

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Date: November 16, 2017

To: Reno City Planning Commission

Subject: **5.3. Staff Report (For Possible Action): Case No. LDC18-00012 (Kappa Alpha Order) - A request has been made for a special use permit to allow for the establishment of a fraternity or sorority house within the Multifamily - 30 units to the acre (MF30) zone. The ±0.48 acre site (1052 & 1058 Bell Street) is located on the east side of Bell Street, ±270 feet south of its intersection with West 11th Street. The site has a Master Plan Land Use designation of Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Area. hrm**

From: Heather Manzo, Assistant Planner

Ward #: 5

Case No.: LDC18-00012 (Kappa Alpha Order)

Applicant: Kappa Alpha Order

APN Number: 007-143-15 & 16

Request: A request has been made for a special use permit to allow for the establishment of a fraternity or sorority house within the Multifamily - 30 units to the acre (MF30) zone.

Location: The ±0.48 acre site (1052 & 1058 Bell Street) is located on the east side of Bell Street, ±270 feet south of its intersection with West 11th Street. The site has a Master Plan Land Use designation of Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Area.

Proposed Motion: Based upon compliance with the applicable findings I move to approve the special use permit, subject to conditions.

Recommended Conditions of Approval:

All conditions shall be met to the satisfaction of Community Development Department staff, unless otherwise noted.

1. The project shall comply with all applicable City codes, plans, reports, materials, etc., as submitted. In the event of a conflict between said plans, reports, materials

and City codes, City codes in effect at the time the application is submitted, shall prevail.

2. The applicant shall apply for all building permits for the project within twelve months from the date of final approval, and continuously maintain the validity of those permits, or this approval shall be null and void.
3. Prior to the issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall attach a copy of the final approval letter.
4. Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for a change of use to establish the fraternity use, the applicant shall have plans approved and work completed. Until such time that work is complete and a certificate of occupancy has been issued, the residence adjacent to Bell Street shall be utilized as a single family residence.
5. The fraternity house shall be limited to a maximum of 22 members residing at the site.
6. The hours of operation, identified as house hours where non-residents are permitted on site, shall be limited to between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.
7. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall have plans approved that demonstrate all fences located within the front yard meet the standards contained in Reno Municipal Code (RMC) 18.12.1401 (Fences) or have been removed. Prior to the issuance of a permit, the applicant shall have plans approved that demonstrate removal of the existing fence between the east structure and southern property line on the southeast portion of the site if vehicular access is provided through the site to the alley.
8. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall have plans approved for site lighting within the parking area and common areas associated with the fraternity house.
9. Prior to the approval of a building permit, the applicant shall have landscape plans approved that are prepared by a licensed professional that identify a minimum of 4,200 square feet of landscape area. The landscape area shall, at a minimum, include areas visible from the rights-of-way and a five foot wide landscape buffer along the entire length of the south property line. One additional tree shall be installed within the southern landscape buffer. Existing mature trees shall be preserved.
10. The site shall be limited to non-illuminated signage only.
11. Prior to the establishment of a fraternity use at the site, the applicant shall have plans approved and complete improvements required by the current edition of the

International Fire Code, as amended and adopted by the City of Reno in force at the time of development. Such improvements shall include the installation of fire sprinklers and alarm system to the approval of the Reno Fire Department.

12. Prior to the issuance of any permit or business license to establish the use, the applicant shall provide a recorded Reversionary Map combining the site parcels into one parcel.
13. Prior to the issuance of any permit or business license, whichever occurs first, the applicant shall have plans approved to widen the existing driveway from the parking area onto Bell Street to a minimum width of 20 feet to accommodate two-way access or extend the driveway to the alley with a minimum 14 foot wide one-way drive aisle. If a one-way access is provided, signs shall be placed at the driveway approach and exit to direct the flow of traffic.
14. Prior to the issuance of any building permit or business license to establish the use, the applicant shall have plans approved to patch, slurry seal and stripe the existing asphalt parking and driveway area.
15. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall have plans approved for all public improvements and shall obtain associated encroachment and excavation permits.

