



Agenda Item #: 5

Project Title: 4846 Eastpark Boulevard - Residential Building Complex. 17th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 76596

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Amanda Arnold, Shane Bernau, Jessica Klehr, and Russell Knudson

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of April 19, 2023, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Residential Building Complex located at 4846 Eastpark Boulevard. Registered and speaking in support was Kevin Burow. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Greg Held, Sarah Church, Bradley Fregien, Karen Scott and Luke Stauffacher.

Updates to the project include improved circulation and access to the park, additional connectivity out of each building, in addition to the direct walk-up units, enhancements to the sidewalk around the perimeter to be more natural in shape, additional screening for residents on the east side of Lot 50, and additional plantings between the canopy trees in a mix of maple and skyline honey locust, which are relatively fast growing trees. To clarify details on the stormwater basins, the regional basin is City owned and maintained, with the shape now more organic as opposed to rectilinear using native grasses and native plant plugs. The gray tone masonry element ties in better with the limestone base, windows and railings, and ties into the darker masonry colors that are part of the other mixed-use buildings. The detailing of the corner elements, where originally an unbalanced dimension, has been made more uniform in size, the height has been decreased and the “hat” element has been removed. The entrance to the community space between the two buildings on Lot 50 is now more prominent and differentiated by relocating the entry door to the center bay, and adding a masonry element extending up the side of the building to allow for a more distinctive canopy. The proposed silver panel material is truly a silver color, in combination with dark blue and two dark gray tones for accent siding.

The Commission discussed the following:

- This looks good, my only question is are some of the materials so close in color that you don’t need them all?
 - There are two gray tone siding colors, but the panels are a distinct silver and the dark blue.
- I think its five materials? Maybe it’s the rendering but you have this frame of stone or masonry, but whatever is behind it isn’t enough contrast to get the effect you want. Either the silver or white or light gray, it’s too close to whatever the masonry or stone frame is to give it the effect that it is actually a frame or something that’s propped of what’s behind it. Do you need that white piece, what if it were something else? The contrast is not as strong as it could be to the adjacent material to where it gives you what you’re looking for. It’s not the materials, it’s the color. Specifically it’s the masonry and the white/silver, they’re very close to where it might wash away.
 - It is a silver material up against a gray material. We like the detail in regards to the difference in texture, but I understand what you’re saying being fairly similar in tone.
- I was looking at the same thing. Lot 49 looking north, that corner element without the white, I don’t think you need that extra bump-out, maybe it’s programmatically important but it’s distracting and to have these nice modern lines but then a cast stone over the brick top looks a bit more formal and less modern looking.
 - That is a cast stone element.

- I know it's necessary for capping that brick, I'm wondering if it should be less fussy and more blocky. I agree there is still too many materials maybe get rid of one of the grays. The white inset panels from the brick look as though you want to see behind them, I'm wondering if that should be darker and get rid of the white entirely. Just a little more simplified would be nice in my mind.
 - The inset is actually a silver metallic, not white. It's hard to get it to read right.
- I still think further simplification would be helpful. I like this blue better.
- The way the renderings are showing the small fenestration, are these operable windows and are they set back some?
 - The lower sash is what's operable for the windows in the units.
- I didn't see any roof plans, just curious about mechanical penetrations, mechanical systems on the roofs, is there anything missing here in terms of louvers or anything that we are not seeing communicated on the buildings?
 - Nothing additional in regards to louvers, we will have small vents as typical with smaller family buildings. On the roof it will just be condensing units, not large air handling or anything like that, typically screened by the parapet, located in the middle of the roof and under 30-inches.
- So you won't need any additional screening?
 - No.
- The retaining walls on your landscape plan, there was a photo of a neighboring building showing the wall in front of it. Is that the same material you're proposing?
 - The retaining walls are a limestone element.
- Going back to the landscape plan with the photo on it. It's a very warm, almost sandstone element. The renderings make the walls very closely matched in color to the masonry, I'm particularly concerned with the ones right up against the building. This looks like a big huge rock.
 - These are cut stone in a grayish hue.
- That was my concern, but you're confirming you're going to use a cooler limestone versus this buff.
- As usual, some really solid responses to our comments from last time. The additional screening separating this parking lot from the commercial one to the east will be helpful. I would question the use of stone mulch in these beds immediately adjacent to the building. Looking at the elevations it's clear some are ground level and some of the plantings are in raised structural planters, but not completely clear in the landscape design if you're intending stone to go in all of those or mulch in some and stone in others. I would tell you if you want those plants to be happy and thrive it should be an organic product, a shredded bark mulch in all of them. Your plantings are extensive enough, I know that applicants generally want to get away from an annual expense in reapplying mulch, but if these beds are landscaped to their full potential, the best mulch is a plant. White stone next to white masonry, sunlight reflecting off the wall and stone underneath brings the plants out of their winter dormancy so much faster than if there's organic mulch there. Stone mulch just doesn't make for a healthy place for these plants to live along foundations. We would request that you put wood mulch in those beds.
- I think we're putting too much emphasis on the way the colors in elevations look. If those areas were truly white I do not like that effect on the buildings, but if it's truly a silver like on the materials sheet, it's going to look quite different than it does in some of these elevations. I don't think it's too much or inappropriate with the other colors, I like the five different colors and textures.
- The number of materials, number of colors, how they transition from one to the other is a recurring theme on this project, and others. Is this application sufficient in the eyes of the Commission for approval or not? There was also the issue of the hats, those have been toned down, and parapet walls instead of overhangs in the middle part of the building.

Action

On a motion by Arnold, seconded by Braun-Oddo, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0). The motion included the following conditions:

- Refine the colors of the materials to provide more contrast, specifically as it pertains to the masonry and the metallic silver composite panel. Further simplification of the material palette could include removing one of the gray materials or the silver metallic inset in the masonry frame and block corners elements.
- Refine the cast stone cap on masonry material to be more blocky, appearing less formal.
- Exterior vents/flues shall be painted to match surrounding materials. Wall-Pak units are not part of this approval.
- Cooler (grayish hue vs. the buff in the drawings) cut stone limestone material shall be used for the retaining walls.
- Organic shredded bark mulch shall be used in beds, including those adjacent to the building.