



CITY OF DUBLIN.

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## PLANNING REPORT

### PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

DECEMBER 10, 2009

#### SECTION I - CASE INFORMATION:

8. **Amberleigh North – Amberleigh Community Park** **4715 Vista Ridge Drive**  
**09-107FDP** **Final Development Plan**

Proposal: Phase One of a previously approved master park plan consisting of a playground, a shelter, an overlook, a trail system and parking lot areas for Amberleigh Community Park located at the southeast corner of Vista Ridge Drive and Memorial Drive.

Request: Review and approval for a final development plan under the Planned District Provision of Code Section 153.050.

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#### Case Summary

This is a request for review and approval of a final development plan for site improvements for Phase One of the Amberleigh Community Park within Section 2 of the Amberleigh North residential development. The proposed improvements include playground equipment, a shelter, a river overlook, woodland paths, an internal roadway system and a parking area. Based on Planning's analysis, this case meets the applicable review criteria for a final development plan and approval is recommended.

#### Case Background

The preliminary development plan for the Amberleigh North subdivision was approved in 1997 for residential and park uses. The final development plan for Section 2 of the subdivision was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on October 1, 1998, including the 22-acre park. A Master Plan for the park was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on December 6, 2001 for layout and use, but required individual phases to be approved separately and any active elements placed as far from residential lots as reasonably possible.

#### Site Description

##### Location

The 22.5-acre park is located on the east side of Vista Ridge Drive at the intersection with Memorial Drive. Entry to the park is at the intersection of Vista Ridge Drive and Somerset Way. The park's east boundary has 2,000 feet of Scioto River frontage. Sidewalks are provided along both sides of Vista Ridge Drive. The nearest residential lots are Lots 68-70 and 74-79 of Amberleigh North, on Vista Ridge Drive.

### *Site Character*

A large open area is located along Vista Ridge Drive in western and southern portions of the park, which will accommodate the majority of open lawn area and park development with Phase One. The remainder of the site is heavily wooded with steep inclines with as much as 50-75 feet of fall across the site from the public roadway to the river.

### *Surrounding Zoning and Uses*

The site and the properties to the south and southwest, are zoned PUD, Planned Unit Development District, as part of Amberleigh North. The area to the west on the north side of Memorial Drive is zoned PUD, for Wasatch Estates, and the properties to the north are zoned R-1, Restricted Suburban Residential District, as part of Deer Run Estates. Both of these areas have a pending concept plan application to establish estate and cluster lots (Deer Run – Application No. 09-093CP). To the east is the Scioto River.

### *Master Plan Details*

The approved master plan includes areas for active and passive use throughout the park, developed in phases including open lawn areas, three shelter houses, hardcourt play areas, discovery gardens, playground, canoe launch, woodland paths, and public art. An internal path system links the various park attractions. The approved plan indicates up to 110 parking spaces with multiple vehicular access points along Vista Ridge Drive and Memorial Drive.

An area to accommodate the future extension of Memorial Drive over the Scioto River was also noted on the 2001 approved master plan and caused the park to be divided into two parts. This road extension and bridge connection was excluded from the 2007 Community Plan and accordingly, the proposed park master plan no longer shows the road extension. The northern portion of the master plan has been modified to retain a more natural feel within the park, with the removal of the parking area and access point north of the proposed Memorial Drive extension, as well as an extensive accessible ramp and pier.

Phase One improvements include a playground, shelter, river overlook, woodland paths, internal roadway system and a 38-car parking area. Phase Two, which will return as a future application, will include basketball and tennis courts, an additional shelter, additional parking, an environmental discovery garden, an extended path system, and a pedestrian bridge connecting the nature trails. The revisions to the plan significantly reduce the degree of active spaces from the approved 2001 plan.

### *Neighborhood Involvement*

The City's Parks and Open Space Division hosted a Homeowners Association input meeting to discuss the proposed park amenities and hear residents concerns. The principal concern expressed was the location of the park entrance which they asked be moved to the Memorial Drive stub, for two stated reasons.

The first was the potential for significant traffic increase caused by park users, which according to the residents will create unsafe conditions in the neighborhood. Based on Park and Open Space analysis, the design elements of the Amberleigh Community Park would not cause a significant influx of park users at any one time, as it is not programmed as other City parks, with

multiple sport fields for tournaments and spectators. The planned activity areas and facilities are likely to be used primarily by adjacent neighborhoods. Parks of this type do not typically have significant peak activity times.

