



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

PRE-DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016
5:15 PM

CIVIC SAN DIEGO
401 B STREET, SUITE 400
SAN DIEGO, CA

1. Roll Call at 5:15pm. Members in Attendance: LC Cline, Jon Baker, Pat Stark, Dan Wery, Cindy Blair and Claudia Escala.
2. No public comments on non-agenda items.
3. Report from Chairperson: Comment on recent DCPC. Congratulated Jon Baker on getting reelected.

Action items:

4. **7th & Market** (full block bounded by Market Street, Island, Seventh and Eighth avenues) – Preliminary Design Review– East Village Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ Aaron Hollister
Project proposes the construction of 39 story and 19 story towers (approximately 475 and 227 feet tall respectively and is comprised of 218 dwelling units (34 affordable units and 125 market rate apartments, 59 hotel branded condominiums), approximately 155,000 SF of office space, and approximately 153 room hotel with a ballroom and 20th level restaurant/bar; an approximate 40,000 SF retail space for a grocer; and 887 automobile parking spaces including 200 for public use. Five levels of subterranean parking and three levels of above grade parking are proposed with all public parking spaces located above grade.

In accordance with the bylaws Claudia Escala recused herself and Dan Wery chaired the meeting.

Design Issues and considerations:

- Overall Massing Does the Project's overall mass, scale and heights constitute a comparable development with existing development and with the overall neighborhood context?
- Overall Architecture Does the Project's architectural expression, particularly with the large areas of concrete surrounds on the project's facades, represent a desirable, contemporary architectural expression?
- Tower Setback Is the 39-story tower compatible with the surround neighborhood with no setbacks from the adjacent ROW's such that an exception can be granted?
- Tower Dimension Does the upper 20 percent of the tower with an east –west tower dimension of 141 feet instead of the maximum allowed 130 feet create a graceful transition to the sky?
- Tower Separation Does the connection of the two towers where a minimum 60-foot tower separation is required by the CCPDO result in a superior architectural design and a more desirable project?
- Curb Cut Separation Does the 94-foot long grouping of curb cuts along the Seventh Avenue adversely affect the ground floor-experience of the Seventh Avenue frontage? Has the proposed design adequately mitigated this utilitarian area for the pedestrian experience?
- Urban Open Space Is the proposed Urban Open Space located at the southeast corner of the site at Eighth Avenue and Island Avenue designed so that it provides a significant benefit to the surrounding neighborhood, such that a street wall exception can be granted?
- Comprehensive Sign Plan Are the proposed signs complementary to, and in scale with, the buildings on



which they are placed and consistent in size to others in the surrounding neighborhood?

Deviations

1. Tower Separation
2. Maximum Tower Dimensions
3. Curb Cut Separation
4. Streetwall Height
5. Permitting valet tandem parking to meet the minimum required parking for commercial uses.

Applicant Presentation by Paul Thometz Cisterra Project Executive

The team has been working for the past 2 years since the RFP creating a world class project. The proposed project presents a diversity of program maximizing density and creating landmark architecture

Cisterra brings a strong financial base from which to execute the project. Agreements are in place with landmark tenants such as Ritz Carlton including their branded residences as well as Whole Foods.

7th & Market is a state of the art mixed use development with major uses all in one block and the project has been designed with a vast variety of stakeholder input.

The plan for the Clermont Hotel is to purchase it and will work with HRB staff to restore it to its original state and create an exhibit space at the ground level.

Architect presentation by David Gonzalez with Carrier Johnson

One of the design principles of the proposed project was to design as much open space as possible to create a great sense of community and vertical neighborhood integration with landscape connections. Key datum lines are taken into consideration based on existing neighbors. David gave an overview of the complex program. One challenge was to give each different use its own front identity. Mirroring Sempra's urban open space creates a park to park concept. The multilayered landscape design creates approximately 56,000 SF of landscaped areas. Condominiums and hotel are oriented with views to Petco Park and beyond. The concept for the tower design since it had a lot of program was to keep it simple. It was imperative that the building did not get out of control. The moment frame expression of the structural system is an example of when structural innovation and architecture come together. The proposed materials are concrete glass and metal with a basketweave concept of metal and glass at the affordable units. At the corner of 7th & Market the condo entry has to read home, a place of arrival with warm materials.

