



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

PRE-DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL

TUESDAY, JULY 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: Pat Stark, Jon Baker and Claudia Escala.
2. Public comments on non-agenda items. None
3. No report from Chairperson
4. **Action items:**

- **Nook East Village** (northwest corner of 15th and K streets) – Centre City Development Permit/Centre City Planned Development Permit No. 2016-18 – Design Review – East Village Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ Steve Bossi

The proposed project is a five-story SRO hotel mixed-use building, consisting of four floors of Type IV wood-frame construction above Type I concrete construction on the podium/ground floor. The Project is comprised of 91 SRO units averaging 250 SF, each with its own private bathroom and kitchenette. The ground floor of the Project consists of a gymnasium, community space/laundry room, and lobby.

Design Issues and considerations:

Building Design and Materials

- Does the overall design and the materials proposed include different elements that imply distinct architectural treatments and well-detailed, high quality, durable materials.

Active Commercial Uses along 15th Street

- Does the proposed reduction from 50% to 43% active commercial use frontage along 15th Street provide adequate retail activation along this Main Street?

Driveway along 15th Street

- Does the small lot size and lot configuration justify the provision of a driveway with a curb cut in the Limited Vehicle Access Overlay Zone?

Ground Floor Height

- Is the proposed 15-foot ground floor height appropriate for this project considering its scale and the retail use on the ground floor?

Parking Requirements

- Is the proposed reduction in parking from 8 required spaces to 7 proposed spaces acceptable considering the small lot size and the provision of a car-sharing station as part of the program?

Presentation by Applicant Trestle Development

The project offers small affordable housing units in a walkable urban location trying to target a wide population. Eight of the units are for housing our veterans. The developer has similar projects in the Bay Area. High end finishes and appliances are part of the interior finishes.

Presentation by Joseph Design Wong and Associates (JWDA)

The project is true to the historical patterns of small infill development in East Village. It shows great diversity in scale, it is pedestrian oriented and innovative in offering a new housing option. The design is honest and dynamic but unpretentious. The previously approved development permit included alley driveway access. The design as



shown in the current application accesses parking via a 12 foot wide driveway on 15th Street. The layout of a typical upper floor is pretty straight forward with a single elevator. Materials include smooth plaster, hardie panel in a tongue and groove aesthetic and board formed concrete at ground level. Punched opening are arranged in a pattern to create an old Type V development. The North elevation is where most utilities are located.

Members Questions

Q. Applicant mentioned a community kitchen space but laundry is called out on plans is that a typo? **A.** Laundry space will also have a kitchen. Not a commercial kitchen just a standard kitchen. **Q** Bicycle storage how is that secured? **A.** The room will be locked. **Q.** Type of security door? **A.** Segmented tilt up door. **Q** Board formed concrete looks dark in renderings, will it be painted or have a special aggregate?. **A.** Not intended to be dark and no exposed aggregate. **Q.** Mechanical units? **A.** Typical PTAC unit that will be part of the window system. **Q.** How will condensation be handled? **A.** It will be piped. **Q.** In the proposed retail space will venting for a potential restaurant be provided?. **A.** The plans have gone through plan check but a restaurant has not been anticipated. If a restaurant were to occupy the space venting through the roof could be accommodated. **Q.** Does the depth of the commercial space comply with the minimum?. **A.** It does but should be shown on the plans. **Q** For the proposed hardie board panels what type of fasteners will be used? **A.** The panels will be tongue and groove so no exposed fasteners. **Q.** Thoughts about trash for commercial? **A.** For 1,500 SF of retail no dedicated trash area. Tenant will need to walk back for trash collection.

Public Comments

Gary Smith (President of the Downtown Residents Group): Very attractive project with oriel windows as well as corner windows. His board will like it. Why is the applicant working so hard to put half a dozen parking spaces and introduce a driveway on 15th Street which is the future of the neighborhood center. The previously approved development permit had access through the alley. The driveway on 15th would eliminate 5 parking spaces including angled parking. The project should propose no more than 2 parking spaces. Wondered if the SRO will be allocated by the San Diego Housing Commission or will the units be market rate. The project looks good and gets away from looking like an SRO. He urges the group to approve the design but to also ask the hard questions. The commercial spaces should have internal circulation to get to a trash enclosure and get trash through the alley.

