

## SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

The Berkeley, 2900 S. Glebe Road (SP #431)

SPRC Meeting #4

April 17, 2014

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Steve Sockwell, Chair; Karen Kumm Morris; Jane Siegel;  
Inta Malis

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### MEETING AGENDA

This was the fourth meeting for SP #431, the Berkeley. The SPRC Chair for this item, Steve Sockwell, gave a brief introduction which was followed by a presentation by the applicant on the project's building architecture and open space elements. Following the applicant's presentation, the SPRC discussed the following topics.

### SPRC DISCUSSION

#### Building Architecture

##### *Building Materials*

- What are the proposed building materials?
  - Building will have a brick base with a masonry product above that looks like brick (recycled fly ash). Metal panels are proposed at the top and for the bays. The metal panels will have a powder coated finish. The proposed privacy fins would be metal as well.
  - Applicant will look into finding local examples of how the masonry product has been used.
- Some expressed disapproval over the use of metal panels and felt it cheapened the look of the building (Ex: Skanska bldg. in Clarendon – Penzance)
- Building design is muted and proposed materials don't help. There are panel products that look like brick and don't require masons to install if cost is an issue.

##### *Balconies*

- Why not locate balconies on the S. Glebe side of the building?
  - S. side of the building was chosen due to the ability to provide shade and better manage solar gain
- Reconsider adding balconies on the N. side of the property as they would be used for 3 seasons and provide active views for residents of the building.
  - Building is very close to the sanitary sewer line but balconies could be located on the upper levels (above 2<sup>nd</sup> floor). Proposal currently has Juliet balconies on the front (N. side).

- Is there an opportunity for balconies on the east or west sides? They would provide more interest for people living in the unit.
- What is the depth of the Juliet balconies?

### ***Building Entrance(s)***

- Consider making changes to highlight the building entrance as it warrants different design treatment. The buildings are very long and the design proposed attempts to break it up but is very repetitive without much variation. Consider adding a treatment to break it up into 3 distinct segments.
- Project is supposed to have no back side; still not sure where the entrance/doors are.
- Consider a cantilever at the corner or use color to make the building entrance stand out more. One suggestion is to bring the white color toward the middle and have the sides vary in color.
- Consider adding a feature to link entrances at the front of the buildings
- Perhaps a porte-cochere could be used to limit vehicular access to the rear and ensure there is no confusion about where the entrance lobby is located.
- Need to better communicate how circulation and parking works on site. The rendering doesn't demonstrate how this will work very well.
- What about ground level entrances – is there any opportunity for this? Might be good for families with children (ex: Hartford in Clarendon on 12<sup>th</sup> Street).
- Security concern re: building entrances at ground level still is not clear. This proposal is no more secure than it is now and residents can let people in anyway
  - Secure facility means access has to be controlled, can't be dispersed. This is more of an issue on the stream side.

### ***General Building Comments***

- Will the affordable housing units be distributed evenly?
  - The specific unit mix per building has not been determined yet. However, there is not a plan to locate or concentrate ADUs in one area or building versus another.
- Could there be different rents for north vs. south facing units? Will there be “English basement” units?
  - The rents for north vs. south facing units haven't been determined yet. None of the units would be considered English basement units but some would be partially below average grade due to the slope of the site.
- What is net change in building height as compared to existing structures?
  - Applicant will provide this information.
- Why the reference to ADA accessibility?
  - This was brought up to clarify that the main entrances to both buildings will be at the same level and equally accessible.
- Community room location is a plus because it is accessible to view of the stream.
- Delivery truck area needs to be marked so people don't park there long term.

### Site Design & Characteristics

- Why no public access from the trail? This would be nice between the two buildings and provide access from the shopping center.
- By widening the trail, you are reducing the distance between cars and the trail. Ask adjacent property owners asking about getting an easement on the east side to provide alternative vehicular access.
- Still hoping to see location of service entrances change. What about using S. Lang Street to provide access? Is it possible to have a third curb cut on S. Glebe Road?
- Applicant's rationale for fence on stream side is to provide security, but the site is still accessible by simply walking around to the front.
  - Not as much activity on S. Glebe as on stream side.
  - Fence on the stream side is a deterrent, not a failsafe.

### Open Space

- Open spaces in front (on S. Glebe Road) look underdeveloped and are not welcoming enough.
- Children should be in the front, not in the corner where no one can see them.
- Play equipment that could be design elements should be incorporated here.
- Be sure to use noninvasive plants.
  - This is a requirement
- Is the safety concern in the play area about vandalism? Proposal has open play area w/out equipment, so what is security concern?

### Other Comments

- What is the unit mix? How many children are expected?
  - 18 efficiency units, 170 one-bedrooms, 89 two-bedrooms, 10 three bedrooms
  - Anticipate larger units will be for families, maybe 150 kids on site; not sure how many live there now

### **NEXT STEPS**

- ARCA has done an analysis of the density issues and will circulate a memo to the committee.
- Next SPRC meeting date is TBD.