



Agenda Item #: 2

Project Title: 826 Williamson St - Demolition of an existing commercial structure and construction of a new mixed-use structure in the Third Lake Ridge Hist. Dist.; 6th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 75230

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

Members: Present: Richard Arnesen, Molly Harris, Katie Kaliszewski, David McLean, Maurice Taylor, and Ald. Bill Tishler.
Excused: Edna Ely-Ledesma.

Summary

Jacob Morrison, registering in support and wishing to speak
Tyler Krupp, registering in support and available to answer questions
Kevin Burow, registering in support and available to answer questions
Jonathan Stevens, registering in support and available to answer questions
Kris Warren, registering in support and available to answer questions
Matthew Tills, registering in support and not wishing to speak

Jacob Morrison gave a presentation on the proposed new buildings, noting that there would be two separate buildings above grade with one in the historic district and one outside of the district. They focused their presentation on the building fronting Williamson Street within the historic district.

Arnesen asked what size brick was proposed. Morrison said it was standard modular brick, not jumbo.

Tishler said the proposal looked good and asked if the parking was underground. Morrison said that there were two separate properties on a single zoning lot, and there was separate underground parking for each property that was accessed by one common entrance on S Paterson Street, so one does not see any parking access from Williamson Street aside from the surface parking next to the commercial space.

Kaliszewski said this was an excellent proposal and good design for infill for the historic district. She asked about using a different material than brick for the hyphen between the two sides of the building. Morrison said they were open to a different material there because that portion of the building was intended to separate and differentiate the two sides. They went with brick because historically brick was used, and they hadn't seen a precedent for stucco but were open to other options. Kaliszewski said that the gray brick was fine, but she would be interested to see other options. She asked if it was possible to create recessed entries on the residential portion of the building instead of the walk-up entrances off the side, or if that would take away too much square footage. Morrison said the apartments in that portion are pretty small and will likely be studios, so that would eat into the space significantly. Kaliszewski said that she liked the oriel windows that go with the time period these buildings would have been built in. She said they continue the pattern of the rhythm of solids and voids and make this building a little different from others, adding character. She asked staff if the ordinance required that oriel windows exist within 200 feet of the building in order to include this feature. Bailey said that it depends how one interprets the standards; there are not oriels within 200 feet, but other residential buildings have a gable front and wing wood structure where the gable front has a trapezoid form coming out of that architecture. The architectural vocabulary of the proposed buildings is speaking to those residential form buildings in the arrangement of window openings, so it does fall into the realm of being visually compatible.

McLean said the project team did a great job and thanked them for the thought and time put into this design. He said that he liked the oriel windows as well, which emphasize the residential use of the building as opposed to the other commercial side. He said that he liked the brick details and different colors of the buildings because it breaks up the mass nicely; the proportions look good overall. He wasn't sure of the chamfered corner; while we see them in the historic district, he wasn't sure about it being on a corner with a parking lot. He asked about the 2nd and 3rd story windows on the commercial side, noting that they emphasize the verticality of the building. He said this building will have a higher floor-to-floor height than historic buildings, so he was concerned about the strong vertical language and proportions because the windows were also thin. He said the red building doesn't read as strongly. On the side of the building, he asked if they played with different materials for the 4th floor and whether it needs to be all brick. He appreciated the step back, but using the same materials with no planar or material breaks from the 3rd to 4th floor makes this look like a building that has lost its architecture over time, like Garver Feed Mill when it decreased in size. He asked if there was anything else they could do to deemphasize the 4th floor. Morrison said they looked at lap siding, but they had been discouraged from using it on the front of the building and were instead told to use brick. Because the side is so prominently visible, they didn't think using a different material was a good idea. McLean said that at first, he wasn't sure about the front entry and thought maybe they could remove it and combine the buildings. Morrison said the residential entrance must be on the Williamson Street façade, but they could design it as part of the red building. They thought having that separation or hyphen gave it more breathing room, and they are walking a fine line of fitting in with the historic context without trying to fake it. McLean said he just wanted their take on that entrance, but he wouldn't add it to the red building because it was already a bit long.

Arnesen said the team did a great job, and overall it was a nice-looking building. He agreed with McLean on the verticality of the light brick building, and it struck him as not being quite right.

Tishler asked about the width of the terrace and the size of canopy trees it could support. Morrison said that the commercial side of the building is approximately 15 feet off the curb, and the residential side is an additional four feet back beyond that. They said they are not altering the location of the sidewalk or terrace, so the current size of the terrace and trees it can support will continue in the future. Tishler recommended they have more canopy trees and coverage and encouraged them to confirm the trees shown in the design are able to be planted there.

McLean asked if there would be concrete or landscaping between the sidewalk and the building. Morrison said there is currently not a landscaping plan. In front of the commercial side and apartment entrance, they were planning on having sidewalks, but the residential side has more room for landscaping opportunities like planters. McLean said that including something in front of the railings would deter people on the sidewalks from getting too close to the residential entrances.

Harris said that she also liked the oriel windows and was glad they could use them on this building and still have it fit in the historic district.

Action

No action was taken.