

MEMORANDUM

TO: DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
FROM: GARY LEE, SENIOR PLANNER
SUBJECT: LAND-2014-00619; The Carter on the Park; Pre-App meeting No. 1
LOCATION: 7494-7502 159th Place NE
DATE: May 1, 2014

This is the first Pre-Application meeting for this project. The proposal is to construct a 6-story apartment building with approximately 198 residential units, of which six units are proposed to be live/work units along the first floor street front. The site is approximately 1.2 acres in size and is located on the east side of 159th Place NE, between Bear Creek Parkway and Leary Way. The site is also across the street from Dudley Carter Park, and an entrance to the Sammamish River Trail, and adjoins a new asphalt path (on the east side) that runs along the west side of the wooded parkland to the east.



This first pre-application meeting is to learn about the applicant's development concept, and to provide input regarding design issues the Board and staff will be interested in addressing through further design development.

The conceptual site plan generally meets the building setback requirements. Additional review by the Fire Department is required regarding emergency access around the building. It is likely emergency access lanes will be required on the north and south sides of the site. The applicant is requesting a reduction in the minimum parking requirement, which shall be reviewed by the staff and the Code Administrator. The unit count is dependent upon the approval of the request.

The proposed development is intriguing and exciting as it will be a pioneer on this street and will set the tone for future development that follows here. The zoning and Pedestrian System Map call for an urban/commercial character along this street, with a 14 foot sidewalk and commercial storefront (non-residential) use fronting on the back of the street sidewalk, similar to the new mixed-use development on Cleveland Street. The hope and vision for this block is that it will evolve into a mixed-used sub-neighborhood of downtown that will have some urban interest and vitality of its own. The applicant is proposing live-work units at the street front level, with the units raised up, and setback from the street. This live-work design scheme can be approved via an Administrative Design Flexibility request, but only if this aspect, along with the entire building, prove to be a superior design solution –with the flexibility. Staff is interested to hear about the conceptual design of the actual work space, and visibility into the ground floor space from the sidewalk, and is interested in hearing the Board's comments on this issue.

As the site also fronts (backs) a new asphalt path (to the east) along the west side of the wooded park, the east side of the building should also provide pedestrian oriented/scaled architectural features that face the trail, per RZC 21.62.020. C. 2. iii. Some attractive pedestrian stair feature(s) should be provided to entrances along the east side too, not only landscaping to screen the open parking garage along this façade.

Planning Staff is interested in hearing about the applicants ideas for cladding and architectural style for the building. Staff generally likes the shape of the building and the photo images provided to convey architectural themes that could be applied. However, staff is concerned with the note on page 10, indicating that the façade will be clad with horizontal lap siding, as this a very large building. Staff likes the images shown on page 6 of the packet and hopes that the style and finish of the building can move toward a modern/sophisticated theme (which does not include a lot of horizontal lap siding in my opinion).

Staff is interested the applicants presentation, and in hearing the Board's comments and directions for the next Pre-Application meetings.