



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

PRE-DESIGN
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE
DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL

TUESDAY MAY 7, 2019
5:15 PM

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

1. Roll Call at 5:15pm, DCPC Members in Attendance: Nancy Wilson-Ramon, Dan Wery, Stacy Dion, Christine Takara, Jon Baker, Rand Barbano
Non DCPC member LC Cline (Downtown Residents Group)
2. Public comments on non-agenda items: None
3. Report from Chairperson: Rand Barbano asked for recommendation on which developments should appear before the Pre-Design Committee once Civic San Diego is no longer determining the agenda. Currently, Civic San Diego schedules design reviews for developments over 85 feet in height and/or over 100,000 square feet in area.

Brad Richter, Civic San Diego Vice President of Planning, said his best guess is that project reviews will be going down. Half of the existing review will become ministerial only. The projects that will continue to be reviewed are those that are requesting deviations, that are in the coastal zone, or if the site contains an historical building. In these cases, public notice will be made, but DCPC and/or the Pre-Design Committee will have to contact the developers and ask them come before us. Hopefully, city staff will ask developers to appear before us. Once DCPC has made a recommendation, it will be sent to city staff.

The ministerial process has not been developed yet. In future, the Pre-Design Committee will need to the city's website to see the list of new permits and then chase down each permit to find out what kind of building is being proposed. Alternatively, Civic San Diego will try to keep their interactive map current, which includes all new permits. Brad said they hope to have a running list of each year's new applications.

He said more information will be available in the next two months.

Meanwhile, the DCPC can ask that all current projects of the right size come before us. We can do this using a PDO amendment or perhaps just getting that added to the current amendments. Either way, however, the Pre-Design Committee will have to become more pro-active.

Gary Smith, President Downtown Residents Group, said he thought developers won't want to present twice, so they will come before either the Pre-Design Committee or the full DCPC – not both.

4. **Action items**
 - I. Predesign Committee Description and goals
 - a. Description: The Preliminary Design Review Subcommittee meets to review development and design proposals, and provide input on the design at an early stage. This forum assists developers and their design teams to obtain clarification on community concerns during the initial conceptual design phase. The committee currently meets when qualifying projects are



submitted to DCPC, which can be as often as monthly, the eight days before the scheduled DCPC meeting. (No change was made to the description.)

- b. 2019-2020 Goals: Develop new processes to determine which construction proposals will come before the Pre-Design Committee including how the committee will get the information it currently receives from Civic San Diego.

Request that the City Council, or whichever governing body is appropriate, mandate that developments over 85 feet in height and/or over 100,000 square feet in area still appear before the DCPC and the Pre-Design Committee.

- II. Two America Plaza (block bounded by Kettner Boulevard, India Street, B Street, and the MTS Trolley Station) – Centre City Development Permit/Planned Development Permit/Neighborhood Use Permit (CCDP/PDP/NUP) No. 2018-58 – Preliminary Design Review – Columbia Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ James Alexander

The project proposes construction of a 13-story, 160-foot tall mixed-use building comprised of 301 hotel guest rooms, 48 dwelling units, approximately 25,089 square feet of commercial space, and 179 parking spaces on a 65,317 square foot block.

Presentations:

Speaker James Alexander, Civic San Diego. The FAR is 4.8; the minimum is 5.0. The project needs deviations for being below the minimum FAR, for walls below the minimum street wall height, for being below the minimum depth of commercial space, for counting tandem parking spaces, and curb cuts below the minimum width.

Civic San Diego has concerns about the overall massing, the massing of the towers, the end stairwells that stand out by themselves, whether the project achieves street level activation, the second floor windows of the western elevation showing the inside of a service area, and whether the project engages the C Street corridor to the appropriate extent.

Speaker Dennis Rogers, Architect. Two driveways on Kettner lead to a ramp into and out of the parking. The parking will be on the first floor of the existing underground parking lot. The plan calls for retail on India and C Street. On the C Street side, outdoor seating will be available (on the assumption that a restaurant would be part of the retail space.) The hotel lobby will be on the first floor before the ramp that leads to parking.

The building will have ballrooms and public meeting spaces on the second floor. The Kettner side of the second floor has windows that the service areas behind the ballrooms. Also on the second floor, an outdoor terrace will overlook the C Street corridor. The hotel rooms will encompass the third to ninth floors. The tenth through twelfth floor will be for residents. The thirteenth level has pool & spa and a small restaurant. These are for patrons only and will not be open to the public.

