

Meeting Minutes of the Design Review Board (DRB)
Meeting
“Monday”, January 7, 2019

The Design Review Board (DRB) met in the City Hall Council Chambers on Monday, January 7, 2019 at 5:30 P.M., with the following members in attendance: Ricky Richardson, Mike Henthorn, and Kevin DeMark. Mr. Pitts was absent. Representing the Planning Department were Natalia Rosario, Planner III, and Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant. City Manager Chris Story also attended the meeting.

Roll Call

Mr. Richardson, the Chair, called the meeting to order and stated that notice of this meeting was posted and provided to the media 24 hours in advance as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Richardson said three members of the current four member Board were present, constituting a quorum; and he went over the procedure for the meeting.

The Agenda for the January 7, 2019 meeting was approved by acclimation.

Disposition of the Minutes from the December 4, 2018 Meeting:

The Meeting Minutes from December 4, 2018 were approved by acclimation.

Old Business – None.

New Business:

Public Hearing re Preliminary Review and Commentary regarding proposed new construction and development at 431 East Kennedy Street located in the DT-5 District, from Adam Flynn, McMillan Pazdan Smith, Agent on behalf of the Spartanburg County Foundation, Owner.

Mr. Adam Flynn with McMillan Pazdan Smith came forward on behalf of Spartanburg County Foundation, and he was sworn. He said also present were Troy Hanna, Mary Thomas, and John Bauknight who were also affiliated with the project, which was the The Robert Hett Chapman III Center for Philanthropy. It was an extension of The Spartanburg County Foundation’s Program and Operations inside of Spartanburg and Spartanburg County. Mr. Flynn referenced a slide to orient the Board Members to the proposed location at 431 East Kennedy Street at the former Hardees’ site. Mr. Flynn referenced another slide of the project site and he pointed out the existing County Foundation Building and the proposed project site; and said this relationship was very important to the project and the Foundation, and they wanted the buildings to read as being of the same family sort of as cousins; although this proposed project building would be a little more contemporary and would face the corner entrance to the Foundation. He said they were located in the DT-5 District off of Kennedy Street that had the side yard parking overlay associated with it. He said the front setback was 12’, and interior side setbacks were 24’. The building would be two stories which met the minimum requirement for building height, and the side yard parking would be permitted in the overlay because of the overlay. The frontage build out would be exempt because of the side yard parking overlay, but otherwise it would be 60%.

Mr. Richardson said it did not look like they had any side parking.

Mr. Flynn said they proposed a driveway access off of Kennedy Street.

Mr. Richardson said that was not parking in the side yard; and he asked would the driveway be to the back of the Farmer’s Market area.

Mr. Flynn said yes. He explained to the Board Members they had very conceptual plans at the moment, but the facility would be two stories with a total of over 15,000 square feet, with a corner entry oriented towards the County Foundation Building Home Headquarters building; and they were proposing the driveway to primarily rear yard parking. He said depending on needs for the facility they were considering but not yet guaranteed some sort of amenity off of St. Paul Street toward rear of the site; and right now the conceptual drawing did show something there but it had not been established yet; but it would not be a building. Mr. Flynn showed a slide of the Kennedy Street elevation showing the corner entry with an enlarged window and framed canopy, as well as a general pop-up of the roof assembly there, which he said

it was intended to face the existing Foundation Building, and the angled cut on the entry allowed them to do that directly. He explained and pointed out on one of the building renderings they were using primarily a white brick and a steel or otherwise metal panel for trim and accents inside of the branding components as well as some pieces between the windows. The cornice would either be a panelized system or stucco; and for clarification he said stucco (not EIFS). Mr. Flynn informed the Board Members one thing they would be asking as an exception to the Code would be to be able to have a monument sign off of Kennedy Street that would feature the name of the project The Robert Hett Chapman III Center For Philanthropy; and he hoped they would be allowed to honor one of Spartanburg's great citizens in this manner.

Mr. Richardson asked if they did not allow the monument sign, what type of signage did they allow in the DT-5 District.

