THOMAS
architecture studios

August 3, 2021

Design Review Board
City of Olympia
PO Box 1967
Olympia, WA 98507-1967

Re: 401 Union Project Narrative

The following shall serve as the application narrative for the 401 Union project.

401 Union is a new seventy unit, four story, multifamily residential development located along Union Ave in downtown Olympia. The development includes one levels of onsite structured parking for fifty vehicles. A 9'-6" right-of-way dedication along the Union Ave frontage and a 6'-0" right-of-way dedication along the Jefferson St frontage will provide wide sidewalks, landscaping, on-street parking and bike lanes.

The surrounding neighborhood is in transition and comprised of older residential and newer commercial service buildings. The proposed building materials mirror the palette provided by nearby structures through a contemporary use of brick, fiber cement, patinated copper, articulated fenestration elements, metal roofing, and painted metal canopies and railings.

The building is sited with frontage occurring along the south side of Union Ave, between Adams St and Jefferson St. The main entrance and lobby is at the mid-block of Union Ave and shall be defined by a change in building materials and detailing through the use of storefront glass and expansive entry canopy. The ten two-story loft units are provided with individual ground floor access and private patios and canopies along the remaining length of the Union Ave frontage. The building has been set back from the original northerly property line, along Union Ave, to provide the required right of way dedication for the site and room for enhanced pedestrian amenities, including trash receptacle, lighting, street trees, bike racks, and a pedestrian bench. The development includes structured parking behind and below the building which provides fifty stalls. The main parking area is accessed off of Jefferson Street and two back-in stalls shall access from Adams Street.

The base of the building is clearly defined by the layering of window glazing, canopies, and patio railings. The fenestration provides articulation between the vertical brick siding and is reinforced by the modulation of the roof dormers at the top. All elements combine, creating a vertical and horizontal rhythm, providing a human scale along all street fronts.

Lighting is provided at all entries and shall include wall sconces as well as lighting in the overhead canopy at the building main entry. Additional lighting will be provided around the façade of the building to highlight architectural elements. The goal of the development's lighting is to provide a safe and well-defined nighttime pedestrian environment.

The building presents as a brick structure in both material and detailing to the public sides of the site and significantly wraps this detailing at the corners along the east and west building elevations, and immediate building facade massing to the south. The south facades, which are not directly visible from the public way, are faced in fiber cement panels with similar window scale, type, mullion pattern, and are detailed to relate to the overall building.

Building Program:

- The first floor shall consist of the building entry, residential loft units with mezzanine level, and structured parking dug into the uphill side of the sloped site. Vehicle parking is located behind the residential units, screened from the view on Union Avenue. The loft units shall be set back from the property line and be provided with a privacy buffer of raised patios.
- The second floor shall consist of a mix of studios, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom residential units, private decks, and a common courtyard terrace to be shared by all tenants.
- The third floor shall consist of a mix of studios, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom units.
- The fourth floor shall consist of a mix of studios, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom units. The top floor shall be defined by a mansard roof and modulating dormer elements fronting on Union Avenue, Jefferson Street, and Adams Street.

Site and Parking Program:
The development includes structured parking behind and below the building. The main parking area is accessed off of Jefferson Street and two back-in stalls are accessed from Adams Street. A total of fifty stalls shall be provided.

- The building height shall be kept below 65 feet (above average grade plane) and meet the required limits of the State Capitol Height District.
- The 50-stall parking structure (including two accessible stalls) shall have a main parking area of(48) stalls with access on Jefferson Street and (2) back-in stalls accessed from Adams Street.
- The property consists of five existing lots containing a single-family residence, small scale office (converted residence), a small apartment building, and a bed & breakfast business; all existing structures shall be removed.
- Proposed utility (water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater overflow) access shall be required from Adams Street (possibly Union Avenue).

The landscaping around the building has been designed to include plants that are compatible with their location within the site, and—once mature—their natural size will be well-suited to the planting location. Plantings on the second-floor terrace have been provided to reinforce privacy and soften the hard surfaces.

Respectfully Submitted,

M. Wade Stine
Project Manager