

## Project overview:

- Please give a brief description of the project.  
Left Lane Ventures, LLC recently purchased a condemned, fire damaged single-family residence at 2607 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. The site is currently zoned R2B and designated Urban Neighborhood, Corridor 4 under the Minneapolis 2040 Plan. While the 2040 built form guidance calls for up to four stories, Left Lane proposes to build a three story, 12 unit multifamily structure that more appropriately takes into account the surrounding neighborhood context consisting of a mix of single family, smaller multifamily buildings and commercial structures. The project will be built with high quality materials, and will include landscaping that goes beyond the minimum requirements. Each unit will have access to outdoor space and no off street parking is contemplated. The project team consists of Left Lane Ventures (developer), Christian Dean Architectures (architect), and Dovetail Renovations, Inc. (contractor). This same team completed a similar project at 3251 Garfield Avenue South in Minneapolis in July of 2020. We reference that project as an example of the quality of the design, materials, and ongoing attention to maintenance the neighborhood should expect.
- How many units and what mix (studio, 1-bed, 2, bed, etc.)?  
12 units including 10 - 1BR units and Two - 2BR units
- Will there be any retail or other types of uses?  
No, the property is not zoned for retail.
- What currently exists on the site?  
When we purchased the lot there was a vacant condemned home. The home had experienced significant fire damage and was uninhabitable. The house was demolished shortly after we purchased the property in order to remove the ongoing safety hazard and blight posed by the condemned structure.
- What other buildings do you own/have you built in Whittier? How long do you typically hold properties before you sell them?  
This is our first project in Whittier but we have developed and own several other apartments throughout the city of Minneapolis. We built a similar project to the one we are proposing here at 3251 Garfield Avenue South and have recently broken ground on a project at 3128 Bryant Avenue South as well. Both developments are 12 units and on similar sized lots to 2607 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S. An image of the Garfield project is attached for your reference. We have also recently completed a 29 unit building, Verso, at 110 6th Avenue NE, and are under construction with The Aubrey at 4230 Nicollet Avenue South. We are long term holders and plan to own this building for a minimum of 10 years following completion.
- What variances, if any, will you be requesting?  
None
- What is your anticipated construction timeline?  
12 month build with an anticipated start date of June 2022.
- Please attach any renderings or plans developed so far.  
See attached

## Housing:

- How much do you anticipate charging, on average, for each unit type?  
Typically, lease rates for our projects of this type fall between 60 - 80% AMI which would be \$1180-\$1574 for a 1BR unit and \$1417-\$1889 for a 2BR unit. We anticipate 1BR rents here to be in the low to mid-point of our typical range.
- What steps have you taken to ensure greater affordability in your property? Would you consider emerging strategies, such as utilizing the 4d tax credit, to bring down rents on select units?  
We believe our product offers a naturally affordable alternative to other new market rate construction in the market as our rents are typically 10-15% less on rents than larger developments. That said, we continue to stay informed of new programs aimed at providing owners opportunities to decrease rents while maintaining viable economics and do consider them as they become available.
- Who will your management company be?  
We have not yet selected a management company for this property, but currently contract for professional management with both MN Apartments and the Stepping Stone Group. It is likely that one of those two groups will manage this property. But if not, the neighborhood can be assured that we will select a reputable management company with a strong track record managing urban apartments. Our reputation as developers and owners is tied to the quality of management in our buildings. We take that seriously.
- What screening criteria will you use for residents?  
Interested residents are required to submit a rental application. Our process includes a background check, credit check, and proof of income.
- If the building will replace any current housing units, how have you engaged with those residents? What plans have been made to enable them to stay in the new building or relocate?  
N/A

## Transportation:

- How transit-connected is the site, and have you considered support for alternative methods of transportation (bike parking for residents and guests, ride share, etc.)?  
We believe the site has great public transit options given the proximity to high frequency bus lines (Specifically Bus Lines 11 & 18 which run along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Nicollet and provide convenient access downtown). For the second part of your question, the building will have a secure, enclosed bike room on the first floor that will have a minimum of 12 bike spaces.
- How many parking spots (total and per unit)?  
No onsite parking will be provided which is in line with City of Minneapolis policy.
- What have you done to ensure a high-quality pedestrian experience?

As stated above, we are proposing a three-story building rather than the four stories that would be allowed per 2040. Further, we direct you to the narrative regarding design below.

- Have you done any studies on the impact of the additional traffic/parking?  
Given the small size of the building (12 units) we do not anticipate a material impact on either traffic or parking in the area. In our experience, tenants are no different than homeowners with respect to their views on parking. Meaning, those who own cars will self select out of a building that does not provide parking if they determine it will be challenging to find on street parking within a block of their unit. For that reason, we find that many people occupying our buildings with limited or no parking do not have cars. Instead, they rely on public transportation and other alternative methods (bike, ride apps, etc).
- How will you deal with traffic diversions during construction?  
Aside from the need to block off one lane of traffic for a few days while we install our sewer and water connections, and the potential occasional inconvenience of a lane of traffic being blocked while a material delivery is made, we do not anticipate the need for any traffic diversions during construction.