From structural innovation of using a moment frame concept with creating vistas and frame views. Framed vistas and tremendous.

Kevin Krumdieck with Carrier Johnson presented the arguments in favor of the deviations

- Deviation 1: Buildings are separated horizontally 60' but PDO does not take it vertically. If the office had to move urban window would be gone. Project presented is a more elegant way to include all the program. Also allows to activate the roof top with the joint. The area of open space gets doubled as it occurs below and above the bridge.
- Deviation 2: Regarding the maximum tower dimension the projecting balcony element will be unique in its character. Bringing that mass down would make it too bulky.
- Deviation 3: Nothing is allowed to can go on island. No services on Market allowed. 8th needs to be a destination arrival point so the team was left with 7thAve. to locate all the curb cuts. The driveways were compressed and then pulled apart 10' to allow for street trees between them. The applicant is planning on using some oversize graphics in the loading areas and making the doors glass to create a strong image. The team looked at Civic's request to internalize the loading but would get rid of the ballroom which is critical to the hotel..7th has more industrial uses and 8th seems more residential. Right visual warnings will be designed.
- Deviation 4: There is a proposed notch between the office tower and the podium. The notch is trying to bring fresh air into the building instead of adding louvers on the façade.
- Deviation 5: Proposing tandem for the condos, makes garage more efficient and allows for more parking on the same available foot print. Did not want to mix private parking with public parking.



DCPC Members Questions

Q. Is the ballroom going to be the only social venue? **A.** There will be meeting rooms on the 6th floor. Also on L6 there will be a Fitness center and spa for the hotel as well as a restaurant on 20th floor of hotel. **Q.** Egress/Ingress for Ballroom through hotel only? **A.** It will be either from Hotel Lobby and 8th street. **Q.** Is it a permeable space? **A.** Yes it is a walk through lobby with a marquee on each façade. **Q.** Will there be a drop off area for people? **A.** A bulb out planned on 8th as well as 7th. **Q.** In trying to understand ground street activation besides the Ritz, what happens on the rest of the ground floor? **A.** Whole Foods also occupies the first floor. They will have not just an entry but an actual functional space. Whole Foods is also asking for a small outdoor eating space along Market. **Q.** Doesn't a ballroom tend to be a closed space? **A.** Will have glass and blinds. **Q.** For the marquee on 7th what is the material? **A.** Structural glass. **Q.** Can the applicant share details on the garage exhaust? **A.** Air intake right at the corner was not acceptable by Civic. The façade was reconfigured to include louvers above street level. **Q.** In any of the residences are there balconies? **A.** Yes they are pulled back as shown on the physical model. Corners are also inset for balconies. The proposed second level balcony also will help activate the street. Balconies on the typical tower plate also show at least six balconies. **Q.** The glass box can turn one of two ways stunning or not. **A.** Cisterra shares that concern. **Q.** How about in that space some public art. **A.** Cisterra agrees and will work closely with Whole Foods. **Q.** Will that be an actively used space? **A.** Second floor is open all the way into the store. Experience of the shopper coming up will be impressive. **Q.** Doesn't the applicant feel the escalator to parking is a dead space? **A.** There is a great example of a Whole Foods on 8th & Grand in downtown LA that is very well executed and creates great street activation. **Q.** Expressed concern about the top three levels. Looks visible but not activated. Are there escalators up to the parking levels? **A.** Yes there are. **Q.** For apartments move in/ move out, we see one loading bay on 7th how do they get to the elevators? **A.** A truck would pull in at ground level, take an elevator down to a corridor that would take the resident to the elevator core. **Q.** Is there garage exhaust to below grade garage how about the emergency generator? **A.** At the Roof of L5 there is an equipment well. **Q.** How about the fueling? Will the loading bay doors be down when a truck is in? **A.** correct. **Q.** Express elevators 1 & 2 who do they service? **A.** Hotel to Sky lobby up on L20. **Q.** On the North/South dim of building what would be the allowed dimension without separation? **A.** 200'. **Q.** What is the solution for exterior building maintenance? **A.** Not resolved yet. **Q.** Is an exterior illumination plan required? **A.** CivicSD can provide. The project is not trying to light the façade but the proposed signs will be lit. **Q.** 200 public parking spaces. 229 proposed. Is the public parking negotiable? **A.** The developer needs parking as a source of revenue. Podium level parking in recent projects is creating a lot of dead space, noise and blank walls. **A.** Parking is 40 feet above grade and has been wrapped with residential. **Q.** At the Clermont building are you able to go under it? **A.** The applicant learned its lesson from Sempra not to try that one again. **Q.** How do you anticipate people visiting Whole Foods this without driving? **A.** Two elevators that serve the public parking are sized for shoppers to come down with shopping carts. The applicant envisions a lot of foot traffic. There are 4,000 SF at grade that will offer a unique dining experience. **Q.** Loading bay how often do you see those being used? **A.** Mostly in the evening. Whole Foods has traffic throughout the day. Move ins /move outs will be less frequent. Trash removal will occur in the evenings. **Q.** Is there any chance of sharing loading? **A.** Whole Foods takes a lot to service that store. **Q.** For move ins and move outs is that dock space reserves specifically for hotel and grocery or alternately used for move in move outs for larger trucks. **A.** 2 dedicated to Whole Foods and 2 for the rest of the project. **Q.** The project has apartment and condos on north side of project Is there a real connection for people to move in and out? The plan for any resident would be to park in the loading dock unload in the shuttle elevator and then go a level down to reach the elevator core. Same way as trash room is serviced going down in the basement. **Q.** Signage on south elevation of residential tower. 39th floor signage is that Ritz Carlton? Concerned with Petco Park and the visibility of the skyline. **A.** That is correct. **Q.** Ritz Carlton properties are they common to be paired with market rate apartments? **A.** They are OK sharing the tower. The project is proposed as an integrated neighborhood with the affordable component and the historical Clermont building. **Q.** Signage at top south facing 285SF proposed. Is allowed area 1,056 as shown? **A.** That is a typo. **Q.** Mechanical Penthouse is this going to be an open breezeway? **A.** Vertical turbines are shown in that opening for wind power. Explored putting cooling towers in other areas but were concerned with noise to residential areas. It will be centralized system. **Q.** LEED silver only? **A.** Correct but will try to go over so guaranteeing silver but will shoot for gold. **Q.** Can you explain the parking exception on the tandem



