

**CITY OF REDMOND  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
May 1, 2014**

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:** David Scott Meade, Craig Krueger, Kevin Sutton

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Scott Waggoner, Joe Palmquist, Mike Nichols

**STAFF PRESENT:** Steven Fischer, Manager; 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 Chair David Scott Meade at 7:12 p.m.

**PRE-APPLICATION**

**LAND-2014-00619, The Carter**

**Description:** Construction of a 6-story mixed use building

**Location:** 7494-7500 159<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE

**Applicant:** Kim Faust with Main Street Property Group, LLC

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

Mr. Lee noted that this was the first pre-application for this project. He was excited about the possibilities for this application. The general site planning meets the City's setback requirements. He noted that the City still needs to find out if there are any fire access issues, but the general shape of the building meets zoning requirements. Staff is concerned about an administrative design flexibility request surrounding the live/work units on the ground floor. The ground floor is supposed to be a commercial design theme, in that it fronts a Type 1 street. The DRB will have to consider that through the administrative design flexibility provisions. With that flexibility, the entire project has to be superior in its design. Another code provision relates to the back of the building, which fronts on the pathway along the adjoining park. Staff says that side of the building should have some pedestrian orientation to it so the building does not turn its back on the trail. Mr. Lee noted that a lot of lap siding is called for in the design. Considering the size of the building, he said other materials should be used, too.

Kim Faust presented on behalf of the applicant, the Main Street Property. She introduced the other members of her team, including Main Street President Kelly Price and CEO Eric Campbell. Architect Agustin Enriquez and Mark Weisman of Weisman Landscape Design were introduced as well. Main Street was formed as a multi-family division and became an independent company in 2011. The company has built several new projects, including Slater 116, a 108-unit building covering 10,000 square feet in the Kirkland area that was completed in 2013. Similar projects have been built in Bothell and Kenmore by the company.

The current application is called The Carter on the Park, a six-story, 198-unit multi-family building between Leary Way and Bear Creek Parkway on 159<sup>th</sup> Place. The project name comes from Dudley Carter, whom the park across the street is named after. Carter was a beloved Pacific Northwest woodcarver and Native American artist. Elements of his work will be subtly included in the design. The location today is auto-related services, but the applicant said this was a prime Downtown location. The project so far has drawn inspiration from three major elements. The first element is the adjacency this site has to local parks. The pedestrian trail and the community park to the east provide a beautiful connection

to nature. The building has been oriented to the east so the units can take advantage of the view. The courtyard and community room are also oriented to the east. To the southwest is Carter Park and units will be oriented toward that view as well, with direct access to the Sammamish River Trail. The applicant said the City has done a great job preserving trees downtown, and the applicant plans to make those an asset to the building.

The applicant said the second inspiration for the project is the fact the site is a gateway to Downtown Redmond. The view down 159<sup>th</sup> Place from Leary provides a portal into the City. Strong corners and a modulation on the south will be a design focus because of the visibility. The third inspiration for the project has to do with a sense of place. The applicant said 159<sup>th</sup> Place was one of the last streets in Redmond to be embraced. This project could be a catalyst for future development. The applicant said her group shared the City's vision for this block and believe that it will develop into a neighborhood of its own.

The applicant said a lot of design thought has been put into this project, but it is still in the conceptual stage. The live/work units along 159<sup>th</sup> will require an administrative design variance. The applicant said that landscape would be an inspiration for these units. Having live/work units will give some flexibility to the building as the neighborhood grows and matures. The materials and color selections are just getting developed. The applicant, at this meeting, is focused on modulation and massing.

Augustin Enriquez with GBD Architects next spoke on behalf of the applicant. He said the project is almost 200 units, and parking is assumed to be on a one-to-one basis. The applicant is trying to stay within the zoning criteria, not including the live/work units, as mentioned earlier. The existing conditions around the site include a lot of small-scale commercial development that, over time, the applicant is expecting to be much larger. Right now, it is a tough retail location, but the views surrounding it are tremendous. Those assets have led a lot of thinking as to how the building is oriented. The applicant is looking for feedback from the DRB as to how feasible the project is and any fatal flaws it might have.

