

CITY OF OLYMPIA
Olympia Design Review Board

CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
August 10, 2017

Case Number: 17-2528

Applicant: Views on 5th LLC

Representative: Ken Brogan

Site Address: 410 5th Avenue SW

Project Description: A multi-family and commercial complex intended to provide 138 new residences and a mix of ground floor restaurant and retail spaces. Project will include demolition of the onsite single story structure, reuse of the existing tower and construction of two new mixed use buildings. Onsite parking and landscaping will be provided.

Zoning District: Urban Waterfront - Housing

Comprehensive Plan: Residential Mixed Use

Scenic Vista: Views of Capitol Lake and the Capitol Building

Critical Areas: FEMA Flood Zone and within 1,000' of a priority habitat species

SEPA Determination: A SEPA Determination has not yet been made.

Notification: Notice of the Neighborhood Meeting, Application, and Design Review Board Meeting was posted on the site and mailed to the adjacent property owners within 300 feet of the project, to the Recognized Neighborhood Associations in the area, and to Parties of Record on June 21, 2017 and again on July 7, 2017.

Board Responsibility: The Design Review Board will review the project to determine compliance with the applicable design criteria and make a recommendation to the Site Plan Review Committee, who will make a recommendation to the Hearings Examiner for the City regarding the adequacy of the projects design. Conceptual Design Review involves the major design elements of a project as they relate to the general citywide design criteria and the specific design criteria of the design district. In situations where explicit compliance is not feasible, the Olympia Municipal Code encourages creative solutions in meeting the requirements as long as these design solutions are equal to, or better than, the guidelines listed in the requirement sections.

Site Plan Review Committee Comments: The proposal is currently under review by the Site Plan Review Committee; no recommendation will be made until after that review is complete.

Staff Provided Assistance:

City staff evaluated the project based on the applicable design standards and prepared a variety of support materials including design review checklists to assist in the Board's assessment of this project (see attached). This report focuses on issues that staff recommends for Board discussion. Suggested conditions of approval have been provided for the Board's review and recommendation.

Project Context / Existing Site Conditions:

The site includes two parcels occupying the majority of the block, bound by 4th Avenue, Simmons Street, 5th Avenue, and Sylvester Street. The surface parking lot occupying the remainder of the block is not a component of the project. There are currently two unoccupied structures onsite, a 9-story tower located on 5th Avenue, and a single story structure located on 4th Avenue. The single story structure will be demolished and the tower is to be reused and remodeled.

The site is subject to a 35' height limit, however the existing tower was constructed prior to this height limit and is considered a legally established nonconformity in terms of height. Pursuant to the nonconforming provisions OMC 18.37.040, developments may be enlarged or remodeled provided the alterations do not further contribute to the nonconformity. This means that the tower can be reused provided the tower height is not increased. Additionally, the tower can be enlarged provided the addition does not exceed the 35' height limit. Pursuant to OMC 18.06.100 roof structures such as housing for elevators, ventilation, parapet walls, etc. can extend above the height limit by up to 18'. While the height standard is a zoning issue to be addressed by the Hearing Examiner, the building design includes several features that relate to building height.

This site has been vacant for more than a decade. The Design Review Board reviewed and recommended approval of a hotel on this site in 2010. Building permits were issued to perform a variety of retrofits in relationship to that project, however due to changes in the economy and market demands, the project was not completed. Now a new application has been received by the City to construct two new 3-story structures and make significant modifications to the existing tower to allow for a mixed-use development on this site.

Review of Design Criteria:

This project is required to comply with both the Basic Commercial Design Criteria (OMC 18.110) and the Downtown Design Criteria (OMC 18.120). Staff reviewed the project for compliance with these criteria and has provided a detailed analysis within the attached "Design Review Checklists". The checklists identify areas of compliance and deficiency. Recommended conditions of approval are provided for the Board's consideration.

