



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

### PRE-DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 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, Cindy Blair, Kay Difrancesca and Claudia Escala.
2. No public comments on non-agenda items.
3. Report from Chairperson: Welcomed new DCPC member Kay Difrancesca

#### **Action items:**

4. **7<sup>th</sup> & Island Hotel** (Northwest corner of Seventh and Island Avenues) Centre City Development Permit/Centre City Planned Development Permit/Neighborhood Use Permit- Preliminary Design Review – East Village Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ Steve Bossi  
The proposed project is a high rise hotel with 324 hotel guest rooms. The hotel is a 20-story concrete structure with the upper stories (levels 6-20) articulated to represent two different hotel brands on the northern and southern portions. The 5 story podium occupies the entire site with the exception of the 2,750 SF of urban open space on the ground floor that occupies the first two floors of the southern portion of the site. Four levels of below-grade valet parking are accessed off of Seventh Avenue.

#### Design Issues and considerations:

- Overall Massing and Architecture - Does the proposed design provide a sufficient breakdown of building massing and an attractive architectural program?
- Tower Setbacks from Public Streets – Do the south and east sides of the tower that encroach into the required tower setbacks from the public street result in a design that is improved and that does not result in massing inconsistent with the neighborhood?
- Tower Setbacks from Interior Property Lines – Does the glass pattern that wraps around the northeastern corner of the tower sufficiently reduce the blank wall as it would be visible from the Seventh Avenue and the adjacent residence? Does the design of the north & west sides of the tower permit views into and out of habitable areas within the tower?
- Urban Open Space Requirements – Does the design and configuration of the urban open space provide for an accessible and public amenity that adheres to all of the urban open space requirements?
- Ground Floor Transparency – Does the design of the ground floor provide enough transparency along the east elevation given the provision of utilities, loading dock and driveway to underground parking?
- Loading Dock – Is the substandard size of the loading dock appropriate given the limited street frontage?

#### Deviations

1. Off Street Loading Dock
2. Parking Provisions: Valet only parking may be provided for valet parking associated with a restaurant use, not a hotel.
3. Tower Setbacks: Towers shall not encroach into setbacks from public streets and interior property lines.



### Architect Presentation by Delawie

The proposed dual branded Hilton Hotel is focused on the millennial traveler. One of the project goals is to enhance pedestrian activity with the proposed urban open space as a main feature

For the podium piece the architect worked closely with SOHO on how to modify and reflect the historical warehouse character of this particular location. Modulation and materiality were key to represent the history of the area. A slot that penetrates all the way to the front is used to break up the mass into two towers

The hotels will have separate entries but both are proposed at the main plaza.

The loading dock is placed to limit impact on pedestrian activity.

The urban open space is very penetrable from the outside and the concept envisions mobile things like coffee carts occurring in that space.

The second floor is open to below and has an open court area to look down. There is a shared fitness area looking over the urban open space and the indoor courtyard. This area is also very permeable.

The project has reserved 500SF for an African American Interpretive Center.

Above the podium levels 6 thru 19 of the tower step and front tower is rotated to focus direction towards the best views.

At level 20 a restaurant space is planned with a few guest rooms.