Background: This SUP is a request to allow for the establishment of a fraternity house, defined in RMC 18.24 as any building occupied and maintained by a social association of college students, or where organization sponsored functions are regularly held. The applicant has proposed use of the entire site, including both existing buildings, for the fraternity to operate as illustrated in the proposed site plan and building floor plans (**Exhibit A**).

The ±21,000 square foot site consists of two parcels improved with two existing structures. A ±3,318 square foot single family residence constructed in 1946 and an additional structure, totaling approximately 2,775 square feet in size that Washoe County Assessor records estimate was constructed in the early 1960s. The ±2,775 square foot structure is located on the east side of the site adjacent to the alley and is constructed across the two site parcels. The applicant stated that at the time of purchase in 1990, the site operated as a sorority. There have been numerous Code Enforcement actions taken over the past 11 years regarding this site, generally having to do with debris or garbage on the site or work conducted without a permit. One of the noted violations was the operation of a boarding or rooming house without the approval of a special use permit (SUP).

The Alpha Chi Omega sorority was located at this site as recently as 1977 when a permit was issued for a building addition. It is unclear when the sorority use ceased to operate at this location, but previous records provided by the property owner indicate the sorority use continued until the early 2000s.

The most recent activity on the property is an SUP to allow for the establishment of a boarding or rooming house (LDC16-00063 - Clark Kayler Boarding House) which was approved by the Planning Commission on June 1, 2016. The SUP conditions of approval have not been satisfied and the use is not legally established. Since there has not been any permit activity to meet the conditions of approval and establish the use, the SUP is due to expire on December 1, 2017.

Analysis:

Land Use Compatibility: Uses surrounding the site consist of a fraternity/sorority house to the east, multifamily to the south and single family residences to the west and north. The site is located approximately one third of a mile from the University of Nevada, Reno campus. The City is experiencing an increase in demand for student housing in close proximity to the University.

The applicant, Kappa Alpha Order, has provided an operations plan (**Exhibit B**) that indicates that the local chapter is comprised of approximately 75 members. The application materials state a request to allow a maximum of 22 members to reside at the fraternity. The operations plan further states that the house hours where non-residents are permitted on site are between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday and between 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Small social functions such as float-decorating and dance practice in association with school-sanctioned events including Homecoming and Greek week may occur onsite within the allowable house hours. Larger events such as formals, initiation and chapter meetings are proposed to be located off site. Conditions specifically limiting the allowable number of residents and hours of operation are recommended to ensure the use remains compatible with a primarily residential neighborhood (**Condition Nos. 4 through 6**).

The site is not anticipated to generate adverse environmental impacts nor cause a nuisance to area properties. Based on the application, operations plan and recommended conditions of approval, the fraternity is anticipated to be compatible with surrounding uses (**SUP findings a & f**).

Urban/Environmental Design: The applicant has occupied the site since approximately June 2017. Currently, two residents live within the ±3,318 square foot main house. Approximately 18 additional residents currently reside within the existing ±2,775 square foot building on the east side of the site adjacent to the alley. The only kitchen associated with the property is located within the north wing of the existing single family residence. The applicant has not proposed any modifications to the exterior or interior of the existing structures. Permits to change the use from single family residential to the fraternity are required to ensure the site complies with building and fire codes related to the fraternity use.

The residence that fronts Bell Street is a two story single family residence while the structure adjacent to the alley is a single story ±14.3 feet tall building (**Exhibit A**). Both buildings are of brick construction and painted brown. There are a variety of building types within the area including single story, single family residences with front porches, multiple family development and fraternal organization houses. The size and scale of the existing buildings on site are consistent with the surrounding buildings within the neighborhood (**SUP finding a, e & h**).

A building permit (BLD16-02325) was issued that added exhaust fans and ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) switches to bathroom stalls to comply with code requirements for the restroom. This is the only permit of record since 2002. Based upon a site visit by City staff, it has been determined that this proposal will result in a change of use for the site. A permit is required that demonstrates the site meets code standards for the requested use. It is anticipated that the building permit will include necessary site work in addition to interior work that will bring the site into compliance with RMC as it relates to the requested use.

