

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

672 Flats/Penrose Group

Site Plan Review Committee Meeting #4

June 15, 2015

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Nancy Iacomini, Jane Siegel, Rosemary Ciotti, Chris Forinash, Steve Sockwell, Ginger Brown, James Schroll

MEETING AGENDA

The fourth meeting of the SPRC for the 672 Flats site plan was intended to finish up the discussion on site design, including landscaping, and continue the discussion on transportation, covering circulation, bike access, sidewalk dimensions, and parking ratio. The end of the agenda included discussion on sustainable design, community benefits, and any other issues. The applicant's architect then presented several new drawings showing new building design intended to address SPRC comments received at the May 18 meeting. Finally, SPRC members provided wrap-up comments on the project as a whole. It was announced that this site plan would appear before the Planning Commission in September.

SPRC DISCUSSION

Transportation

- The bus stop will be located 50-ft from the 7th Street intersection
- There will be off-street parking available along the Glebe frontage, for which there are precedents along the western edge of Glebe
- Will the applicant provide an accessible van space built by universal design? Staff will work with the applicant when discussing conditions.
- Will the bike room have power door openers?
- Concern that there will not be a permanent place to park delivery vehicles. Staff responded that there will be short-term parking somewhere.
- Could outdoor seating for a café be accommodated at Glebe and Carlin Springs? Staff responded that there likely would not be enough sidewalk width for a full café.
- Will the 7th Street sidewalk be expanded? The applicant responded that it will be improved from its current condition.

Landscaping

- Why aren't there plantings at the Carlin Springs side of the alley?
- Can pervious and permeable pavers be included?

- Will lighting be provided in the alley? Staff responded that no lighting is required in the alley.
- Will tree species in the alley be shade-tolerant?
- Will the proposed green roof be accessible to residents? The applicant responded that it will not be accessible because that adds additional cost due to maintenance, as well as mandating major changes to the roof configuration to allow for access.

Community Benefits

- Which of the listed community benefits are standard site plan requirements, and which are “extraordinary” benefits. Staff answered that sustainable design and affordable housing are being provided consistent with the County’s policies and ordinances for bonus density. The alley design and construction is an extraordinary community benefit being provided by the applicant.

Comments on new drawings

- Are there pictures or information about how the materials will age? Are they durable?
- How will window transparency be considered? Staff responded that this is addressed in the standard site plan conditions.
- What does the draft retail plan say about Glebe Road? Staff responded that it calls for retail equivalency.
- How will the garage doors on the 7th Street frontage be treated? The applicant responded that the doors will be treated with a tinted/spandrel and backlit.

Wrap up comments

- The location of the parking and loading is an outstanding issue. However, because pedestrian counts are so low on 7th Street, curb cuts are appropriate on that frontage.
- Some concern about window transparency and ground-floor façade design
- Can permeable material be used for the alley treatment?
- There is a land use issue—this should be commercial and not residential.
- Concern about meeting 10% landscaped open space requirement.
- Concern about activation on the Glebe frontage
- There should be flexibility in the retail use; professional office should be considered as an appropriate use
- Supports parking and loading on 7th Street
- Support massing given the attention to making the scale transition through architectural design
- If staff supports parking and loading on 7th Street, there needs to be a strong justification for why this does not set a precedent against MTP policy
- It is the desire of the SPRC to located parking and loading on 7th Street
- We need to demonstrate that residential building services are compatible in residential neighborhoods.

- The loading on the alley is an odious burden on the townhouses; the policy isn't code, so there is grounds for an exception in this circumstance. Curb cuts don't cause conflicts with pedestrians and vehicles.
- There should be continuous soil volume for the street trees
- Façade uplighting should be directed down
- The Townes of Ballston is not a rogue community. Putting parking and loading on the alley will ruin property values. This is a transition zone and therefore an exception from the MTP policy applies.