Mr. Flynn said typically wall signs or building mounted signs. Mr. Flynn said regarding the final portion of the presentation he did want to show the Board Members some renderings and he showed a slide of the front view looking from The County Foundation to the front of the new proposed building; and a slide from the view from the other angle off Kennedy Street. He pointed out the intent of the facility was to have a space allotted to a partner or an incubator or some other function (that had not yet been defined) that would take about one third of the building footprint. He said it would have its own entrance and canopy, and it would be a minor entrance off Kennedy Street. A slide was shown of the rear of the site showing a conceptual parking layout, which he said would be rear yard accessed from the driveway off the side of the building. He concluded the presentation by showing a slide of the overview from above the County Foundation Building towards the new proposed project area just showing more area in front.

Board Questions:

- Mr. Richardson asked Mr. Flynn about the setbacks in DT-5 regarding setbacks from the sidewalk, the sidewalk size and plantings, etc.
- Mr. Flynn said he believed the requirement was 12' maximum off the sidewalk, and the typical requirement in DT-5 was a 60% frontage build-out, meaning 60% of the frontage be occupied by the building within that zone. He said that was omitted in side yard parking overlay, regarding Kennedy Street. Mr. Flynn said he thought they met the total width of the property at 60%; but he did not think they were 60% inside that zone which he explained on a slide of the building. The front band which he pointed out on the building was at twelve feet from the property line; and he said the intent would be to do a plaza or other deeper element going back toward the entrance (which would allow them to turn the entrance to face the foundation building, and it would also allow them to continue to activate the street frontage even though the building does step back a couple of feet. Mr. Flynn said it was a 3 ½' setback from one plain to the other plain that he pointed out on the slide. On the side yard setbacks they were 14' from the property line as the building was currently; and he said they were over the 24' required on the other side yard, but that was primarily to allow a space to put in the driveway. He thought the City's standard for two lanes was 24'; and they were assuming based on the side yard parking and the driveway requirements the Board would be amiable to more than 24' because it was off of that setback. Mr. Flynn said that would also allow them to screen the back of the Farmer's building property because that was the functional back of that building.
- Mr. Richardson asked was there any reason the building shouldn't move closer to the street.
- Mr. Flynn said one of the reasons would be to allow space for a monument sign; although if they were to push the building closer there might be opportunity to somewhat integrate that sign into the front of the facility and make it more of an extension of the building (which may also alleviate the exception for a monument sign) if they were to push it closer to the street.
- Mr. Richardson said he was just thinking out loud about the continued development of Kennedy Street and what they really want it to look like within the DT-5 area. He said as you drive down Kennedy Street they already had institutions, whether they be churches, library, or the foundation building, that he wondered as they tried to activate the street; that he was trying to get it straight in his mind what they wanted 50 years going forward about how they wanted Kennedy Street to feel like, and that was the only reason he was asking.