The second reason expressed was that having the entrance at Memorial Drive would be part of the decision whether to build the Memorial Drive Bridge. However, the park access drive would likely not be a hindrance and should a future Council determine that the Memorial Drive Bridge be needed, and the park entrance was at this location, it would simply be relocated and the park redesigned.

## **Plan Description**

### *Overview*

The proposed park modifications for Phase One include the construction of a playground, shelter, river overlook, woodland paths, internal roadway system and parking area. Phase Two, which will return as a future application, will include basketball and tennis courts, an additional shelter, additional parking area, an environmental discovery garden, an extended path system, and a pedestrian bridge connecting the nature trails.

### *Site Layout*

The layout of this park was significantly influenced by topography and other natural site elements. Active park elements including the shelter, playground, parking area, and internal roadway are located in the central and southern portion of the park in the existing open areas. The proposed passive park elements are located in the wooded, natural areas in the eastern and northern portions of the park, adjacent to the river and include the overlook, woodland paths, canoe access and the preservation of existing woodland areas. As noted earlier, the revisions to the plan significantly reduce the degree of active spaces from the approved 2001 plan.

### *Playground*

The proposed playground is located in the central portion of the park and includes swings, performance areas, a stump garden, music areas, climbing areas and benches (see attachments for the proposed components.) The proposed playground equipment is on a mulch play surface and have neutral colors.

### *Shelter and Overlook*

The proposed 800-square-foot shelter is located in the southwest portion of the park, adjacent to the parking area, constructed of stone columns with a gable, cedar shake roof. The final plan will need to ensure that the proposed shelter is located at least 10 feet away from the sanitary sewer line and out of the existing easement located to the north. A 144-square-foot river overlook is proposed in the southeast corner of the park, constructed of the same stone column design as the shelter.

### *Parking and Access*

A single park entrance has been created at the intersection of Vista Ridge Drive and Somerset Way for the 38 space parking area. The location of the proposed park entrance at this intersection has been extensively studied by Parks, Planning, and Engineering and is based on the characteristics of the land. A park entrance located off Memorial Drive would require the

internal park drive to run parallel to Vista Ridge Drive for the full width of the park to account for the changes in topography. The proposed location takes best advantage of the existing topography in the lower portion of the park, significantly decreases impervious surface area, offers the best protection for the natural features on the site, enhances park design, and lowers costs.

#### *Pedestrian Access*

An existing bikepath along Memorial Drive connects to the sidewalks on both sides of Vista Ridge Drive, allowing access to the park at several points. New internal paths and nature trails connect park amenities, existing wooded areas, and the river. Planning recommends a striped crosswalk be provided at the main entrance to the park at the intersection Somerset Way and Vista Ridge Drive to provide pedestrian access into the neighborhood.

#### *Landscaping and Entry Feature*

The park contains large woodland areas that are preserved with the proposal. Additional landscaping with a variety of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs is proposed throughout the park. Landscape masses continue the natural character of the site. The proposed park entry feature is located on the south side of the entry drive uses the same stone column design as the park shelter and overlook.

#### *Site Amenities*

A river overlook and potential canoe access point are located in the north portion of the park. A historic stone wall along the river will be retained. Planning recommends that trash receptacles be appropriately placed adjacent to the shelter, playground, and overlook areas. No site lighting is proposed.

#### *Stormwater Facilities*

With its close proximity to the Scioto River, the park is exempt from the stormwater quantity control requirements. A series of stepped rain gardens are proposed to account for the stormwater quality requirements. The stormwater treatment zones are located parallel to the internal access drive.