### DCPC Members Questions

**Q.** Is drop off just on the street. **A.** Yes along Island Ave. with valet parking. **Q.** What is the difference between Canopy and Hampton in the tower? **A.** The break up is more horizontal than vertical. Even though the design expression is vertical organizationally the separation is horizontal. **Q.** Does the required tower setback apply to the entire tower above the podium? **A.** Per Civic SD yes it is the entirety above podium. Carving away the backside preserves more of the livability of the existing building. A 10 foot setback can be granted during the design review process. **Q.** Do you anticipate events in the hotel space? If yes valet parking and drop off may not be big enough. **A.** No meeting space in the hotel. **Q.** How about in the restaurant on the roof? **A.** The restaurant is for public use and there will be no dedicated event space. **Q.** Is storefront proposed on all elevations? Are you capturing the edge of slab? **A.** Will bypass the slab with the window system. The concrete exposed at the core will be finished and painted. And the stair in the tower is proposed in GFRC. **Q.** Where is the emergency generator located? **A.** Over the garage ramp. **Q.** Is there a roll up door at the loading dock and is the parking entry not gated? **A.** It is not gated it is all valet parking. **Q.** With respect to the backflow areas can they be turned perpendicular? **A.** That option can be studied. **Q.** Will there be laundry onsite? **A.** There is a proposed back of house area where laundry will occur on site. **Q.** The rhythm of the window system on the east façade is very intriguing but it not clear how it will be achieved could the architect provide more information?. **A.** Only the outside plane of the wall will have the shape represented on the renderings. The inside part of the wall will be flat. The play will occur within the thickness of the wall. **Q.** Plans don't show articulation correct? **A.** Correct as the design has not gotten to that level of detail yet. **Q.** Is the mechanical system a vertical water source? It will be a fan coil vertical or horizontal but will not have PTAC like system on the façade. **Q.** Did the team prepare a materials board? **A.** Yes and Civic SD brought it in the room. **Q.** Has the applicant looked at window washing equipment on the roof? **A.** The Team has not reviewed window washing yet. **Q.** Has the team looked at what kind of structure would be needed to create the proposed top of building design? **A.** The team has not gotten to that level in the design process. **Q.** Recently the committee reviewed the 7<sup>th</sup> & Market project which is also proposing an exhibit space for African American History. If both projects are proposing a similar space which project will get it? **A.** Alex Beaton representing the applicant and also involved in the 7<sup>th</sup> & Market project informed the group that he has met with Karen Huff with the Black Historical Society of San Diego and she has expressed interest in seeing both projects dedicate about 500 square feet to an exhibit space.

### Public Comments:

Resident from the Alta Condominiums next door neighbor. As a neighbor on the fourth floor facing south she wants to know how close the new building will come to her building. As she faces the hotel what will she be looking at? The architect noted there will be a brick wall with no window expression. The proposed building will be 27'-9" from its property line and 43'-1" away from the Alta Tower. With the loading dock on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. has the applicant thought about people coming into their building? The architect pointed out there



will be traffic control when trucks are loading. At the rooftop will there be a night club or DJ? The architect stated that it is not in the plan to have live entertainment and an acoustical report as prepared to look at how to mitigate sound.

#### DCPC Member Comments

Jon Baker 7<sup>th</sup> Ave will turn into loading dock capital. With lots of loading dock activity why is the patio dining on 7<sup>th</sup>? Recommended the applicant rethink that location for the patio dining. The north elevation with a solid brick wall goes up quite a bit and will be visible for a very long time. The applicant should study if the rhythm of fenestration can be replicated with spandrel glass as that will give the impression that there is more human activity happening behind the wall. Maybe even look at wrapping up the form around the corner.

Cindy Blair Complimented the applicant on doing a good job with the open space. She understands what is happening on seventh but inquired if there is a way to look at the utilities and hide them a little better. She likes the setbacks. She is interested in how the vertical concrete will be finished. It may need some texture. She likes the two building concept and how the project pays good homage to history in the neighborhood.

Pat Stark. The urban open space feels more like a lobby. He recommends turning the utilities perpendicular to the street. The back of house is cramped and scary. A 23 foot long truck backed up to a door will be sitting on the sidewalk. He would like to see a recessed gate at the vehicular entry.

LC Cline. He likes the nod to the warehouse building. With regards to the north wall eve. Even though it is brick he recommends creating a grid within the brick wall to create some sculptural quality. For the upper tower on the North he suggested the use of spandrel glass in some areas. A blank wall can be very disturbing even at a higher elevation. The urban space in plan seems semi-public as opposed to fully public. It doesn't have the flow of an open space. He did not get the character of a truly public space. He likes the proposed out of plane articulated façade.

Claudia Escala Concur with other members that the north façade should be further refined. As far as the utilitarian portion of the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade she recommends switching what feels like infill brick to metal panel with the intent of disguising the various doors currently shown in different sizes. She believes there is not enough glazing wrapping around the northeastern corner and spandrel glass may be a good solution to this item. She encouraged the team to look closely at window washing and structure as both could dramatically change the tower top design. Another area to pay close attention to is the gap that will occur between the existing buildings on the block and the proposed project. She really likes the design parti with the differentiated towers and the podium portion in the rich brick material that speaks to other warehouse buildings in the neighborhood.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20pm.