



Agenda Item #: 5

Project Title: 437-445 W Johnson Street/215-221 N Bassett Street/430-440 W Dayton Street - New Student Housing Project. 4th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 75228

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Christian Harper, Lois Braun-Oddo, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Amanda Arnold, Marsha Rummel, and Russell Knudson

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of May 31, 2023, the Urban Design Commission made an **ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION** to the Plan Commission to grant Final Approval of a new student housing project located at 437-445 W Johnson Street/215-221 N Bassett Street/430-440 W Dayton Street. Registered and speaking in support were Brian Munson, and Trina Sandshafer. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Doug Tishner, Aaron Ebent, Austin Pagnotta, and Suzanne Vincent.

Updates to the proposal include alteration to townhome entries by removing the exterior entrances in favor of an interior hallway that spans the building, lowering the height of the garage door from 14.8 to 12.0, the addition of art and a mural placement adjacent to the Lexington, inclusion of two EV parking stalls, adjustment of lighting that will continue to be refined to meet code, and additional landscape screening at private patios along the townhome locations at interior lot lines. No changes were made to the Johnson Street side of the building.

Questions for staff and/or the development team:

- Thank you for the clarification on the garage. You took out the wording “loading and trash staging,” but I get the awful feeling that after this has been built, we’re going to see mattresses or dumpsters or carts in that area that will be very unpleasant to look at. Other buildings have their dumpsters behind an overhead door, why can’t we have an overhead door here to screen that stuff?
 - We wanted to make it easy for vehicles coming in and out. We have short term parking for Ubers, etc. before you go further down into the garage, so we’re not queuing up people on the street.
- The Ovation has public parking with another door that restricts cars. The doors open in a matter of five seconds when they detect a vehicle, so I believe that can be overcome and still have your secure parking beyond where you have a door. Given the scale of Dayton Street and the clarity which I now see the opening along Dayton Street and given the scale I’m concerned we’re going to be seeing a bunch of junk in there we don’t really want to see. Also big bright lights in that area, it detracts from an otherwise very attractive composition and building design.
 - We can add a door there if that satisfies the group.
- The concern of trash and staging of carts and dumpsters, you are required to screen those and that would preemptively solve any screening issues.
- I concur on having a door there, having an open access like that, people are bad drivers. I can see people seeing this driveway thinking it’s a through street. Even if there is a door further in, it’s security for the whole building. We received neighborhood comments about concerns that the common opening is not distinctive enough, it

doesn't seem like it would be a problem but what sets that opening apart other than the street numbers seeing that it is similarly sized to the others?

- It is similar in character to the front door on the other street. A small number of people use that door, it is primarily for the townhomes.
- I have a question about the massing. I still struggle with this project, it's a nice brick base with this thing on top of it. There's tension where they meet, they're in competition and it's not working, I can't get past it. Where you pulled in that grid at the corner, when it's so much more successful. Get that band of relief above the brick and add a little color to a somewhat colorless elevation on all sides.
 - Looking at the building entry, there is a reveal detail of the brick base on what is above. It was done to draw attention to the corner. We've received no other comments about the massing at this point.
- Sometimes when you draw attention to something that is good, you also draw attention to the things that are not good.
- I do have a question for staff, there was mention for the UDC to look at rooftop mechanical screening?
- (Secretary) There are a number of design considerations in the staff memo that staff is looking for the Commission to address in their motion, including:
 - Large changes to the townhome entries at grade, we had front doors and now we have back doors. Looking at patios, screening and landscape surrounding them.
 - Change to the Dayton Street tower building entry. The initial recommendation by UDC to Plan Commission was having that common unit entry, but is it adequately designed to read as a common building entry versus an individual unit entry.
 - The garage door opening, the Commission asked for details related to design and detailing of this entry. The Commission talked about having an actual door here, I would ask the commission to provide additional details on what kind of door that is: is it solid, does it have windows, is it recessed, flushed?
 - The mural is new, the Commission's comments related to that, is that coming back to the Commission or is staff administratively approving that in the future?
 - The mural is an attempt to screen a large blank wall. Should the mural never come to fruition, the landscaping there is low lying landscape. The Commission should consider if a mural doesn't happen, should the landscape plan be modified to accommodate the necessary screening to break up the bank wall?
 - Lighting, changes have been made there.
 - We have not seen anything relative to rooftop screening, especially in terms of material and detailing.
 - This one is a little clunky because, typically before we consider items for the second time it has gone to Plan Commission and they have done something with our initial recommendation. In this case because of a referral, this item is going to Plan Commission on June 12th. The applicant has refined plans to hopefully address what were going to be the adopted conditions of approval from our May 10 meeting. It is very important that we look at those items in particular and address them as part of our revisited motion to the Plan Commission, as well as changes made to the plans.

