



Agenda Item #: 11

Project Title: 3841 E. Washington Avenue - Renovation of a Former Hotel Building to Residential Located in Urban Design District (UDD) No. 5. 3rd Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 71120

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Christian Albouras, Jessica Klehr and Russell Knudson.

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 11, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for the renovation of a former hotel building to residential located at 3841 E. Washington Avenue in UDD No. 5. Registered and speaking in support were Colin Hooper and Morgan Van Riper-Rose. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Shaun Elwood, representing Schwerdt Design Group; and Craig Driver, representing Republic Madison, LLC.

The proposal involves converting 197 hotel rooms into 155 studio and one-bedroom apartments in workforce housing rent ranges. The existing structure and floor plate would be used, focusing on repairing, renovating and modernizing what is there to it a new identity as a residential building. The scope of work includes patching and repairing the damaged façade, the pool building, resealing and restriping the parking, and updating the interior with modern paint schemes. The landscape plan is in progress and will upgrade plantings across the site. The project aims to focus on being pedestrian and bicycle friendly by introducing more of the existing sidewalk to get from E. Washington, and will include bike parking inside the building and throughout the site.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Do they have to upgrade their parking with the 12 space island rule?
 - Typically the parking lot will largely be up to them. Based on my understanding of the development proposal, the applicant is not doing anything to trigger any improvements more than resurfacing and restriping
- You have an interesting serpentine driveway coming off Mendota Street, and a nice built in buffer from E. Washington Avenue, but that large patch of grass with evergreens is a huge opportunity for really nice landscaping. No matter what you do to the outside it's going to give away its former origin as a hotel. That's OK, but one thing you can do to soften it and make it more appealing is to upgrade the landscaping, you've got plenty of space for it.
- That central courtyard space looks like a prison yard with only two trees and turf. Please find somebody with imagination to activate that space. There probably won't be a lot of kids living here, so outdoor seating and grilling areas, more trees and shrubs. It's a blank slate, go crazy in there.
 - We share the same thoughts about that interior greenspace, we're excited to make it a usable and appealing space for the residents.

- I don't think this is an improvement over the straightforward way the color scheme works with the windows. You're accentuating the through wall HVAC units, I would encourage you to find a way to help bring this into a more residential look than a hotel look. The drive under canopy screams hotel, eliminating that would be a huge improvement. Consider awnings or canopies at least on the first floor. It's very flat, start sprinkling in some 3D elements along those windows to provide shade and identity throughout the building. That along with enhanced landscaping will be a big improvement. The paint scheme just didn't seem like it was an improvement to me with the horizontal stripe to it.
- Even if it's not required, it is a better design of the site and might help us sway our opinion of the project if there were more tree islands, more trees separating those long stretches of stalls, urban heat island mitigation, shading of the pavement. Especially in this area of the City, that's critical. Don't jam a tree into a tiny little pocket, give it a couple stalls to give it a chance of surviving.
 - The site itself is three parcels and there are no current plan for those two outlots. For the conditional use application we are strictly focused on the back hotel parcel, and do need the parking that is on that parcel itself.
- Look at getting rid of that canopy and having landscaping and daylight all around there. I see an opportunity for a big landscape island at the entrance.
- Since those two parcels aren't part of this project, maybe putting in a strip of lawn at the entry instead of that very massive canopy could designate the entry but give it more greenspace.

Action

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.