



STAFF REPORT

Planning Commission Meeting: February 26, 2024

Application	PR23-0024: Preliminary Site Development Plan for St. John Paul II Parish		
Location	Located southwest of W. 168 th Terrace and S. Ridgeview Road		
Owner/Applicant	Dan Himmelberg, The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas		
Engineer	Doug Ubben, Jr.; Phelps Engineering, Inc.		
Staff Contact	Emily Carrillo, Senior Planner		

Site Area:	<u>23.55± acres</u>	Current Use:	<u>Farming/Agriculture</u>
Zoning:	<u>R-1 (Residential Single Family)</u>	Proposed Use:	<u>Religious Institution, School, and Cemetery</u>
Proposed Building Area:	<u>114,000 square feet</u>	Plat:	<u>Unplatted</u>

1. Introduction

The applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary site development plan for St. John Paul II Parish located south of 167th Street and east of S. Ridgeview Road. The 23-acre development will be constructed in five (5) phases with four (4) primary structures including a church, school, parish hall and rectory totaling over 114,000 square feet of building area combined. The development also includes a prominent central courtyard, soccer field and cemetery complete with columbaria and walking paths.

2. History

The subject property was annexed into the City in 2005 (Ord. 05-02). In 2017, this site was rezoned from County zoning to the R-1 District (RZ17-0014) and a preliminary plat (PP17-0051) was approved for the Boulder Ridge subdivision, which included 125 single-family lots on the subject property. Since then, the Boulder Ridge preliminary plat has expired, and the property has remained undeveloped.

3. Existing Conditions

The site includes one (1) large detached accessory building currently utilized for storage and agricultural purposes. The site gently slopes towards the existing stream corridor running along the south and western portion of the property. Most of the existing tree canopy is located along the north and south perimeter of the property where tree preservation is planned.



Aerial view of subject property.



View of the property looking east from S. Ridgeview Road.

4. Zoning Standards

- a. **Land Use** – The site is identified as Conventional Neighborhood on the Future Land Use Map of the Plan Olathe Comprehensive Plan which directly aligns with the existing R-1 District. The proposed religious institution and school uses are permitted by right in the R-1 (Residential Single Family) District.

The proposed cemetery has been classified as accessory to the primary religious institution use as defined in Ch. 18.50.020 of the UDO. The UDO defines accessory uses as “a use of a building or land which serves as an incidental function to and is customarily associated with, and located on the same lot or premise as, the main use of the premise” (UDO 18.90.020). UDO Section 18.50.020.H provides that the Planning Official has the authority to determine if a use is classified as accessory. The cemetery is commonly associated with a religious institution use and is incidental to this use as the cemetery will only be available to parish members and there are sufficient facilities on the property including parking to support this use.

- b. **Building Height** – Building heights for nonresidential buildings within the R-1 District are limited to 75-feet measured to the average height level between the eaves and ridge line. Ornamental tower features such as the church steeple, spires or belfries are exempt from the district’s height restrictions.

The proposed church building is 75-feet tall measured at the roof midpoint and includes an ornamental dome with cupola that extends an additional 95-feet, included in Phase 1 of the church. The school and parish hall are 45-feet tall as measured at the roof midpoint, and ornamental cupolas extend an additional 40-feet.

- c. **Setbacks** – All buildings meet the requirement for nonresidential buildings within the R-1 District that are taller than 35-feet to be setback from all property lines a distance at least equal to their height.

Rear yard setbacks in the R-1 District is a minimum of 25-feet. The columbaria structures within the proposed cemetery positioned to the rear of the property, maintain the required 25-foot rear yard setback from the east property line. The setback requirement does *not* apply to traditional raised headstones and non-raised headstones as they are not classified as structures. This standard is consistent with practices for existing cemeteries in Olathe and national standards, including the American Planning Association. The proposed development plan meets and exceeds all setback requirements.

5. Development Standards

- a. **Phasing** – The development includes a proposed phasing plan that includes five (5) distinct phases. The applicant intends to move forward with fundraising for Phase 1 over the next 1-2 years with estimated construction beginning in 2025-2026. Phase 1 includes an approximately 16,000 square foot portion of the church, construction of all access points to Ridgeview Road and street improvements. Phases 2-5 will be developed at a future date determined by demand to expand and an ongoing fundraising campaign.

