



**STAFF REPORT**  
**WEST ALLIS PLAN COMMISSION**  
 Wednesday, December 2, 2020  
 6:00 PM  
 Virtual Meeting

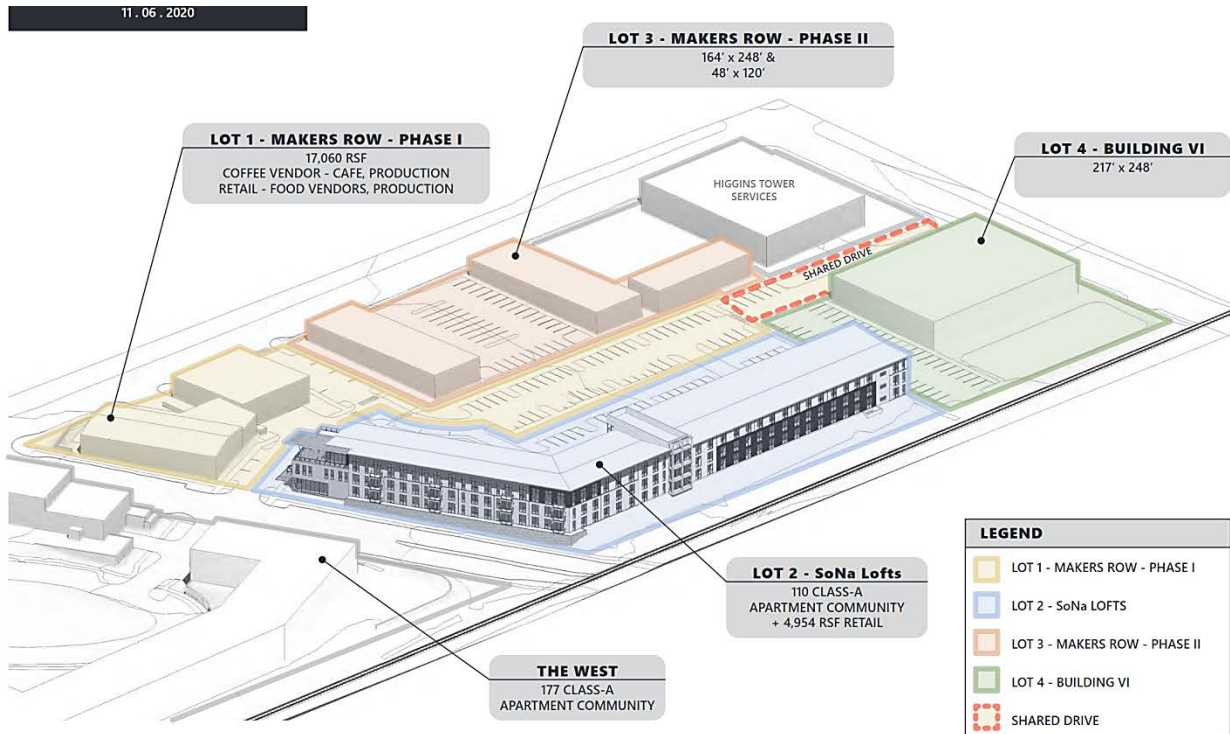
Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/user/westalliscitychannel>

- 3A. Special Use Permit for a mixed, residential and commercial, use to be located at 66\*\* W. National Ave. submitted by Robert Monnat d/b/a Mandel Group.
- 3B. Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans for a mixed, residential and commercial, use to be located at 66\*\* W. National Ave. submitted by Robert Monnat d/b/a Mandel Group. (Tax Key No. 454-0648-000).

Items 3A and 3B may be considered together.

**Overview & Zoning**

Mandel Group is proposing a development south of National Ave., referred to as SoNa. As part of phase 1 Mandel Group is proposing to convert the two northernmost remediated brownfield sites (Lots 1 & 2) into multiple mixed use residential and commercial properties. The entire project is estimated to cost \$25-35 million. The developer is working on a letter of intent to purchase said property at 66\*\* W. National Ave.