Steve Bossi offered clarification that there will be an agreement with the SDHC for 100% of the units. The applicant noted that using a different median income will allow for a balance between a homeless population and individuals in a lower income bracket.

Steve Bossi also noted that Civic SD would not support two parking spaces. Brad Richter indicated the angled parking will be on the east side so only parallel parking will be affected by the introduction of a driveway on 15th Street.

Member comments

Jon Baker: Maneuvering in and out of the parking spaces would be tough. In favor of eliminating parking. The proposed project is a great change from the previously approved project. Likes the color scheme with the lights and darks. Thinks the planning is excellent. Supports staff recommendation and believes this is a good project.

Pat Stark: No objections to the aesthetics. Concerned how the PTAC units will look once the project is completed. The detailing needs to be studied.

Claudia Escala: Thinks it is a good looking project. Likes the composition and choice of materials. Is very familiar with the Alpha project done by JWDA and cautions architect to not use again the dark non clear glass used on that project.

Park & Market (Block bounded by Park Boulevard, Eleventh Avenue, Market and G streets) – Preliminary Design Review – East Village Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ Christian Svensk

In accordance with the bylaws Claudia Escala recused herself and Pat Stark acted as chair for this item.

- The project proposes the construction of a 34-story residential tower, a four-story office building, and a one story retail building (approximately 360 feet, 65 feet and 20 feet tall. The project contains 427 dwelling units, 342 market-rate apartments and 85 affordable units) approximately 51,260 SF of office



space; approximately 22,641 SF retail space and 478 parking spaces in four subterranean levels. There is a total of 5,500 SF of public Urban Open Space. Other common spaces that provide limited public access are 3,198 SF amphitheater and a 5,000 SF upper terrace overlooking the public plaza.

Design Issues and considerations:

- Is the overall design of the project an adequate and thoughtful response to its immediate environs of East Village?
- Does the tower provide a distinctive and attractive addition to the City's skyline?
- Does the tower's shape and architectural design meet the Downtown Design Guidelines?
- Does the upper tower design meet the intent of the Downtown Design Guidelines?
- Should the tower be better integrated with the ground floor and street frontages?
- Should the Eleventh Avenue frontage of driveways and utility rooms be further evaluated to create a better pedestrian experience?
- Should the office building lobby be better defined and enhanced?
- Does the open space design provide for a thoughtful and enhanced public experience?

Presentation by Applicant Holland Group:

Very excited with this project. Completed in 2014 the Form 15 project. That project incorporated public art as well as artifacts from Bob Sinclair and plan on doing the same for Park & Market. The project presented is truly a mixed use project. It proposes an office building that will bring employment use, a high rise residential tower and affordable housing. It will also relocate the historical Remmen House and create Public Open Space that will compliment the Downtown Mobility plan.

Presentation by Architect:Carrier Johnson David Gonzalez talked about the vibe and personality the project will bring. The site is right on Park Blvd. which acts as a connector between Balboa Park and the Bay. The office building speaks to Market St. The historic house will be relocated within the same site and allow for a great open space. Vehicular entrances are along 11th Ave. combined on a 45 foot curb cut. The design parti comprises ample open space, with over 5,000 SF at grade and an above grade amphitheater of approximately 8,200 SF. The street wall on Market St. will relate well to the existing context. The tower's main design concept is that of a dual facade. One composed of metal panel and glass and the other one of glass on glass. Balconies are carefully placed with some pointing to Balboa Park and a stacking corner balcony facing the bay. The tower steps down as opposed to going the full 400 feet tall.