The site is proposed to retain the ten existing rooms in the east building. The floor plan for the main house adjacent to Bell Street identifies two bedrooms and a study. The room identified as a study, for the purpose of calculating parking, has been included as a bedroom. The parking rate for a fraternity house is 0.9 parking spaces for every rooming unit. Overall, the site has a total of 13 bedrooms; therefore the site requires 12 parking spaces. The proposed site plan (**Exhibit A**) identifies all required parking is being provided on-site. All proposed onsite parking spaces will be required to be improved per parking lot design requirements RMC 18.12.1101 (Off Street Parking and Loading). The applicant has proposed a maximum of 20 fraternity house residents. At this time, there are 20 residents living at the site, of which 12 drive vehicles. Based on the site's proximity to the University of Nevada, Reno campus and public transportation, it is anticipated that the number of parking spaces required by RMC is sufficient to serve the site. In addition to the parking provided on-site, on street parking is available on Bell Street.

Fences: The site plan identifies an existing chain link fence located between the east building and the southern property line. If the site is approved with one-way circulation, it is recommended this fence be removed (**Condition 7**).

Lighting: The applicant did not provide a site lighting plan, but has expressed concerns regarding site security. The site will be required to meet lighting requirements for parking lots as outlined in RMC 18.12.1104(h)(5) (Parking Lot Lighting) (**Condition 8**).

Landscaping: The multifamily zone requires 20% of the site (4,200 square feet) be landscaped. The site plan provided identifies 17 existing mature trees and approximately 40 existing shrubs located throughout the site. The site has a wide parkway strip with mature trees along Bell

Street. Per RMC Section 18.12.1205(e)(2) (Parking Lot Edge Landscaping), a minimum landscape area of five feet is required along the parking lot edge. As part of this approval, it is recommended that a landscape and irrigation plan prepared by a licensed professional, be submitted with the building permit. The applicant has identified a minimum of three additional trees and ±67 additional shrubs to be located within the parkway strip along Bell Street, the northeast and southeast corners of the site adjacent to parking areas. While it is acceptable to provide landscape area in excess of code requirements as the applicant has proposed, the applicant should be required to provide a minimum of 4,200 square feet of landscape area, primarily located in areas visible from the public rights-of-way and to provide a minimum five foot wide landscape buffer located between the parking area and the south property line **(Condition 9)**.

Trash Enclosure: Residential trash totes are currently located near the alley and are not screened from public view. The use requires a commercial dumpster. The applicant should be required to provide a trash enclosure that complies with the standards contained in RMC Section 18.12.1208(c) (Storage, Loading Area and Utility Screening) and is accessed from the one-way alley **(SUP finding f)**.

Signs: One sign has been proposed in association with this request **(Exhibit C)**. The sign square footage was not provided, but the sign will be limited to 20 square feet in size based on RMC 18.16 (Signs). Since the site is located within a primarily residential area, it is recommended that the sign be non-illuminated **(Condition No. 10) (SUP finding g)**.

Public Safety: Comments received from Reno Fire Department staff indicate that improvements to the site will be required due to the change of use. These additional improvements will at a minimum be required to include a fire sprinkler and alarm system. It should be noted that fire sprinkler systems for single family residences would not meet International Fire Code standards for a fraternity. The fraternity use will require 13R sprinklers and associated alarm systems **(Condition 11)**. The applicant is in the process of obtaining multiple fire system quotes to expedite the permitting process should this SUP be approved **(SUP finding c)**.

The Reno Police Department staff provided a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) analysis and calls for service report and no significant issues were identified with this proposal **(Exhibit D)**.

Public Improvements: The site is existing and no impacts to sanitary sewer or drainage are anticipated from this request **(SUP finding c)**.

The property line bisects the eastern structure. Parking associated with the site is located on a separate adjacent parcel. The proposed parking lot should be located on the same parcel as the

use. A reversion to acreage map combining the parcels into a single parcel should be required prior to the issuance of any building permit or business license to establish the proposed use for the site (**Condition 12**).

