

CITY OF OLYMPIA
Olympia Design Review Board

CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
January 14, 2021

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| Project Name/Number: | 13th and Cherry Townhouse Apartments, File 20-4706 |
| Applicant: | Cameron Monda Bailey General Contractors, LLC |
| Location: | 526 13 th Ave SE |
| Project Description: | Demolition of the existing structure to construct 12 townhouse-style apartments. The units will be approximately 36 feet in height at three stories. Parking for each unit will be provided below the units at-grade, accessed from a drive aisle off the 13 th Avenue frontage. Long and short term bicycle parking will be provided; frontage improvements will be provided along Cherry St including curb, streetlight, sidewalk repairs and street trees. |
| Design Review District: | Downtown Design District, Residential Sub-District |
| Zoning District: | Urban Residential (UR) |
| Comprehensive Plan Designation: | Residential Mixed Use (RMU) |
| City Staff: | Catherine McCoy, Associate Planner Phone: 360.570.3776 E-mail: cmccoy@ci.olympia.wa.us |
| Public Notification: | In accordance with the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) 18.78, public notification was mailed on November 23, 2020, to recognized neighborhood associations. |
| 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 regarding the adequacy of the project design. The Community Planning and Development Director will make the final decision. |

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Context and Existing Conditions

The development site is located in the southeast area of Olympia's downtown core. This area of the downtown consists of a mix of single family and multifamily residential development and commercial office buildings.

The lots are located in a small urban residential neighborhood east of the Capital Campus and west of the Plum Street and I-5 interchange. This area of downtown Olympia has been designated a residential downtown design review sub-district. Both Cherry St and 13th Ave are Type C streets.

The development site consists of two abutting lots located at the northwest corner of 13th Avenue and Cherry Street. The west lot is a mid-block site developed with a single family residential house oriented to 13th Ave, while the east lot is vacant and has two street frontages – Cherry St and 13th Ave.

Building development in vicinity of the site consists of a mix of varying architectural styles and age (including an individually listed historic property east of the development site). Housing types include single family and mostly multifamily residential development. The commercial buildings north and west of the lots are primarily office buildings. Newer residential development is occurring, an example of which is a similarly designed ground related townhouse style apartment building located at 512 Jefferson St, Campus Lofts.

- North – commercial office and single family residential
- East – single family and multifamily residential
- South – single family and multifamily residential
- West – commercial office and the Capital Campus

Neighborhood Meeting

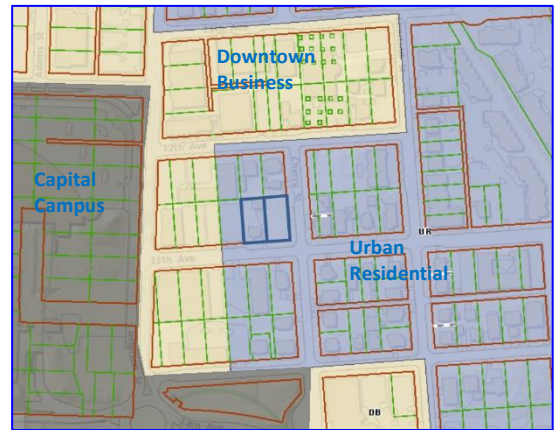
A neighborhood meeting was held on December 15, 2020 in which five members of the public attended, including the president of the neighborhood association. The aesthetics and character of the development relative to the surrounding homes and apartments was of particular interest to attendees. Another concern was stormwater runoff to lots immediately north of the development site.

Land Use Review

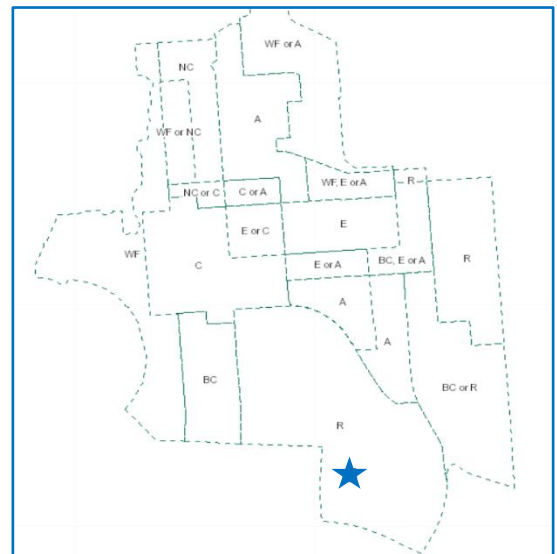
Land use review is currently underway – no decision has been made regarding the proposal, and at this time there are no major land use issues with the site plan relative to design review of the project.



Site Context. ZOOM. City of Olympia.



Surrounding Zoning. ZOOM. City of Olympia.



Downtown Subdistricts. ZOOM. City of Olympia.

DESIGN REVIEW

Concept Design Review: Please note that this is a *Concept Design Review*. Conceptual review involves the early design considerations and elements of a project, such as site context and contextual response, site development, and architectural and landscape concepts as they relate to the general citywide design criteria and the specific design criteria of the design district.

The section called “How to Use Design Criteria” in the Olympia Municipal Code provides instructions for meeting the City’s design criteria (OMC 18.100.100). Compliance with each requirement is necessary; the guidelines provide methods to achieve compliance with the requirement.