Presentation by Melendrez Scott Baker discussed how the love for public life shaped the building's public space. The purpose of the project is to create a level of activation for a 24 hour life cycle. Turning the Remmen house allowed for more open space. There is consistent streetscape around the site. Park Blvd wants to be a space to congregate. The project creates a hierarchy of spaces with an entry plaza of the street and a more expansive plaza to allow for events. The creation of the public plaza was definitely informed by the Quartyard. The stage is a place envisioned for performances or as a dining terrace and the project is unique in its creation of multilevel public spaces. Occupied spaces are intertwined with landscape.

Members Questions:

Q. Is the driveway on the right a two-way driveway as that may create a challenge? **A.** Yes. **Q.** Where is the pedestrian access? **A.** Anyone that wants access will go through the lobby. **Q.** Is the park component available 24/7? **A.** The intention is to have the area secured with a retractable gate. **Q.** In the public open space are ramps worked out to get people all the way up? **A.** Yes the ramps have been studied for many hours. **Q.** Ground Floor concept without a podium please elaborate. **A.** The building comes all the way down as part of its design parti. **Q.** Has the exterior building maintenance been worked out? Anything on the roof should not be visible. **A.** Is not fully worked out yet but will pursue having no visible maintenance equipment. **Q.** For the public art component criteria is it a dollar component? **A.** Per Civic SD it is based on a valuation of the commercial value. 1% of that amount. **Q.** As a DCPC member looking for an education on sequence of events. **A.** The Holland Group has not gotten that far but will create a series of murals. The large projection element is also offers an opportunity for art.



Public Comments

Gary Smith: This is a very interesting project, yet another glass building with balconies stuck to it. It does not look very appealing for an iconic site Concerned with the public space and office building. If project was flipped 180 in the north south direction it would be better. The proposed amphitheater will only get sun 3 months. Not sure this will be a viable space for any events. If office building was mirrored and located on G St instead of Market St. it would make for a better project. Building is not even as attractive as the federal jail. His board will hate it. It is not an interesting box. Would normally disagree with driveway layout but this time he agrees with the proposal. It makes sense to put driveway on 11th and combine it. Strongly urge to look at the façade of the office building. The residential space tucked against the office will not get any light. Not convinced of what people will be looking at across the City? There is no top to this building, it goes up and just stops.

Ryan Darby:(Opposed) East Village resident who overlooks the proposed project. Proponent of the Quartyard project which is an outdoor community space that offers a beer garden, music venue, dog park, assortment of food trucks and cultural events. It serves families with children as well as dog owners. It is a viable public square not just another bar. An online petition to express the importance of Quartyard to the neighborhood has been created. With over 2,600 signatures people can go and offer their support at SaveQuartyard.com. The community is looking for help to secure a permanent site for Quartyard at Park & Market or at another location. Are the public spaces shown really communal? The amphitheater and plaza will be open to the public but are not required as public open space. The developer should be held tighter on his promises.

Brad Richter offered clarification with respect to the site. He indicated it was acquired by the former redevelopment agency for an affordable housing project approved by the State. Proposed site is intended to be redeveloped for a project and must proceed to be in compliance. The Quartyard was originally conceived by students from the New School of Architecture. Civic SD is happy to assist Quartyard in finding a new location and is aware that they are in discussions with other developers too.

Scott Baker agrees with how successful Quartyard has been and does not want to supplant it with the proposed project. He explained that the project attempts to bring Quartyard's energy into the project. Regarding creating shaded areas, the studies proved the public open space will be a sunny space. Also having some shade is not so bad in our climate The project will create a duality between sun and shade.

Eli Sanchez, the project manager for this site on behalf of Civic SD also explained that the site is owned by the City as a housing asset. The site is intended to benefit affordable housing including its sale will provide those benefits.

Tom Warren with Holland Group also offered his comments. He is also concerned about the Quartyard. Pleased to see such a cool space in that neighborhood and would love to have that quality of operator. Feels that the renderings do not do justice to the project. Also wanted to reassure the public that the tower location is in response to not creating a shadow on the park.