The design is intended to enhance the horizontal feel of the building.

The two stairwells, one on each end of the “L,” will have windows and be lighted at night. The corner of India and B Street has cooling equipment that cannot be moved but this area will be screened and a mural will be added to make it attractive.

Speaker Gabriel ??, owner: The garage is not owned by the hotel except for the first level. The garage is owned and run by One American Plaza.

DCPC Members & Non-Member Questions

Q: Is the parking additional spaces or the existing underground parking? A: Existing

Q: Will the roofs be landscaped? A: No, the existing garage provides minimum structural support.



- The team is looking into how to make the second floor roof more attractive as it is a large space.
- Q:** Is there parking for 48 dwelling units? **A:** All parking will be valet parking and the residents will share that with the hotel guests.
- Q:** Will parking be closed during construction? **A:** The parking lot for One America Plaza will remain open during construction.
- Q:** What is the long corridor between southern retail and parking ramp? **A:** An existing exit for the garage.
- Q:** Will you see the fountain from the street? **A:** That has not been determined yet.
- Q:** What will be the hours for the pool/spa, roof top restaurant, second level outdoor terrace, and outdoor seating along C Street? **A:** The owner has not determined this yet. She indicated that noise would not be a problem because the areas are not open to the public. This, however, has not been the case in other buildings.
- Q:** Doesn't the second floor event center deck have a wall facing the plaza that is 6 or 7 feet tall that cuts off any interaction with the C Street plaza? **A:** Yes, so far.
- Q:** Are you strengthening the structural load of the garage. **A:** The first level of the garage will be reinforced. Most reinforcement will be inside the tower.
- Q:** What kind of light will be in the stairwell, and how visible with the stairs themselves be? **A:** We will need a lighting designer to help us light the glass more than the stairs.
- Q:** How will you do move in's, move out's, mailroom, etc.? **A:** There is an elevator on the corner of India and C Street that could be used, but that is being negotiated with the owner. The moving truck will be in the loading dock. No mail room is shown yet.
- Q:** Is there a separation between the two lobbies? **A:** It's a shared lobby and valet parking.
- Q:** Does the first floor show a service elevator near India and close to the other elevators? **A:** Yes, there is a small elevator for service people and to access the roof.
- Q:** Will they do valet parking? **A:** Yes, all parking will be valet and will use the first floor of the underground parking lot.
- Q:** Is there an opportunity to do a bump out on the sidewalk corners to slow traffic and make drop offs and pickups easier? **A:** They are checking with SANDAG but no information is available at this point.
- Q:** Have you thought about scooter parking around the hotel? **A:** Not thought about that yet (though some of the streets should have designated scooter parking spaces.)
- Q:** The balconies will need to be drained and the windows washed. Have you figured out how to do this? **A:** We have a good idea but have not gotten to this level of detail.

Public Comments

Cathy Moon – resident of Trio, the condo on the other side of B Street - Against: The plan does not show any green space and the neighborhood needs green space. The building will also need hours for closing the pool and restaurant.

Robb Dubré - resident of Trio - Against: Flip the plan and put the hotel tower near C instead of Trio (). The plan needs more green space. Light pollution from both the balconies and the stairwells is going to be a problem. The public spaces will create noise pollution; we need closing hours. What concessions will the builders make for Trio during construction.

Gary Smith – President Downtown Residents Group - Neutral: Things to look at, move the porte cochère to enter the building from India Street. Puts all three driveways on the same side. This prevents drivers from crossing Kettner Street to enter the hotel. Also, Kettner is the currently where the taxis park for Santa Fe Station. Where will they park afterwards? The retail will also be a hard sell as not much retail is in that area now.

Aria Pounaki: The plans do not have affordable units in this project. We want to maximize the use of the space by making the building even larger (taller).



DCPC Member Comments:

Jon Baker: I agree with moving the tower to the C Street side.

LC Cline: I support the building but listen to the comments and then go for it.

Christine Takara: The pet area seems small.

Dan Wery: I agree with the change of the orientation. Perhaps the structural change could be made.

Rand Barbano: The two stairwells form large vertical walls of gray and will project light into the Trio and Grande South all night. Yet another gray building; add color.

