



PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 18, 2023

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Project Name & Address: 134-150 S Blair Street — Land Combination & New Construction in the First Settlement historic district (District 6)
Application Type(s): Informational Presentation
Legistar File ID # [79566](#)
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Background

JCAP Development is proposing a redevelopment of a site that will include properties in the First Settlement historic district, Third Lake Ridge historic district, and several properties adjacent to those districts. While this is one redevelopment and this will create a single Zoning lot, the proposal is to maintain the existing Hotel Ruby Marie (Third Settlement), construct a new building on the large lot in the First Settlement historic district, and demolish several existing structures located on E Wilson St. As there are no changes proposed to the exterior of the Hotel Ruby Marie, the Landmarks Commission has nothing to consider for that property. For the rest of the lots on E Wilson, the Landmarks Commission will provide its typical advisory recommendation to Plan Commission and the Urban Design Commission on the historic value of those properties.

The three lots in the First Settlement historic district included in this development will include one technical land combination for the large lot that contains the surface parking lot and the two other lots will retain their legal boundaries. The surface parking lot has several unresolved underlying lot lines. The applicant will need to provide evidence that this lot has operated as a single lot for an extended period of time rather than its present configuration being a more recent phenomenon. If this has been operating as a single lot for a significant period of time, then it is part of the lot development pattern of the district. The question for the Landmarks Commission will be about what the history of this lot configuration is.

For the proposed new construction, it will need to meet the New Structures standards for the historic district, referencing historic resources within 200 feet that are within the district. There have been several recent successful infill projects in the vicinity that followed the direction of the new historic district standards. Those projects were in the Third Lake Ridge historic district and referenced the historic resources within 200 feet of those properties. This project must follow the same process.

An initial review by staff has concerns about the massing of the building being pushed so strongly towards Blair St. The other large infill projects that Landmarks Commission has recently approved had substantial setbacks for upper stories so that those additional stories could read as if they were well back in the distance. This project has a base that references the height datum of historic resources, but then only has a 2.5' to 5' setback for six additional stories. For the base of the building, it mostly reads as a continuous wall plane and isn't broken up to convey the width of the historic resources' street facades or convey a suggestion of the historic roof forms. Staff has provided feedback to the project team with recommendations for how to comply with the historic district standards.

This informational presentation allows the Landmarks Commission to provide their feedback to the development team on how the proposed development could align with the applicable standards that the commission will use to review the project. Below are those standards:

41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS. A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (1) New Construction or Exterior Alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
 - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.
- (4) Land Divisions and Combinations. The commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for land divisions, combinations, and subdivision plats of landmark sites and properties in historic districts, unless it finds that the proposed lot sizes adversely impact the historic character or significance of a landmark, are incompatible with adjacent lot sizes, or fail to maintain the general lot size pattern of the historic district.

41.27 STANDARDS FOR NEW STRUCTURES.

- (1) General
 - (a) Primary Structures

The design for a new structure in a historic district shall be visually compatible with other historic resources within two hundred (200) feet in the following ways:

 1. Building Placement. When determining visual compatibility for building placement, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as lot coverage, setbacks, building orientation, and historic relationships between the building and site.
 2. Street Setback. When determining visual compatibility for street setbacks, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as the average setback of historic resources on the same block face within two hundred (200) feet, and the setback of adjacent structures.
 3. Visual Size. When determining visual compatibility for visual size, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as massing, building height in feet and stories, the gross area of the front elevation (i.e., all walls facing the street), street presence, and the dominant proportion of width to height in the façade.
 4. Building Form. When determining visual compatibility for building form, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as building type and use, roof shape, symmetry or asymmetry, and its dominant vertical or horizontal expression.
 5. Architectural Expression. When determining visual compatibility for architectural expression, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as the building's modulation, articulation, building planes, proportion of building elements, and rhythm of solids to voids created by openings in the façade.
 - (b) Accessory Structures
 1. Comply with requirements for new primary structures with other historic accessory structures serving as comparables.
 2. Minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way, or be minimally visible from the front of the property for corner lots.
 3. Clearly be secondary to the primary structure.
 - (c) Exceptions
 1. New principal structures in Marquette Bungalows Historic District shall be no taller than the existing historic resources in the district.
- (2) Building Site
 - (a) General
 1. New parking areas, access ramps, trash or mechanical equipment enclosures shall be designed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic

relationship between the buildings and the building and the landscape, and are visually compatible with other historic resources in the district.