The applicant presented some images of similar projects in Portland and elsewhere. The current application calls for five stories over one, with a wood frame building over concrete. The applicant would like to see most of the quality exterior materials on the west-facing street side on 159<sup>th</sup>, with the potential to wrap them around on the north and south. The 159<sup>th</sup> side would be a blend of brick and panels. Bay windows would be placed on the west side to articulate the front face of the building and giving it a residential look. There would be a differentiation between the purely residential units on floors two through six and the future commercial units on the ground floor. The applicant is asking for two curb cuts. There are two levels of parking. One level is five feet down, and one level is five feet up. Having a curb cut at the north and at the south allows the applicant to remove any circulation and ramping for the parking, which should make it much more efficient. The applicant wants the DRB's feedback on the curb cuts.

The pedestrian trail back behind the building is interesting, in that the building really only has one public face, on the west side. The applicant said the east side was a public face, too, in that it faced the pedestrian trail. The applicant is looking for guidance on how to cover the parking on the east side of the site yet still allow for proper ventilation. The project is predominantly housing. There are north and south-facing small courtyards that are 27 feet deep by 90 feet wide. A large central courtyard is 50 to 60 feet wide and 100 feet long, so it is fairly large. That faces the heron rookery near the project, and could almost be an extension of the rookery. There is a community space on the east side of the project. The street side elevation could have a blend of brick and panel. A dark gray or black brick with red highlights would be used to emulate Native American art.

There are two floors of parking, one five feet below grade and then five feet above grade. About 190 parking stalls have been provided, and a robotic parking stacker could be placed on the east side to put in more parking, if needed. The floor plans on the lower level are pulled back from the street and five feet below the street level. Ingress and egress for the parking structures are on the north. There are curb cuts on the north and south that brings cars up to the parking structure. The live/work units proposed would be two feet off street level, accessed internally by a ramp. The apartments would have a central amenity space and a central court in between them with a C-shaped scheme. The applicant has suggested a basic floor plan for the units themselves, but those designs are still very much in flux.

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

### Mr. Krueger:

- Asked if the applicant had requested a lower parking count for this project. Mr. Lee said that had not been applied for yet, but is anticipated. Mr. Krueger said he had always wondered how and when this area would be developed.
- Mr. Krueger said the access points on 159<sup>th</sup> make sense, with one ramp up and one ramp down. Mr. Lee said the Technical Committee is still determining the feasibility of that plan.
- Mr. Krueger asked if a green roof would be used on the project as a way to gain additional height. The applicant said the green roof had not been considered, but some sort of LEED designation would be desired.
- Mr. Krueger asked about making a pedestrian connection from the east side of the building to the park. The applicant said that has been discussed, but there is some question about how providing that access would reduce the number of parking stalls on the site. If the access could be provided in the building setback, that could be an answer.
- Mr. Meade said that a good example of how a building could access the trail is right across the street from the applicant's project.
- Mr. Krueger asked about providing access to the parks and how the design could be changed to reflect that. The applicant said the plan to provide a peaceful view for a maximum number of units outweighs the possibility of orienting the central courtyard another way. However, that idea has been discussed. Mr. Krueger suggested that the applicant continue considering that.
- Mr. Krueger said that 159<sup>th</sup> Avenue could use some improvements, and Mr. Lee said a new 14-foot sidewalk would be put in through this project, which would be a significant change.

### Mr. Sutton:

- Agreed with the idea of making a connection between the pedestrian corridor and the community room, possibly through the setback.
- Mr. Sutton said the live/work units, at 500-600 square feet, did not seem big enough for living and working. The fact that the units are elevated off the sidewalk made them seem more residential to him.
- Mr. Meade said the Lion's Gate live/work units in Redmond, which the applicant mentioned in his presentation, have not been working well. He asked the applicant to make a more deliberate move toward a residential or commercial development.
- Mr. Meade said a lot of screening would have to be employed to have live/work units on this site. He noted that the City might be saturated with live/work units. Mr. Lee suggested a loft design for the units, with commercial units downstairs and a residential space above.
- Mr. Meade said the applicant should look at the Star Point buildings in the Issaquah Highlands for some examples of live/work units that are very cool.
- Mr. Sutton said he liked the building forms and the step back on the south and north of the site. He also liked the plantings around the site. He said the community room should have some connection to the trail and park outside.

### Mr. Meade:

- Suggested that the applicant should look at the Group Health project the DRB recently approved, which had a cabana/community room element that stands on its own. He suggested that the applicant consider the community room on this site as a destination and icon along the trail.
- Mr. Fischer gave more details to the applicant on where the Group Health design could be located on the City's website.
- Mr. Meade said the community room could have more height, or some different element, to make it stand out. Mr. Sutton said the main idea would be that the residents would not have to walk out of the courtyard to get access to the trail.
- Eric Campbell next spoke to the DRB on behalf of the applicant. He said that he would consider making that pedestrian connection. Mr. Meade said the site next door to City Hall was a good example of a bike-oriented development, which makes the trail even more important.

