

**Minutes of the**

**Development Review Commission**

**January 23, 2018**

1

**Minutes of the regular hearing of the Development Review Commission, of the City of Tempe, which was held in Council Chambers,**

**31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Present: | City Staff Present: |
| Chair Linda Spears | Ryan Levesque, Comm. Dev. Deputy Director – Planning |
| Vice Chair David Lyon | Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner |
| Commissioner Michael DiDomenico | Obenia Kingsby, Planner II |
| Commissioner Thomas Brown | Cynthia Jarrad, Administrative Assistant |
| Commissioner Philip Amorosi |  |
| Commissioner Andrew Johnson |  |
| Alternate Commissioner Nicholas Labadie |  |
| Absent: |  |
| Commissioner Scott Sumners |  |
| Alternate Commissioner Barbara Lloyd |  |
| Alternate Commissioner Angela Thornton |  |

This item was moved to the February 13, 2018 regular meeting of the Commission and a revised agenda was published prior to date of the January 23, 2018 meeting. Therefore, no action was taken by the Commission for this item.

1. Request for a Development Plan Review consisting of two, two-story office buildings totaling 20,000 square feet for **SUPIMA AGAVE (PL170360),** located at 1710 West Ranch Road. The applicant is RSP Architects.

Hearing convened at 6:01p.m. and was called to order by Chair Linda Spears.

**Consideration of Meeting Minutes:**

The following Agenda items #1 and #2 were considered together.

1. Study Session Minutes, January 9, 2018
2. Regular Meeting Minutes, January 9, 2018

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner DiDomenico to approve Study Session and Regular Meeting minutes for January 9, 2018. Motion seconded by Commissioner Amorosi.

**VOTE:** Motion passes, 7 - 0.

1. Request for a Use Permit Standard to reduce the west side setback from 10 feet to 8 feet and a Development Plan Review for a new 5-unit, attached single-family development for **UNIVERSITY LOFTS (PL170395)**, located at 800 West University Drive. The applicant is Tricor.

**PRESENTATION BY STAFF:**

Mr. Obenia Kingsby, Planner II, gave a short presentation. He stated University Lofts is a new 5-unit, attached, single-family development. The proposed development will consist of two three-story buildings, one building containing three units and the other building containing two units. Each unit will have a two-car garage at ground level, with bedrooms and livable areas above. The applicant has also proposed two surface parallel parking spaces for guests and landscape along the street frontage and the entire perimeter of the site. Staff is recommending approval of the project, subject to conditions.

**PRESENTATION BY APPLICANT:**

Mr. Mitchell Rotta of Tricor gave a presentation. He stated this site had been purchased in July, it is uniquely positioned in relation to downtown and a they enjoyed the challenge of making this small site work. He pointed out that it will be a great addition to the City, this parcel faces University and has been vacant for a long time. The applicant has not maximized density, as they did not feel it was necessary to do so. These units will be a for-sale product. The project meets all City requirements with the exception of the west-side setback. He stated that those involved are proud of the way the design has come together to produce a great, quality product, and they hope the Commission members agree.

Commissioner Brown inquired if the building directly behind the project would also have a ten-foot setback. It is a three-story apartment building, and he thinks it looks closer than ten feet. Mr. Rotta responded that he thought it was ten feet, per ordinance. Commissioner Brown then asked if there would be security lighting near the sidewalks at night. Mr. Rotta stated there are lights at each front door for safety and clear walkways. Commissioner Brown stated the first-floor bedroom does not seem feasible as a bedroom, as the frosted glass for privacy does not seem a good option, also that overall, the configuration of the site makes it too tight, he does not believe people will want to purchase units in this configuration. Mr. Rotta responded that the downstairs bedroom would be marketed as office space, and they foresee first time homebuyers with small children as potential buyers. Commissioner Brown stated there may be students living there, and there are fifteen bedrooms and only ten parking spaces. These are three-bedroom units, so each may house three people with three cars, there is simply not enough parking. Ms. Dasgupta clarified to the Commission that since this is a single-family development proposed, the Tempe Zoning and Development Code (ZDC) requires two parking spaces per unit and the applicant is also providing additional guest parking. Commissioner Brown then asked about trash bin placement, Mr. Rotta responded that there are two enclosures provided for the bins, one off the patio and one in the garage. The patios are four feet deep.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Michael Hineman of Tempe stated he is the owner of the adjacent site. He does not object to the project overall, but opposes the setback variance in general. He believes that with more surrounding development, the additional setback could be a problem for fire safety conditions, sight line safety, etc. He also voiced concerned over whether the sewer connection would be accessible, as there may not be an easement to access the sewer if it is connected on the north side. There must be an easement for sewer maintenance or repairs.