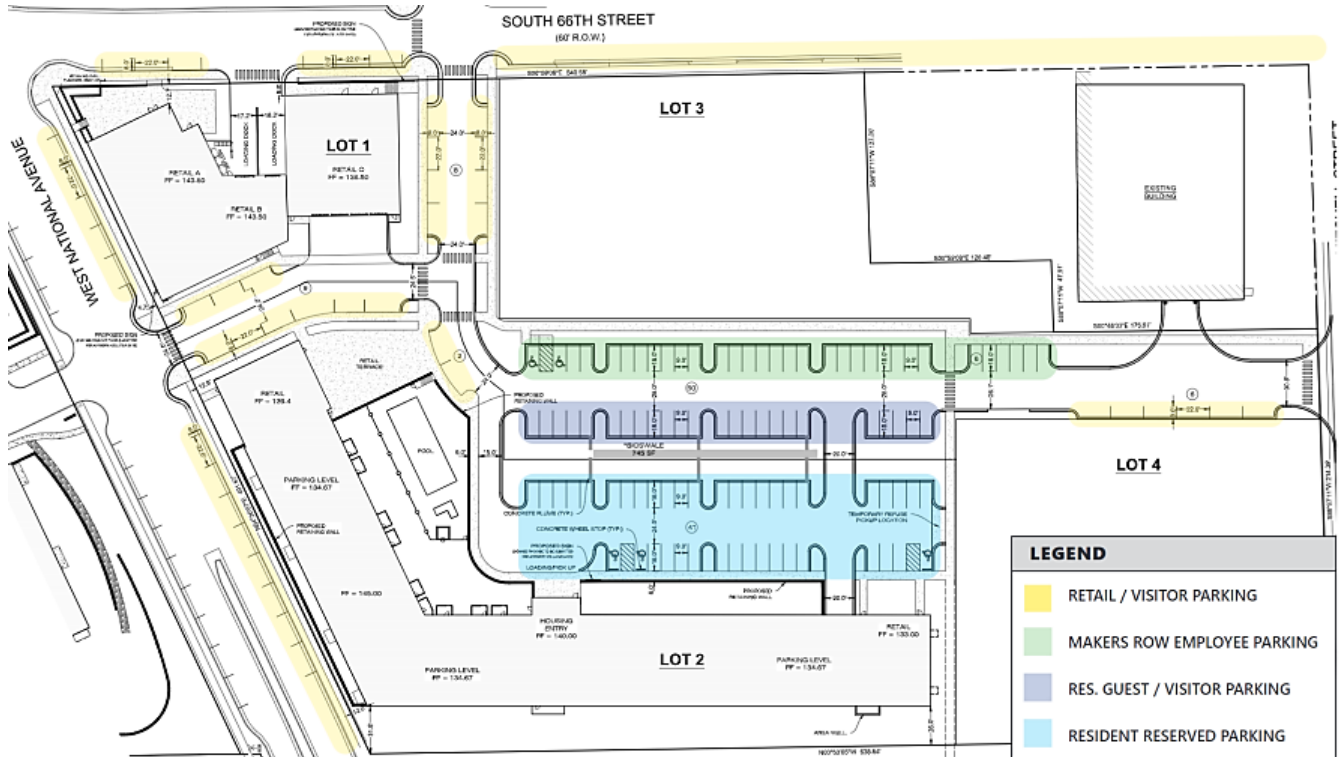


For the purpose of this review, we will be evaluating the site and landscape plan for what is considered Lot 2.



10 AERIAL VIEW/LOOKING NORTHWEST

The development within Lot 2, which is part of Phase 1 of the project is called SoNa Lofts and is proposed to be a 3-story, 110 unit market rate multi-family building with 2 small commercial endcaps, totaling 4,954 sf in commercial endcap space. Phase 1 of the development will also include Phase 1 of Makers Row which will consist of 17,060 sf of commercial space (this portion of the development will be reviewed in item 4). This is considered the first phase of development with other buildings comprising of phase 2 south of SoNa Lofts and Makers Row which would eventually amount to 6.5 acres of development. The phase 1 parcels are bound by W. National Ave. to the north, S. 66 St. to the east, phase 2 parcels to the south, and the C&NW Railroad spur track to the west. These parcels are zoned C-3 Community Commercial District, which permits mixed residential and commercial as a Special Use. A Public Hearing for the Special Use Permit is scheduled to take place on December 15, 2020. The unit mix of SoNa Lofts is expected to be 3 studio units, 34 Jr. one bedroom units, 59 one bedroom units, 6 two bedroom units, and 8 three bedroom units.



