



Agenda Item #: 5

Project Title: 448 S Gammon Road - Exterior Renovations to an Existing Building in a Planned Multi-Use Site

Legistar File ID #: 79257

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Jessica Klehr, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Marsha Rummel, Wendy Von Below, Christian Harper and Russell Knudson

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of November 1, 2023, the Urban Design Commission made an advisory recommendation for **FINAL APPROVAL** of exterior renovations to an existing building in a Planned Multi-Use Site located at 448 S Gammon Road. Registered and speaking in support was Eric Ohlfs.

The applicant provided an overview of the surrounding context and existing conditions, as well as the changes that have been done to address the Commission's comments, including modifying windows and overhangs, increasing the amount of glazing across the front of the building, removal of some of the striated stone banding across the front of the building, increasing the eyebrows over the front large windows, and additional siding in some locations to help break up the banding. The site access was improved via the crosswalk from the south to provide additional access, they have increased the landscaping around the dumpster enclosure, and followed the recommendations for omitting the boxwoods along the sidewalk and drive paths for salt damage. They will be using the dark wood mulch instead of the red mulch. They have also addressed the lighting comments to be code compliant and omitted a monument sign that was not compliant with zoning.

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

- With regard to lighting you noted that refinements were made to the lighting plan to bring it closer to being in compliance with MGO 29.36; but that there continue to be discrepancies. What are those discrepancies?
- (Secretary) There were issues with regard to uniformity ratios and light levels within our areas specified in the lighting code. The code outlines particular areas, there are maximums and minimums for pedestrian areas, parking areas and vehicle use areas. The lighting levels provided were provided across the entire site. The lighting plan needs to be updated to show the light levels and averages within those areas rather than broad brush strokes of the light levels across the entire site. That could happen as part of their site plan review.
- I know we had a comment before about screening the dumpsters; do you have a rendering that shows how that is being screened. Could you speak to what you are screening it with in relation to the building?
 - The dumpster enclosure will be brick to match the brick on the building. It will blend into the site, but then the screening will be with Karl Forrester grass and arborvitae. We are using the grasses in multiple locations around the building, with the arborvitae for height to help screen.
- Could you also indicate where the secure pedestrian pathway is?
 - Here.
- With regard to the stone base, you are aware that this Commission is charged with making sure that the Plan Commission's conditions are met, and that one of the conditions was to remove all of the stone?
 - That wasn't my interpretation from our discussion last time; it was simplifying it and not having so much striation.

- As I read the staff report and the motion was to simplify the material palette and to remove the stone. I believe the material palette appears the same, and there is a little less stone. I want to make sure you're clear on that and you have your interpretation.
- (Secretary) To clarify, the UDC's role is advisory in this capacity; this item does not go to the Plan Commission. It's a Director level approval. We're advisory to the Planning Unit Director on the minor alteration. This one doesn't rise to the level of needing Plan Commission review of the previously approved conditional use approval. Those initial approval conditions came from this body. That discussion originated and ended here, we're just picking that back up.

The Commission discussed the following:

- This is simpler, and cohesive, and works together, and I actually like the stone.
- My only comment is, I think the applicant addressed most of the site issues we have mentioned. We have a pretty long stretch of parking stalls along plan south, I'm guessing this gets picked up at a staff level site plan review stage, usually you need a tree island to break-up that quantity of parking. This being West Towne, in this area a tree island would be appreciated to break-up all those stalls.
- (Secretary) The level of change on this site is very minimal with regard to the parking lot, they are not making any building additions, they are really just recladding the building and adding landscaping, so they aren't triggering any compliance with site requirements from the Zoning Code, or landscape requirements at this point. But what we are reviewing does need to meet code. There modifying the trash enclosure so that needs to be meet code requirements. Any modifications in the parking lot will need to meet code requirements. That doesn't mean that we can't talk about adding tree islands and ask the applicant team if they would be open to that.
- I would definitely request that you add a tree island. There are a couple of different arrangements on the few different site plans in the packet with that long stretch of parking stalls, some show more perpendicular and have some are angled. One strategically placed tree island may be where it catches the change from angled to perpendicular would make sense, give the tree island a little more space would make sense. You would only lose one parking stall. I would ask that you consider that condition.
- Why not make is a requirement; is there some sort of reason why we cannot make it a requirements?
- (Secretary) If the Commission wanted to require the addition of the tree island, the Commission could make it a requirement. With regard to the commission requiring that the entire parking lot be updated to meet the Zoning Code that is not something that will be triggered, nor could the Commission require it.

Action

On a motion by Knudson, seconded by Von Below, the Urban Design Commission made an advisory recommendation for **FINAL APPROVAL**, with the following finding and conditions:

- The Commission approves the stone base.
- The trash enclosure shall be screened with a material that is consistent with the building.
- The applicant shall add a tree island in the long expanse of parking along S Gammon Road, where the angled parking meets the perpendicular parking (the intent is to break it up).

The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).