
- Promote the development of housing suitable for people and households in all life stages, and that can be adapted to accommodate changing housing needs over time.

**Policy 4.12:** Minneapolis will reasonably accommodate the housing needs of all of its citizens.

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**Implementation Steps:**

- Permanent housing for people with disabilities shall not be excluded by the zoning ordinance or other land use regulations from the benefit of residential surroundings. Special housing shall be available as needed and appropriately dispersed throughout the city.

**Policy 9.5: Minneapolis will support the development of residential dwellings of appropriate form and density.**

**Implementation Steps (selected):**

- Promote the development of well designed moderate density residential dwellings adjacent to one or more of the following land use features: Growth Centers, Commercial Corridors, Community Corridors and Activity Centers.

**Policy 9.22: Minneapolis will promote increased housing production in designated areas of the City in order to accommodate population growth.**

**Implementation Steps (selected):**

- Use both infill development and new development opportunities to increase housing in the city.
- Consistent with the City of Minneapolis adopted Housing Principles, develop strategies so that the variety of housing types throughout the city and its communities shall be increased, giving prospective buyers and renters greater choice in where they live.

**c. Petition’s Consistency with City Plans and Policies:** The following describes how the petition relates to the above goals and policies:

- The project is a medium-density-residential development consistent with the medium-to-high-density residential allowed in the R5, Multi-Family District. This is also consistent with the City’s first Goal and Policy 4.9, 4.11, and 9.22.
- The project provides housing for people with disabilities and for their families consistent with Policy 4.12.
- Policy 4.2 and 9.5 call for the promotion of well designed moderate density residential dwellings adjacent to certain land use features including Community Corridors. The Plan designates Humboldt Ave. N. in the vicinity of the site as a Community Corridor.
- Policies 4.16, 4.17, and 9.12 deal with designated Major Housing Sites and encourage medium-to-high-density residential “that is compatible with existing development in the area” and are “in close proximity to amenities or in locations where value will be sustained over time.” The Plan does not designate the area as a Major Housing Site but the project does provide high-density residential close to the significant park amenities the flank Shingle Creek Parkway.

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**Alternative Compliance:** The Planning Commission or zoning administrator may approve alternatives to any site plan review requirement upon finding any of the following:

- **The alternative meets the intent of the site plan chapter and the site plan includes amenities or improvements that address any adverse effects of the alternative. Site amenities may include but are not limited to additional open space, additional landscaping and screening, green roof, decorative pavers, ornamental metal fencing, architectural enhancements, transit facilities, bicycle facilities, preservation of natural resources, restoration of previously damaged natural environment, rehabilitation of existing structures that have been locally designated or have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated as historic structures, and design which is similar in form, scale and materials to existing structures on the site and to surrounding development.**
- **Strict adherence to the requirements is impractical because of site location or conditions and the proposed alternative meets the intent of this chapter.**
- **The proposed alternative is consistent with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council and meets the intent of this chapter.**

**Conformance:** The application meets all applicable provisions of the Zoning Code; no alternative compliance is warranted.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning & Economic Development – Planning Division for the site plan review application for 25 dwelling units in the proposed Kingsley Commons project at 4550 Humboldt Ave. N.:**

The Department of Community Planning & Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission **approve** the site plan review application for 25 dwelling units in the proposed Kingsley Commons project at 4550 Humboldt Ave. N. subject to the following:

1. CPED Planning staff review and approval of the final site, landscaping plans, and building elevations.
2. All site improvements shall be completed by November 15, 2007, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for noncompliance.

#### **Attachments:**

1. Zoning and lot lines in the vicinity
2. Primary and Overlay districts
3. Aerial photo
4. Project area of the Planned Unit Development
5. Project as approved per BZZ-2470 on 8/29/05
6. Project as proposed (pending BZZ-2698)
7. List of proposed changes
8. Photos of the site and surrounding buildings