- b. **Access/Streets** – Access to the site will be provided from Ridgeview Road. An additional 60-foot feet of arterial street right-of-way is proposed to be dedicated by the associated preliminary plat (PP23-0004) which was recently approved on the February 12th Planning Commission agenda. No other changes to roadways are proposed with this development.
- c. **Parking** – Per UDO 18.30.160, minimum parking required for civic and church/religious assemblies is one (1) stall per four (4) seats or building capacity. The initial phase of development includes a church building that accommodates up to 627 people with a minimum requirement of 157 parking stalls. A total of 154 stalls are proposed in Phase 1 of the development which is approximately 3 stalls less than the minimum required parking. The applicant has agreed to provide at least 157 stalls with the final site development plan submittal. Staff is recommending a stipulation to reflect this revision.

Additional parking is proposed with future phases of the development. Parking will be re-evaluated with each future phase of development to verify if the parking proposed.

- d. **Landscaping** – Landscaping is provided in compliance with UDO requirements. A continuous 20-foot landscape buffer is provided along S. Ridgeview Road, containing a mix of deciduous, evergreen, and ornamental trees. A 10-foot landscape buffer is being provided along the east property line that includes clustered evergreen trees to provide additional screening from adjacent residential homes. A 20-foot tree preservation easement provides a significant buffer from existing residential homes, and the stream corridor and tree preservation area is located along the south property line. Foundation landscaping is provided along the front building facades and parking lot plantings and screening are provided in accordance with UDO 18.30.130.
- e. **Tree Preservation** – An existing stream corridor runs along the south end of the property, with an approximately 60-foot-wide tree line running the length of the corridor. The existing trees along the south and the north property lines will be preserved. Approximately 30% of existing significant trees on site will remain, which meets the UDO requirements for tree preservation for nonresidential uses. Tree protection fencing will be installed on site per UDO 18.30.240.E.
- f. **Public Utilities** – The property is located within the WaterOne and Johnson County Wastewater service areas. Additional water and public sewer main improvements are required to serve the buildings in this development and will be constructed by the developer.
- g. **Stormwater/Detention** – No stormwater detention or treatment is required with this proposal as this development will utilize existing regional stormwater infrastructure.

6. Site Design Standards

The site is located within the Mixed Density Residential designation of the PlanOlathe Comprehensive Plan and is therefore subject to Site Design Category 1 of the UDO (Section 18.15.105). The following is a summary of the applicable site design requirement:

- a. **Landscape Buffer Area** – As required per the UDO, the applicant is providing a minimum 10-foot landscape area with a minimum of 70% permeable surfaces and

50% planted material adjacent to Ridgeview Road, and therefore meeting this requirement.

7. Building Design Standards

The proposed church, school and parish hall buildings are subject to the building design standards for Nonresidential Buildings in Residential Zoning Districts (UDO 18.15.020.G.6.)

All proposed buildings are designed as historic mass-masonry buildings, which traditionally have a lower wall-to-window ratio than what is required by the UDO. This traditional cathedral style of architecture consists of higher artistic quality and features than what is seen in typical institutional buildings with a lower glass-wall ratio. Traditional ornamental features include ornate colonnades, columns, pediments, cupolas, and domes that increase the architectural character and quality of these cathedral-style buildings.

The church is an approximately 25,000 square foot, multi-story building at full build-out, that has one (1) primary façade facing west, and three (3) secondary façades facing north, south and east. The school facility is an approximately 60,000 square foot, two-story building at full build-out, with two (2) primary facades facing west and south. The parish hall totals approximately 25,000 square feet, and also has two (2) primary facades facing west and north.

All proposed buildings meet architectural code requirements with the exception of clear glass and horizontal articulation on primary facades. The applicant is requesting a waiver from these (2) building design requirements. See Section 8 for a detailed analysis of these waiver requests.

