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Slavic Village development ready to fill neighborhood's 'missing teeth'

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Renderings of the Fox & Mound townhomes occurring on seven empty lots in Slavic Village.

A new scattered townhome project in Slavic Village has been approved by the Cleveland Planning Commission as of early April, marking the first new housing development in the neighborhood since before the pandemic.

The project, known as Fox & Mound Townhomes, will consist of 27 two-story townhouses with 29 two-bedroom units and 25 three-bedroom units. This \$13 million development is expected to bring around 100 new residents to the area.

Each home will feature attached garages and open-concept living spaces, with some exceptions for a few units that will include age-friendly ground-floor primary suites.

Chad Summe, project designer for LDA Architects, informed the commission that some design elements may be adjusted based on fire access requirement along the private driveways leading to each home. Final design decisions are anticipated to be made by the end of April.

Construction will take place on seven empty lots made available through the Cleveland Land Bank. These lots are not contiguous, with homes facing Chambers, Sebert or Fleet avenues. The homes will be surrounded by other single-use or multi-family building.

Slavic Village was one of the hardest-hit communities following the 2007 foreclosure crisis, resulting in a high number of abandoned and dilapidated properties that led to mass demolitions and vacant lots.

Councilwoman Rebecca Mauer notes that Slavic Village has “missing teeth,” referring to the vacant spaces between buildings that need to be filled to promote sustainable development. Mauer represents the area where the new housing will be located.



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Fox & Mound Townhomes will be the first infill construction in the neighborhood since the Slavic Village Green Homes project prior to the pandemic.

Each unit will be priced at just over \$200,000, according to Dominick Durante, president of LDA Architects. He hopes it will attract residents to the neighborhood at an affordable rate.

“Developments like this should encourage more people to live in the city of Cleveland and own homes,” Durante said.

Jimi Oluwabiyi, development manager for Lael Development, has spent over a year working on this project, carefully considering its impact on the community. In addition, he received a \$30,000 grant as the second-place recipient for Cleveland Development Advisors' and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress' Cleveland Equitable Development Initiative, known as CLE-EDI, for this project in 2024.

"Jimi is exactly the type of developer we need in Cleveland," Mauer said. "He has engaged with residents about this project and has received an award from Cleveland Development Advisors for minority developers to help fund it. We look forward to seeing it completed."

In a written statement to Crain's, Oluwabiyi expressed optimism that this development will serve as a catalyst for revitalization efforts in Slavic Village.

"We truly believe this will positively impact the Ward 12 neighborhood in terms of density and aesthetics," Oluwabiyi said. "We expect its proximity to Fleet Avenue businesses will have a beneficial effect."

While the project is still being developed, Durante indicated to Crain that he hopes construction on the first units will begin this fall.