



Project Address: 402 W Gorham Street
Application Type: Building Addition in the Urban Mixed Use (UMX) District
UDC is an Approving Body
Legistar File ID #: [79237](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Marc Schellpfeffer, CaS4 Architecture, LLC | Riley's Property, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing a third floor addition of roughly 2,900 square feet of office space on an existing commercial building.

Project Schedule:

- UDC received and Informational Presentation on August 16, 2023.
- UDC granted Initial Approval on November 8, 2023.

Approval Standards: The Urban Design Commission ("UDC") is an **approving body** on this development request. Pursuant to Section 28.076(4)(b): All new buildings and additions that are less than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet, as well as all major exterior alterations to any building shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the design standards in [Sec. 28.071\(3\)](#), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.

At the November 8, 2023, meeting, the Commission granted Initial Approval of this item with conditions that generally spoke to providing additional details related to proposed landscape and materials, as well as revising the Gorham Street elevation, the tower element at the corner of Broom and Gorham Streets, and lighting plan. The Commission's subsequent review and continued evaluation of this item should focus on whether those conditions have been addressed.

Related Zoning Information: The project is zoned Urban Mixed Use zone. Staff notes that the proposed development **does not** trigger compliance with the design standards, including those related to window and door openings and materials because the building addition is less than 50 percent of the existing building's floor area.

In addition, in working with the Zoning Administrator, it is staff's understanding that this use is a nonconforming use. As such, pursuant to MGO 28.191, any structural repairs or alterations to the building shall not exceed a cumulative value of fifty percent of the total assessed value. The proposed addition, as well as any improvements that have occurred since 2014, in cost, are limited to fifty percent of the total assessed value. The applicant is advised that additional information will be required to be submitted in order for Zoning Administrator to confirm that the proposed expansion is consistent with requirements for expanding nonconforming uses pursuant to MGO 28.191.

Design-Related Plan Recommendations: The project site is located within the [Downtown Plan](#) planning area, within the State Street neighborhood. As such, development on the project site is subject to the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#). The Plan recommendations for development in this neighborhood generally speak to maintaining and enhancing the district as a premier designation for a variety of commercial and civic uses, the

unique sense of place, the diverse and vibrant mix of uses, encouraging human-scale developments that actively engage the street, and creating pedestrian oriented streetscapes.

Summary of Design Considerations

As noted above, it is the role of the UDC to review the revised drawings for consistency with the conditions of approval as outlined below. Please note that as conditions of approval, they are required to be met. The UDC's role is to ensure these previously established conditions are met, however they cannot waive or change these requirements. Staff requests the UDC's final action to reflect the following:

- The applicant shall provide a landscape plan.
- Revise the lighting plan to avoid the hot spots at the entry to create a more even 2.5 footcandle rating across the site.

With regard to lighting, staff notes that the uniformity ratios do not appear to be consistent with MGO 29.36 (5:1). As such, the applicant is advised that revisions to the lighting plan will be required. Staff recommends UDC address lighting as part of their action.

With regard to the following four conditions, staff believes that the conditions have been adequately addressed and the requested information provided.

- The applicant shall provide a final materials board and samples of the final materials selections.
- The Gorham Street ground level elevation shall be revised to include architectural details appropriate for a commercial retail use entry. Consideration should be given to increasing the amount of glazing or incorporating a canopy element to create a hierarchy to the main entry, etc.
- The tower element at the corner of Broom and Gorham, shall be revised to be all one uniform color.
- The Gorham Street facing elevation shall be revised to reflect a smooth material versus a corrugated metal panel. Corrugated metal panel is acceptable on the southwest elevation.

Summary of UDC Initial Approval Discussion and Action

As a reference, the Commission's discussion and comments from the November 8, 2023, Initial Approval are provided below.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- You have a large expanse of glass that is essentially south-facing. Could you explain the color and proposed window treatments?
 - It would be a series of mechanical shades. The lower half of that is more of a clerestory into the retail space, there would be no mechanical shades on that portion; the idea is to get light as deep in as we can get it. We are looking at the fritting, we might look at opportunities to densify that fritting pattern. Trying to get enough and as much light into the retail space as possible.
- And the color of the shades in the office?
 - Probably a white to a light gray, 3-7% in that range, something for diffusing light through it versus a darker quality.
- You show three doors off the parking lot, which one is the main entry?
 - The one on the right. The two on the left, one is an entry and one is an exit from the U shaped check-out area retail space on the inside. The middle door is an exit door.
- The Broom Street elevation have these vertical elements with the windows and the material, looking at the white ones versus the tanner ones. If it's white vertical element or tan it goes all the way up. I'm

curious why the one on Gorham Street changes material and wonder if it is distracting there and if it wouldn't be better if the white could just go all the way up.

