

# Pearland Connection

## The Ivy District Brings Debate to the City

POSTED ON AUGUST 23, 2014 BY STACEYG

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If you've been paying attention to social media lately, you've probably noticed a big push by developer **American Modern Green** (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/modern-green-development-co.-ltd>) to get citizen input for their Planned Development (PD) called **The Ivy District**.

According to their **Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Ivy-District/608477829272049>), "The Ivy District will be a \$300 million plus dynamic mixed-use, walkable center complete with high-end retail and restaurants, state-of-the-art offices, a conference center, modern hotel, upscale residential and 18 acres of dedicated green space. Located off of Highway 288, the district is south of the Houston Medical Center just past Beltway 8. It will contain 800,000 plus square feet of retail, hotel and office space. The Ivy District will also offer upscale residential options for all age demographics. The district will be built using energy-efficient technologies that will reduce energy costs for businesses and residents. The Ivy District will be a beacon of modern development in the Pearland community.

American Modern Green Development is the developer of Ivy District. It is a subsidiary of the Hong Kong-based listed company, who is global real estate pioneer dedicated to the comfortable and energy-efficiency green buildings."

The Pearland City Council will vote on the zoning requests at their next meeting on **Monday, August 25**. To view the presentation, click **HERE** (<https://silvercreektribune.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/modern-green-aug-25-upload.pdf>).

**Kevin Cole**, Vice President of Development for Modern Green, answered some questions about potential problems with the development that residents were posing.

**Q:** This development will bring 800,000 + square feet of commercial space along with 1,150 residential units and green space over 48.5 acres. Won't this be too dense for the area, creating more problems with traffic and generally getting around?

**A:** This project was basically approved in late 1998/early 1999 in the City's Comprehensive Plan. In 2008, this area was planned to be the Water Lights District, but that developer went bankrupt. The Ivy District, which is part of "The Lower Kirby Urban Center," which was approved in January, 2013, will actually have less residential units than the approved Water Lights District, along with more green space. So, this project is really nothing new to the City.

**Q:** With so many rental units available, won't there be an influx of lower socioeconomic status families?

**A:** There will be only 400 rental units out of the 1,150 available. All of these units are geared toward single professionals or couples and are priced as luxury units. Rent will be between \$1,400 – \$2,000 per month and the sale prices will range from \$200,000 – \$400,000. Therefore, a certain demographic will be drawn to the area, much like Mid-Town in Houston.

**Q:** With such an influx of people, how will they get around easily? It looks like there are no direct ways to get to Beltway 8 and folks will have to use a feeder road to get to 288.

**A:** Right now, S. Spectrum Drive leads to Kirby and then the dead-end street called Fruge. This street will be built out as an easy way to get to the Beltway. Residents and retailers will have to use the feeder to get to 288, but Bass Pro customers have to do that now, and that doesn't seem to be a problem. We have to follow rigorous rules set by the City and the Texas Department of Transportation and must do traffic studies during development to determine what roadways are needed. As far as 288 goes, if our PD passes in City Council, it will be at least 2 years before any retail space opens. The toll roads on 288 may be open as early as 2017, so this could benefit customers and retailers as far as traffic is concerned.

**Q:** Some residents are concerned that there are no plans to look over and therefore, they assume drainage plans and design standards are still very fluid.

**A:** There will be 12 blocks in The Ivy District. Each block already has a designation of use: residential/commercial/mixed. We cannot deviate from that. Also, drainage plans are in place. As development goes along, we may have to change certain things, but we can't do that without City Council's approval. Our design has to meet the City's Unified Development Criteria, which is very specific.

**Q:** When building starts, won't that cause a big problem as far as traffic on 288 and the Beltway goes?

**A:** The Ivy District is set to be built in 2 phases. Our Market Study was completed and approved by the Planning and Zoning Committee in July. Phase 1 will take 4-5 years to build out and will consist of 8 blocks of commercial space. Phase II can't begin until Phase 1 is completed. The design requires commercial buildings to be completed first, as the residential units will make up the second floor of the buildings. We are putting the commercial spaces in first to start generating revenue and creating jobs for the City. We expect to generate \$3 million per year and create 900+ jobs. This design ensures that the City has no risk. Modern Green will even be maintaining the private streets inside the District.

While Mr. Cole's answers may soothe some residents' concerns, some members of City Council still have some issues. Council Member **Keith Ordeneaux** recently posted on **Facebook** ([https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=736894619682298&id=343874205651010](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=736894619682298&id=343874205651010)) that, "I cannot support the percentages in Phase Two, the area on the map in red. But I do believe that multi-family will be part of any development in this area due

to the demographics and market studies. So at this time I am leaning towards supporting the PD if they will pull out Phase Two totally and add streets connecting to Kirby and/or Beltway 8.”

The map that he is referring to is below:



(<https://silvercreektribune.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/mgmap.png>)

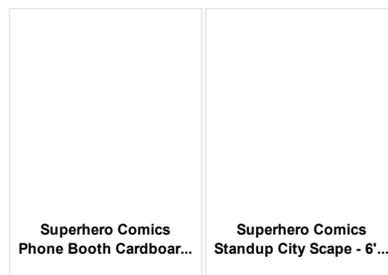
Council Member **Tony Carbone** says, “Overall, I believe the developer and staff have worked well to get to a final product that is beneficial to the city.”

Council Members **Greg Hill**, **Gary Moore** and **Scott Sherman** were not available to comment on the issue before press time.

The City Council meeting on Monday, August 25 is sure to be an interesting one. If you cannot attend at 6:30pm at City Hall, you can watch it live [via the Internet \(http://pearland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?event\\_id=124\)](http://pearland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?event_id=124), [Pearland TV \(http://pearlandtx.gov/departments/city-hall/communications/pearland-tv\)](http://pearlandtx.gov/departments/city-hall/communications/pearland-tv) or on cable TV (U-Verse channel 99).

If you would like to give your opinions to the Council, click [here](#) (<mailto:treid%40pearlandtx.gov%3B%20carbone%40pearlandtx.gov%3B%20moore%40pearlandtx.gov%3B%20kordeneaux%40pearlandtx.gov%3B%20>) to send an email to them.

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## 2 thoughts on “The Ivy District Brings Debate to the City”

### 1. *Sue Weber*

[AUGUST 24, 2014 AT 3:00 PM](#)

FB also had posts from councilmen that were not so supportive. Did you leave those out because this article was really a marketing piece rather than a news piece that offered a balanced view?

[Reply](#)

o *StaceyG*

[AUGUST 24, 2014 AT 3:15 PM](#)

I did ask all the Council Members for feedback. If you’d be so kind as to send me links to the posts you’re referring to, I’ll gladly add quotes in, with the person’s permission, of course. My email address is [sglaesmann@mac.com](mailto:sglaesmann@mac.com). This piece was absolutely not meant to be an ad for The Ivy District. I worked with the information I had at the time.

Thank you for reading!

Stacey

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