

**CITY OF REDMOND  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

May 2, 2013

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review in the Redmond Planning Department.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joe Palmquist, Craig Krueger, Scott Waggoner, Arielle Crowder

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** David Scott Meade, Mike Nichols, Kevin Sutton

**STAFF PRESENT:** Steven Fischer, Principle Planner; Gary Lee, Senior Planner

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Susan Trapp *with* Lady of Letters, Inc.

The Design Review Board is appointed by the City Council to make decisions on design issues regarding site planning, building elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage. Decisions are based on the design criteria set forth in the Redmond Development Guide.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Design Review Board meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Joseph Palmquist at 7:04 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MR. KRUEGER AND SECONDED BY MR. WAGGONER TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE MARCH 7, 2013 MEETING. MOTION APPROVED (4-0).**

**PRE-APPLICATION**

**LAND-2013-00203, Redmond Multi-family**

**Description:** Development of a four story, 104 unit multi-family residential building with parking

**Location:** 8324 165<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, 8301 166<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, 8323 166<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and 8345 166<sup>th</sup> Ave NE

**Applicant:** Reed Kelly *with* DRK Development, Inc.

**Prior Review Date:** 03/21/13

**Staff Contact:** Gary Lee, 425-556-2418, [glee@redmond.gov](mailto:glee@redmond.gov)

Mr. Lee noted that this was the second pre-application meeting for this project. He said the applicant has addressed many of the concerns raised by the Board back in March. The applicant has changed the roof line and some other details. Staff likes what it is seeing. One issue is the break between two of the buildings, with two windows on each side that face each other. This does not meet the privacy standards, but staff is amenable to a deviation on that, pending the deliberation of the Board. Mr. Lee noted that the stoops on 166<sup>th</sup> come straight out from the building, all the way to the sidewalk, and then turn 90 degrees. He said the massing of the stoops appears to be a bit too much, and he would recommend pulling the stoops back from the sidewalk such that they are lower at the street level. Staff is also recommending the retaining wall system proposed should be finished not with concrete, but with blocks or bricks to complement the building. Staff would also like to see more brick coursing on the windowsills, doors, and window headers to add more detail to the brick.

Kent Smutny with Veer Architecture spoke to the Board on behalf of the applicant. There are three separate buildings on the site. The corner building on 166<sup>th</sup> and 83<sup>rd</sup> has a residential lobby. At first, the applicant was taking a more modernist approach to the corner building and a more traditional approach to the end buildings. That design idea has been toned down following the comments of the DRB from the last meeting. The three buildings will still have their own distinct style, but they now have more traditional detailing and more closely relate to each other. The corner building has shapes with a harder edge, but more closely resembles the other buildings and fits in with the surrounding area of the Perrigo sub-plot.

The corner building is now designed to be further out of the ground, by about three feet, compared to the last time the DRB saw it. The applicant is working with a water table issue, and because the project has two levels of subterranean parking, the building has been raised. The first floor units now have more separation and privacy away from the sidewalk. The applicant has created a more deliberate niche, about 10 feet wide, that goes back to the center corridor of the buildings. The first entry on the corner building, as Mr. Lee noted, does go straight up, but based on Mr. Lee's comment, the applicant is looking to adjust all of the steps to the first level units so that they come out perpendicular to the sidewalk. The applicant has added a greater level of detail to the bays of the project, following up on concerns voiced by the DRB. A continuous band of brick has been used to help unify the building designs, too. The hipped roof that was proposed before has been broken down to create smaller hips over the bays, thus breaking up the roof form as seen from the street. The look appears to be more of an eyebrow than a hip at four stories up.

