



<b>Agenda Item #:</b>	6
<b>Project Title:</b>	702 & 734 E Washington Avenue - New Mixed-Use Building in Urban Design District (UDD) 8. (District 6)
<b>Legistar File ID #:</b>	79239
<b>Members Present:</b>	Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Wendy von Below, Marsha Rummel, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad*, Jessica Klehr, and Christian Harper
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

\*Asad was recused on this item.

## Summary

At its meeting of January 10, 2024, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a new mixed-use building located at 702 & 734 E Washington Avenue in Urban Design District (UDD) 8. Registered and speaking in support were Joseph Lee, Chris Houden, and Troy Jacoby. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Joe Pepitone, Jennifer Camp, Alex Thill, and Amy Larson.

The proposed mixed-use building is fourteen stories, under 158-feet in height. Activation of the E Washington corridor and Blount Street occurs with pedestrian-friendly uses of retail and commercial space, which holds the corner. The opposing side houses the lobby and office on the second floor. The service functions come in off the alley side of the building. Improvements show a larger footprint on that corner, a larger expanse of glass, and opportunities for public art to help screen blank walls. The building steps back 15-feet from the plinth on E Washington and Blount. Wrapped around the pool are units and amenity spaces. The top steps back with wrap around balconies and a sky lounge. The elevated plaza is due to flood plain issues but offers opportunities for bike racks, benches, and planters. The floor to ceiling glazing has been reduced, concentrated at the living spaces of the units. Balconies now articulate the back of the building and create motion in the façade.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- Is the upper terrace wide enough to support café tables and chairs or designed as a true promenade?
  - The intent is to have opportunities for outdoor dining on this terrace. We're roughly 9-10 feet on the width of that upper terrace.
- That is good news. On the main roof terrace, I've seen a couple different plans in the packet, one has a more curvilinear sweep to the planting bed and one that does not...which one is the correct one?
  - The non-curvilinear.
  - It was about the paver selection and how we are committing to this bonus section and this green roof is quite a cost. We need to find a way to connect it with your general 24 x 24 paver line.
- It can definitely be done. I was a fan of the large sweep.
  - You and I both.
- It would set this apart from others in the neighborhood. There's a corner rectangle of planting in the pool area, what is that and why is it just one area that's planted?
  - The idea is to maximize pool deck chairs. We did a chair count and that drove the amount of greenspace introduced to that enclosed pool area.
- Following our last E Washington discussion with the façade on the east facing future buildings, can we take a closer look at what it's going to look like for a while? Can you talk us through what's there?