As outlined in the checklists, staff has found that the project design adequately addresses the criteria within the code. There are a few issues that staff suggests the Board pay specific attention to, as follows:

Views from the Public Right-of-Way:

Two applicable design criteria address views and the preservation of views as prescribed on the Scenic Vista Overlay Zoning Map. This map identifies two views that are to be maintained from the public right-of-way on 5th Avenue. The views are of the Capitol Building and Capitol Lake. The design criteria provide the language of how the views from the right-of-way are to be maintained:

- Basic Commercial, 18.110.160, requires the development to incorporate views for a significant number of people into the site design from the public right-of-way and shall provide lookouts, viewpoints, or view corridors so that visual access to existing outstanding scenic vistas are maintained.
- Commercial Design Criteria Downtown, 18.120.030, requires the applicant to consider their impact on views of the Capitol Building and Capitol Lake from 5th Avenue. The development must reserve a reasonable portion of such views of features for a significant number of people from the rights-of-way.

The applicant has provided a View Analysis to address both of these requirements. The View Analysis primarily focuses on views from 4th Avenue facing Capitol Lake and provides a comparison of the current views with the existing development and how those views are likely to be impacted by the project proposal.

The analysis contends that views of both the Capitol Building and Capitol Lake from the right-of-ways surrounding this site will not be significantly altered or be further obstructed by this project proposal. The existing views seen from the right-of-way will be maintained for a significant number of people. The View Analysis indicates that a large covered seating area is proposed at the corner of Sylvester and 5th which will provide opportunities for public viewing of Capitol Lake and Capitol Building. It is unclear however if this area is intended to be used for the restaurant or for the general public. Several other benches and public spaces are provided in various locations surrounding the site.

Pedestrian / Vehicular Circulation:

The project proposal includes the use of a woonerf (pedestrian oriented alley) running east/west and a pedestrian pathway running north/south which will provide the bulk of the vehicular and pedestrian circulation onsite. These features intend to enhance the grid system, and are in addition to the roads and sidewalks surrounding the site. As the woonerf is not a standard feature, careful consideration of the pedestrian and vehicular interactions should be paid. The following design criteria address pedestrian connections through the site and to adjoining streets, trails, and properties as applicable:

18.110.030 – Connections

18.110.050 – Pedestrian Amenities

18.120.110 – Pedestrian Access from Parking Areas

Staff has minor concerns about the areas in which vehicles and pedestrians will simultaneously occupy. The following conditions intend to ensure that pedestrians and safe access to the buildings through the woonerf will be provided:

- Textured pavement within the woonerf may be too busy once the necessary painted pavement markings for directional traffic movement, parking stalls, and assessable routes are installed. Staff suggests asking the applicant to consider revising the textured patterns to emphasize these safety and circulation features and provide plans that show all markings.
- More information about the mid-block crossing should be provided. The stamped concrete adjacent to Sylvester Street does not align with the park pathway and does not show a crosswalk for pedestrian traffic to safely cross the road. It is unclear if a mid-block crossing at the woonerf is proposed, if so the design should be provided on plans.
- The dual use of the woonerf for vehicular and pedestrian traffic needs more explanation to ensure pedestrian safety. Staff encourages the Board to evaluate directional signage for vehicles and any proposed signage that emphasizes that pedestrians have the right of way.

Bike Parking Locations (OMC 18.050 & OMC 18.38.220(c)):

The project includes three separate buildings with several individual commercial tenant spaces surrounding the site perimeter. Short-term bike parking is intended to provide convenient and covered parking for customers and is required to be located as conveniently as possible for customers. Short term bike parking locations are provided, but in some instances it appears they are not fully covered and/or not located as conveniently as possible. Bike parking locations will be reviewed by staff and it is anticipated that minor modifications are likely. Staff has included a condition to ensure the detailed design review packet will include the final layout of the short-term bike parking.

A recommended condition of approval has been provided.