At 83<sup>rd</sup> and 166<sup>th</sup>, the applicant originally had decks coming right to the corner, but in light of comments from the DRB, a stronger architectural element has been proposed. There is now a pentagon-shaped bay at the corner to give this area a more elevated importance. On the plaza side, an area that was very much a blank slate at the last meeting, the applicant has now expanded the design and created a pedestrian connection to 83<sup>rd</sup> to the west of the project. Most of the pedestrian traffic will be from the west, headed downtown. The parking ramp has been moved closer to the building, and the plaza has been expanded over the top of most of the vehicle ramp, thus minimizing the appearance of that ramp. The materials have been simplified. There is a brick base that faces the street, but once the design turns into the plaza, a hardy siding would be used in a lighter brown color as a cost-saving measure.

On 166<sup>th</sup>, the north side of the building has been developed using bays that are similar to the street side of the end buildings. The northeast corner of the building has been moved back to open up some space and let more light in to the project. Also on 166<sup>th</sup>, the applicant pointed out the differences and similarities between the corner building and end buildings. The bays on the end buildings have a greater level of detail and different window patterning. The idea is to create three separate buildings that work together strongly, in answer to the DRB's previous comments about unifying the design. The deep niches between the buildings go all the way to the internal corridor the buildings all share. This should provide more light to the site and more orientation to the corridor. The outdoor plaza covers the entire vehicle ramp and goes out to 165<sup>th</sup> with its pedestrian connection.

Since the last presentation to the DRB, the unit mix of the site has changed slightly. The project now has 108 units as opposed to the 105 units proposed before. Several two-bedroom units have been turned into one-bedroom units. There are 1.25 parking stalls provided per unit. The roof plan shows the amenity space, which is allowed to be 750 square feet per code restrictions. Two-thirds of this space would be interior and one-third would be exterior. A wall between the spaces could be opened in good weather. The applicant noted that the DRB had some concern about this space at the last meeting and its proximity to the hipped roof. The applicant said the hipped roof would be minimal, with a four in twelve pitch. There would be fifteen feet between the curved arbor and the toe of the hipped roof, and some landscape screening would be provided. The applicant said the smaller amenity area has been pulled back from the hipped roof, and anyone using that area would not be aware of the hipped roof.

The primary material for the project is hardy plank siding in two colors, dark for the exterior and light for the interior areas. The applicant said the bays on the end buildings will have a greater level of trim detail, using a cream color. This should help differentiate the bays on the corner building from the bays on the end buildings. The metal railing will have a darker color. The brick will be a terracotta color. The shingles on the hipped roof would be architectural asphalt.

Landscape architect Jason Anderson, with Design 2426, next spoke to the Board on behalf of the applicant. He said the planting plan is based on the City of Redmond's suggested planting plan. Any plants that are not within the City's plan can be found in local nurseries. The street trees, red sunset maples, are thirty feet on center. The corners are highlighted with sweet gum and pink heather. The buildings have been buffered with native evergreens, grass, and colorful plants such as potentilla. Along the drive entrance, an arbor accent with planter boxes beneath it has been proposed, with evergreen

clematis used as a highlight. The arbor should preserve the view corridor, but would also give residents some privacy in the plaza area.

The site triangles have been preserved, and no plant materials would go above 24 inches in the plaza. Some seating areas have been provided in the plaza along with planter boxes. The seating areas are buffered from the pathways but not from each other. Tables and chairs can be moved in the plaza, allowing people to gather as they would like. An artificial turf pet area has been provided to the side of the plaza. At the back of the plaza, heavy planting of Osmanthus and Hinoki Cypress has been proposed as a way to add some buffering as well. The plantings are open enough to allow egress and ingress to the buildings and not overcrowded.

Between the buildings and niches, some vine maple and rhododendrons have been proposed to give some visual interest. At the front of the building, nandina and vine maple have been used to provide some visual highlights during all seasons of the year. On the roof, the applicant has an arbor that looks similar to the one at ground level. Planters have been proposed around the arbor to draw views away from the roof itself. Evergreen clematis would be used, and there would be a gas fire pit in the center of the roof amenity area. The applicant added that, in front of all the bay windows of the residences, the plantings have been kept low to preserve views from those windows.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:**