## **SECTION II - REVIEW STANDARDS**

The purpose of the Planned Unit Development process is to encourage imaginative architectural design and proper site planning in a coordinated and comprehensive manner, consistent with accepted land planning, landscape architecture, and engineering principles. The PUD process consists of up to three stages:

- 1) Concept Plan (Staff, Commission, and/or City Council review and comment);
- 2) Zoning Amendment Request (Preliminary Development Plan; Commission recommends and City Council approves/denies); and
- 3) **Final Development Plan (Commission approves/denies).**

The intent of the final development plan is to show conformance with and provide a detailed refinement of the total aspects of the approved preliminary development plan (rezoning). The final development plan includes all of the final details of the proposed development and is the

final stage of the PUD process. The Commission may approve as submitted, approve with modifications agreed to by the applicant, or disapprove and terminate the process. If the application is disapproved, the applicant may respond to Planning and Zoning Commission's concerns and resubmit the plan. This action will be considered a new application for review in all respects, including payment of the application fee. Appeal of any action taken by the Commission shall be to the Court of Common Pleas in the appropriate jurisdiction. Following approval by the Commission, the applicant may proceed with the building permit process. In the event that updated citywide standards are applicable, all subsequently approved final development plans shall comply with the updated standards if the Planning and Zoning Commission determines that such updated standards would not cause undue hardship.

### **Planning Analysis and Recommendation**

Section 153.055(B) of the Code identifies criteria for the review and approval for an amended final development plan. The criteria are arranged in the following categories and may be in a different order than listed in the Code:

*Adopted Policies and Plans (Criteria 1, 3, 9, & 10). The proposed modifications conform to the approved preliminary development plan, have adequate public facilities and open spaces, are carried out in progressive stages, and conform to all other applicable zoning text and Code requirements.*

**Criteria are met:** The proposed improvements meet the applicable zoning and text requirements.

*Site Safety and Circulation (Criteria 2 & 5). The proposed modifications provide for safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular circulation and provide adequate lighting for such uses.*

**Criteria are met:** The creation of a single access point at the intersection of Vista Ridge Drive and Somerset Way provides a more cohesive park design and decreases the amount of impervious surface. The proposed parking area will provide adequate parking for the park and is located appropriately on-site. Extensive paths are provided throughout the park and connect to the neighborhood. Planning recommends a striped crosswalk be provided at the main entrance to the park at the intersection Somerset Way and Vista Ridge Drive to provide pedestrian access into the neighborhood (Condition 1).

*Development Details (Criteria 4, 6, 7, & 8). The details of the development are sensitive to the natural characteristics of the site, include appropriate landscaping and signs, and provide adequate storm drainage.*

**Criteria met with conditions:** The proposed improvements are sensitive to the existing conditions of the site and preserve existing vegetation. The proposal must meet the City's Stormwater Management regulations for quality. Revised plans will be required indicating the proposed shelter 10 feet from the sanitary sewer line and out of the existing easement (Condition 2). Planning recommends trash receptacles be appropriately placed adjacent to the shelter, playground, and overlook areas (Condition 3).

### **SECTION III - RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions.**

The proposal is consistent with the Amberleigh North development text and meets the intent of the approved park master plan. It is Planning's analysis the proposal complies with the final development plan criteria set forth in Section 153.050 of the Dublin Zoning Code and approval is recommended with three conditions.