- Mr. Flynn said that was certainly something they could discuss with the Foundation.
- Mr. Richardson asked Mr. Hanna if he knew how far back the existing building was now from the sidewalk and were there plantings between the sidewalk and the front of the building now.
- Mr. Hanna explained there were trees like they were proposing on tonight's plans.
- Mr. Henthorn explained they were within the requirements.
- Mr. Richardson said he was not talking about the proposed property specifically, as he was about the entire continuance of Kennedy Street, and what it could in fact be; and as they take these steps – how did they want it to line up.
- Mr. DeMark asked Mr. Flynn was there a grade change across the site.
- Mr. Flynn said it was fairly minimal; that it was flat for the area where the building would be placed, that it did slope a little bit down as you got closer to St. Paul Street. They had a survey done which he thought had just been completed; and he said he would be surprised if there was more than 5 or 6 feet in grade change.
- Mr. DeMark asked would the roof height or parapet block any HVAC or anything like that.
- Mr. Flynn said it would provide them opportunity to screen any mechanical type units either inside or behind it, and that in future presentations they would be happy to show that.
- Mr. Richardson felt it was a great looking building and was sure the materials would be terrific, and it would be a great project for the Foundation and the City.
- Mr. Richardson said he knew tonight was conceptual; but he asked Mr. Flynn regarding the monument sign that he did not know if what was in the rendering was what he was talking about, because the sign in the rendering faced the street, where as a monument sign generally was perpendicular and not horizontal.
- Mr. Flynn said they would like for the monument sign to face the street, and they would welcome any comments or suggestions as to the placement of that.
- Mr. Richardson said he did not have anything to say about it at the moment; that he would like for them to go back and look at the site and look up and down Kennedy Street again and think about the placement of the proposed building because he thought this building would be there a long time and he thought the placement of it would be very important. He said again there were already so much on the street that would not come up to the street; and he thought they all needed to think about that.
- Mr. Henthorn wondered whether or not Kennedy Street would ever be widened. He said what bothered him was if there was any chance it would be widened at some point and if they had buildings put too close to the street, it would be a problem regarding not having enough sidewalk space. He said it was one thing if you already had a completely built out street. He said that had already been a problem in a few areas around town, and mentioned the Montgomery Building; and he said that was what would worry him. Mr. Henthorn did feel Mr. Richardson's point about what was going to happen in the future was a good one, however.
- Mr. Richardson said it certainly was a street that begged to be widened because of what was there.

Mr. Richardson asked if anyone had any more questions. There were none.

Mr. Richardson opened the public hearing; and he asked if anyone was present who wished to speak in favor of the request or against the request, or if anyone had any questions to come forward. No one came forward. Mr. Richardson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Richardson thanked Mr. Flynn and everyone for coming; and said the Board Members would think about their signage and building placement; and he said he was sure their materials and all were fine, and they would look forward to seeing them at a future meeting.

continued

Cambria Package only for Review/Commentary regarding Design Progress – (No votes to be taken) regarding proposed New Construction at 179 N. Church Street of Cambria Hotel, TMS#7-12-18-002.00; 003.00; and 014.00 located in the DT-6 District, from Choli Aronson, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Overcash Demitt Architects (ODA), Agent on behalf of Suraj Mistry, Owner/Developer.

Ms. Choli Aronson of 2010 S. Tryon St., Charlotte, NC, OverCash Demitt Architects (ODA) came forward, along with Mr. Suraj Mistry, Owner and were sworn. Ms. Aronson said she had a presentation for them tonight; and to give the Board Members a site update regarding a public comment that had been made at the previous meeting regarding anything being buried on part of the site; she wanted them to know they were working on that; and she felt public comments were very helpful, and she wanted to commend the Commission on those.

Mr. Richardson asked Ms. Aronson if there was any credibility to the public comment.

Ms. Aronson said it appeared there was a buried basement under part of the site; and they had filed an FOIA Request which they were waiting to receive.

Mr. Richardson asked what about the easements, etc.

Ms. Aronson said that was what they were waiting to find out as well regarding the FOIA Request. She said they had come back tonight with a presentation trying to address the comments from the Board at the previous meeting regarding reduced area of orange on the building, as well as bringing the tone of the orange down to more of a brick tone. She said she would go through the presentation first, and then she had some sample boards as well as additional items they would like to talk about. Ms. Aronson showed an aerial slide of the site, and pointed out where she thought there might be some buried basement pieces.

Mr. DeMark asked if that was under part of the parking lot.

Mr. Mistry said it may be a little further up.

Ms. Aronson said she knew it did and was also on a part of the parking lot. She said from what they had been able to find out so far, they had taken the building down to the basement level and then filled in with compacted grade but had left the walls and foundation in place. They believed it was to protect some communication lines and to help protect the building next door. She said it may cause them a few issues but they would need to come in and stabilize whatever was there.

Mr. Mistry said they had been in communication with the City and they did not foresee any major issues with it.