### Parking

154 total off-street parking stalls provided for SoNa Lofts (residential)

- 89 underground stalls
- 41 above ground resident stalls
- 24 above ground guest stalls
- Bike parking was not shown on the initial plan.

176 parking stalls are required for the residential units by code.

10 non-exclusive parking stalls are reserved for the 2 commercial spaces at SoNa Lofts. Per parking code, 16 are required.

The Common Council can waive this requirement as part of the Special Use Permit approval on December 15, 2020.



### Farmers Market Parking

The SoNa development area has been historically used by Farmers Market patrons for parking. In anticipation of the SoNa development, City staff compared the West Allis Farmers Market to other more traditional, outdoor markets in the region. The comparison determined that, West Allis has, and will continue to have, more parking availability than other markets. After SoNa is built, there will be a slight reduction in dedicated parking, but the parking ratio still has more parking per person than other case study sites. The City is currently pursuing firm commitments to use additional parking spaces at St. Joseph's church at 6420 W. Mitchell St. (40 stalls), one block south of the market and Horace Mann school's teacher parking lot (50 stalls), half of a block east of the market. With the addition of these parking lots, the West Allis Farmers Market will have more parking per person than any of the Markets studied. The additional spaces would replace the roughly 100 stalls currently being used on the SoNa site. While walking a short distance will be necessary for some customers, this is a typical Farmers Market experience. The parking lot attached to the Farmers Market could have more stalls dedicated to seniors and persons with disabilities.

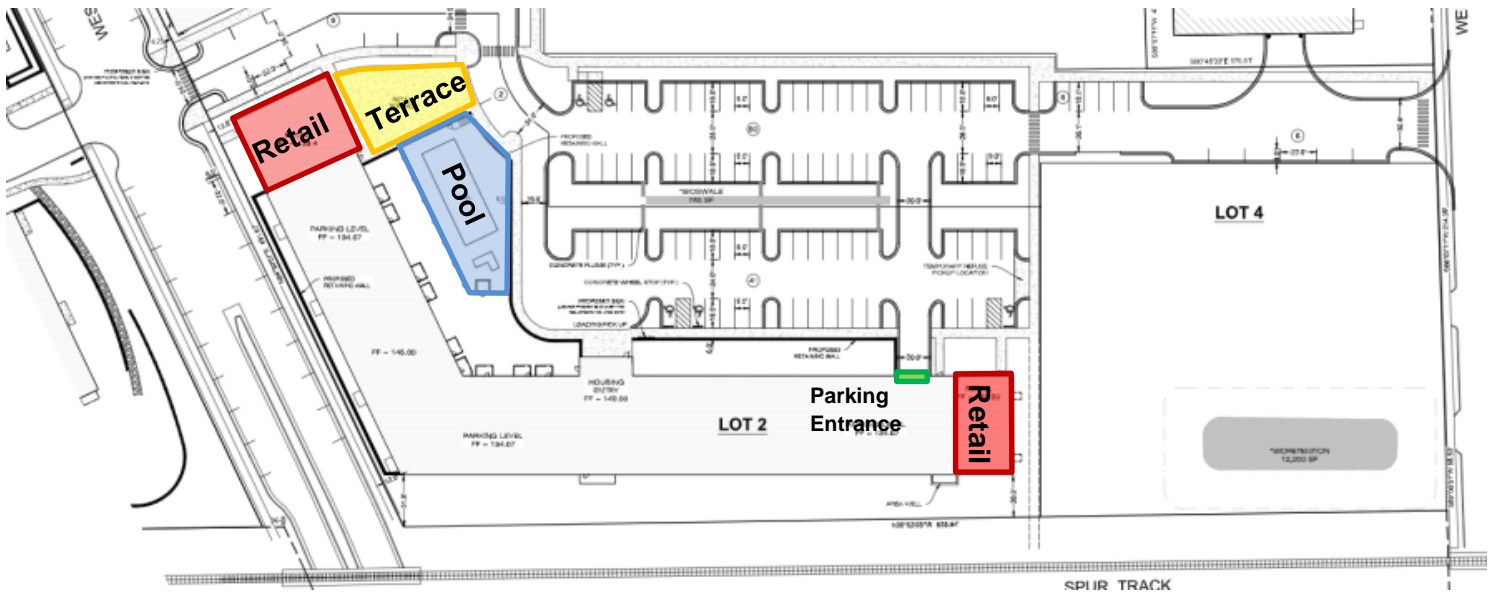
SoNa will also have 44 non-exclusive parking stalls available for market attendees to use if available on market days. This is in addition to existing public street parking.