Design Review Board meetings are public meetings open for public attendance; however, the meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony or comments are not taken at the meeting. Written comments related to project design may be submitted in advance of the meeting.

Design Analysis:

The project is in the Downtown Design Review District and is subject to the *new* Downtown Design Review chapter, OMC 18.120. The requirements in the chapter are focused on three key programmatic elements: Site Planning, Site Elements and Design, and Building Design, with the intent of encouraging appropriate urban design that reflects the vision expressed in the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Staff’s analysis of the design proposal is incorporated in the same checklist the applicant submitted as required for the land use review. The checklist identifies areas of compliance and deficiency, and staff recommended conditions for the Board’s consideration. Staff has found that the design program generally addresses the criteria within the Code.

Key design issues that staff suggests the Board pay particular attention to pertaining to this project proposal include the following:

1. There are several building and site elements somewhat clustered in the south portion of the lot. This particular site area is along the 13th Ave street frontage between the building and the property line, a depth of 7’ 6” from the building edge to the property line, and 10’ from the building to the sidewalk. Short term bicycle parking that will need overhead weather protection, building mounted utility meters, transformer box, a mechanical gate extending across the drive aisle, fire/riser room closets, and landscaping are concentrated in this narrow area. Staff encourages the Board to provide guidance as to the clustering of site elements in this area – relative to aesthetics, circulation, and security.
2. The design *program*, which typically includes the combination and organization of all site planning elements such as the building(s) – orientation, openings, mass and scale; the landscape plan; the hardscape plan; on- and off-site pedestrian and vehicular circulation; and the open space plan – does not appear to include a common open space plan that meets the requirements listed in OMC 18.120.270. Each individual unit includes private open space in the form of patios and decks, but the common open space requirement is for all residents in the development. Staff has recommended a condition of approval to provide common open space and looks to the Board to discuss options and possibilities for meeting the requirement.
3. At the next stage of design, it will be important to see street level elevations, renderings, and perspectives that depict the composition of elements between the building and the back of sidewalk along Cherry St and along 13th Ave. The architectural packet should include street level perspectives, from each of the cardinal directions, and the composition of landscaping at maturity, fencing, patio, unit entries, lighting, etc. – that give a clear sense of the connection and interaction of the building and the public realm – for private and

public users.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Based on review and analysis of the Downtown Design Criteria, OMC 18.120, staff recommends the Design Review Board recommend approval of the conceptual design review proposal for the 13th Avenue Townhouse Apartments subject to the following conditions:

A. Context Plan: Approve as proposed.

B. Site and Landscape Design:

1. Show the preferred option for solid waste management – carts stored along the rear property line, or carts stored in individual garages. *OMC 18.120.260*
2. All utility features at the 13th Ave frontage shall be relocated to a less prominent location on site. *OMC 18.120.260*
3. Provide 100 sq.ft. of common open space, or 10% of the gross floor area of the development with a minimum of 15' depth. *OMC 18.120.270*
4. Provide photos of all plant choices. *OMC 18.120.270*
5. Provide the construction level design landscaping plan with the next review to evaluate the appropriateness of planting materials and to ensure there are no areas of pedestrian entrapment. *OMC 18.36.*
6. To reduce the potential for pedestrian/vehicle collisions, vegetation shall not obstruct views between 3' and 8' above the ground. *OMC 18.120.270*
7. Provide defined and detailed *street-level* black and white and colored elevations, renderings, and perspectives along both streets that show the following in composition:
 - a. Landscaping, fencing (patio, border, 'man' gates, and main entry gate), entryways, lighting type and placement, pedestrian amenities (bicycle parking), driveway and drive aisle, building modulation and articulation (depth, dimension and form of the building). *OMC 18.120.280*
8. Hardscape elements shall consist of high quality pavements such as concrete and pavers. Provide images and specifications of the materials, including the permeable pavement in the drive aisle, in the plan set. *OMC 18.120.340*
9. Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and (human) scales along pathways, above entries, in the drive aisle, etc. *OMC 18.120.360*
10. Add the locations of each type of light fixture to the building elevations – black and white and colored elevations. *OMC 18.120.360*
11. Show the fixture cut sheets and specifications in the architectural plan set for detail design review. *OMC 18.120.360*
12. Replace the proposed materials or remove the mechanical gate that extends across the driveway from the design program. *OMC 18.120.370*
13. Show all site features proposed, including but not limited to, overhead short-term bicycle structure design and materials, and design details of fencing and gates. *OMC 18.120.370*

C. Building Design:

1. Provide street level elevations and renderings of the ground floor units. *OMC 18.120.240*
2. Entries shall be elevated 3' above sidewalk and the bottom of the window shall be at least 6' above grade. *OMC 18.120.240.*
3. Recess or project individual windows, at grade and above the ground floor, at least 2 inches from the façade or incorporate other design elements that add depth, richness and visual interest to the façade. *OMC 18.120.450 and OMC 18.120.470*
4. Arrange joints and panel detailing consistently with windows, balconies and building modulation. *OMC 18.120.470*

5. Add human-scale uses or design elements to the blank walls along 13th Ave. *OMC 18.120.480*

Submitted By: Catherine McCoy, Associate Planner

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – This Staff Report

Attachment 2 – Design Review Checklist, OMC 18.120

Attachment 3 – Architectural Plan Set