parking? **A.** Have met all parking requirements. What the team is looking for is valet parking in a tandem configuration.

Screening parking with spandrel glass. **Q.** Worried about headlights? **A.** There are a variety of materials, a combination of glass and metal panels. Angled metal panels alternating give texture to the façade. **Q.** Can Whole Foods open up more on 8th Avenue? **A.** No, there is a lot of their back of house on 8th and access to refrigeration system.

Public Comments:

Gary Smith: President Downtown Residents Group

Deviation 1: Cool building

Deviation 2: Similarly although DCPC members should remember the tower separation was to let light and air into the units and not to be looking into your neighbors windows. If you look at it as a single tower it makes more sense.

Deviation 3 Regarding setbacks, Alta goes all the way out to property line. Nothing to the east. Pinnacle all the way to the property line too so what is one more?

Deviation 4 Garage curb cut. If it is treated as one long curb cut makes more sense from pedestrian access. Likewise the trees need to be centered in the space between the loading bays as they won't last past the first semi is they are close to the edge.

Deviation 5 Office signs should not be oversized, Tenant should apply for their own exception, Example Kleinfelder Other signage weigh it carefully. Why are you giving them an exception?. HR Block could come in next. You have to have a good reason to violate the ordinance.

Public Parking Comprehensive parking plan requires the 200 spaces. FRED may change the whole parking dynamic downtown

Lastly will pay attention to the top of building. Should have something distinguishable.

Bruce Coons Save Our Heritage Organization:

He is in support of the project. Likes the way the project sets back from the hotel and how the Clermont will be restored.

