

Meeting Summary
Design Review Committee (DRC)
March 12, 2014

Item 1 – Roll Call

Members Present:

Dean Cervelli, Jim Chaffee, Rick Gonzalez, Bob Smith, Tom Warne, Matt Williams.

Members Absent: Jane McCollum

There was a quorum.

Planning and Development Services Staff:

Jim Mazzocco, Adam Smith, Belinda Flores –McCleese, Kristina Medina

Public Attendees:

Lynn Ashton, Chris Gans

Staff gave general background information on the DRC review process.

Item 2 – The Hub at Tucson I – 1023 N. Tyndall Avenue - Phase 1 Signs

Keri Silvyn, zoning consultant, Jeff Zelisko, architect gave a presentation for the applicant Core Campus.

Keri Silvyn gave a presentation on the sign request for the Hub I project. She mentioned that Hub I is a mixed use project in the Urban Overlay District and the sign code does not contemplate this type of use or this zoning district. She said that the City is reviewing a sign code text amendment that may go to Mayor and Council in April that would require DRC review of signs greater than 50 square feet. She said they would present more information at the next DRC meeting scheduled for April 16, 2014.

As a comparison, Tom Warne said the Main Gate square properties fall under the sign code's pedestrian district and the Historic Preservation Zone.

Ms. Silvyn explained that her client wants 400 square feet of signs. 180 square feet for identification wall sign on the north elevation of the building and the rest for retail on the east and south elevations. She noted there would be no signs on the west elevation of the building.

There was some discussion about illumination of the building's identification sign. The architect said the light source would be indirect and lighting the blue-colored letters only.

Bob Smith mentioned that businesses should not be unnecessarily restrained by the sign code, and overall signage should be in context with the rest of the development.

Ms Silvyn noted that at some point she needed to work with Glenn Moyer, the City's sign code administrator on details of the application and the upcoming text amendment.

Tom Warne and Bob Smith discussed the need to put any future Main Gate signs in context to what is already occurring versus viewing one building in isolation.

Dean Cervelli asked about what is the relation to Hub Phase 2 The architect said it is part of the marketing to put them together and use the sign for both buildings.

Ms. Silvyn said she would return and put the entire sign application in better context for the April 16, 2014 DRC meeting.

Item 2 - The DRC took no action.

Item 3 – The Hub at Tucson II – 1023 N. Tyndall Avenue Phase II

Keri Silvyn, zoning consultant, Jeff Zelisko, architect, Tom Harrington, Core Campus representative gave a presentation.

The consultant noted that the subject property is currently owned by the City of Tucson and is the location of a non-profit for disabled persons known as Direct. The applicant has worked with the City to purchase the property and help the non-profit to move to a more suitable location. The Mayor and Council will vote on the sale of the property on March 18, 2014.

The consultant also mentioned they are working with the West University Neighborhood Association on traffic mitigation and with Ms Gray an owner of an adjacent historic bungalow on mitigation matters also.

Staff mentioned that there is a letter in the application addressing the Main Gate's District's definition of story. He said the Zoning Administrator concurred that the two-level townhouse development at the north end of the first story did not constitute separate stories but were still part of the first story which is predominantly a parking garage.

There was some information explaining the west side alley's width and the use of high rise sprinkler system to address concerns of the City's Fire Department. Further, there is continuing work on alley maneuvering for loading areas that is on-going with the applicant's traffic engineer.

The Core Campus architect said the design of the Phase II building was intended to complement the Phase I building but be different in its appearance. He also mentioned shadow studies that include both the proposed Phase II building and the existing tall buildings already in the area.

Bob Smith asked how the building is different. The architect said it was smaller with only 95 units and no retail. Further, its target market was students but not necessarily limited to students.

The architect mentioned the colors would have continuity with Phase I but there would be no brick but rather other contrasts in materials are being used.

Bob Smith asked about the streetscape improvements. The architect said the streetscape will be a continuation of Phase I. Ms. Silvyn said that Core Campus and Campus Acquisitions both agreed to use similar color and landscaping palettes. This streetscape design concept would become the design standard for the entire Main Gate District.

Bob Smith asked about retail viability in Phase II. The architect said this building like the Campus Acquisition building across the street are limited to residential use. Both he said are too far away for successful commercial. Tom Warne agreed with this assessment. Tom Harrington said that the townhouses with street level entrances help to enliven the street. Dean Cervelli asked if they have used the townhouse concept elsewhere? The architect said at Ole Miss – The Hub at Oxford.

The architect mentioned the use of corrugated metal siding on the building. Rick Gonzalez asked how that would be successful. The architect said the depth and stiffness of the materials would assure that it does not fail.

Regarding building massing, the architect said that Phase II has more variation than Phase I. There was more discussion about articulation and various features being proposed in the Phase II project.

Bob Smith said he liked the continuation in the rear setback and the forms as you get closer to the historic buildings on the west.

