

Herbaugh, Melinda

From: Jaime Pharr <jaime.pharr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 2:32 PM
To: PRC
Subject: Feedback on Project 3020338, 2925 E Madison St.

Dear Magda Hogness,

This letter is in response to the third and most recent proposal submitted for project 3020338 located at 2925 E Madison St.

I appreciate the applicant's efforts so far including the addition of townhomes on the backside of the building to cover the garage. However, there remain several significant concerns and instances of the applicant not following the Board's recommendations including:

Height, Bulk, Scale and Response to Context

EDG2 Report: "the Board agreed with the public's concern that the height, bulk and scale of the Dewey frontage was not yet resolved and that the massing needed to transition further to respond to the single family zone....The Board directed the applicant to return with a modified massing option based on the guidance provided for the Dewey frontage."

Design Guidelines: CS1-C, CS2-A, CS2-B, CS2-D, DC2-A

The height, bulk, and scale still have not been sufficiently addressed on the residential side of the building. This proposed building is clearly out-of-scale for the neighborhood, particularly in contrast to the single family zoning bordering it on two sides. Rather than reduce the overall scale of the building, the applicant has added 5 townhouses to the previously proposed (in the EDG2 proposal) 73 apartments and 26k+ square feet of retail space. The mass of the building continues to jut out of the space, rather than following the contour of the slope as the guidelines suggest and as the Board has recommended at each of the two earlier Design Meetings.

The upper level setbacks are inadequate so that the result is an outsized building that towers over the narrow, largely pedestrian street of Dewey and a single family zone. The northeast corner of the building is equivalent to 7 stories and still looms over the p-patch and homes, and creates an oppressive and overwhelming pedestrian experience.

As explained in your EDG3 Memo to the Board, height, bulk and scale are in the DRB's purview and the Board can state that the project is too tall in light of the Design Guidelines.

Trash, Vehicular Access and Loading Location

EDG2 Report: "The Board...agreed more information was needed before indicating their preference on the related departures. Related to developing a sensitive solution to the Dewey frontage, the Board requested studying alternates, such as one vehicular access point."

Design Guidelines: CS2-B-2, PL1, DC1

The backside of the building borders a quiet, residential area. A garage entrance on Dewey would dramatically impact the pedestrian-friendly nature of Dewey and connecting residential streets. Surrounding streets, such as Republican, 29th, and 30th, would all become less safe for pedestrians. The presence of a garage entrance will seriously interfere with the pedestrian experience for the new townhouse residences on Dewey, the homes that back onto Dewey, and the greater neighborhood that uses Dewey as a walkway to the P-Patch, Madison, and the Arboretum. Dewey is a narrow road that is frequented by many in the neighborhood including dog walkers, parents with strollers and young children, and bicyclists.

It has been estimated that an entrance on Dewey, will pull 16% of the traffic from the Madison entrance, which is not enough provide real relief to the impact on Madison, yet it is enough traffic to entirely change the nature of the residential streets and make them unsafe. Rather than approving two garage entrances that will unnecessarily interfere with the pedestrian realm in two separate locations, I hope the Board will consider the value of having a single curb cut and garage entrance on Madison to minimize conflict with non-motorists.

Setbacks, Site Features and Existing Tree Canopy

EDG2 Report: “The Board agreed that the setback depth, amount of landscape buffer, and green wall maintenance is important to address. For the next meeting, the Board recommended studying the depth of the setback and seriously examining the potential to save some of the existing trees.”

Design Guidelines: CS1-D-1, CS2-B, CS2-D-2, DC3-C, DC4-D

The planting area in front of the townhomes is minimal and is not adequate to recreate the urban green space that has provided ecological services to the area and served as a buffer. Exceptional trees are being removed, and the replacement plantings are not comparable.

While this latest proposal is a step in the right direction, it still does not treat the Board's recommendations and requests with the seriousness they deserve. I hope the Board continues to guide the applicant to make this project a better fit for our neighborhood.

Regards,

Jaime Pharr