III. 220 W. Broadway (block bounded by Broadway, Union, Front and C streets – Centre City Development Permit (CCDP) No. 2019-01 – Preliminary Design Review – Civic/Core Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ William Chopyk

The Project proposes constructing a 37-story, 445-foot tall mixed-use building comprised of 431 dwelling units including 87 very-low income affordable units, 270,493 square feet of office space, and 18,595 sq. ft. of commercial space on the 54,647 sq. ft. site.

Presentation:

Speaker Bill Chopyk, Planner Civic San Diego. The site is the old county courthouse building. All the buildings will be demolished (but only the southernmost block in this phase). The site is a full block with a 14.22 FAR. The building features an eight level podium for office space with commercial space on the ground floor.

The applicant is using the San Diego shared parking plan to count parking spaces. Peak demand is during weekdays at 10 a.m. Need is for 520 spaces, and building has 583 spaces with compact spaces. They are requesting loading and parking on Front Street that requires City Center permit.

The building is in the Civic-Core area and has 87 low-income units.

They are asking for five incentives: Reduced residential storage, reduced commercial frontage on Front St, reduced residential common open space, increased residential FAR, and reduced parking standards for compact parking.

Union Street already has a large bump out for the trolley station. So on Union the private area will be used for open space.

Questions Civic San Diego has are 1. The overall massing, 2. Is there adequate variation in the podium and tower facades, 3. Is the tower top a graceful transition to the sky, 4. Are the landscape components adequate, and 5. Is there adequate pedestrian interest on Front Street?

Speaker Alex Gutierrez, architect. The Project has a great site with building diversity around it. The open space at the Federal courthouse on southwest corner was the inspiration. We've built in a lot of setback on the Union St. side, which becomes plaza space. Front Street is the workhorse street as the other three streets cannot be accessed by car. The design provides ground floor public use on all side and the lobby connects Front and Union.

We are inviting the sun in with multiple masses and the set back on Union. We wanted to break up the overall massing of the building. The tower is broken up with balcony and shifting planes. Inside, the building has larger floor plates for high tech companies to get the space they need.

There is a roof deck on level nine and level 39, the pool deck.



The main corner is Union and Broadway with a portion of the building lifted above the street. This creates a compelling space. Commercial space is planned on both sides of the entry. In front near the corner of Union and C is seating shaded by trees. Outdoor terraces are above that area. C St. has a wraparound terrace and the building again overhangs the pedestrian area. Front St. has the main lobby entrance and driveways into the building. The lobby has glass between it and the ramp to make the space feel like one. On Broadway, the entire perimeter is planned to be retail.

The tower and base are different but also tied together. In the tower, some color can be added. The top, the “Club Room,” has a different look from the rest of the tower.

Speaker Tom Warner, owner. This is our fourth project in San Diego in last few years. This building is the first of this type of mixed use in San Diego. One of the city goals was to get a new tunnel from the county jail to the courthouse to transport prisoners. We will build that.

San Diego is ready for this type of large office building.

DCPC Members & Non-Member Questions

Q: Will you also tear down the old building north of C Street? **A:** We hope to close on the ownership of all the block in June, and we have plans for all of them. However, at this time, we will only tear down the southernmost block and build the one building.

Q: Where is the parking for pickup & delivery and trash? The loading dock? **A:** The loading dock. (However, this is a long way from the trash.)

Q: Vertical circulation, all the elevators are massed together. **A:** There are two cores; the office elevator and resident elevators will be separate. Office tenants will have access to the 9th and 37 floor.

Q: How many floors of parking are there and are they separated. **A:** Five levels of mixed parking.

Q: Front Street is extremely busy at Broadway; is your arrival area adequate? **A:** The bump outs will slow cars and make room for pick up and drop off. Duane: We are working with the city to find the best way to develop the street. We are also working with city to find a way to provide drop offs on Union St. Right now, no parking is allowed on Union Street.

Public Comments

Gary Smith – President Downtown Residents Group - Neutral: You can have parking on Front St. This is a big city design; it looks like a downtown building. None of the retail spaces have access to the loading zone and garbage. Some of the internal flow needs working out. Love the double entry and the tuning forks.

Aria Pounaki – In favor: He likes the building.

DCPC Member Comments:

Jon Baker: Very beautifully done.

Stacy Dion : Love it all

Nancy Wilson-Ramon: Also like it, and includes affordable housing.

LC Cline: This building is pretty unique in that 20% of it has been designated for affordable housing. Big city design.