**APPLICANT RESPONSE:**

Mr. Rotta responded to these questions, saying that the sightlines meet the requirements, and they have also tiered back the site walls. In regard to the question about the sewer line, there is an easement on the northwest side, which has been there for about twelve years, which can be utilized to access the sewer. He stated that this has been reviewed by the City as well.

Chair Spears asked staff for clarification of the ingress/egress sightlines and sewer questions. Ms. Dasgupta stated that this project, as all projects, has gone through the inter-departmental review process, and each of these items, including fire safety, traffic, sewer, etc, have been addressed and approved.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Brown inquired of the other Commissioners if they had concerns over the small balconies and narrow driveways, as he thinks they are some of the smallest and tightest the Commission has seen in townhomes. Chair Spears responded that she believes this is what they will see on these small infill lots. Commissioner Brown stated he still thought the site was too snug, and would like to see larger balconies, etc. Chair Spears stated that while they are awaiting guidelines from the Urban Core Master Plan, they do not have guidelines for these types of issues.

Commissioner Amorosi stated he appreciated Staff’s conditions, it had been a rather stark building and he appreciated Staff’s input. He agrees the balconies are too small, but they cannot change that if it meets Code.

Commissioner Labadie stated he is not as concerned about the balconies, as he is quite sure that 99% of the traffic will go in and out of the garages, not from the front doors, as most people do in their homes. He agrees with Chair Spears on small, tight infill spaces. He believes there will be people happy to be living in these units.

Vice Chair Lyon added that he shares the concern about vehicular traffic, backing out of the provided spaces will be very demanding on the driver. He also has concerns about the two guest parking spaces, since they are parallel parking, it will be difficult to come and go from them in a safe and convenient fashion. This would not preclude him from supporting the project, but he does believe it would be very demanding on the driver.

**MOTION**: Motion made by Commissioner Johnson to approve a Use Permit Standard to reduce the west side setback from 10 feet to 8 feet and a Development Plan Review for a new 5-unit, attached single-family development for **UNIVERSITY LOFTS (PL170395)**, located at 800 West University Drive. Motion seconded by Commissioner Labadie.

**VOTE:** Motion passes, 6-1, with Commissioner Brown in the dissent

1. Request for a Planned Area of Development Overlay and Development Plan Review for a new 22-story building containing a hotel with 186 rooms, 60 dwelling units (condominiums) and commercial for **THE HAYDEN (PL170281)**, located at 580 South College Avenue. The applicant is Gammage and Burnham, PLC.

**PRESENTATION BY STAFF:**

Mr. Obenia Kingsby, Planner II, gave a brief presentation**.** This proposed project would be at the northwest corner of College Avenue and 6th Street, and consist of a new22-story building containing a hotel with sixty condominium dwelling units above. The density is 150 dwelling units per acre, maximum height would be 271 feet. Levels 2 through 5 would house the parking garage, levels 6 through 15 would house the hotel, and levels 16 through 21 would house the condominiums. At ground level is the lobby and commercial space; there will be an amenity deck on the 22nd floor, and there is also a below grade level for storage and mechanical equipment. There is more parking provided than the minimum required. Staff is recommending approval of the project, and requests that Condition #3 under Development Plan Review be removed, as the applicant has received approval of the Traffic Impact Study, so this condition has been met.

**PRESENTATION BY APPLICANT:**

Ms. Manjula Vaz of Gammage and Burnham, PLC gave a brief presentation. She stated she is here tonight on behalf of CFT Ventures and Macdonald Development Corporation. CFT Ventures will develop the hotel, and Macdonald Corporation will develop the condominiums. The plan is to maintain the pedestrian environment on College, there is no ingress from College, it will be from 6th Street. She shared some images of the surrounding area and stated the height of this building would be similar to others in the area. They have met the parking requirements and bicycle parking requirements. This hotel will be “The Unbound Collection” by Hyatt, which is a high-end, luxury boutique hotel.

Mr. Adam Valente with Davis Architecture of Tempe then discussed more specifics of the project. He emphasized how the project activates the corner and invites the pedestrian traffic that comes from just north of this location, the nearby light rail station at the Transit Center and from University Drive. They have utilized glass on the first and second floors and added a dining patio and cafe at that corner. The project has four floors of parking available. He shared floor plans of the hotel and condominiums, stating the 6th floor would contain meeting space. There are a total of 186 keys for the hotel. The 60 planned condominiums are designed as two-bedroom units, but may be combined for larger units if desired. The rooftop contains a fitness center, pool, and outdoor lounge area with an indoor/outdoor bar. He pointed out the design features, the art box, and the super-frame of the building, textures and materials.