### Site Plan

The site is generally laid out with the apartment building tucked into the northwest corner of the SoNa development area. The apartment building forms an obtuse L shape with the exterior facing W. National Ave. and the C&NW Railroad spur. The eastern end of the building has a 2,917 sf commercial space with a retail terrace reserved on the ground floor for an expected tenant. Another commercial space (2,037 sf) will be located at the south end of the lower level. The south facing exterior of this space is a blank wall that could use some variation. City staff recommends a trellis or service door.

Renters at both the SoNa Lofts and The West (across National Ave.) may have access to a pool. The pool is conditional on receiving enough financing, which is unknown at this time. The pool area will be elevated from the parking lot as well as the retail terrace and not as visible due to a 6 foot retaining wall, which tapers down to 3 feet as it nears the building entrance. Staff is discussing with the applicant the possibility of adding a species of landscaping that can grow down the walls from above to help soften the look of them.



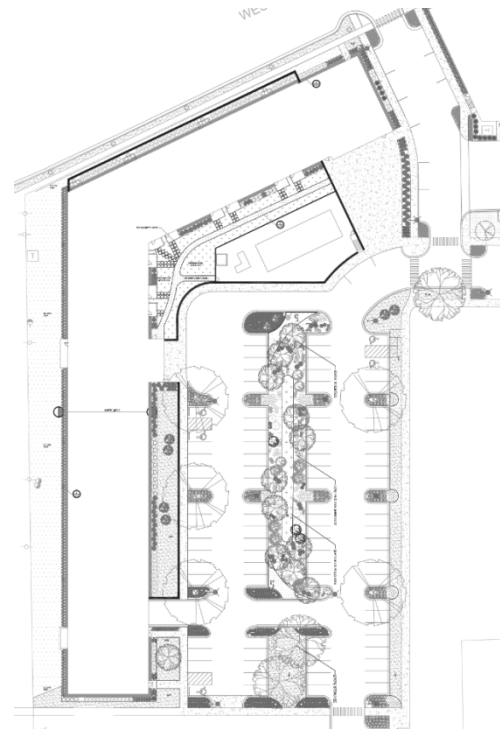
Along W. National Ave. is a retaining wall that holds the steep grade up to the building from the sidewalk. The wall is 10 feet high at its tallest near the railroad tracks and tapers down as it nears the commercial space to the east. As seen across the street at The West, the wall is made of keystone brick. The National Ave. entrance to SoNa has curb bump outs, which narrows the roadway to lessen the crossing distance and delineate parking stalls. Marked crosswalks add an extra element of pedestrian safety. The parking lot will consist of two rows of parking, mostly dedicated to tenants and their guests. The easternmost parking section is for Makers Row employees. The parking rows have openings that align with the underground parking entrance to the building. The applicant, the City, and We Energies are in discussions to get as much of the utilities underground as possible.

Landscape Plan

The entire site is lined with a diverse array of shrubs and grasses. The parking lot will be adorned with a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees as well as annuals and perennials. The area between the building and pool will have concrete pavers. The area between the building and railroad tracks will have no mow turf.