The architect mentioned that within the 95 units there was a total of 290 beds. Further, there would be 70 parking spaces. Ms. Silvyn said Phase II had a higher parking ratio per bed and unit. Bob Smith said the University would not be planning to sell parking spaces to residents of Phase II. Ms. Silvyn said the project would manage its residents and supply zip cars. Tom Harrington said that 90% of the units are leased along with the same amount of parking spaces leased.

Matt Williams mentioned that businesses on Speedway have had problems with illegal parking coming from the Campus Acquisition building. Mr. Williams said he believes there is a loophole in the towing provisions that causes repeat offenders.

A property owner of a historic bungalow to the west, Lynn Ashton said she worried about this project's residents parking on her property across the alley. Tom Harrington said he felt towing should help take care of that problem. Bob Smith asked about taxi service. The architect said they had a proposed drop off point. Further, he said there is bike parking in the garage and in front of the building.

Lynn Ashton also mentioned she is concerned about flooding in the alley crossing onto her property. She said her neighbor, Judith Gray, has been flooded a few times. The architect said Phases I and II should improve the drainage situation by better engineering of the building and the alley. He said he expects the alley to be re-paved as part of this project.

The architect said the overall height of the Phase II building is 84 feet with 74 feet of occupied space. He showed photos of views of the building from distant points to the west. Some showing that the building could not be seen at certain points to the west within the neighborhood.

The architect showed a series of pictures of shadow impacts during various parts of the year. He said the Campus Acquisition building and Hub Phase I create more shadows than the Phase II building.

The architect said they would give a more information and show improvements when his team returns at the April 16 DRC meeting.

Bob Smith said he appreciated being able to give input early in the process. Rick Gonzalez , Dean Cervelli, and Matt Williams said they liked the design as presented. Dean Cervelli asked if there is an opportunity to do rainwater harvesting. The architect said they are looking at it and think they may be able to do that.

Item 3 - The DRC took no action.

Item 4 - Future Agenda Items - Hub Phase I Alterations Discussion.

Matt Williams said that the final project being built has to be consistent with the DRC approval. The DRC agreed that it wanted to make sure that there would not be substantial changes happening without their knowledge. It appeared that there needs to be something in place that assures continuity from design approval to construction stage.

The architect said he understood that there was an issue with the reduction in the number of windows on the west elevation of the Phase I project currently under construction.

He further said the solutions had to deal with bathrooms and closet locations that were overlapped with window locations not meant for these interior room plans. The architect said it was a mistake on this team's part. He said they were focused on getting the units to work and did not return to the DRC with revised elevation plans. He said it was a mistake.

Matt Williams said there was substantial fenestration on the west elevation and it is not there. He said he understood that changes are inevitable. He also mentioned that there

were balconies where there are now pillars. He added that making these changes without returning to the DRC made the design review process moot.

Ms Silvyn suggested that the Design Professional should review changes to plans. She said changes are normal parts of the construction process. Tom Harrington said they want to help improve the process and there was no intent to circumvent the process.

Matt Williams asked if there is anyway to address the changes now. He said people are asking him and some are upset with the outcome of the Phase I building. Dean Cervelli said that adding more greenery is not a viable solution since hanging gardens struggle in this climate. She said the approved fenestration complimented the overall design of the west elevation of the building. She added that she is not comfortable in going forward until there is a policy assuring a solution to this disconnect between design approval and the final product. She also said she felt it was the City's fault for not catching the discrepancy prior to approval to begin construction. Staff said they would review the problem.

Bob Smith said we needed clear direction in the form of a motion. He mentioned that the University policy is that any change in outer appearance requires additional review.

Jim Chaffee said we need to find out how to make it better in the future.

Bob Smith asked the architect can he return with Hub 1 and explain how it will look better. The architect said he could do that.

Dean Cervelli asked what if you return with a proposal and we do not like it. She said that additional plantings and a band aid solution is not acceptable.

Bob Smith asked if it is possible to install windows in metal panels to re-establish its articulation. The architect said they would return with a list of changes.

Dean Cervelli asked if they would stop construction. The architect said the west elevation is already finished.

Tom Warne said that he liked the idea about making a list of what was approved, what was different and what is the proposal going forward.

The DRC discussed the making of motions and the following motions were made and approved.

Motion - *By the next DRC meeting the City should have a procedure in place that addresses changes to the exterior of the building made to the plans approved by the Design Review Committee and the changes be given to the Design Professional and all members of the Design Review Committee are notified and the proposal returns for a formal review.* Motion by Matt Williams and seconded by Dean Cervelli. **6-0 Approved.**

Motion – *Any disparity between DRC approved Hub Phase 1 plans and what was constructed by Core Campus shall be returned to the DRC. The renderings shall show what was the original rendering and what changes were made and also present the plan to fix the proposal to ameliorate negative effects.* Motion by Matt Williams and seconded by Tom Warne. **6-0 Approved.**