



Agenda Item #: 7

Project Title: 134-150 S Blair-Land Combination & New Construction in the First Settlement historic district (District 6)

Legistar File ID #: 79566

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

Members: Present: Jacob Morrison, Molly Harris, Richard Arnesen, Edna Ely-Ledesma, and Maurice Taylor
Excused: Katie Kaliszewski and Ald. Amani Latimer Burris (left at 5:35 PM)

Summary

Brian Munson of JCAP Development and Trina Sandschafer of Kahler Slater provided information on the proposed development.

Arneson opened public comment.

Jim Skrentny applauded the developer for looking back at past proposals, but noted past proposals did not meet the standards for land combination. The underlying lot lines that are proposed to be resolved may not meet 48.18 (4). Dissolving underlying lot lines should not become a precedent for all districts. Skrentny spoke about each of the standards and noted they feel the proposed size does not meet the visual massing and scale of the district. And is worried the massing, height, and footprint of the building are concerning and will set a precedent for historic districts.

Ely-Ledesma asked about the context of the commercial buildings on Wilson and if the facades could be preserved, and what the density bonus granted the project and how many units will be affordable.

Brian Munson explained that by adding two stories, 50% of those two stories would have to be affordable units and they are working with city staff on how to apply this. For the Facades on E Wilson, 510-516 have had significant if not complete removal of their facades. 518 the upper story is intact but the lower has been heavily modified. All 4 of those have significant structural issues. At the Come Back Inn, they are looking into it, and they know that the lower façade is not original.

Morrison asked for details on the materials in the future as that is critical to fitting in the historic context, specifically how the building will look alongside the Hotel Ruby Marie, including brick color, and to articulate some of the windows on the Blaire St façade. Morrison recommended showing some context including the buildings across the street, including the MG&E building and their monumental entrance. Along Wilson, a small setback between the hotel and the Ruby Marie is needed, a distinction or separation between the two. On the living street, Morrison had questions about what happens if someone accidentally turns in to that area from Blair.

Trina Sanschafer answered that there will be room for them to turn around using the hotel drop off, and it will not interfere with pedestrian or bike use.

Arneson stated he liked the Blair St building without opining on whether it is visually compatible, but the hotel does not work. The vertical elements that start on the third floor are not visually compatible.

Morrison noted that including a comparison to the Cardinal hotel is important.

Staff clarified that the underlying lot lines proposed to be resolved in this proposal are different than the last proposal in 2019, as this proposal is not proposing to combine all of the lots, just resolve the underlying lot lines on the surface parking lot whereas the previous proposal was to combine the three lots within First Settlement historic district and also combine with lots outside of the district. Staff also reiterated Skrentny's points about the visual size and how this new construction will relate to the historic resources in the First Settlement historic district. Staff clarified that the Cardinal and the MG&E buildings are not in the First Settlement historic district.

Arneson closed public comment.

Action

No action taken.