- There are a series of gates currently there, a little bit of built wall. Architecturally our building consists of the lobby at the corner, then we have a waiting area on the first floor, where the big tree is you can see the second floor office space expressed as ribbon window.
- But on the ground floor what's behind those trees?
  - Those are windows.
- The rendering with the alley, there's one lone car parked there so I wonder how people will use that space. What is the plan, is it a drop-off?
  - From a circulation standpoint we are treating this as a pure alley, it's purely circulation. Our intent is there are no cars parked back there.
  - It's not wide enough to do a turnaround, it's a single alley, so there would not be any cars parked there.
- So, move ins and outs would be parked in the garage?
  - Yes.
- Sharp and exciting project happening on E Washington. I commend the team on the things you're doing related to the bonus stories, there are so many great things happening there with parking, affordable housing elements, very encouraging. The one I'm least clear on, you're mixing in an intent about LEED Silver equivalent. Last time I remember you were open to sharing more about that, but I didn't hear much about that.
  - We are following the LEED checklist, doing the project as if we were achieving Silver, but not certifying it. Some of the things making this LEED; the site makes it LEED, such a great use for E Washington. A large percent of green roof, high performance glass, central heat pump, chiller and boiler, higher end mechanical solutions for this type of a building and the systems play such a huge part of the design.
  - Support that LEED system with how we're doing the project, just as a make sure.
- I didn't quite understand the last comment. Right now, the Commission doesn't have much detail around this. I don't know that it makes or breaks our opinion about qualifying for the bonus stories. Right now, from a design standpoint, the expression of the building with the amount of glass, I appreciate the remark about you reducing it but I didn't notice that. Learning more about LEED and the sustainability strategy could help really galvanize our thoughts about Final Approval.
  - To clarify, to get to LEED Silver there are so many moving pieces to get that point total, that level of detail is not determined yet. We might consider one thing versus another depending on cost value benefit relationship. That is a level of detail that comes as we finalize the design. I would say we have every intent of providing the city our list of the LEED point system that gets us to Silver equivalent, we just don't have that right now. To go to that point of design without approval, we would commit to providing that information as a condition of Final Approval. There's quite a bit of design analysis to be done to get to that point.
- When you do this raised terrace area for the storefronts, I would hate to see you have to put guardrails along there. I hope you can design it so that the building code does not required guardrails along this really nice plaza.
- We have a staff report that asks us to weigh in on the bonus stories, in this case six additional stories for a total of fourteen. Criteria (ii), vegetative roof covering and 5% of units restricted to 60-80% AMI. They're looking for extra setback in some areas which I believe our Commission is able to grant. And then there is some findings on street level articulation and building articulation, particularly along Blount Street and the lobby.
- I do believe the design considerations we are supposed to look at were met, height/bonus stories, setback, street activation, articulation, composition, and materials are met. I think we were also asked to address lighting in our formal action, and then the proposed landscape plan. I don't have the technical skills to comment on the proposed landscaping. There were concerns about some of the cut off requirements, so as we work towards a motion I would ask that we consider that those are addressed. With regard to the concerns related to the raised terrace with guardrails, my concern would be a skateboard deterrent, something that would mitigate that as well.
- Yeah, appreciate the additional things and the staff report because there were some cutoff and illumination levels related to lighting that need to be brought into compliance.
- I just wanted to weigh-in on the bonus stories. I worked pretty successfully with the applicant and encouraged them to consider doing some kind of an affordable housing component. As you may recall, we amended UDD 8

for this block and added more criteria so we could say there would be public interest to granting this many extra stories beyond what the ordinance allowed. I really hope there is some kind of affordable housing here for a big win. Everyone thinks these are all condos for rich people, which is not necessarily true, but the rents are not exactly cheap either. Hopefully we can figure out a way to guarantee all these elements, but I do support them.

- I don't know who actually enforces these rents, certainly the UDC doesn't have any follow up with the promise of 5% of units being within that.
- There would be a land use restriction would be approved, I would assume Community Development would have oversight.
- (Secretary) That is correct, there is an agreement that the property owner will enter into with the city to provide certain amount of affordable units for a certain number of years.
- The fourteenth floor, the top floor, there are some doors going to the exterior toward the north of the plan around the outside of the mechanical rooms. Is there a balcony or what is that function, what are those doors going to?
  - The intent is that dead center in that plan is an outdoor observation deck as an amenity for the residents, in front of that mechanical space.
- With the heavy mechanical systems there, I wonder if it will be a loud area to be; just wanted to know what it is.
- Have you had conversations with Traffic about turning east on E Washington, and the neighborhood concern about people using the Mifflin Street bikeway?
  - We are set up to do a traffic study tomorrow (January 11, 2024) and will have a memo prepared for the Plan Commission on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We worked with Traffic Engineering to come up with what the parameter of our study should be.

The Commission discussed the following:

- They are looking for Final Approval, it says Initial/Final. I believe it's a vastly improved project, I thought it was a good project to begin with, but it has a lot more going for it. I think just the modulating the size of the windows gives it more richness and texture and variety along the main elevations. Some of the concerns about blank walls have been addressed as well as they can, given that, just like the other project down the street there's no real opportunity to put the parking underground. The alley is an alley, other developments down E Washington have alleys as well. If the building materials are any indication this will be as good or nicer than any of those. We do have the recommendation to make on the bonus stories, as well as some of the other comments in the staff report that have been mentioned that would have to be captured in a motion.

A motion was made by von Below, seconded by Klehr for Final Approval with conditions.