Ms. Aronson showed a slide of the existing site conditions to remind everyone of what the site looked like and what was adjacent to it. A slide of the proposed site plan was shown; and she said they had added a good bit of landscape to the front regarding street trees which were Metal Oaks and also proposed low evergreen shrubs to help conceal the parking area to the best of their ability without blocking the site triangle. She explained the proposed trees would have minimum impact to the site triangle coming out on to East Saint John Street; and she said it was the maximum landscaping they could provide.

Mr. Richardson asked her if they thought it would be DOT approved.

Ms. Aronson explained she thought that it would be.

Mr. Richardson asked what was the problem with the street trees in the last proposal.

Ms. Aronson did not think they had shown any then, because really DOT would prefer not to have them at all. Since the last meeting they had added what they felt would be allowed by DOT. She showed a slide of the proposed floor plan, and said nothing had changed; but she did want to point out the outside cafe seating area and their sidewalk area that would try and help engage the public.

Mr. Richardson referenced the slide and asked was that the curb on the left hand side; and if so what was the approximate measurement from the building to the curb.

Ms. Aronson said seventeen feet if they were counting from underneath the covered area, or it would be eighteen feet from an inset piece she referenced and she said they were providing a very wide sidewalk that would really help encourage gathering. She showed a slide of the upstairs area and of the suite they

had put on the prominent corner; and slides of pops of colors they had seen throughout the downtown that were sort of their precedents, as well as the murals area she said they had talked about at the last meeting for where they would have the height transition in the back parking lot; which they would need to come back to the Board with at a later time. She showed some Cambria precedent colors, and said they did have some very strong colors. She showed a copy of the revised proposal and said they had taken the orange highlights down in tone since the last meeting, leaving the orange up and over which was the signature Cambria. They had also made sure that all the orange areas that were inset were more recessed into the building, but would still provide some differentiation along a large façade; however they would be somewhat concealed. The very large stairs that had orange before, they had changed to gray. She showed the area where they had talked about perhaps having a mural, which was conceptual.

Mr. Mistry said it was conceptual and they had talked about having a local artist come in and show some renderings regarding the mural if the Board would prefer, and that it could even be more neutral or conservative if that was preferred.

Ms. Aronson showed a slide of some of the elevations and said they were looking at 12% orange on one façade, and 20% on another façade. She showed a slide of the courtyard interiors that transitioned into a lower brick base and the EIFS material that would end up being treated like the stucco they were proposing for the street sides. They would like to continue with the patterning on the stairwell. At this time Ms. Aronson took the sample board up to the podium to show the Board Members the further detailing they were proposing with the brick, sort of the earthen jug color or orange they had taken down in tone, as well as the other colors. She showed them a stucco sample of just the reveals, and how that would be just a nice clean line.

Mr. Mistry informed the Board Members they had took the Board's suggestion about the color, and had the architectural team provide some renderings, and they took them and shared them with the ownership group and other locals, and came back with what they had brought tonight as the color being most desired and liked, and they had dulled it down a lot. They also had discussed it with Cambria and their brand standards, and he said they needed to keep the earthy toned down color.

Mr. Richardson said he appreciated them working with the Board Members on that, and to him it was a lot better than before.

Mr. Henthorn asked about the orange stucco wall that came down in the middle – where did it hit on the ground floor, or how did it transition to what was down below it.

Ms. Aronson pointed out on the slide and explained it would come down at the back of the portico or covered walkway.

Mr. Henthorn said those were things that were important.

Ms. Aronson said there would be a brick water table of that darker colored brick that transitioned across.

Mr. Henthorn said they did not want it to look too thin; and right now the way it was transitioning to the ground floor did not look quite right to him. He said whether it was the brick going up further, that it may be a continuation of the portico or something.

Ms. Aronson said they could certainly take the dark band and the brick below all the way across to the other side of the windows to make it feel more grounded; and that it was a very good comment.

Mr. DeMark mentioned adjacent BTC building, and said there would be an exposed façade as you came down the street, and asked had that been addressed in their design.

Ms. Aronson explained they had a wider portion of the walkway back and this was where that seating would be in front of that, and they were trying to discourage the common person from walking all the way down that alley back to the parking; and they were trying to create that area as more of a terminus where they wanted their more public area and regarding public/private transition.