Speaker without a speaker slip who did not disclose his name:

Q How does the project not provide public parking when it is offering a public open space? **A.** Per Brad Richter there is no requirement for parking for open space. **Q.** Does the project have any renewable energy components? LEED Silver seems entry level bare bones. **A.** The project is working towards LEED Silver rating and the applicant is also following the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Checklist that will go beyond LEED Silver requirements .

Pat Stark acting as chair noted that the public comment portion is not intended to be an open dialogue.

David Lowenstein (Neutral) The idea is moving in the right direction but is concerned that there is no mention of capturing any solar energy or any type of renewable energies. The Celadon project is a good example of capturing renewable energy. He is appalled that such a large project is not going for renewable energy especially with a flat roof.

Jeff Forrest (In Favor) Jeff introduced himself as land use partner with Sheppard Mullin. He indicated that the CAP Checklist was approved by City Council earlier in the day. 5 democrats and 4 republicans approved it. In his opinion the approved CAP checklist offers a balance between sustainability and energy requirements. For example it offers other ways of using the roof to meet sustainable goals not only with solar panels.

Member comments

Jon Baker: **Q.** Is there public parking in the garage? **A.** No plan for that and the site benefits from having the trolley right next to the site. The public space is the most interesting part of the project. Not concerned about the placement



of the tower with respect to the wind. Sees nothing wrong with the courtyard space as shown. The ramps should create some larger landing areas that will be more comfortable and believes will be required for ADA. To the question of whether the lobby location is appropriate from Market he thinks the location as shown makes sense. The entry via the driveway and the lobby access in the same vicinity is helpful but the two way driveway may create some traffic issues. With regards to the aesthetics of the tower he understands the premise of two forms facing different sides but agrees with staff comments. Both the office and the residential tower need further design exploration. The recessive element that separates the two pieces is not successful. The team has done such a great job on the ground plane but the rest needs more work.

Pat Stark: He concurs with Jon's comments. The ground plane with the double driveway and Lobby on 11th work for him. The shaded area will not be a bad place to be. He agrees with Gary Smith's comment regarding the open space for residents that may not be very inviting. With respect to the aesthetic component he agrees with staff's report. He sees the mass coming down too hard on 11th Ave. and feels that the building is top heavy on the west elevation. The main body works but at the ground something is lost and the top needs more exploration. The project needs to have a strong presence due to its prominent location and does not want to see another project like Pinnacle.

- **The Beacon** (south side of C Street between 14th and 15th avenues) – Preliminary Design Review – East Village Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ Christian Svensk

Claudia Escala returned to act as chair for this item.

The Project is a 5-story (60 feet tall) residential development consisting of 43 living units (350 SF each) and one 1 bedroom unit (770SF) for the building manager. The 43 living units are to be affordable for individuals below 40 percent of the area median income (AMI). Parking is not required but 8 spaces are provided to be used by the building manager and the supportive program managers plus visitors. Father Joe's Villages will provide services to 21 of the 43 tenants and the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services Division will provide mental health focused services to the remaining 22 tenants.

Architect Presentation MW Steele Group

The Beacon will provide permanent supportive housing + one manager's unit. The units will be affordable at or below 40% AMI. It will focus on livability and dignity, natural light and ventilation as well as transparency and visibility and spaces for social interaction and communal gathering. The site is a very compact site with access only on C Street. The project will have several amenities of a very comfortable size. The north façade has the following defining features with a CMU base, highly transparent lobby and the slab projection to accentuate the entrance plus planters. It also includes two projecting oriel windows. The garage door will be finished painted metal. On the typical floor plan the floor plate pulls back to create light wells on the east façade that are coordinated with adjacent condo building. It also offers open air corridors. The proposed earth tones refer to existing buildings. The colors have been selected sensitively, with red as an accent color tying to City College.

Members Questions

Q. For the one story commercial buildings to the west what is the expectation? **A.** That property will most likely be redeveloped and there is a fault line that cuts the corner. **Q.** What is the reasoning behind the corridors shown as exterior spaces? **A.** The primary principle will be to provide more light and air. **Q.** The marine layer will affect the choice of materials **A.** MW Steele has an aversion to double loaded corridors and with the scale of this project opening it up was a viable option. **Q.** The 6 roof top units identified what type will they be? **A.** They will be Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) units. **Q.** Will windows be fixed or operable? **A.** They will be a combination and most of the units will have operable windows.