Discussion on the motion:

- The conditions that we do accept the bonus stories, lighting-wise the maximum average light levels and uniformity ratios are captured, capturing the landscape comments, and addressing the upper terrace design details not requiring handrails and skateboard deterrent. We also have a request to grant a little bit of additional setback along E Washington.
- Yes, I forgot that part too [accept the increase in setback along E Washington Avenue].
- (Secretary) Just to confirm, there is a motion for Final Approval with the following conditions: the Commission finds that the bonus story criteria are met based on the providing of public parking, affordable housing, LEED Silver equivalency and green roof; with regard to LEED Silver equivalency the applicant shall provide additional details regarding the LEED points being utilized to obtain equivalency, and which can be reviewed administratively as part of the Site Plan Review application; the Commission finds that the increased setback along E Washington Avenue is acceptable given the enhanced design of the raised pedestrian plaza; the applicant shall provide design details on the raised pedestrian terrace to confirm that handrails are not necessary and to deter skateboarding; the lighting plan shall be revised for meet code requirements related to

light levels and uniformity ratios and cutoff requirements and the subsequent review of lighting can be completed administratively.

- I wanted to close the loop on landscape. In my opinion the landscape is great, I don't see anything, the activation along Blount is nice and they're doing probably as much as they can do for the alley. I don't personally think there was anything left hanging out there in regard to landscape.
- For us as a Commission, if we ever discuss sustainability and some of these LEED related ties to bonus stories, I'd highly recommend that something like an equivalency be documented and shared with this Commission before we vote on it. To say it can be provided and reviewed at a later date by staff, that's quite a complicated request of staff. There are elements of design baked into that program that this Commission has the right to see and should see in the future. This project has a lot of great things going for it, I don't think we should hold it up, I think saying "equivalency" and not seeing documentation; this might be a dangerous process and I'd hope we would have more involvement in that.
- I think that's a good point. I heard the applicant say it's early, it's hard to document. When we review our Urban Design District criteria, we might want to take a look then about clarifying about what our expectations are. One thing we didn't discuss from the staff report is what happens if the art installation doesn't happen?
- That splash of color does make a big difference; definitely important. If you look at the WYSO building down the street it makes a difference; there's a similar condition over there. That's a matter of final sign-off, making sure that art installation is approved.
- (Secretary) I would be asking if the Commission wanted to entertain adding a condition of approval related to the art installation and whether or not further review of that is reviewed by the Commission or by staff.
- The important thing is that it gets done. We don't want the building to get occupied and then it slips through the cracks.
- (Secretary) So if it isn't installed, does the Commission want to see it back? If it isn't done, we end up with louvers on the wall.
- I would think they go through the process of approval by staff, and if it's not installed, that's a zoning compliance issue ultimately down the road. The fact that they get the, while they have a couple of years before this is built, they have time to get that designed and signed-off. I would ask for your judgement then as to the review/approval prior to final sign-off or give them a condition before they move in?
- (Secretary) That's going to need to be worked out as part of the final Site Plan review. I have added a condition that subsequent review and approval of the final art installation and details as shown on the Blount Street elevation shall be completed administratively as part of the Site Plan Review. Any deviations from the proposed design may require further review/approval by the UDC. If that is acceptable to the mover?
- Yes.

## Action

On a motion by von Below, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** with the following findings and conditions:

- The Commission finds that the bonus story criteria are met based on the provision of public parking, affordable housing, LEED Silver equivalency, and green roof.
- With regard to LEED Silver equivalency the applicant shall provide additional details regarding the LEED points being utilized to obtain equivalency, and which can be reviewed administratively as part of the Site Plan Review application.
- The Commission finds that the increased setback is acceptable given the enhanced design of the raised pedestrian plaza.
- The applicant shall provide additional design details on the raised pedestrian terrace to confirm that handrails are not necessary and to deter skateboarding.
- The lighting plan shall be revised to meet code requirements related to light levels, uniformity ratios and fixture cutoff requirements. Subsequent review of lighting can be completed administratively.

- Subsequent review and approval of the final art installation and details as shown on the Blount Street elevation shall be completed administratively as part of Site Plan Review. Any deviations from the proposed design may require further review/approval by the UDC.

The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0-1) with Asad recused, and Goodhart nonvoting.