Mr. DeMark asked if the building went directly to the lot line or did it set back.

Ms. Aronson explained it set back.

Mr. Henthorn asked how far the canopies would extend beyond the face of the building.

Ms. Aronson said 4 feet.

Mr. Richardson asked if the canopy on Saint John Street side go all the way down, because it appeared in the drawings that it had a break.

Ms. Aronson said the canopy on the Saint John Street side was dotted in on the plans, and was the one that you see with the columns underneath it; and she pointed to where they were on the slide.

Mr. Henthorn said he thought the columns were at the face of the building.

Ms. Aronson said they were not at the face of the building; and she explained again where they were located at. She said the other side was not dotted in on the plans.

Mr. Henthorn said to him in the renderings the canopies looked like they were hung from the exterior of the building.

Ms. Aronson said the one on Church Street was cantilevered and hung, but the one on East Saint John Street would mimic that look, but it had columns supporting it.

Mr. Henthorn said it did not look that way.

Ms. Aronson said it did stick out 4 feet, and it was sort of a mixed representation there. She said it would structurally be supported by columns.

Mr. DeMark said it seemed like there was going to be a lot of concrete or a lot of plaza and no landscaping.

Ms. Aronson said that was predominantly because it was a DOT road, and there was not a lot of landscaping that was allowed for them there because of the site triangle. She explained in the rendering there was planter boxes they could help to solve that with but they also had the drop off directly in front of that side.

Mr. DeMark asked about the other side; and did it front on Church Street.

Ms. Aronson showed where their primary drop off was; and said it was her understanding that both of the roads were DOT roads and so they had the same difficulty with both of them and the same site lines. She showed where they had landscaping up against the building, and she showed where they could have planters, with the minimal street trees they had shown. Ms. Aronson said what they had been trying to do was to keep what landscaping they had on their property close to the building.

Mr. DeMark said he guessed he was worried about the guests, if it was pouring down rain like it had been doing for the last twelve weeks in Spartanburg, and there was no way to get a lot of luggage into the hotel without getting wet, and a guest would be carrying all their luggage through the parking lot and then to the covered corridor at the front door.

Mr. Mistry said the intention would be if you had a significant amount of luggage you would come up and unload your luggage and then go around to the back. He explained that was just the way it was at a lot of hotels across the country.

Mr. Richardson asked did any other Board Members want to comment on the color.

Mr. Henthorn felt the color was better.

Mr. DeMark said he thought it was a lot better now that it had been toned down, and felt the rendering was always dangerous because it was not always the same; but he liked it now and was not offended by it.

Mr. Richardson felt the color was better as well, and felt they had shown some real improvements in the project. He knew the landscaping was a work in progress.

Mr. DeMark said he would like to see when they came back what the air conditioning grille would look like and that detail.

Ms. Aronson explained it was detailed in these plans, and she knew it was hard for them to see; but it was the painted gray metal at the bottom of the windows painted to match the existing stucco.

Mr. DeMark asked was it the width of the air conditioner.

Ms. Aronson said it was the entire width of the window to try and make it feel like it was more of a decorative element on the window, and they were trying to make it look like part of the window.

Mr. Henthorn asked could they do a blow up of it when they came back so they could see it better.

Ms. Aronson said they would.

Mr. Richardson asked did the Board have any more questions at this point. There were no more questions.

Mr. Richardson thanked them for doing their homework and said this discussion had been very helpful.

Staff Announcements:

Ms. Roland said there was still the one Board Member Vacancy.

There was a gentleman in the audience at this point of the meeting that had his hand raised; and Mr. Richardson asked if he had a question.

The gentleman who did not identify himself said he wanted to thank the Board Members for working so hard on this project; and he had been to all of the meetings so far regarding this project; and felt this would be a great project for this corner, and that he really did like the color.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 6:25 P.M.



Ricky Richardson, Chair

Edited by Julie Roland, Secretary