##### Mr. Waggoner:

- Asked about the water table issue and how the building had been raised up three feet. He said this situation has created more basement wall to cover up. He said, with this much retaining wall around the block, the site now has a fortress effect. He suggested putting in some tiered planter boxes to break up the massing of this wall and provide more visual interest.
- Mr. Waggoner agreed with staff that the cladding material from the bottom floor should extend to the walls, at least to the stoops and stairs. The planter walls could remain concrete or stone, but more enhancement of the exposed structure would be helpful in bringing down the scale.
- In general terms, Mr. Waggoner said the different viewpoints from the street appear to indicate that the sloped roof cannot be seen from anywhere. He asked why a sloped roof was needed, or if a flat roof over the whole site would make sense.
- With regard to the windows and the different articulation of the bays between the buildings, he said it appears the exact same window types were used. Mr. Waggoner suggested using some different window types for each building to reinforce the concept of variety the applicant is going for.
- Mr. Waggoner liked how the balconies have been pulled back from the corners. He likes the corner turret elements that appear to be more octagonal. The one rounded corner in the middle appears to be a misfit, to him.
- Color-wise, Mr. Waggoner was okay with the palette presented. He warned the applicant to stay away from any pink color, which the light brown color appeared to be in some of the renderings.
- Mr. Waggoner was curious, on the courtyard side, if the ground floor units would step out on the plaza level. It did not look like there was much buffer between the plaza and the windows of these units. The applicant said some planted materials, such as potted plants, could provide that buffer while also allowing for some flexibility in the use of the plaza site.
- Mr. Waggoner noted that families with kids, if they live in the ground level units, might be running around looking into other units' windows. He said some dimension of enclosure outside the windows of the ground level units would be worth consideration.
- He continued that the rooftop terrace has a cool look, but said the hipped roof in this area would still be very noticeable. That might be a reason to think about flat roofs, as a way to gain a better view for residents in every direction.
- The applicant said it was a lot easier to maintain a hipped roof than a flat roof, and wanted to make sure owners had units that would last a long time.
- Mr. Waggoner asked about the notches between the units and if the green wall presented in these areas at the last meeting have been removed. The applicant said the green walls had indeed been removed following comments from the DRB about maintaining a green wall over time.
- The applicant spoke to the concern of staff about opposing windows in the niche areas. He said that only units on one side of the niche would have windows to avoid any privacy problems.

Mr. Krueger:

- Asked about the service area off to the west corner of the site and the door presented in this area. The applicant said this was a garage door that would allow access to the garbage. Mr. Krueger suggested some sort of change in texture of this wall.
- Mr. Krueger said the main corner of the building, where people would walk through and to the southwest, still does not have a good sense of entry. He would like to see more life at the southwest corner.
- He was hoping to see more detail at the corners, as this is a prominent site for the City. He did not like the octagonal and 45 degree design and prefers a perpendicular design, which is his personal preference. He said the project seems very flat at the corners. He noted that in some cases, balconies have been added to projects to create more interest.
- With the colors, Mr. Krueger was hoping to see more lively colors rather than gray and brown. He hoped to add more interest to the structure with subtle but lively color changes. He suggested adding more variety to the color palette.
- Mr. Krueger said the balconies look repetitive to him. He said the turret on the northeast corner looks very flat to him and could have more life to it.
- He was not sure if brick all along the street level, clear around the building rather than just the corner building, might be a way to help the massing of the elevation along 166<sup>th</sup> and 83<sup>rd</sup>. He agreed with Mr. Waggoner's suggestions about the materials next to the sidewalk and the stoops.
- Mr. Krueger said that in some designs the DRB has reviewed, units have stairs that lead down to a common landing and then have access to a sidewalk. That might give the applicant more room between the retaining wall and the sidewalk to break up the massing.
- The applicant said a CMU block rather than the concrete proposed could be an option. He said joining the stairs for the porches, as Mr. Krueger suggested, might offer a chance for more landscaping, as well. Mr. Krueger liked the idea of doing something different along that edge.
- Mr. Krueger did not know what to do with the southeast corner, which he said was tough. He was more in favor of the round design rather than the diagonal. Right now, the design appears flat.
- He asked about the pet lawn area, which he was not familiar with. The applicant said this would basically turn into a pet bathroom. Irrigation would be installed here to help flush the area.
- Mr. Krueger spoke to the privacy issue in the courtyard. He noted that his daughter lives in a complex, Juanita Village, with a similar design to this one, and he did not notice many privacy issues in an area like this. He said the landscaping would be very helpful in maintaining privacy.