DCPC Member Comments

Jon Baker Hugely complex project and planning is very good. The applicant is doing many things right. With regards to signage Ritz Carlton is truly the branding component so not excited about the other signage. OK with consolidation of loading docks. In this plan 7th Ave. becomes the back door and provides relief to the other streets to be something better. No concerns with tower separation or setbacks. Need more development on the extension of the hotel to the office tower. The idea is good but form is awkward. It almost feels like office tower existed before the rest. Does not see anything in the way the window has been detailed to make that window be special. It looks like just a space between the two buildings. Needs further development of that big idea. Elevations showing two different colors of concrete helps. Some concerns with monotony of grid. Understands that tinkering with different elements may make it too busy. The composition of the piece that extends out does not feel right. Small things to keep working on compared to the complexity of the overall project.

Cindy Blair OK with tower setback. Likes the idea of the window. Is it in the right orientation? Likes the activated roof tops. Not bothered by curb cut consolidation. Urban open space is nice. Hopes ballroom works well. They have not been successful on 5th Ave. With regards to the signage agrees with Gary and Jon. Stick with what the code allows. She is satisfied with how the parking is handled.

Pat Stark. Has an understanding for the why of all of the deviations and feels all work except his only concern is the signage. Recommends sticking with 4' instead of 5'. Does not feel the grid is problematic. Predicts the utilitarian side of 7th will be problematic. It will not be hard to annoy neighbors. Will have to deal with it operationally. Loves the project.

LC Cline Totally in agreement with Jon on the urban window concept. As we study the model it is extremely glassy surrounding the window. Likes the elongated upper elevation for the east west tower. It creates a sculptural effect to the building. Grid design of major portion to the building reminds him of a building in



New York 520 Park Ave that is very successful. LC sees the project as a Mid Century modern concept with an updated flare. No problem with deviations except for the office signage one. Does not like deviation for the unknown. Extremely impressed with the visual connection. Plaza along 8th will be an exceptional addition to that part of the City. Commends the team on the mixed uses and the restoration of the historic hotel. Feels they have done an excellent job.

Dan Wery: Kudos for affordable housing on site and preserving the Clermont. Likes the massing of the building. First thought too monotonous but likes that each form represents each program element. Does not like the overhang as much but likes the ceiling of the upper level that will look great at night. Concerned with exhaust vent adjacent to the Clermont Hotel. Concerned with 7 stories going all the way up and all the services on 7th. The Clermont feels all hemmed in and will feel awful. It will also be close to all the stinky elements. Will not get any light and air. Encourages the applicant to study connecting it to the urban open space. Working from the old building out. The Sempra concept around the fire station is a better concept. Would like to see the concept around the Clermont improve. Could an open space on top of the Clermont help? More attention needs to be paid on the experience for the residents of that hotel. Still some concerns with the activity at the ground level. Still see a lot of dead space. Suggests bringing more life on the street, on 8th on both sides of the Ritz where at the entry the metal panel is coming down on both sides. Need to show more activation at the Whole Foods lobby. Not a fan of blank walls but likes the articulated metal panels. OK with deviations but struggles with the signage one and would like to see the lighting plan. He sees an escalation of bigger and brighter for projects in downtown. He has had a personal negative experience with lighting bleeding into his unit. Wondering about the people under the bridge. Is there a way to bevel the structural elements to get more light into this area? Likes the Urban window. Not a fan of the extra width at the top as it creates the maximum shadow. Has a main concern with the awkwardness from different angles.

Jason Wood representing Cisterra arrived late into the meeting but wanted to address the Clermont Hotel. He has been in several meetings with the representatives of the Black Historical Society. The courtyard in the back is currently a junk yard with mattresses behind the existing 8 to 10 feet high brown fence. He has been discussing in addition to the exhibit space inside being able to activate the courtyard and create some exhibit space in that courtyard too. He is aware that people in the tower would not want to be overly connected to the Clermont

Jason Wood requested a confirmation of his understanding of where the group stands with regards to the signage. He believes the whole group is OK with the Ritz Carlton signage but not in favor of the signage for the office tower. The group concurred. He suggested deviating to the same size as the Sempra sign. **The** DCPC members felt that Sempra is the naming of the entire tower. They did not feel the secondary tower should be as prominent as Sempra. Signage is a global concern within the community.

The applicant feels the office building needs an identity as it is as big a Sempra. Pat Stark reminded the applicant that DCPC's role is only advisory.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.