The Commission discussed the following:

- The Dayton Street entryway, in elevation view other than the number there is no differentiation between the units, when you go to plan view it's the same scale, rhythm, the same stairs. You want to design something that gives folks a queue, it's so subtle you'll have lot of people walking up to the two units on the end rather than the main entrance because they are all the same. Maybe it's the narrowing of the walk, maybe a gate going up to it? I do think it needs some differentiation. I understand what Rafeeq is saying about the podium and the distance of that element at the corner, although I like that it's only happening at the corner. I think it attaches and meets the podium at the other corner in a nice way. I don't necessarily feel like the whole building has to have that same treatment.
- There has to be a door going into the parking garage, on the plan it shows a whole wall of transformers there. Those can be unsightly, it would be a nice way to give that façade a little definition.

- Where it says “440” is kind of private entry itself. It’s really not meant to say to the public “come in,” this is really just for a handful of units. That’s the only reason I thought this low key door, slightly differentiated, was appropriate for the Dayton Street entry. Something could be done with landscaping.
- For the garage door, I would opt for something in a mix of aluminum and acrylic openings. Having some view in and out as cars approach would be good for safety and security. A high speed rollup door would be most preferred and functional. So, we have been asked to make findings on at least five points, including the mural the common entry, the garage door, for rooftop mechanical screening and that would be again a description of what the material might be and how to dispense of rooftop and site lighting.

Discussion on the motion:

- The motion includes that the list of items has been met. I would ask that the applicant add the overhead door to the garage entry, somehow add landscaping or other visual cues to differentiate the common entryway. An expression on the façade is not necessary, it is more of a landscape solution.
- Any requirements for rooftop screening material? Corrugated metal panel?
- Something that is complementary to the building (like a metal) for mechanical screening.
- Second by Arnold.
- (Secretary) To clarify the motion. Is this Initial or Final Approval? This is an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission; and last time we granted Initial Approval with the condition that it comes back to the UDC.
- The motion is for Final Approval.
- (Secretary) Also looking for a recommendation on the Mural and how that is to be handled in the future, and rooftop lighting and overall site lighting, looking for a condition on that. Ultimately the Urban Design Guidelines rule the day on rooftop lighting, not the code. Our ordinances related to lighting only address on the ground lighting. There are some pretty high light levels on the roof.
- Add that the lighting does have cut offs so it doesn’t extend past the property or up into the sky and respects the dark sky initiative.
- (Secretary) There are design guidelines that in terms of light levels be appropriate and not excessive.
- Add that lighting should be appropriate to the activity on the roof and for the lighting to not leave the property light levels will likely need to be lowered.
- They be consistent with the lighting levels that are already controlled by the code at the ground level.
- Ok, Lets to that.
- (Secretary) And then just the mural so we don’t need worry about whether that comes back in the future.
- I don’t necessarily feel like the mural needs to come back; there is a commission that looks at that right?
- (Secretary) The main concern is typically we look at the mural’s visibility, is it being painting directly on brick, is it framed, lit, etc. Any sort of guidance you could give and if can be approved administratively.
- Let’s have the mural come back, there are so many possibilities it would be hard to capture.

Action

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Arnold, the Urban Design Commission made an **ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION** to the Plan Commission to grant Final Approval. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-2-1) with Braun-Oddo, Arnold, Knudson, Harper and Rummel voting yes; Asad and Bernau voting no; and Goodhart non-voting.

The motion for Final Approval found the list of outstanding items (from the Commission’s initial action) has been met, with the following additional conditions:

- A garage door shall be provided on the exterior garage opening on the W Dayton tower. The door shall be comprised of aluminum and acrylic openings to provide some views in and out.

- Additional landscaping or visual cue shall be provided to distinguish the individual entries from the common entryway on W Dayton Street.
- Rooftop screening shall be complementary to the building façade material, like a metal material.
- The rooftop lighting shall be revised to be consistent with the lighting levels that are already controlled by the code at the ground level.
- The mural shall return to the UDC for final review and approval.