Commissioner DiDomenico inquired if the element of overhang at the patio level, above the sidewalk, encroaches into the easement or is it within the property line. Mr. Valente replied that it does encroach, and they have worked out an agreement with the City for that. Ms. Dasgupta confirmed that this has been approved by City engineers.

Commissioner Amorosi inquired what size the balconies are and Mr. Valente responded that they are 6 feet. Commissioner Amorosi asked if the one parking space on 6th Street could be an electric charging station space in the interest of sustainability. Ms. Vaz responded that they would be happy to investigate this, and they are having conversations with the City, as the parking space is City property. Commissioner Amorosi then inquired about the west side elevation, it is very plain in comparison to the other sides, and the eye is drawn to it with the dark grey super-frame. Mr. Valente replied that it is at the property line, and designed with the intent there will be another building in close proximity on that side, in the future. Until that happens, they are considering some temporary graphics on that side.

Vice Chair Lyon stated he is concerned with the parking garage ramps, and vehicles spiraling up or down. He likes the idea of mixed use with parking inside the building, but in this case, with such a small footprint, it seems to be problematic with such a tight loop. Mr. Valente responded that this is similar to other urban areas with buildings with small footprints, and this garage design meets the minimum requirements and exceeds them in some areas. Vice Chair Lyon also asked about the shared elevators for hotel and condominium use. Mr. Valente responded that those will be controlled by key cards.

Commissioner Johnson stated there was a good possibility that condominium owners may have electric cars, and inquired if charging stations were planned for this project. Mr. Valente responded that this is not currently in the plans, but they are considering this and other sustainability features and evaluating cost, etc. He pointed out that technology is changing quickly, and chargers are different for different vehicles, which presents a problem. Commissioner Johnson also inquired about the configuration of the rooftop lounge, and if the lounge chairs are shaded. Mr. Valente responded that this area will be partially shaded by the super-frame.

Commissioner Labadie asked the dimensions of the metal screening. Mr. Valente responded that the screens are 7 feet wide and 10 feet tall. Commissioner Labadie asked if other options were considered, and Mr. Valente stated that they were, but this metal screening was the final choice, as they felt it added textural elements and was a good “fit” for the building, it was an overall aesthetic design decision. Commissioner Labadie then stated that he is very happy with this project overall except for these panels, he believes they detract from the design aesthetic rather than add to it. A pedestrian looking up at the building will see nothing but metal screening, very stark and industrial.

Commissioner DiDomenico inquired, if someone is across the street, will they see cars in the parking garage behind the screening. Mr. Valente responded that one would not see cars, they may only get an idea of the ramping behind the screens, but they would not see vehicles.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Philip Yates stated he believes 102 parking spaces is not enough for this project, and what about visitor parking? He also believes that electric car parking/charging stations would be a good idea. He stated the balconies are not very large, and he wonders why they are not utilizing solar power. He believes these streets are too small for such large structures, especially with downtown events taking place and fire and police services.

Chair Spears asked staff to reiterate the quantity of parking. Mr. Kingsby stated that the applicant is providing more than the required minimum, considering the new downtown parking standards, which were recently reduced by ordinance. Chair Spears asked if there is public parking, as an example if someone stopped to have lunch. Ms. Vaz responded that there would be paid parking or parking on the street in this instance.

**APPLICANT RESPONSE:**

None.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Brown stated he likes the proportions of this project, it is very nice, and he will support.

Commissioner DiDomenico stated that he also likes how the building looks, and appreciates the interest, textures, mixed use, activation of the street, etc. There is a lot to like here, even though there is quite a bit of density in a small footprint. However, the Council has not as yet given direction as to height and setbacks, so he will support.

Vice Chair Lyon stated he does like the look of the building, but he does not think it looks fabulous or high-end. He believes it looks like a committee put it together, with no clear vision of what it should or could be. The super-frame is nice, but that is about it. However, his larger concern is the small site and such a huge tall building, with this parking. The parking situation gives him pause, and he does not believe condominium owners will be happy with it either. He may not support.

Chair Spears added that she agreed with Vice Chair Lyon that if she were living there, she would not be happy with the parking situation. She also is not a fan of the screening on the garage, she urged the applicant to consider changing that.

.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Brown to approve a Planned Area of Development Overlay and Development Plan Review for a new 22-story building containing a hotel with 186 rooms, 60 dwelling units (condominiums) and commercial for **THE HAYDEN (PL170281)**, located at 580 South College Avenue. Motion seconded by Commissioner Johnson.

**VOTE:** Motion passes, 6-1, with Vice Chair Lyon in the dissent.

**STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Ms. Dasgupta reviewed the agenda for the February 13, 2018 Development Review Commission meeting. There are currently five items on the agenda.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm.**

Prepared by: Cynthia Jarrad



Reviewed by:

Suparna Dasgupta

Principal Planner, Community Development Planning