- On that one the white is a 16 x 16 burnished block and the creamy is an existing EIFS. We're looking at pulling that cap off of the existing stair that sloped portion, there's a face that tilts back out from that. We are trying not to take the masonry up over that block from a cost and detailing standpoint and letting EIFS become something that, it already comes down in that sliver between the box and vertical window, so it's really this engaging of the EIFS coming over the top and coming down.
- Anything in the staff report you want to highlight? It's a non-conforming use but that is not our purview.
- (Secretary) They will have to work with Zoning to confirm that the limitations related to the expansion of a non-conforming use.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I'd like to thank the team for listening to us last time. You did a nice job of listening and removing those shed roofs. My only concern are the removal of the windows and these three doors in this blank wall that's the new burnished block. I'd be interested, there's no hierarchy and it's my only struggle.
- This is a retail establishment, to have it blocked off like that raises a couple concerns. One is you can't really see in very easily, and as the staff report indicated, how successful of a match are those infills really going to be? Certainly there are other liquor stores and wine outlets that have a visual connection to the inside. I agree with you, that's the one thing that's really not an improvement at all.
- I definitely agree, if there could be some sort of glazing or voids in there that would be helpful, something that signifies a main entry, like a canopy. There is nothing that says this is an entry. I agree it's weird to have one tower at the corner that's split when the others aren't; even though it is a change in materials, it could still be the same color to bring more continuity to the project. If it's white, burnished block with CMU or whatever, even the EIFS could be white as well. Even at the existing you have this white tower on one side of the glazing, and on the other side, there's a lot going on, simplifying it even more to where the one tower is white, it ties it and grounds it with the rest of the building, especially since the white tower breaks up the brick. A solid continuation of color would be a better presentation.
- Looking at the context images, you're saying that EIFS there that's tan, paint it all white instead of this buff and the white burnished block?
- I think there's a discrepancy in the plan set versus presentation set.
- They're just leveling off those shed roofs on Broom Street.
- That's what I thought, but that's not what the, if you go to the one with the four perspectives. The bottom right is telling me a different story.
- You see the one in the foreground, it's pitching up, the one next to it with the two double doors that shed roof is coming off. Everything is being leveled off basically.
- Are they leveling it and raising it?
- Yes, they have to raise it to engage the new glass cube. But to your point, it could add continuity if it was EIFS not touching the ground and painted white.
- That one corner that top piece should just be the same color for a stronger project.
- I'd like to clarify my comment about the doors. I'm fine with establishing a sense of hierarchy, it doesn't have to be a canopy, but it needs to be studied. I don't know which one they want me to enter into.
- What would really work well is if there was a new set of doors that led into a vestibule that could be secured at night. If they want to get rid of some of the windows, I think we have to have something back. I hate to see the net loss of window openings at the ground level here, particularly as a retail establishment. With the amount of remodeling they're doing maybe now is the time to rethink the two ins and the one out or vice versa and make it a lot less confusing to customers.
- It could be side lights or a number of things.

- The metal panel band around the glass cube from where the sign is up the side next to the building and then over the top, which is a heavy corrugated metal material. I just think a smooth ACM aluminum panel would work a lot better than a really heavily corrugated metal panel because we do have a lot going on here. Something smooth versus corrugated in that tiny little area would work better. If they need to go back around the other side to the west and take that ACM in one panel depth and let the rest of it where nobody can see be corrugated where nobody can see it, that's fine. That C shaped being heavy corrugated metal is too much texture for that fine element surrounding glass and other panels between the floors. That was the only other thing that was eating away at me.
- That covers most of the staff memo concerns as well.

A motion was made by von Below, seconded by Asad for Initial Approval with conditions.

Discussion on the motion:

- As a way to not add another miscellaneous material, instead of the ACM could it just be the white EIFS they're putting right next to it? Since it's not touching the ground? That C-shape, could that just be the EIFS?
- Agree.
- I suppose you could give them that option.
- (Secretary) I think EIFS is allowed as an accent or trim material high up on the building, but I would have to check the Zoning Code. But before the Commission votes, I wanted to come back to the conditions to make sure I have them all. Do we want to word the condition in such a way that the "...materials should be consistent with the Zoning Code?"
- Yes, it was more getting a smooth material than a heavily corrugated material.

Action

On a motion by von Below, seconded by Asad, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** with the following conditions:

- The applicant shall provide a landscape plan.
- The applicant shall provide a final materials board and samples of the final materials selections.
- The Gorham Street ground level elevation shall be revised to include architectural details appropriate for a commercial retail use entry. Consideration should be given to increasing the amount of glazing or incorporating a canopy element to create a hierarchy to the main entry, etc.
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- Revise the lighting plan to avoid the hot spots at the entry to create a more even 2.5 footcandle rating across the site.

The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0).