



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

### PRE-DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018  
5:15 PM

CIVIC SAN DIEGO  
401 B STREET, SUITE 400  
SAN DIEGO, CA

1. Roll Call at 5:15pm. DCPC Members in Attendance: Cindy Blair, Pat Stark, Stacy Dion, Dan Wery and Claudia Escala. LC Cline with the Downtown Residents Group
2. Public comments on non-agenda items. None
3. Report from Chairperson: Elections for DCPC are scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup>. Encouraged existing members to run for re-election and the general public to sign up for empty seats.
4. **Action items**
  - 5<sup>th</sup> & Ash (Southeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> & Ash) – Centre City Development Permit/Centre City Planned Development Permit/Neighborhood Use Permit No. 2017-29 – Preliminary Design Review – Cortez Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area – Christian Svensk

This Project proposes a 16 story (approximately 175 foot tall) hotel tower comprised of 156 hotel guest rooms and 60 valet parking spaces

#### Design Issues and Considerations:

- Overall Massing and Architecture – Does the proposed design sufficiently breakdown the building's massing and present an attractive, coordinated architectural concept? Does the Project design meet the intent of the DDG and exhibit superior design to warrant the three building bulk deviations?
- Tower Setbacks from Interior Property Lines – Do the east and south facades of the tower provide adequate glazing in an attractive architectural composition? Is the treatment of the stairwells successful?
- Street Level Design – Does the Project's ground floor integrate successfully with both street frontages and provide an interesting pedestrian experience? Does the street level successfully integrate with the building design above?

#### Presentation by Joseph Wong Associates Inc, Chris Fassler

The project's intent is to fit well within the existing context therefore proposing a punched opening façade playing off the neighboring buildings in lieu of a fully glazed building. Being a small infill project it aims at adding diversity in scale. It is a pedestrian oriented hotel development with an innovative vertical design. It is also respectful of the adjacent historical resource. Special attention is given to the south façade not to create a blank wall. The proposed design is honest and dynamic but unpretentious. The site has a steep slope. Lobby facing 5<sup>th</sup> Ave is 20' tall.

The top of the tower has a stepped design with a sky bar and a couple of hotel suites up at the top. There are 3 levels below grade with most of the back of house program at the first below grade level. The street front does not have a lot of frontage for street trees. The existing view corridor is already obstructed by an existing parking garage.

The prominent stair tower uses similar materials as the rest of the project in a composite metal panel. White color shown is smooth plaster. The white greyish tile at ground level mimics the plaster but is a more enhanced material.



### Members Questions

**Q.** Explain the deviation on the bulk. **A.** Stair tower 18' is not adhering to the setback. 15 feet along Ash not meeting prescriptive requirements. **Q.** How many parking spaces? **A.** Parking 50 spaces provided 47 required. 100 x 100 footprint does not allow for efficient ramping system therefore a valet automated parking system is proposed. **Q.** Service to restaurant? **A.** Via the elevators. **Q.** Accessible drop off area required at curb side? **A.** Per Civic SD this is a new City requirement when automated parking is proposed. Driveway serves as the required drop off area. **Q.** Is this area also the trash access using the vehicle lift? **A.** Yes **Q.** Signage is there a hotel flag and have you identified signage location? **A.** Yes there is a hotel flag but at this time the developer is not ready to release information. **Q.** Type of signage proposed? Any neon? **A.** Will adhere to comprehensive sign plan requirements. Per Civic 75SF are allowed on 2 opposite elevations.. **Q.** grease trap in basement? **A.** Yes. **Q.** Does applicant have an alternate design that will meet all the required setbacks? **A.** No, but a rendering from Ash St. looking towards the west shows the project massing with and without the setback. **Q.** is the vehicle lift fully valet system? **A.** Yes. **Q.** On Ash Street where blank wall is shown? Can the program shown swap? **A.** It is an IT room. **Q.** Will drop off have a cut out on sidewalk or is that the driveway? **A.** The driveway serves the drop off requirement. **Q.** Has any consideration been given to the blank wall along ground level to use spandrel glass instead? **A.** Will consider that as an option

### Public Comments

**Gary Smith** -President of the Downtown Residents Group. Agrees with Ms. Escala that the portion of ground level blank walls may work better as spandrel glass . Spandrel glass may not encourage graffiti. Stairwells stand out but understands applicant cannot do something else. Looks like both stairs empty into the building. Aware that they have to empty into the street. Concerned about the need for recesses that encourage homeless activity. Regarding accessible parking he believes 2 bays will allow for a disabled person to pull in so no drop is required at sidewalk. By contrast a single bay would require a drop off. Oriel Windows on the north side are better than balconies and they allows to look up and down the street. Project fits in the neighborhood perfectly. This location fits it very well. Only other concern because there is no loading dock will they need a loading zone and where would it go? Could potentially conflict with the driveway

### Member comments

**Dan Wery** Attractive building fits in the community. Likes contrast between dark and light panels. Deviations make sense. Activation on street makes sense too. Something happening on the upper floor. Overall likes it. With the stairwells he would encourage the inclusion of windows to bring some natural light. Could be a feature that helps with deviation. Applicant noted that they cannot have windows facing property line due to close proximity.

**Stacy Dion** Works well, appreciates the design and likes the windows. Would like to see signage. Project fits the neighborhood well.

**LC Cline (Downtown Residents Group)** :Deviations make sense. Massing in different levels breaks up different color areas. Who does not love a roof deck. Bar restaurant should be open to the public. Hope applicant follows through with trees in roof area. Will make for an interesting contrast. Good looking building, Is there a roll down gate dividing the pulling bay from the lift. Applicant needs to work with lift manufacturer on door style and aesthetics. Civic SD believes any doors would probably be down only at 2:00AM. Treatment of vehicle bay would be highly visible and will need to be further developed.

**Pat Stark:** Comfortable with the deviations. Agrees with Brad Richter that vehicle bay area needs to be more finished as it will be very visible from the street. Project looks good. Awareness of loading should be addressed at next meeting.

**Cindy Blair.** Agrees with deviations and massing, Visuals show proposed project would not be blocking something already blocked. East and south provide adequate glazing. Covered issues really well. Good street level integration and pedestrian experience.



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Claudia Escala: The design is serene and unpretentious. Agrees with the other members that the project fits well within its context. Pleased with the proposed project.

Meeting adjourned at 5:57PM