



Agenda Item #: 7

Project Title: 131 W Wilson Street - New Mixed-Use Building in UMX Zoning. 4th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 73562

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

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of April 26, 2023, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of remaining conditions of approval for a new mixed-use building located at 131 W Wilson Street. Registered and speaking in support was Kirk Keller. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Jake Bunz and Garret Perry.

Four issues remained from the previous discussion:

1. Coloring of the decks and those materials;
2. The facade along John Nolen Drive;
3. Some plant species, varieties and cultivars; and
4. More discussion on lighting.

The development team left the previous discussion with a lack of direction. They are showing two options (preferred Option A). They brought the band on Wilson Street to the John Nolen Drive side to break up the façade. If the Commission chooses, there is an Option B for a greater use of metal panel. Two options were shown for lighting, with a sliver of light breaking up the façade vertically and a light glow at the top. The options for glass show one tone or two tones. The balconies have detailing of metal around the edges and an integral cable railing system. The concrete underside has an integral stain with it that is permanent, in a purposely warm tone to work with the metal panel as a middle tone for a consistent tone all the way around the building. The accent lighting at the decks are all code compliant. A more complete lighting package is available. Effort was expended here, the L3 fixture housing is a locked bracket that controls the angle and cut off to not extend beyond the parapet. The lights are completely dimmable, with a roughly 2 ½ inch bracket for a very small piece above the window assembly. There are no exposed lightbulbs, and a very small LED strip would be completely integrated into the architectural design to run up and down and give that effect continuously, with very careful consideration given to the color range (in the 3,000 kelvin range).

The Secretary noted that with regard to the lighting, since it was not originally included in the original recommendation to the Plan Commission, nor was it included in the Plan Commission's original application materials, it needs to return through the process. As such, it cannot be part of the final action this evening, but the UDC will be seeing it again at a future date as a separate action. The site lighting that Kirk was talking about can be part of tonight's motion as it was always part of our materials. There are concerns with regard to light levels and light trespass. We have a standard motion that lighting shall be revised to meet code requirements.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Is there instruction for us with regard to the lighting?

- (Secretary) Yes, with regard to the lighting, working with the Planning Division and Building Inspection, it was determined that since the architectural lighting was not originally included in the UDC's original recommendation to the Plan Commission, nor the Plan Commission's original application materials, it needs to return through the process for review and approval. It cannot be part of our final action this evening. The UDC will be seeing this again at a future meeting date as a separate application. The site lighting, on the photometric plan, can be included as part of the UDC's action this evening. This has always been part of the UDC's materials. With regard to the site lighting however, there are concerns with regard to light levels and trespass, which as part of the Commission's motion, a condition that the site lighting shall be revised to meet code requirements should be included.
- We can have a motion that says the information provided has met our conditions with exceptions: we have to determine whether it's Option A or B so the motion is specific, and then commenting on site lighting levels that are too bright or trespassing need to be corrected at a staff level.
- Addressing the balconies, we talked plenty about them last time. I guess it comes down to, there seems to be a fairly even divide amongst my fellow Commissioners as to whether we wanted to hold them to a wood or faux wood base of these balconies as is on the top two floors, or if we were willing to accept a stained base and I think that was further finessed with having a more finished edge to the concrete balconies. If I recall, we're being asked to vote on whether or not conditions for finishing those balconies have been met, I think we're in the same boat as to whether or not people feel that we still want to see a wood or wood type finish on the bottom or if having a stained concrete and metal finish edge, though I'm not sure a metal finish edge would have been part of a wood balcony either. My preference would still be for a wood finish, I'm curious to see how others will feel. As for the other elements, I prefer Option A here, I don't feel the addition of the metal panels is an asset as opposed to having that darker glass element running down the center. I'm fine with all the lighting conditions with the exception of the racing stripes coming back to us later. The applicant referenced comments about landscaping, I will admit to perhaps muddying the waters on those with the earlier request, partly by not being clear about the terminology I was trying to get out of them. There's a horticultural terminology and I either didn't articulate it enough or make it clear in revising the reports and minutes as to what I was looking for. I was fine with the plantings along that base as they were, I was trying to get them to be more specific for cultivars and not species. I think they're fine and gave them several pieces of advice they are free to take or leave, we don't need to revisit the landscaping. I'm still leaning towards wanting to see wood underneath these balconies but I will entertain other people's opinions on that.
- I'm fine with the stained concrete, I think there's such a distance to the underside of these and we have exposed normal concrete on so many downtown apartments and condos that I've never really seen them as an eyesore. I would be accepting of the stained concrete. Is the area with the darker glass option in Option A, is that a separate unit or separate room within a unit, is it just for heat gain, what is the purpose and what's behind there?
 - To break up the massing. We were left with a quandary from the last discussion, but with the integration of the vertical piece carving into the building form there, if the Commission wishes to make a motion for a single glass color we could certainly do that, we just didn't know which direction we would be going here, so we show both. Yes it does deal with individual rooms within the units behind and the visible light difference is just a couple percent from the inside.
- I glance at both, I feel like Option B gives the light element more of an anchor, something to hold on to and it's not just floating. However I don't feel very strongly about it and if in Option A you chose to go with all of the lighter glass, I would be in favor of that too. It's just a little odd to be in one unit and have these different tones of glass. If it helps with your solar gain that's fine too. I feel like the metal panels anchor that light a little bit. I'll be definitive about the stained concrete.
- Looking at the floor plans it looked like there's a wide building column on the left side of that light strip directly behind where the metal panel is in Option B. If you go with Option A will that be a spandrel glass, will we see the column?
 - You will see the column.

- But on the right side there's no column behind there. It could look a little off balance, maybe that's what I'm seeing there, is that column behind there. Because it is a lighter glass, something for the Commissioners to think about what they're actually seeing behind that glass. Whereas in Option B, the metal panel has a much more symmetrical look I think.
- It does seem to be somewhat contradictory to want to economize on materials and asking somebody to put a wood veneer that's actually metal underneath concrete. Then we have concerns about residences being affordable, although it's a drop in the bucket to mandate something cosmetic like this that does not have unanimous support on the Commission, it may be a little frivolous in my opinion.

Action

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Asad, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-1-1) with Braun-Oddo, Asad, Arnold, Bernau and Rummel voting yes; Harper voting no; and Goodhart non-voting. The motion included the following conditions:

- The Commission finds that the stained concrete finish treatment of the underside of balconies acceptable.
- The John Nolen Drive elevation shall be designed as shown in Option B.
- The site photometric plan shall be revised to meet code requirements related to light levels and trespass, which can be reviewed/approved administratively.
- Architectural lighting is not a part of this approval.