

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Pentagon Centre, 1201 S. Hayes Street and 1200 S. Fern Street (SP #297)

SPRC Meeting #3

April 23, 2015

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Steve Sockwell, Chair; Steve Cole; Nancy Iacomini; Jane Siegel; Erik Gutshall; Rosemary Ciotti

MEETING AGENDA

This was the third SPRC meeting for SP #297, Pentagon Centre. The SPRC Chair for this item, Steve Sockwell, opened the meeting. Staff gave a presentation on the previously approved Phase I Site Plan and relevant Pentagon Centre Design Guidelines. The applicant gave a presentation on the current Phase I Site Plan request, focusing on site design and building architecture for each building individually. Following the presentations, the SPRC discussed the following topics.

SPRC DISCUSSION

Building and Site Design

Building A

General Comments

- Proposed design is fairly successful, especially the “glass box” at the second level
- Proposed mall entrance is not strong enough
- Balcony treatment (some open, some not) is a positive aspect
- Overall good attempt at quality architecture but not a centerpiece building
- The south and east sides are not given the same weight. Different quality of design and finishes on those sides. Building should feel like its equal on all four sides
- Somewhat contrived designed with regard to three different uses; garage, retail at ground level, and residential above are treated separately.
- Want more details on accessibility features

Above Grade Garage

- Like treatment of garage area and the pleated screens, maybe use a little color there?
 - LED lighting is planned for this area
 - Good example of using LED light are stairs at Signature Theater
- Concerns about large uninterrupted areas of brick in parking areas, looks commercial
- Panels don't hide the garage, they tell us exactly where it is
- Garage treatment is a good effort but it has too much weight as a defining character of the building

- View of garage from the south needs work

Base, Middle, and Top

- Podium treatment is a positive
- Base could be more interesting and less monotonous
- Building top is awkward and perhaps too heavy in how it expresses itself
- Top is ok but only extends up on 12th street side, want to see it on other sides

Building Materials

- Base is largely flat brick with no treatment
 - Brick will not be a single color; it will have variations in it, applicant will bring in samples
- Eye is drawn to all the beige brick, concerned because it hasn't proven to wear well

Vertical features

- Vertical components make it more interesting and give the design some motion. Their undulating surface and architect's attempt to work with light are positives.
- Varying viewpoints expressed regarding whether this feature is "too heavy"; additionally, there is concern regarding how it connects with lower levels of the building

Retail Spaces

- 12th Street uses are principally lobbies and not retail.
- Will new retail be created on 12th Street when the parking/loading area is relocated on S. Grant?
 - Yes, retail could be located there in Phase II.
- Is proposed ground floor retail a full two (2) stories?
 - In appearance only, it will look like a double height space
- Concerned about height of retail space (14' clear) b/c it's less than the 15' standard
 - Retail tenants of less than 10K sf generally want heights of 10'
 - Where did the 15' metric come from?
- What are proposed loading facilities?
 - 1 dock for retail
 - 2 for residential tower

Building B

- Overall, façade changes represent a great improvement over what is there now.
- Proposed architecture is too uniform, boring, and/or subdued and does not have enough articulation or create enough interest to make S. Hayes Street very exciting.
- Desire expressed to maintain galleria feel of the glass features there now.

Building C

- Additional work is needed on the area between the storefront and the projecting bays
- Area where garage is exposed on S. Hayes site calls more attention to itself in how it is treated
- Attractive building overall, issue is with above grade parking
- Concern about amount of encroachment over sidewalk with balconies and habitable space
- Projections are nice and give it a residential feel in a location close to the neighborhoods
- Consider having balconies that are comfortable for seating

- Take another look at brick color as well as the proposed orange color on the balconies

Building D

- Least successful of the three buildings. Proposed design is industrial and utilitarian, and is a detraction from the streetscape and 15th Street. Facades need improvement.
- Is this building a temporary structure?
 - Yes, the plan is to replace it with a hotel in a later phase
- Green screening walls often don't work well in this climate; window boxes often work better on open bays but additional, alternative options for screening are encouraged.

Streetscape and Site Circulation

- Retail looks and feels crowded at that corner near the Metro. Is there more room for pedestrian circulation? There is not enough room for robust public space now.
- Sidewalk looks smaller in front of Building B. Look at spacing of bus shelters and other street features.

Signage

- Incorporate signage more into the building design; don't design the building to handle space for signs. The façade should stand on its own, with or without signs.
- Is there more than one mall entrance?
 - Yes, there are three entrances
 - Signage on 12th is over parking garage entrance to direct people to the mall
- Name branding throughout the property is understood, but you are not allowing individual tenants to individually express themselves
 - Hard to get national retailers to agree to strict standards regarding signage and branding
 - Expect to get local retailers in some new spaces so idea was to organize things up front
- Signage on Building C is too junky.
- Pentagon Centre name over pedestrian walkway is confusing (on 15th Street); alternatively, others felt this signage was useful in signaling it was ok for the public to enter.

Parking & Traffic

- Want above ground space activated instead being devoted to parking. County should consider giving the applicant additional density that would facilitate putting the garage underground (Building A)
- Figure out a way to get parking underground on the Building D site since it is outside the Metro zone of influence. Is underground parking permitted beneath public right of way?

Sustainability

- Questions were raised about overall sustainability and energy efficiency features. Is there potential for utilizing renewable energy in the future?
 - Yes, the building will likely attain a higher level certification at the end.

Phasing

- Don't have a lot of choices here right now. What is anticipated timing of future phases?
 - Next phase anticipated in 30-35 years
 - This adds importance to building facades of Building A

- What are expected timelines for the construction of the individual buildings?

<u>Building</u>	<u>Anticipated Completion Date/Timing</u>
○ Building D	Summer 2016
○ Building A	Summer 2018
○ Building B	Begin construction 6 months after start of Building A
○ Building C	Early 2020

General Comments

- Additional information requested on the following:
 - Renderings of all four sides of each building
 - Drawings that outline or show eventual locations of future buildings and their relationship to proposed Phase I improvements
 - Additional detail/dimensions on public realm features

NEXT STEPS

- The next SPRC meeting will be held on **Monday, May 11th**. The applicant will present responses to previous comments made about building architecture before moving on to the transportation and open space elements of the project.