



# The City of Grove City, Ohio

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Planning Commission Staff Report  
Council Chambers  
December 4, 2018 1:30pm

**7. APPLICATION: Arrowleaf Apartments | Development Plan**

Project Number: 201810290047

Location: Located at the terminus of Shirlene Drive, approximately 600 feet east of McDowell Road (PID 040-006939)

Zoning: A-1 (Apartments)

GroveCity2050 Future Land Use Designation: Suburban Living, Low Intensity

Proposal: A development plan for 28-unit apartment building on a 4.77-acre site.

Applicant: Donald Plank, Plank Law Firm, LPA, 411 East Town Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215

**Relevant Plans, Policies, and Code Section(s):**

- Section 1135.10 – Residential District Requirements
- GroveCity2050 Community Plan – Future Land Use and Character Map

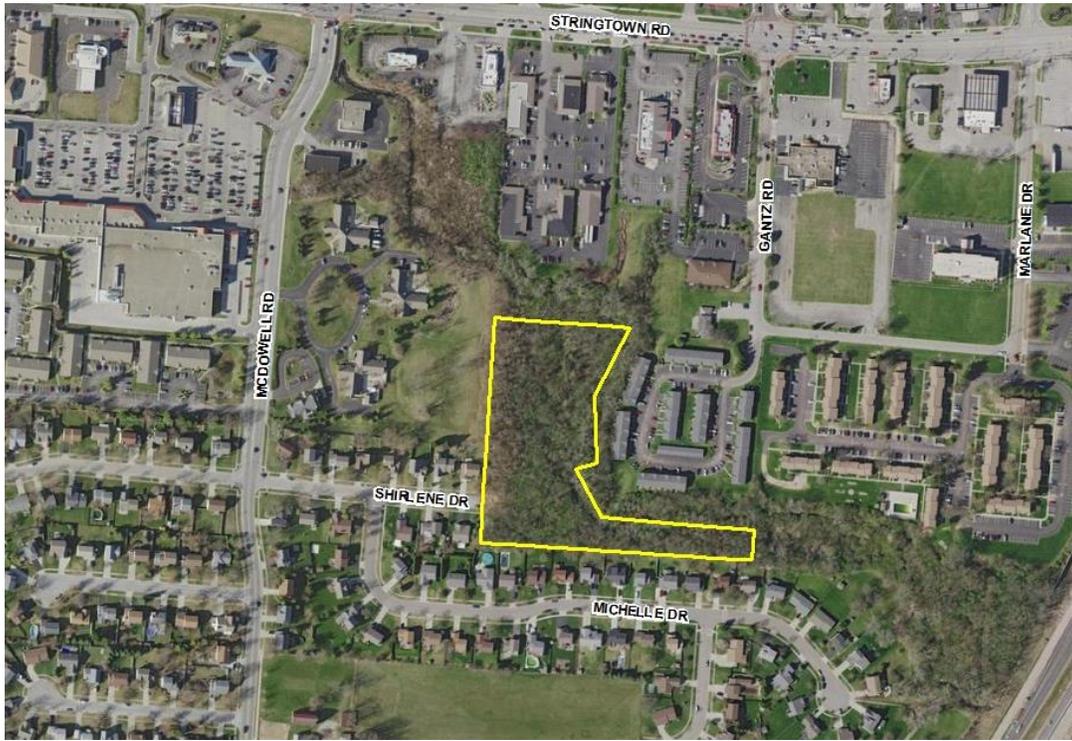
**Project Summary**

The applicant is requesting approval of a development plan for a 28-unit apartment building at the terminus of Shirlene Drive, approximately 600 feet east of McDowell Road (Parcel 040-006939). The proposed development, Arrowleaf Apartments, will be approximately 30,000 square feet in size and be three-stories in height, finished primarily in brick with vinyl siding used on the majority of the third story. The proposed building will be used for workforce housing operated through Homeport and has received tax credit approval through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The site is zoned as A-1, which permits multi-family apartments.

The applicant met with area residents to discuss the development and the result of the discussions led to a plan that required several variances from Code in order to lessen area resident concerns. The applicant received five variances from the Board of Zoning Appeals at their September 2018 meeting for the items noted below:

- To permit more than eight units per building.
- To exceed the maximum number of units per building.
- To permit less than 50 percent of the units to be ranch/single floor type design.
- To provide two parking spaces per unit, instead of 2.5 spaces per unit.
- To permit a building at 39-feet in height, above the 35-foot height maximum.