Public Comments

Jeff Smith (Opposed) Permanent resident of East Village. Lives at Union Square as a resident. No problem with the building and its design. Is concerned about the destruction of the historic building. Very concerned with usage and management of the proposed project. Understands real estate transactions and does not see this as good value to upgrade the neighborhood. It will house people with addictive issues. Would like to see a petition against further



granting of funds to Father Joe's Villages. The homeless population downtown has grown to 800. He typically brings his family including his grandchildren downtown but cannot walk two blocks without stepping over bodies. He noted that if people look at other Father Joe's buildings they are not looking good these days. On the other hand if you look at the Rescue Mission it has no issues. Concerned that the new Urban Discovery Academy will have people addicted with issues within two blocks. He is thrilled with Makers Quarter and Silo. Thinks the use of this building is inappropriate.

Gary Smith.

With respect to the earthquake fault it only affects the southern most part of the property. The Hive will most likely remain. Ideally this property could be part of a future sale. Open corridors facing the residential adjacent building does not seem like a good idea. This is not simply an affordable project, it is a project for people with issues possible mental issues. There could be residents screaming at each other which will affect the neighboring building. Also people with issues may be going into the outdoor space to smoke. The planter at the front may not be a good idea as the Studio 15 project has an example of an unsuccessful planter area. Does not want that next to Union Square as he sees that those residents will be constantly calling law enforcement. Would suggest applicant considers facing potential issues away from residents. Questions again why that much parking is needed. Why can't the communal space move to the ground floor? If more light and air is desired the architect should bring it from the roof and add some skylights. This project is again a case of who is there first. Quadrupling the current unit count and having a different use may not be the best proposal.

Jonathan Taylor with Wakeland Housing addressed Jeff Smith's comments. He will be meeting with Union Square residents and their HOA board to address any concerns. Father Joe's Villages is proposed as a service provider to some of the units not all of them. Permanent supportive housing is a successful model supported by Housing First. Currently the existing building has 28 beds as part of transitional project. The proposed 43 beds of supportive housing will not be quadrupling the numbers or even doubling. The design of the building will provide an outlet for someone to smoke as the units will be smoke free. The parking is mostly for staff around the clock and during normal working hours. The open corridor idea is about air and light and about the size of the units.

Member Comments

Jon Baker

Not much to contribute on the land use subject as the meeting is focused on design review. He does believe there should be a conversation about the City's focus on transitional housing to a disproportionate level particularly in the downtown area. With regards to the exterior corridors what happens in those spaces is of concern. This will not be a garden apartment building. The front portion slanted roof is addressing the future east elevation of another project. May be worth exploring and more effective to rotate the roof slope 90 degrees to address the street. The project looks visually too busy. The backflow preventer area is not easy to conceal.

Pat Stark. Land Use question not in this group's purview but we can comment on sound and smoke. He questioned if the group is going to hear this from a land use perspective. Brad Richter the group will hear about it during the review of the Site Development permit. He is OK with the overall architecture but thinks the project should take measures to reduce noise and smoke.

Claudia Escala: Also in agreement with the rest of the members that the design of the building should attempt to mitigate any noise and sound issues. Always in favor of activation of the street and creating lively outdoor spaces but in this case if what will be behind the gate will be people smoking then believes the gate may function better if it is as solid as possible. Civic SD noted that the gate needs a certain level of transparency to comply with ground floor transparency requirements. She also suggested that the backflow preventer should be relocated to a space behind the gate so it is not as visible. As far as the planters on the front elevation she concurs with Gary Smith that the planters at Studio 15 are in bad shape and would not like the proposed planter to look the same. She likes the overall composition of the project, the hierarchy of materials and believes the west façade is well balanced with the filigree and texture of the shading devices proposed. Overall believes this is a good project.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.