Ms. Crowder:

- Agreed with the previous comments and said there has been some progress with this design. She said the fundamental issues brought up at the last pre-application still remain. She said the hipped roofs are still a problem with a building of this size, and bother her aesthetically even though the hips are not that visible.
- Ms. Crowder said she appreciated the efforts to differentiate each corner of the site, but the corners do not have a cohesive design language. She said the walkways appear to be a sea of railings, and she said joining them would help reduce that problem.
- She continued that the color palette appears to be dated, not fresh and modern to fit the young families that might be moving into this site. The combination of the colors and hipped roof needs to be bumped up, Ms. Crowder said, to a more current look.

Mr. Palmquist:

- Said Ms. Crowder was correct in saying the applicant has made some progress, but the parts the DRB wanted to see some movement on from the last meeting did not develop.
- Mr. Palmquist said the transition from the public street to the building needs work, from an architecture and landscape architecture perspective. The access points to the site, including the private entrances to the units, the main entrance to the lobby, the trash enclosure, and the patio all need more attention.
- Mr. Palmquist said more design energy was needed to get this site to work well. He would like to see some enlarged planting plans to help understand some of the landscape buffering.

- He was struggling with the corner designs, which are the most prominent parts of the project. A lot of design energy has been put into the spaces between the corners, and it appears now the corners are simply blending into the building. He wanted to make sure the corners were done well. He was not drawn to any of the solutions regarding corner design that the applicant presented.
- Mr. Palmquist said the three separate buildings are really not all that separate. From the street, there would not be a view of the roof, which means there is not much differentiation with the roofline. He liked the idea of the three buildings at the start of this process, and encouraged the applicant to bring in some new designs and details to accentuate the differences between the buildings.
- Right now, Mr. Palmquist said this looked like a timid approach to creating three separate buildings. He asked the applicant to change up the details and color schemes. He wants the applicant to really explore the idea of creating three separate buildings and make this a great project.
- Mr. Palmquist said the transition from public to semi-private to private needs to be resolved, perhaps with the common landing suggested beforehand. He asked the applicant to improve the design such that residents get a feeling that they can use their street space.
- He said the same comment would apply to the backside of the units where they open onto the plaza. Mr. Palmquist wanted to define, perhaps with landscaping, some way that residents could have some defined yet active space.
- He asked the applicant to focus on the three corners of the project, especially the southwest corner. Mr. Palmquist said the arbor, plantings, and pathways near the vehicles look good. He asked if there was a way to create a better sense of entry at the southwest corner.
- Mr. Palmquist recommended improving the trash enclosure and perhaps putting in a small lobby on the southwest corner, or perhaps putting in an entry on 83<sup>rd</sup> just up from the corner. He hoped there would be a way for pedestrians to use the southwest corner without walking around a number of driveways.
- Mr. Palmquist noted that corner elements are always the toughest on big projects like these. He suggested, if the three buildings are very different, the corner tower element could be the same for all the corners and thus tie the entire project together.
- Mr. Palmquist said the project could even include more than three buildings, possibly five or six, creating a row-house look which might be more in line with what the zoning in this part of Redmond calls for. He wanted to make sure the applicant did not feel stuck on the three-building concept.
- Overall, Mr. Palmquist said this project has made huge strides. He asked the applicant to focus on the comments made by the DRB at this meeting and coming back with some new ideas.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MR. WAGGONER AND SECONDED BY MR. KRUEGER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:11 P.M. MOTION APPROVED (4-0).**

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**MINUTES APPROVED ON**

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**RECORDING SECRETARY**