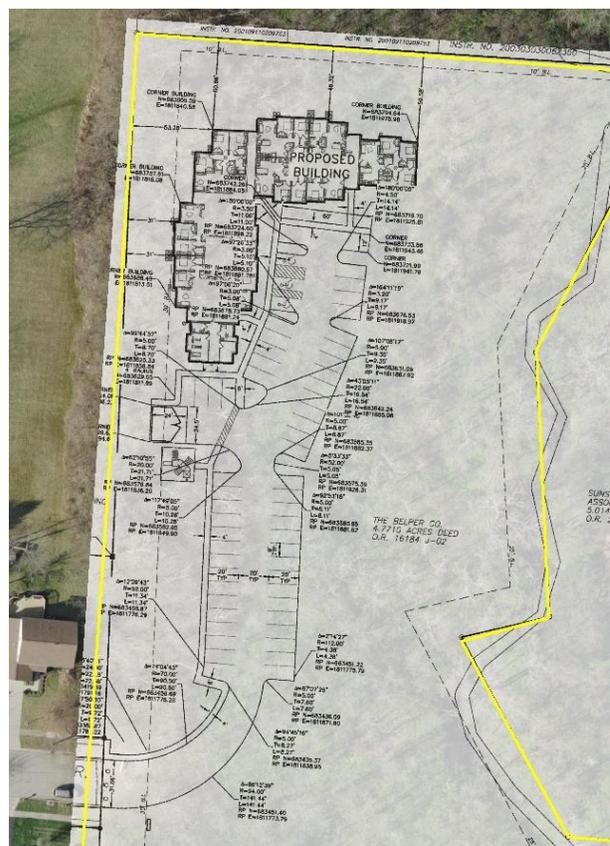
Although the GroveCity2050 Community Plan Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this site for “Suburban Living, Low Intensity”, which lists single-family as the primary use, the site is zoned for multi-family development. Staff believes the proposed project will be less impactful on area residences than a standard multi-family development, as it will be contained in a single building developing less of the site than a development constructed according to the standard A-1 zoning district regulations.



Site Plan

Much of the 4.77-acre site is wooded and contains a 100-year floodplain and Stream Corridor Protection Zone (SCPZ) surrounding an existing stream on the eastern side. The proposed development will be located outside of the 100-year floodplain and SCPZ and will be preserving the existing tree stand area in the western and southern portions of the site.

The site is proposed to be accessed from a single point at the terminus of Shirlene Drive. The proposed access drive will match the width of Shirlene Drive (30-feet) at the site's entrance, then narrow to 20-feet further into the development. Staff typically recommends that all drive aisles be a minimum of 24-feet in width; however, staff is supportive of the proposed drive due to the constraints of the site, including the 100-year floodplain and the Stream Corridor. Parking is proposed on both sides of the entrance drive leading up to the building and the proposed building will be located in the northwest corner of the site. Sidewalks are proposed along the building and the western side of the parking lot and are proposed to connect to the existing sidewalk on the north side of Shirlene Drive. A community playground is also proposed on the site, to the south of the building.



A vegetated retaining wall is proposed along the eastern side of the parking lot, adjacent to the stream. The plans show parking blocks for all parking spaces adjacent to the retaining wall, however, staff has concerns that parking blocks will not adequately protect vehicles from the steep drop to the stream corridor to the east and recommends reinforced fencing, per standard drawing C-GC-96 along this portion of the parking lot.

### Open Space

Based on the number of units proposed on the site, 1.25 acres of open space is required on the site. Proposed plans show more than two (2) acres of open space within the preserved wooded area, not including any land in the floodplain or in the setbacks between the structure and the north and west property lines. A small playground feature is also shown to the south of the proposed dumpster enclosure to serve as an additional amenity for residences in the development.

### Landscaping

The eastern and southern portions of the site contain an existing tree stand, which is proposed to be preserved. In addition to the existing trees, a variety of landscaping is proposed on the site in conformance with landscape requirements in Code. To screen the development from adjacent single-family residences to the west, existing trees will be preserved in the area with an additional row of Austrian Pine trees and a continuous row of evergreen shrubs are proposed.

Supplemental landscaping is proposed around the building including a combination of shrubs (Buffalo Junipers, Green Velvet Boxwoods, and Dwarf Mugo Pines), deciduous trees (Autumn Flame Red Maples), and other plantings. Each parking island is proposed with one Skyline Honey Locust tree. The ground sign is proposed to be landscaped with Hicks Yew and Blue Princess Holly plantings.

The dumpster enclosure is proposed to be landscaped with Techny Arborvitae shrubs on the west and south sides. A sidewalk is proposed on the north side of the enclosure; therefore, the required landscaping has been shifted north of the sidewalk. Staff is supportive of the landscaping of the northern plantings as they will still screen the dumpster enclosure and allow greater pedestrian access to the dumpster.

