



Agenda Item #: 5

Project Title: 575 Zor Shrine Place - Residential Building Complex. 9th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 72416

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Ald. Juliana Bennett, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Russell Knudson and Jessica Klehr.

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of August 17, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a Residential Building Complex located at 575 Zor Shrine Place. Registered and speaking in support were Mark Laverty, Namdi Alexander and Suzanne Vincent, representing Vierbicher. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Kim Van Dyn Hoven.

The building metrics remain the same, the gable roof has been replaced with a flat roof and the wing walls have been removed for a cleaner look that is more cohesive with the surrounding context. The base wraps around all four façades, and the material palette has been elevated with brick at the base, and faux wood panels as accents at entries and walk-outs. Functionality improvements include sidewalk and patios on the west and alignment with the northeast sidewalk for clear pedestrian delineation. The landscape plan has been updated to include more multi-seasonal interest in a variety of flowering trees, shrubs and evergreens. Additional landscaping along the amenity deck area and main entrance highlight those most visible areas. Yellow Birch, Red Twig Dogwood and ornamental grasses give texture, color and movement while acting as a buffer for the bike path and amenity deck within the building. Native plantings and crabapple trees continue the theme established by the properties to the east.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Bicycles can really fly by on that path. Make sure it is well signed or divided into a pedestrian side/bicycle side.
- The building looks much nicer, thank you for taking our comments to heart. Give some consideration to the area that is below 42" under the stacked screened-in porches that may require something more substantial. I will be interested to see the details of how those materials come around the corner because it looks really flat right now. The columns don't look substantial enough. They might benefit to having a screened-in porch there too for more privacy.
- We never see screened-in porches on multi-story buildings; when you get above the 2nd or 3rd floor the concern for bugs diminishes. I'm wondering if they are really necessary, it is your call but we need to see realistic drawings of what the guardrails and screens will look like because they tend to make it look like a solid. You should make your best effort to represent that more accurately for us to be able to give any approval on that.
- The siding and the simplification of the façades is appreciated, but the inspiration avoided the use of really long unbroken expanses of lap siding. It is a residential product but it's not typically seen in this scale on big multi-unit buildings. The windows are taller or otherwise broken up in your inspiration photos, so we're not seeing the long expanses of siding. It could be done with trim, rearranging your windows or balconies. That's the one thing you're not achieving with the precedents moving into the actual design, it should be less flat and less institutional. I also agree about the changes of material and color on the outside corners, it makes the materials look extremely thin and two-dimensional.

- If you look at the elevations now, particularly where there's no more than one or two windows, then you're not having long expanses of siding. When you get into 3-4 and the difference in sill height, the lap siding is a little disconcerting to see, that low scale single-family residential material in a large building with punched openings.
- I agree about the transitions between materials, there's an imbalance in the facades. The slickness of the post for the overhangs being right next to something horizontal, and the siding and trim around a window seem like very different languages. The window sizes and trims are not as much of a match-up as in your precedents. It needs more attention to detail to upscale it, either you really go sleek and modern or you add more details like the renderings you're showing.
- The simple color palette is successful.
- I like the building architecture a lot more than the Informational Presentation version. I'm not seeing the pop of color you talked about with your precedents. All that white siding seems a little dull to me, you could introduce color somewhere.
- Overall the plant selection is pretty good. You might want to consider alternatives to the birches across the front, they would be beautiful but that species is not the best choice in this climate. You would do better with White Spire Birch or River Birch. The selections of crabapples are nice but I question their placement on the amenity deck. Firebird Crabapples near a seating area will be a mess, consider Serviceberry in that location instead. On the southern edge between the building sidewalk and the bike path you have three Spring Snow Crabapples, which are really nice, but may be a better selection along your front sidewalks. Appreciate that you added some winter interest plants but you could do a bit more. You could add some gold varieties of low Creeping Juniper for pops of color. More of the Color Twig Dogwoods, Willow or winter berries would be nice along that western edge. Where you have drifts of Little Blue Stem you could replace some with Blackeyed Susans or Liatris drifts for extra color in there.
- What do we know about the existing trees on the site and what considerations were given to preserve those, near the bike path and amenity deck?
 - We do have a tree survey of the site itself, we can include that with our new landscaping plan.
- Normally we think about the site and massing of a building at the Initial level. The maturity of those trees is a key design solution to getting some privacy to that amenity deck given the proximity to the other developments. I would like to understand whether we really exhausted all opportunities to preserve and use that resource. I'm not sure whether a conversation next time quite gets us there or not, but glad to know you've done the survey and have that information.
- I'm not a fan of the bars on the outside trusses, it gives the aesthetic that it's a vanilla box with bars outside the window. Wondering if you could talk about the accessibility of the building?
 - We're entering right at grade with a zero threshold, we do have ramping. We have to meet ADA requirements, this building is age-restricted, so every unit needs to be adaptable.
- The public spaces will be fully wheelchair accessible, there will be van accessible parking spaces, and the individual units can be modified as required.

Action

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0).

The motion included the following:

- The applicant shall provide details on the screened-in porch railing and screening materials.
- The applicant shall provide details of the material transitions at the balconies, including the returns of material around the porch corner.
- In areas where there are long expanses of lap siding, alternative façade treatments shall be explored, including utilizing trim, modifications to punched openings, balconies, etc. to reduce the expanse of lap siding.

- The applicant shall refine the building design to include a positive termination at the top of the building. Consideration should be given to incorporating a cap on top.
- The applicant shall provide additional information on the tree species and conditions of the existing trees on site. If appropriate, consideration should be given to the preservation of the existing trees.
- Consideration should be given to the necessity of the use of screened-in porches above the 2nd floor and whether they need to be enclosed.
- The landscape plan shall be updated in address of landscape comments as noted below:
 - Utilize alternatives to the Yellow Birches, such as White Spire Birch or River Birch.
 - Use Serviceberry in-lieu of the Firebird Crabapples at the amenity deck seating area.
 - Placing the Spring Snow Crabapples along the front sidewalks.
 - Add more pops of color with gold varieties of low Creeping Juniper, Colored Twig Dogwood, Willow or Serviceberry.
 - Add to the perennial drifts with something like Blackeyed Susans or Liatris for more plants and more color.