

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

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

SPRC Meeting #4

May 11, 2015

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

MEETING AGENDA

This was the fourth SPRC meeting for SP #297, Pentagon Centre. The SPRC Chair for this item, Steve Sockwell, opened the meeting. Staff gave a presentation on the Pentagon Centre Design Guidelines relevant to streetscape, transportation, and open space. The applicant gave a presentation on the current Phase I Site Plan request, focusing on these same elements. Following the presentations, the SPRC discussed the following topics.

SPRC DISCUSSION

Streetscape

- Will the proposed expansion of the public sidewalk impact the ability to provide a uniform building wall along 12th Street South for the remainder of the phases of development?
 - No. The applicant will agree to provide a consistent street wall in future phases with what is being proposed at Building A.
- Reevaluate whether or not a 58' ROW is wide enough for 12th Street South to accommodate future transit options
- Proposed clear zones for sidewalks are generous, with the exception of the areas near the bus bays and bus shelters on S. Hayes Street. The applicant should study this further to provide additional width (at least 10') in these locations.
- Proposed circular planter at the corner of 12th Street South and S. Hayes Street should be reconsidered. It creates a pinch point in an area with high pedestrian activity.
- The critical number for street tree pits is the amount soil volume, not its dimensions. Make sure adequate soil volume is provided.
- Drawings do not currently show trees continuing all the way to S. Fern along 12th Street South. Since the sidewalk will be provided in this phase, the trees should as well.
- Consider providing additional streetscape and/or screening for the proposed tire center to shield view of tires and equipment from 15th Street South.

- Interior streets need to be walkable for people of different ages. Concern was expressed regarding the proposed brick sidewalk crossings. Consider utilizing an elevated smooth surface in these locations to encourage cars to slow down.

Transportation and Site Circulation

- The service entrance (along the proposed service street) would be in close proximity to the building lobby (Building C). This seems like an unfortunate location for this facility.
 - The applicant has looked at this and is comfortable with this arrangement
 - Service vehicles come onto the property 1x/day at the most and the timing of deliveries can be managed to limit disruptions to residential tenants. No major conflicts are anticipated.
- Is the existing island on 15th Street moving as part of this proposal to allow access to S. Grant Street?
 - No, the proposed entrance at S. Grant Street occurs at the end of the existing island. Its location would also allow drivers leaving the residential driveway on the south side of 15th Street South to drive directly into the site.
 - This location is being reviewed by DES and could, in a later phase of development, become fully signalized.
- Will the proposed saw-tooth bays require buses to back-up, and potentially cross bike lanes, to exit?
 - No, they have been designed to function without requiring buses to back up.
- Proposal includes 7' wide parking lanes adjacent to bike and travel lanes, raising concerns about the possibility for larger vehicles to project into these adjacent lanes.
 - The County controls striping of all street elements. We generally request a total road width that we are comfortable can accommodate all of the uses we desire. Then we can adjust striping for each element accordingly, depending on the site context and characteristics.
- Where will deliveries and drop off occur for Building C, without having to go through the gate?
 - Residents will have fobs that permit access. Applicant will have to study non-resident access for drops-offs and deliveries further.
- What's the difference between the public and private streets being dedicated on site?
 - In Phase I, all of the interior streets are private.
 - In Phase II, S. Grant Street will extend north to 12th Street South and become a full, public street.
 - The private service street shown in between Building B and Building C is not a public street in Phase I or any subsequent phase.
- Please explain the reasoning behind the location and function of the entry/exit gates?
 - The gates were installed to prevent the site from becoming a commuter parking lot and to maintain existing retail parking. The gates within the service drive are located to permit loading access to the facilities located closer to S. Hayes.
- Provide additional details about the proposed passageway, it appears as though it will be dark underneath.

Parking & Traffic

- What is the current demand for bicycle parking on site now? How can you ensure that the proposed decision to not include bike parking facilities on S. Hayes will be sufficient to meet demand?
 - The proposed transit/commuter store inside Building A is meant to accommodate bike valet service to handle the demand for bike parking.
 - Applicant will track current bicycle parking on site for a week and report back

Landscaping

- Concern raised about locating off-street parking (S. Hayes) in close proximity to planting beds.
 - A two-foot wide step out area has been provided to allow room for people to maneuver around the planting areas from existing parked cars along S. Hayes.
- Is the current site subject to special conditions with regard to landscaping?
 - The current improvements were built by-right.
- Support was expressed for the proposed lush plantings as well as concern for their continued maintenance.
 - The developer will be obligated to maintain these and all other streetscape elements for the life of the site plan.

General Comments

- Consider providing additional opportunities for rooftop viewing along the N. side of Building A, as that side will have the best views and be most attractive to residents. Please be mindful of providing adequate capacity for large groups.
- Additional information requested on the following:
 - Clarify which transportation policy documents are relevant to this request.
 - Explain how the requested amendments will impact the existing design guidelines.
 - Provide a diagram showing the location of street parking on all adjacent streets.
 - Study how access to parking can be managed with fewer entry/exit gates.
 - Show where deliveries can be made to all of the buildings on site.
 - Examine the impact of the proposed changes in land use on the function of the Pentagon City Metrorail station.
 - Confirm if bike share stations are called for on this site.

NEXT STEPS

- The next SPRC meeting will be held on **Monday, June 8th**. The applicant will present responses to previous comments made about building architecture before moving on to other elements of the project.
- The SPRC discussion will likely conclude at the **Monday, July 13th** meeting, which will consist of an overall wrap-up of both the PDSP and Phase I Final Site Plan.