Table 1 lists the building design standards applicable to Nonresidential Buildings in a Residential Zoning District– 18.15.020.G.6:

Table 1: Building Design Standards	Design Requirements
	Proposed Design
<i>Building Entryway</i>	<p><i>The main common building entry must be defined with a covered projection from the façade or by a recessed area.</i></p> <p>The main entrances of all parish buildings are defined by a covered projection, meeting UDO requirements.</p>
<i>Horizontal Articulation</i>	<p><i>Each primary façade must provide horizontal articulation every 50 linear feet across the length of primary façades.</i></p> <p>Horizontal articulation is being provided on all primary facades through a series of offsets and projections.</p> <p>The applicant is requesting a waiver to increase the horizontal articulation requirement from 50-ft to 80-ft for the west-facing facades for both the school and parish hall buildings. See Section 8 below for an analysis of this waiver request.</p>

<i>Vertical Façade Articulation</i>	<p><i>Vertical articulation of at least two feet in height is also required every 50 feet across the length of primary façades.</i></p> <p>Vertical articulation is provided through variation of roof form, with gables of varying height alternated throughout, meeting UDO requirements.</p>
<i>Façade Expression</i>	<p><i>The primary façades of all buildings two (2) or more stories in height must incorporate one (1) or more façade expression technique.</i></p> <p>Façade expression is provided through projecting expression lines, material changes, and canopies and ornamental cornices on all primary façades within each phase of the development, meeting UDO requirements.</p>
<i>Glass</i>	<p><i>A minimum of 20% glass is required on primary facades.</i></p> <p>The applicant is requesting a waiver to the glass requirement on all primary façades within this development. See Section 8 below for an analysis of this waiver request.</p>

Proposed Building Materials

The building façades incorporate a mix of synthetic clay fired brick in shades of tan, synthetic stone, and clear glass with a vertical metal panel roof system in a green tone. Building materials meet UDO requirements for a minimum of 70% Class 1 and 2 materials on primary facades and 50% Class 1 and 2 materials on secondary facades.

8. Waiver Request

Section 18.40.240 of the UDO provides a mechanism for waivers to be considered when unnecessary hardships can be demonstrated or where the exception would result in superior design. The applicant has submitted a justification statement for the requested waivers, which is attached to this report. The applicant is requesting waivers from:

1. UDO 18.15.020.G.6.b which requires a minimum of 20% clear glass on primary facades. The applicant is requesting a waiver to reduce the glass percentage from 20% to percentages ranging from 1.8% to 16.6% on all primary facades of the church, school, and parish hall buildings.
2. UDO 18.15.020.G.6.a(2) which requires horizontal façade articulation every 50 feet on primary facades. The applicant is requesting a waiver to increase the requirement from 50-ft up to 80-ft for the west-facing facades for both the school and parish hall buildings.

Staff is supportive of the (2) waiver requests as the applicant has provided an alternative high-quality design that is consistent throughout the development. Incorporating additional clear glass and a higher frequency of articulation is difficult due to the large scale and nature of the traditional architectural style incorporated into this development. Large ornamental colonnades, columns and archways are provided on primary facades to enhance building entries which are consistent with the traditional cathedral style of architecture. These features provide a unique artistic quality that extends the façade and creates depth which increases visual interest and transparency of the building facades.

Additionally, the buildings are setback significantly from Ridgeview Road with significant landscaping and a prominent courtyard within the front of the development.

9. Neighborhood Meeting/Correspondence

A neighborhood meeting was held on January 18, 2024, in accordance with the UDO and the minutes of this meeting are included in the agenda packet. This meeting included the discussion of this project and two (2) other residential projects in the area which were included on a previous agenda (Stonebridge South, PP23-0005 and Stonebridge South Addition PP23-0004). Eight (8) members of the public attended the meeting. Residents asked questions about general road improvements in the area, architecture, church and school operations and capacity, anticipated timing of the project and future phasing, which were responded to by the applicant. Neither staff nor the applicant have received additional correspondence regarding the project.

10 Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the preliminary site development plan (PR23-0024) with the following stipulations:

1. A waiver is granted from UDO 18.15.020.G.6.b to reduce the clear glass percentage from 20% to percentages ranging from 1.8% to 16.6% on all primary facades of the church, school, and parish hall buildings as shown on the Building Elevations dated February 9, 2024.
2. A waiver is granted from UDO 18.15.020.G.6.a(2) to increase the requirement from 50-ft up to 80-ft for the west-facing facades for both the school and parish hall buildings as shown on the Building Elevations dated December 18, 2024.
3. Parking for Phase 1 of this development must be revised to meet minimum parking requirements for the proposed use with submittal of the final site development plan.
4. On-site parking will be re-evaluated with each future phase of development to verify if the parking proposed will adequately support the combined uses and anticipated visitors during peak times.
5. Prior to issuance of a land disturbance permit or building permit, standard orange barricade fencing must be installed around all tree preservation areas in accordance with UDO 18.30.240.