2. Fences and retaining walls in the front yard shall be in character with the style of fences or retaining walls historically found in the district, or in keeping with the materials and character of historic resources in the district.

(3) Exterior Walls

(a) General

1. Materials used for new structures shall be similar in design, scale and architectural appearance to materials that date to the period of significance on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet, but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as a historic building.

(4) Roofs

(a) Form

1. Roof form and pitch shall be similar to the form and pitch of the roofs on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.

(b) Materials

1. Roof materials shall replicate materials found on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.
2. Any roofing material shall be permitted on flat or slightly pitched roofs not visible from the developed public right-of-way.

(c) Skylights

1. Skylights visible from the developed public right-of-way shall be flat, parallel to the slope of the roof, and have the frame painted to match the roof material, and be located least twelve (12) feet back from the front edge of the roof.
2. Other forms of skylights are allowed on elevations not visible from the developed public right-of-way.

(d) Chimneys

1. A chimney's form and materials shall be similar to other chimneys on historic resources within the district.

(e) Rooftop Features

1. Rooftop decks or terraces and green roofs or other roof landscaping, railings, or furnishings shall be installed so that they are inconspicuous and minimally visible on the site and from the street.

(5) Windows and Doors

(a) General

1. Door and window styles should both match the style of the new structure and be compatible with those on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.

(b) Windows and Storm Windows

1. Multi-light windows shall have true divided lights or simulated divided lights with muntin grids on the exterior and interior with spacer bars between the panes of glass.

(c) Entrance Doors and Storm Doors

1. Sliding glass doors shall not be installed on the ground floor elevation along any street frontage.

(d) Shutters

1. Shutters shall be allowed if they are found on historic resources in the district, and shall replicate their operable appearance.

(e) Awnings

1. Awnings will be of a configuration and form consistent with the awnings in the district.
 2. Awning materials shall have the appearance of the materials found on historic resources with awnings.
- (f) Garage Doors
1. Garage doors shall be similar in design, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities prevalent within the historic district.
- (6) Entrances, Porches, Balconies and Decks
- (a) Porch Elements
1. Entrances and porches shall be of a size and configuration consistent with the historic resources in the district.
 2. The primary entrance for the structure shall be located on the front elevation, or, structures on a corner lot may have a corner entrance.
 3. Second exit stairways shall be provided on the interior of the structure.
- (b) Balconies and Decks
1. Projecting, partially projecting/inset, and inset balconies are prohibited on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way, unless there is precedent on the historic resources in the district.
- (7) Building Systems
- (a) Mechanical Systems
1. Mechanical equipment shall be screened if it is visible from the developed public right-of-way.
 2. Static vents, electric vents, wind turbines, and attic fans visible from the developed public right-of-way are prohibited.
 3. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters shall be finished or painted to match adjacent building materials.
- (b) Solar
1. Roof-mounted solar arrays on sloped roofs shall be flat, parallel to the slope of the roof, and arranged in a pattern or grid parallel to the roof's ridge and eaves.
 2. Roof-mounted solar arrays on flat roofs shall be installed so as to be minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way.
- (c) Lighting and Electrical Systems
1. Decorative light fixtures shall be compatible in style and location with the overall design of the building.
 2. Security light fixtures or security cameras shall be installed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible.
 3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
 4. Roof appurtenances such as antennas, satellite dishes, or communications equipment should be installed so that they are minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure historic features."