



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

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

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 6, 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: Jon Baker, Ned Lachman, Nancy Wilson Ramon, Stacy Dion, Dan Wery, Rand Barbano, Paul Pensabene & Claudia Escala
2. Public comments on non-agenda items. None
3. Report from Chairperson: Meeting #3 of Ad-Hoc committee to review the 12<sup>th</sup> Land Development Code proposed update has been scheduled for Wednesday November 14th at 4:00PM at Civic San Diego
4. **Action item**
  - Columbia & Hawthorn and State & Grape (majority of the block bounded by State, Columbia, Hawthorn and Grape Streets) – Centre City Development Permit / Centre City Planned Development Permit No. 2017-19 and 2017-20 – Preliminary Design Review – Little Italy Neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan Area ~ William Chopyk

The proposed project is a combined project that is composed of a nine-story (approximately 86 feet tall) mixed-use development on an irregular-shaped site that curves significantly along State Street. The combined project consists of 125 DU, 82 hotel suites, 6,201 SF of commercial space and 159 parking spaces.

#### Design Issues and Considerations

- Is the Combined Project appropriately designed for its neighborhood context as well as its high visibility site along the heavily travelled Grape and Hawthorn Street corridors that serve as gateways to and from Little Italy?
- Does the Combined Project present a desirable contemporary architectural expression as well as meet the intent of the Fine Grain Overlay District?
- Do the Combined Project's deviations result in an appropriate design for the Combined Project and/or do they provide acceptable relief in order to achieve desired density goals given the irregular shape and slope of the Combined Project?
- Does the Combined Project's blank interior wall on the State Street/east elevation (south facing) require more detail?

#### Presentation by Architect AVR P Skypoint Studios

The reason for 2 separate projects is related to the airport authority overlay. Since the prior submittal a year ago the design team made significant design changes. The project proposes two distinct but compatible aesthetics. The Columbia & Hawthorn portion of the project explores the concept of movement of water and cars taking cues from its location in close proximity to the bay and the freeway. It emphasizes flow and has a dynamic expression through the use of curvilinear shapes, while the State & Grape the project is more grounded, orthogonal and anchored. The latter side is more formal but still playful with the window patterns and the pop outs. Columbia & Hawthorn proposes



a hotel building with an entrance right at the intersection of State and Hawthorn. A commercial space has an entrance at the corner of Columbia & Hawthorn and a driveway off Columbia for a ground level parking garage. State & Grape portion that contains a residential building has a driveway and garage entry to below grade parking off State Street and on the same street access to the residential lobby. Both buildings contain various amenities. The hotel has a trellis patio with seating area on the second floor, a main outdoor deck space on Level 7 facing State Street and a pool deck at Level 9 overlooking the bay. The residential building component has a patio adjacent to the leasing office and at the primary deck on Level 7 proposes a BBQ deck and dog park.

#### DCPC Member & Non Member Questions

**Q.** The pool shown on Level 9 is it available to only PH residences or everyone? **A.** Everyone. **Q.** Is parking segregated between hotel and residences? **A.** No **Q.** Stair on State side is missing railings? **A.** Not currently shown, it will include railings but will be an open stair with a sculptural structure supporting balconies. **Q.** Is it an external walkway for residential units? **A.** Yes. **Q.** Large hotel rooms on the top floor? **A.** Yes. **Q.** Along State Street is there a separate drop off lane is that a separate median or paint? **A.** Curb along Grape St will be bumped out. Downtown Mobility Plan show Cycle tracks on State and track. **Q.** Height of building compared to freeway which is higher? **A.** Top four floors are higher than freeway. **Q.** Affordable units? **A.** In lieu inclusionary housing fee. **Q.** Why? **A.** Not suitable at this location. **Q.** Exit and entryways how do they work? **A.** Visitors off Hawthorn, residents on State. Hotel lobby entrance is at corner of Hawthorn and State. **Q.** Trash & utilities? **A.** Off Columbia. **Q.** Where do moving trucks come in and out of building. **A.** Same entrance on Columbia Street. **Q.** Will comments from LIRA meeting be taken into consideration for this meeting? **A.** The design team will be working on all comments from all design review meetings after this meeting. **Q.** Have structural elements been considered especially in the most prominent architectural moves? **A.** Not yet. **Q.** Any thoughts regarding planter drainage of several planters shown? **A.** Not yet. **Q.** What are the species for street trees? **A.** In accordance with the Streetscape Manual.

#### Public Comments

No public comments

#### DCPC Member comments

**Paul Pensabene:** This project was previously presented to the Little Italy Association (LIA) and the Little Italy Residents Association (LIRA) in a combined meeting. One of the comments from the meeting was that the project is short on parking. Regarding palm trees, although called out on the streetscape manual, Little Italy does not like palm trees. Also regarding lighting Hawthorn requires double lamp post style on State St. and single on Grape St. Both LIA and LIRA liked the design and flow. They would like to see some type of Little Italy connection to the building like other projects have included. The project presents operations, traffic flow and some parking unresolved items. Supports residential entry off State St. Need to pay attention to trash, loading, etc. Columbia and Hawthorn streets can get very busy. Design team should think about moving loading to State St. Wonders if there will be a condo overlay for future condo conversion.

**Stacy Dion:** Wants all utilities to be on State Street not Hawthorn. Regarding the existing building on site, Little Italy would like the developer to help demolish the building now while the project is moving forward. Design wise everyone loved the project. State & Columbia could use a project like this. LIA & Lira would like to keep working with the design team regarding the landscape areas.

**Rand Barbano:** Regarding State St. has currently 2 lanes with parking on the right side and partial parking on the left side. Once bike lane is implemented and parking is kept on both sides State will turn into one lane. Could be problematic, for example potentially for people carrying furniture across bike lanes.

**Jon Baker:** Sees disconnect with the circulation element, bike lane, drop off, ubers, cabs, etc. Circulation needs to be further studied. When first reviewed the entrance to the hotel already seemed problematic and still needs to be reconsidered. The bike lane is disconnecting the drop off which could be problematic on many fronts. May be possible to move bike lane to east side of street. Believes there is a big safety issue with the plan as laid out right now. Much improvement seen on the grounded portion as it has a scale that fits. Regarding the Hawthorn side glass and steel office space ship like building did not see a connection to a gateway into Little Italy, how it would fit with



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the community, and does not propose any fine grain. On the contrary the Grape St side has a nice and elegant solution. Last disconnect is the east side amenity deck as it is located overlooking interstate 5 and be impacted by its traffic noise. Surprised it is not reversed to provide some protection from traffic noise from freeway and better view.

Claudia Escala: Concurs with Jon regarding the building on Hawthorn seems commercial. Big improvement on the building on Grape as it is simple yet has an interesting window pattern. Encourages the architect to review the Complete Streets Mobility Plan again and reevaluate proposed circulation.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:04pm