Circulation: The existing driveway onto Bell Street currently serves two-way traffic for the existing parking lot, but does not meet the required driveway width for this use. There is existing sidewalk along the Bell Street frontage that appears to be in good condition. The driveway should be widened to be a minimum of 20 feet wide to accommodate two-way traffic or the driveway should be extended to the alley to provide one-way drive aisle access onto the site from Bell Street and exiting onto the one way alley. A one-way drive aisle shall be a minimum of 14 feet in width with appropriate signage to direct the flow of traffic (**Condition 13**). The existing asphalt surface within the driveway and proposed parking area is in poor condition and will need to be crack sealed, any necessary patches completed and the parking lot striped (**Condition 14**). The applicant should have plans approved for all public improvements including associated encroachment and excavation permits (**Condition 15**) (**SUP finding d**).

Master Plan: The project is consistent with the Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Master Plan Land Use designation on the site. As proposed and with recommended conditions, the project appears to be consistent with the following applicable Master Plan policies: The City should make every effort to retain mature trees as a part of the development process to continue to improve the City's environment (E-12); Site access and circulation should be safe, convenient, logical and minimize impacts onto adjoining roads (P-1); Mixed and multiple uses should be encouraged throughout Reno...whether large or small, should promote walkable neighborhoods with services, housing, employment and transit within close proximity to one another (CD-34) (**SUP finding b**).

West University Neighborhood Plan: As proposed and with recommended conditions, the project appears to be consistent with the following applicable West University Neighborhood Plan Goals and Policies: Encourage a college campus atmosphere in the neighborhood by supporting residential density and new non-residential development in appropriate locations while preserving the desirability of traditional residential areas (Policy 1.1); Installation of landscaping and maintenance of parkways is encouraged...(Policy 9.3) (**SUP finding b**).

General Code Compliance: This special use permit, if approved, will allow the applicant to obtain necessary permits to improve the site to accommodate the requested fraternity house use. Once the conditions of approval have been satisfied, the applicant may obtain necessary permits and business license to establish the use.

Other Reviewing Bodies: No applicable agency comments were received regarding this proposed project.

Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB): This project was reviewed by the Ward 5 NAB on September 12, 2017. Comments received were in support of the request. A copy of their comments is attached to this report (**Exhibit E**).

AREA DESCRIPTION			
	LAND USE	MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION	ZONING
NORTH	Single family residential	Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Area	MF30/WUNP
SOUTH	Multifamily residential	Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Area	MF30/WUNP
EAST	Sigma Nu Fraternity	Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Area	MF30/WUNP
WEST	Single family residential	Special Planning Area/West University Neighborhood Plan/Traditional Neighborhood Area	MF14/WUNP

Legal Requirements:

RMC 18.06.405(e)(1) Special Use Permit

FINDINGS:

Special Use Permit: General special use permit findings. Except where specifically noted, all special use permit applications shall require that all of the following general findings be met, as applicable.

- a. The proposed use is compatible with existing surrounding land uses and development.

- b. The project is in substantial conformance with the master plan.
- c. There are or will be adequate services and infrastructure to support the proposed development.
- d. The proposal adequately mitigates traffic impacts of the project and provides a safe pedestrian environment.
- e. The proposed site location and scale, intensity, density, height, layout, setbacks, and architectural and overall design of the development and the uses proposed, is appropriate to the area in which it is located.
- f. The project does not create adverse environmental impacts such as smoke, noise, glare, dust, vibrations, fumes, pollution or odor which would be detrimental to, or constitute a nuisance to area properties.
- g. Project signage is in character with project architecture and is compatible with or complementary to surrounding uses.
- h. The structure has been designed such that the window placement and height do not adversely affect the privacy of existing residential uses.

Attachments:

- Display Maps (PDF)
- Exhibit A - Site and Floor Plans (PDF)
- Exhibit B - Fraternity Operations Plan (PDF)
- Exhibit C - Sign (PDF)
- Exhibit D - Agency Comments (PDF)
- Exhibit E - NAB Comments(PDF)