**Conditions**

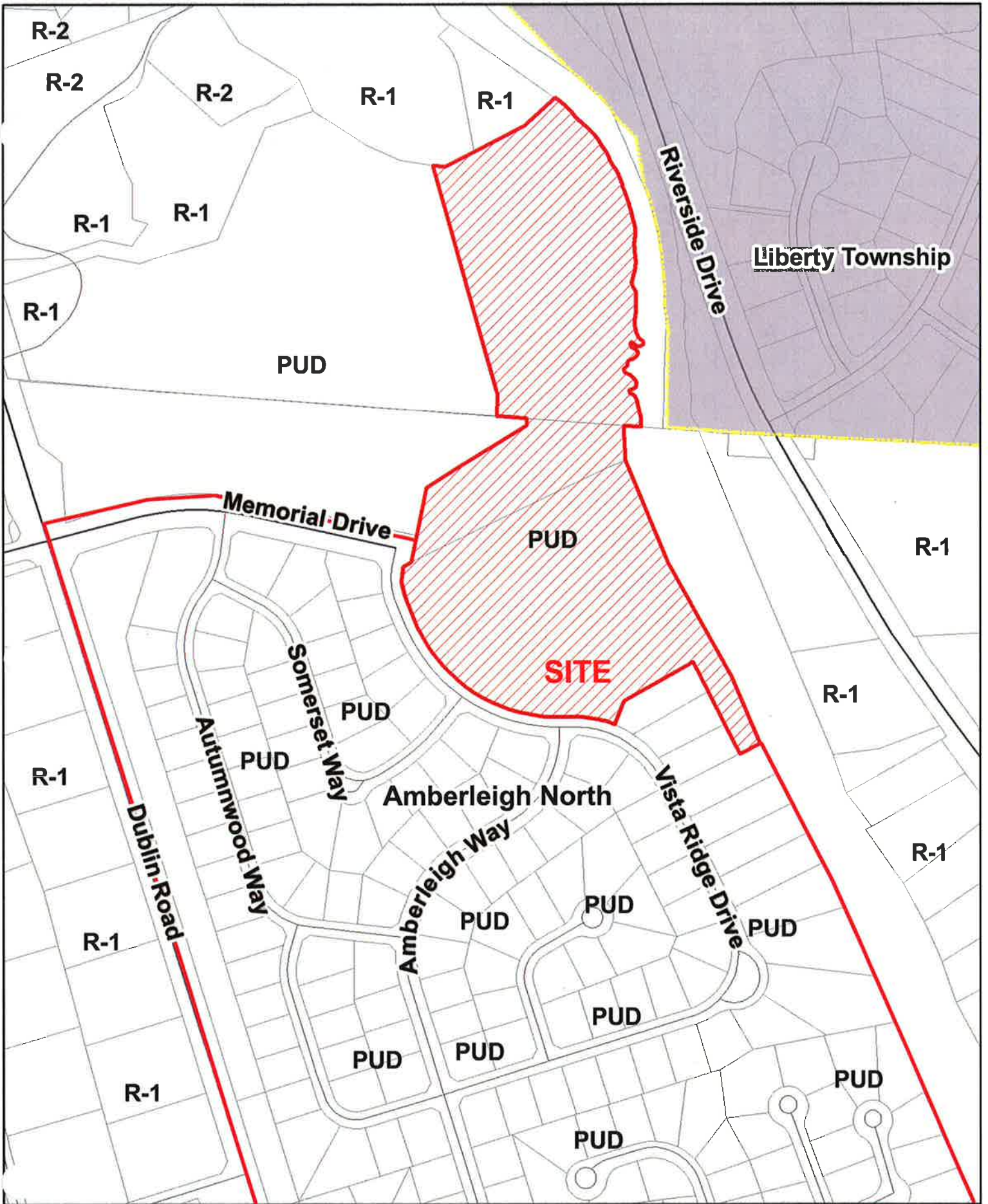
- 1) A striped crosswalk be provided at the main entrance to the park at the intersection Somerset Way and Vista Ridge Drive, subject to Engineering approval;
- 2) Revised plans be submitted indicating the proposed shelter 10 feet from the sanitary sewer and out of the existing easement, subject to Engineering approval; and
- 3) Trash receptacles be appropriately placed adjacent to the shelter, playground, and overlook areas, subject to Planning approval.

## Final Development Plan

### Review Criteria

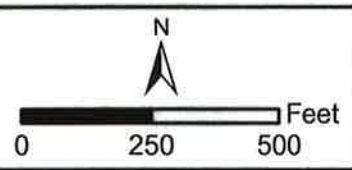
In accordance with Section 153.055(B) *Plan Approval Criteria*, the Code sets out the following criteria of approval for a final development plan:

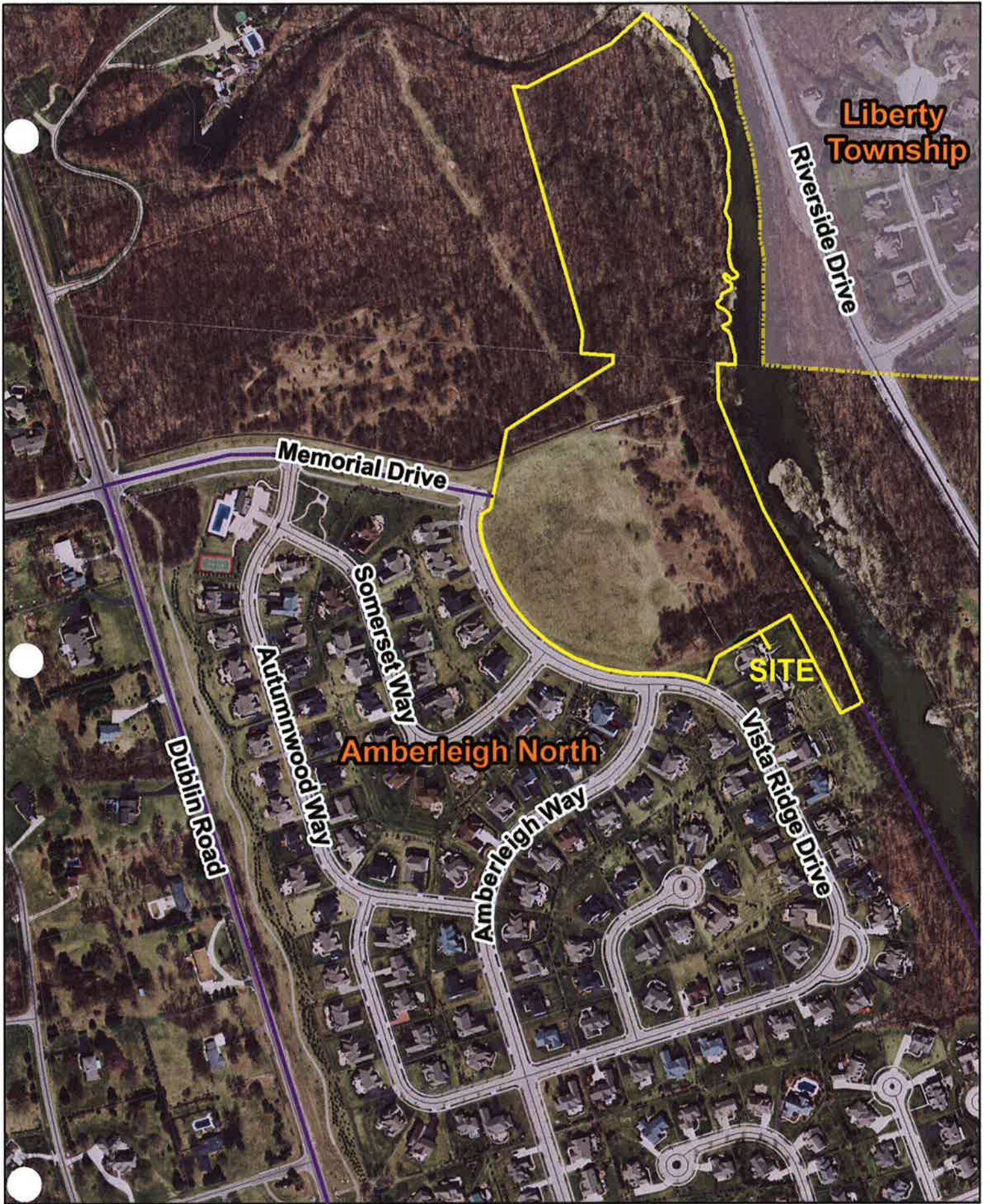
1. The plan conforms in all pertinent respects to the approved preliminary development plan provided, however, that the Planning and Zoning Commission may authorize plans as specified in §153.053(E)(4);
2. Adequate provision is made for safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular circulation within the site and to adjacent property;
3. The development has adequate public services and open spaces;
4. The development preserves and is sensitive to the natural characteristics of the site in a manner that complies with the applicable regulations set forth in this Code;
5. The development provides adequate lighting for safe and convenient use of the streets, walkways, driveways, and parking areas without unnecessarily spilling or emitting light onto adjacent properties or the general vicinity;
6. The proposed signs, as indicated on the submitted sign plan, will be coordinated within the Planned Unit Development and with adjacent development; are of an appropriate size, scale, and design in relationship with the principal building, site, and surroundings; and are located so as to maintain safe and orderly pedestrian and vehicular circulation;
7. The landscape plan will adequately enhance the principal building and site; maintain existing trees to the extent possible; buffer adjacent incompatible uses; break up large expanses of pavement with natural material; and provide appropriate plant materials for the buildings, site, and climate;
8. Adequate provision is made for storm drainage within and through the site which complies with the applicable regulations in this Code and any other design criteria established by the City or any other governmental entity which may have jurisdiction over such matters;
9. If the project is to be carried out in progressive stages, each stage shall be so planned that the foregoing conditions are complied with at the completion of each stage; and
10. The Commission believes the project to be in compliance with all other local, state, and federal laws and regulations.



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