#### Design:

- From a design perspective, how does this project mesh with the surrounding neighborhood?  
The surrounding neighborhood is anchored by two world class art institutions, MCAD and MIA. In addition, Eat Street, a creative hub of its own, is just three blocks to the West. We want to acknowledge the neighborhood's artistic roots and classic architecture by designing and building a timeless modern structure built of high-quality materials that gives a nod to MCAD and the MIA and is itself a piece of art. Thus, the reason why we have chosen to work with an award-winning architect in Christian Dean Architecture.

We are taking a lot of contextual clues from MCAD and MIA, located just north of the site. Views from the site looking north are open long views of the MCAD campus, specifically the main public entrance to the campus and the main studio building (including a large colorful mural). We want our project to visually and programmatically connect to the campus.

The primary studio building on campus is a white brick and bronze metal building by Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. He also designed the lobby and portions of the MIA in the same material palette. This is our inspirational touchstone and we are proposing white brick as the signature material on the facade.

We are intrigued by the idea of expressing the concept of 'facade' very literally: treating the front of the building as a 'canvas' and using a more compositional approach to openings. To further emphasize the 'facade' quality, we propose switching from brick on the front to stucco and metal on the sides of the building.

The side elevations play with the idea of the 'artist's garret' apartment (habitable attic spaces in traditional French mansard roofs). The walls tip to create the 'mansard roof' expression and this minor move results in a unique form lessening the boxiness and mass of the building. The tipped walls also allow us to create dormer windows that provide interest on these elevations. We think keeping the palette very simple and white inside and out will provide a neutral 'studio' environment that would be attractive to creative tenants.

- How have the Whittier Design Guidelines influence the project?  
Looking at the Whittier Design Guidelines, it would appear that our site falls just outside the area of applicability. Nonetheless, our proposed project does take many of the proposed guidelines into account. For example, in keeping with Whittier's guidelines, and as described above, we have avoided the use of primary colors as major elements of the façade, opting instead for a simple white canvas that plays off of the MCAD campus to our North. We have also paid particular attention to incorporating architectural elements that give the building sculptural elements that provide visual interest.

Further, we note that our building exterior is comprised of high quality traditional materials; brick, stucco, and architectural metal. We believe our building design is forward in nature and will prove to be an enduring and perhaps iconic architectural asset to the neighborhood. That is certainly our intent. You will also note that we have taken steps to ensure that the project is contextually appropriate, and pedestrian friendly including the use of abundant glazing facing the street, inset balconies, and design features aimed at reducing the feeling of bulkiness and mass. Careful attention will also be paid to our landscape design, an important part of the overall aesthetic of our project and an element that we do not treat as an afterthought. See our project at 3251 Garfield Avenue South as an example of our commitment to landscape design and the corresponding pedestrian experience (but do note that the landscaping there has not yet matured). In a nutshell, we believe our project is well aligned with the neighborhood's guidelines and rather than providing a lengthy narrative will let the project speak for itself and the neighborhood provide its feedback.

- What materials are you using in the building?  
White brick on the front and stucco and architectural metal on the sides of the building.
- Will public art be featured on the site?  
Public art is not being contemplated at this time, but careful attention has been paid to the street facing façade of the building with the intention of providing artistic visual interest. Equal attention will be paid to the landscaping.
- How will you accommodate ADA accessibility?  
Our building will meet or exceed all applicable ADA code requirements.

#### **Environment:**

- What are the environmental features of your project (e.g., porous surfaces, green roofs, resident compost access, solar energy)?  
The project will comply with all City of Minneapolis code requirements regarding porous surfaces (note there is no parking lot). We will provide organic recycling. We are not currently planning for a green roof or solar energy.
- What green space (total and public access) does your project have?

As a small urban infill multifamily building, our project does not incorporate publicly accessible green space. As described above, landscaping is an important component to the overall design.

- Will your project include resident composting?  
We will provide organic recycling.

**Other community benefits:**

- What community amenities will you offer for non-residents?  
The project does not include amenities. We view the neighborhood and its abundant locally owned businesses as the primary amenity to the project.
- As a property owner, developer, property manager, how will you interact with the Whittier community?  
We are new to Whittier and look forward to learning about opportunities to engage with the neighborhood and incorporate ourselves into the community. We believe the neighborhood is a gem and hope to prove ourselves worthy contributors and be welcomed back to create additional projects.