Written Public Comments:

The Design Review Board does not take verbal public comment during the meeting. A significant number of comments have been received. All comments submitted to date regarding this project can be reviewed on the project website: <http://olympiawa.gov/news-and-faq-s/construction-news/views-on-fifth.aspx>. Written comments specifically related to design, or specifically addressed to the Board are provided as attachments within this packet. Please note that comments intended for the Board's review received after this packet has been distributed will be provided to the Board at the meeting.

Staff has reviewed all comment letters received by the City to date and has summarized the design related content as follows:

Topic	Design Related Comment
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Views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ The tower is too tall, an eye soar, and ruins views ~ It blocks view corridors ~ The tower interferes with the skyline; efforts should be taken to blend it in. ~ Does not conform to the Wilder and White design for the Capitol
Compatibility with Surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ It does not conform to the current architecture in the City ~It conflicts architecturally with the surrounding oasis ~ It is a failure aesthetically ~ Continue the styles from the 1900- 1930's with a uniform façade of business.
Pedestrian Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~The rooftop should include a greenspace for all residents ~ Pedestrian amenities such as street benches, street level seating/dining should be provided ~ Enhanced pedestrian access through the isthmus should be provided
Street Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Apartments above commercial is a good concept. ~ Encourage small retail spaces that will attract local businesses
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Use glass that can easily be seen by birds to reduce injury / death. ~ Consider using non-reflective, non-mirrored glass to reduce reflections ~ Green wall is trendy and will likely fall out of favor quickly. ~ More softening green spaces should be provided

Staff Recommendation:

Based on review and analysis of the applicable Design Review Code Criteria, staff has determined that the proposal meets the intent of the Design Review requirements. Staff recommends the Design Review Board to recommend approval of the Conceptual Design to the Site Plan Review Committee, with the following conditions:

A. Context Plan: Recommend approval.

B. Preliminary Site & Landscape Design: Recommend conditional approval as follows:

1. Provide plans with the detailed design review packet that show the textured pavement with the necessary painted pavement markings for directional traffic movement, parking stalls, and accessible routes. Consider revising the textured patterns to emphasize these safety and circulation features.
2. If mid-block crossing is proposed, revise plans to show the stamped concrete adjacent to Sylvester Street aligning with the park pathway and add the appropriate crosswalk features to the roadway. Provide the appropriate revision with the Detailed Design Review packet.
3. Provide plans with the Detailed Design Review packet that show all directional signage for vehicles and any proposed signage that emphasize that pedestrians have the right of way.
4. Work to disperse the short-term bike parking (visitor parking) as evenly as possible to provide convenient covered parking for all business entries. In areas where bike parking spaces are more than 50' from a business entry, signage will be required and should be shown on detailed design plans.

5. Plans must show which buildings or units will be assigned use of the bike storage room and which will have space in the individual units. Signage for long-term bike storage will be required in and around buildings as appropriate. Show proposed signage locations on plans at Detailed Design Review.
6. Should fencing of the outdoor seating area be proposed in the future with the tenant occupation of the restaurant/bar, staff should review the fencing and ensure it maintains a human scale by providing openings at frequent intervals and that the fencing material is compatible with the structure.
7. Proposed lighting locations and fixture types shall be provided with the Detailed Design Review packet including lighting for the pedestrian walkway, woonerf, and all three of the buildings.
8. Provide plans that clearly identify all site utility and mechanical equipment locations and the anticipated measures to screen such features.

C. Preliminary Building Design: Recommend approval.

Submitted By: Nicole Floyd, Senior Planner

- **Attachment 1:** This Staff Report
- **Attachment 2:** Design Review Checklists (Basic Commercial OMC 18.110 & Downtown OMC 18.120)
- **Attachment 3:** Concept Design Review application and plans
- **Attachment 4:** View Analysis
- **Attachment 5:** Comment letters addressed to the Design Review Board (all other comments are available online)