### Buildings

The proposed building will be approximately 30,000 square feet in size and three-stories in height, totaling 38 feet. At the September 2018 BZA meeting, four variances were approved regarding the proposed building on the site, including permitting a maximum height of 39 feet, more than eight units per building, and for less than 50 percent of the site to include single floor or ranch type units. The building meets each of the granted variances. There are 28-units proposed within the building, including six one-bedroom units, 18 two-bedroom units, and four three-bedroom units. The proposed building will be finished primarily in brick veneer (Lawrenceville Brick "Henrico") with vinyl siding around the majority of the third story (KP Vinyl Siding "Cobblestone Wicker"). The roof will be pitched and utilize dimensional asphalt shingles (Owens Corning Duration "Driftwood"). Open air stairwells are proposed that will utilize black aluminum railings (Superior Aluminum "Black").

The dumpster enclosure is proposed to have cedar gates and brick veneer walls matching the type used on the building.



*South Elevation*



*West Elevation*

### Parking

A total of 56 parking spaces are proposed on the site including three ADA spaces, providing two parking spaces per unit. City Code states that 2.5 parking spaces are required per unit in the A-1 district; however, the site was granted a variance to permit the reduction of two spaces per unit. The parking spaces are proposed to be at least 180 square feet in size (9' by 20'), meeting the minimum parking space size requirement. All pavement striping is proposed to be white.

### Lighting

A photometric plan has been provided showing no light spillover onto the adjacent residential properties. The proposed site lighting will utilize decorative beacon style lighting fixtures similar to the street lighting utilized in other area residential developments.

### Signage

A ground sign is proposed at the site's entrance from Shirlene Drive. The sign is proposed to have a brick base and be a maximum of approximately eight (8) feet in height. The sign's face is proposed to be approximately 19 square feet in size and will be externally lit with flood lights. While signs are only preliminarily reviewed as part of a final development plan and require a separate sign permit through the Building Division, staff is supportive of the preliminary sign design provided that the lighting is within a landscaped area to conceal any fixtures and to reduce any potential impacts on adjacent residences.

### **GroveCity2050 Guiding Principles Analysis**

The City of Grove City adopted the GroveCity2050 Community Plan in January 2018, which contains specific goals, objectives and actions to guide growth in the community. Five (5) guiding principles are identified that articulate Grove City's community values and direct the recommendations in the Plan. Applications submitted to Planning Commission are reviewed based on these five Guiding Principles:

- (1) **The City's small town character is preserved while continuing to bring additional employment opportunities, residents and amenities to the community.**

**Finding is Met:** Staff believes that the site will bring additional residential opportunities to the community, through a development designed to be appropriate for the area. The proposed structure will utilize similar materials and design elements as surrounding residences, including brick, vinyl, and a pitched roof, and will preserve much of the site's tree stand to reduce visual impact on adjacent residences. While the GroveCity2050 Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this area be used for single-family residential, the site is currently zoned as A-1 multi-family, and staff believes the proposed development can offer a unique housing opportunity to the community while creating a quality development.

- (2) **Quality design is emphasized for all uses to create an attractive and distinctive public and private realm.**

**Finding is Met:** The proposed site layout will preserve much of the existing tree stand maintaining some of the site's character. Additionally, the site will be accessed off of the existing Shirlene Drive terminus and will match the character of the roadway to provide a more seamless transition. Furthermore, quality materials on the structure and landscaping throughout the site are proposed to create an attractive development.

- (3) **Places will be connected to improve the function of the street network and create safe opportunities to walk, bike and access public transportation throughout the community.**

**Finding is Met:** A sidewalk is proposed throughout the site, which will connect with the existing sidewalk on the north side of Shirlene Drive. The drive aisle on the site will connect to Shirlene Drive providing residents safe access entering and exiting the site.

- (4) **Future development will preserve, protect and enhance the City's natural and built character through sustainable practices, prioritizing parks and open space and emphasizing historic preservation.**

**Finding is Met:** Much of the existing tree stand will be preserved with the proposed development, due to the variances received that allowed for a single, three-story structure, thus reducing the amount of disturbed land on the site.

- (5) **Development provides the City with a net fiscal benefit.**

**Finding is Met:** Although residential land uses do not generally provide the City with a fiscal benefit, as revenue primarily comes from income tax from workers employed within the City, the increase in property value from the development of the site will be an overall benefit to the community. Additionally, as noted by the applicant, a diverse, affordable housing stock helps employers reduce costs from employee turnover and benefits the community by alleviating the rent-burden that restricts some households' financial ability to consume in the local community.

### **Recommendation**

The Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the following deviations and stipulations:

1. Reinforced fencing per standard drawing C-GC-96 shall be installed along the eastern row of parking where adjacent to the proposed retaining wall.