



Agenda Item #: 6

Project Title: 519-547 W Washington Avenue - New Multi-Family Building in DR-2 Zoning

Legistar File ID #: 70439

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

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of April 27, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** of a new residential building located at 519-547 W. Washington Avenue. Registered and speaking in support were Kevin Burow, representing Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC; and James Stopple.

The proposal on the southeast side of W. Washington Avenue involves the demolition of nine student rental houses for one larger development of 140-units with 169 parking stalls under the building's footprint. The concept plan shows a uniquely shaped building determined through discussions with the neighborhood and meet the criteria of the newly adopted Mifflandia Plan. There will be one main entry to the building for vehicular access, a main lobby in the center, an exterior loading zone for deliveries and move-in/move-out, bike parking at the main entry, and ten stalls of visitor parking at the main corner entry of the building. Exterior courtyards break down the façade along W. Washington Avenue, with the main entry at the center flanked by an exercise room and leasing office. A stepback of 30-feet is shown at the fifth floor, with an outdoor plaza community room with views towards the Capitol. There is access to the main roof element, however no structures or fixed amenities will be allowed in that space to meet the Downtown Plan. They are maintaining all the mature trees along the street. Building materials include a combination of brick, composite siding, metal siding and a stone base. Two brick colors are proposed to help break down the scale, with consistent materials around all four sides of the building.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Materiality – it probably has one if not two materials more than it needs, in particular there's quite a bit of movement and articulation of the building mass itself. Especially regarding the brick, probably better suited with just one type, or some minor simplification of the materiality.
- Overall a swath of lawn along W. Washington Avenue feels very appropriate with that corridor, however, where lawn wraps around the sides and alley spaces, you don't want to be mowing back there. It would be better suited to a more robust planting palette of shrubs, ornamental and perennials rather than lawn. That could be cleaned up and simplified.
- I'm comfortable with the height, I like the stepback in this case.
- Getting rid of one of the brick colors is appropriate because of the break-up of the massing. It could also benefit from not bringing the metal down, that would help it recede a little bit. Keeping that material higher and making it darker.
- The Mifflandia Plan talks about complementing existing structures and compatibility with existing forms. The Capitol Neighborhoods letter gravitated toward the Depot. We're not looking for something that is a revival of a

historic style, but when you look up and down the corridor you don't see these big glassy metal panel openings, you see more rhythmic punched openings. A design that has a much more restrained use of colors and materials, but also a unified composition would really help this fit into the neighborhood without being so directly historic or trying to emulate three-flat wood frame stacked apartment buildings.

- I actually like it. I can appreciate it going down to one brick. I understand the point of the recess being a different color but I don't mind that indentation being a different material. I don't mind the openings, you want to get that daylight in. Maybe darkening the top but bringing it down in some areas to separate the massing. I think it's pretty close.
- Can you speak to what happens at the back of this building, no function or program?
 - There is a 20-foot rear yard, so no activities. It will be part of our stormwater management area so it's just landscaping and lawn.
- Any plans for fencing, just grass between the building and existing properties?
 - Correct.
- Echo the simplicity of materials and darkening the top. It draws attention to an area of the building you want to recede. I like the large glass openings. You could draw more attention to the main entry, differentiate it more clearly from the walk-up unit entries.
 - (Secretary) The rooftop appurtenances look to be all enclosed in a structure, with another structure for the stair tower. The Code states that those should be the minimum necessary to provide the required access/egress.
- I concur that the front entrance on W. Washington Avenue does not pop in any particular visual way. That could be distinguished somehow architecturally.
- Regarding the size of the openings, their proportions notwithstanding, I still believe simplification of materials and a more unified composition could happen across the W. Washington Avenue façade. The Depot building has large openings but they have a certain nice rhythm to them.

Action

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

The recommendation noted the following recommendations/considerations:

- The UDC finds the overall height, massing and setbacks are appropriate and acceptable. The UDC further notes that the building would be of a lesser design if the upper two stories were removed, and that the project benefits by having the two requested bonus stories.
- Recommend simplification of materials (choose one of the two proposed brick colors), unification of the materiality vs. attempting more than what the massing suggests.
- Recommend to darken the bonus stories in the stepback to help them recede more from the front of the building.
- Suggest looking at more consistency with the detailing and proportions of the fenestrations. .
- Recommend revisions to the landscaping on the backside of the building to use less lawn and more planting beds with simplified edges.
- The rooftop structures above the 6th floor shall be kept to their minimum Code-required size.