Architectural Plan

The SoNa Lofts apartment building takes its inspiration from historic loft structures and borrows certain exterior palette materials from Makers Row. The masonry base of the building is complemented with ribbed metal skin and pops of color to make the finished product a contemporary, memorable design statement. The overall form of the building is unique and will present a high-quality design statement along National Avenue.



The architectural drawing to the left and below is a study of materials and window fenestration. The upper floor is sheathed in a combination of vertical ribbed metal panel and horizontally laid deep-profile metal panel with a burnt orange accent color. A masonry brick base supports a rooftop terrace amenity space where residents can overlook the Farmers Market and National Avenue.



The south facing wall of the southern tenant is rather bare and could use some architectural variation or additional landscaping. See left image.



The site design for SoNa creates a final parcel at the south end of the property fronting Mitchell Street. This adjoins an access drive and a retention pond. This is mentioned because the retention pond will be a part of phase 1. Once the infrastructure to support this is in place it is intended that Makers Row Phase 2 and this remaining southerly parcel will be pursued for an immediate subsequent phase of development.



Lighting

The lighting plan submitted adequately splays an appropriate amount of lumens throughout the entire development area and especially throughout the parking lot.



Signage

The architectural elevations show where some of the desired signs are to be located. To date, no sign plans have been submitted for review. Accordingly, no formal comments have been given. When ready, the applicant may apply for signage directly to the Department of Development for administrative review and approval, unless a variance is requested.





**Recommendation:** Recommend Common Council approval of the Special Use Permit for a proposed mixed, residential and commercial use, located at 66\*\* W. National Ave. and approval of the Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans for a proposed mixed, residential and commercial use, located at 66\*\* W. National Ave. submitted by Robert Monnat d/b/a Mandel Group. (Tax Key No. 454-0648-000)., subject to the following:

(Items 1 through 7 are required to be satisfied prior to the issuance of building permits associated with the proposed work reviewed by Plan Commission. Contractors applying for permits should be advised accordingly).

1. Revised Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans being submitted to the Department of Development to show the following: (a) architectural variation on the lower level of the south facing commercial space; (b) additional landscaping details on the retaining walls; (c) City Forester approval of the landscaping species and number; (d) outdoor bicycle parking; (e) further clarification of outdoor patio space for northern commercial tenant; (f) alternative plans for pool area if financing does not include pool; (g) location and screening considerations of proposed rooftop units (h) exterior lighting plan being provided; and (i) a schedule for timing of proposed improvements. Contact Tony Giron, City Planner at 414-302-8469.
2. An estimated cost of paving, landscaping, and screening being submitted to the Department of Development for approval. Contact Tony Giron, City Planner at 414-302-8469.
3. A surety bond or other form of security as required under Sec. 12.13(14) of the Revised Municipal Code in the amount of 125% of landscaping and screening shall be executed by the applicant prior to the issuing of a building permit. Contact Tony Giron, City Planner at 414-302-8469.

4. Utility plan to indicate transformer locations and coordination with existing overhead lines (along the west property line) being provided to the Department of Development approval. Contact Tony Giron, City Planner at 414-302-8469.
5. Documentation and approval showing compliance with the City of West Allis Stormwater Management Ordinance, to be submitted to the Building Inspections and Neighborhood Services Department by a registered Civil Engineer. A stormwater permit must be obtained from the City Building Inspector. Contact Mike Romens, Building Inspector, at 414-302-8413.
6. Permit application and approved plans being submitted by applicant to the Engineering Dept. for necessary driveway permit to be granted by the Board of Public Works. Contact Greg Bartelme, Engineering Department at 414-302-8367.
7. Common Council approval of the special use (scheduled for December 15, 2020) and applicant's acknowledgement of the special use resolution.

(Remaining conditions of approval to be satisfied by the property owner within one year of Plan Commission approval)

8. A signage plan being submitted for permit review and approved by the Department of Development.
9. Compliance with Section 2814 of the City's Policy and Procedures Manual relative to that policy as it relates to the replacement and repair to City walkways of damaged or defective (if any) abutting sidewalk.