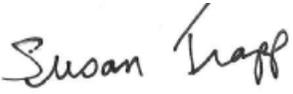
- Mr. Meade liked the idea of drawing on the Dudley Carter theme. He asked the applicant to explore something really special in that regard for this building.
- Kelly Price from Main Street spoke on behalf of the applicant. He said that, in looking into the origins of Dudley Carter and his sculpture along the trail, he has recognized how big an impact Carter had on the City of Redmond. The applicant said he would make a strong effort to create some showpiece elements in the design that would emulate Carter's work.
- Mr. Meade said the project should have an urban feel, but could still provide some tasteful references to Dudley Carter.
- Mr. Krueger asked about the parking and the parking screening under consideration. He said some green screening seemed reasonable. Mr. Meade said creating some ramps from the parking to the trail could be considered, as well.
- Mr. Meade said a green element that would take shape quickly would be needed on this site. The building across the street from the site has a similar situation, and has turned into more of a garage than the DRB intended.
- Mr. Meade said the growing environment in the screening area proposed could be a good space for plants.
- Mr. Weisman spoke on behalf of the applicant, and said this area could be a challenge in terms of its access to the light. He noted that the landscaping could meander somewhat to create some areas for residents to linger and celebrate the plant life on the site.
- The applicant hoped there could be some playfulness in the design that might encourage local birds to nest there, even. Mr. Meade said that was a good idea. He was concerned about containing headlight spill from the garage.
- The applicant said lighting and safety could be issues, too, if the landscaping is too heavy.
- Mr. Lee asked if the area in question could be backfilled to block the view of the parking. The applicant said that would be a possibility. Mr. Lee said a short wall along the trail might be a good idea, too. The applicant agreed, and said he would look into it as a way to provide some separation and privacy between the site and the trail.
- Mr. Sutton asked about the possibility of a loading dock or loading area. The applicant said trash and recycling would happen on the south end of the building. Details have not been developed as of yet. Mr. Fischer asked where the loading would be for people moving in and out of the complex.
- The applicant clarified where the trash and loading zones would be. The loading zone is within the garage. Mr. Lee confirmed that there would be a separate driveway that residents could use to back in and offload their things. The applicant said that driveway could range in size from 25-45 feet.
- Mr. Meade asked about the central access points that tenants would use. The applicant said that point was well taken. Mr. Meade asked a building around the corner from the site could serve as inspiration. Mr. Lee said that building has not been built, in that the applicant in that situation had some other projects in other cities he had to attend to.
- Mr. Lee asked about the idea of mixing brick and lap siding on the exterior. The applicant said he had not spent a lot of time on that part of the design. One complication is trying to pop the bay windows on the site, which would be a unique element.
- Mr. Lee asked about the front elevation and if the second floor was cantilevered up. The applicant said the floor could be cantilevered, but it would not have a significant depth. Mr. Lee said that cantilever would limit the base of the building coming up and getting bigger.
- The applicant asked if it would be better to have the base of the building run taller rather than having a clear delineation between the base and the rest of the building. Mr. Meade said some vertical interplay could happen between the base and the upper floors.
- Mr. Meade suggested putting some big sections of brick on the exterior of the building to provide some visual breakup to the massing.
- Mr. Krueger said he liked the massing of the building and the bay windows. He would like to see more details on the southwest corner, which would be a community entrance, of sorts, for the site.
- Mr. Meade said this was a forward-looking design, and he said people in Redmond were pushing the envelope with projects like this. He said the applicant was in a sweet spot in this location and could create something historic. He said the initial massing study showed a lot of potential.
- Mr. Krueger said he was eager to see this project take shape.
- Mr. Meade said the parking for this site was a big question. A few buildings nearby have some parking issues, and there are cars filling up the streets. He hoped the applicant could encourage bringing in tenants who might have smaller cars.

- The applicant asked about the two garage entries proposed and the DRB's opinion of that idea. Mr. Lee said the argument for two entries was good, in that the property is very long. Mr. Meade said he had no argument with that concept.
- Mr. Lee noted that the project is on a street that is not heavily traveled and will not be heavily traveled in the future. Mr. Meade said he would support anything that would help increase the parking cap as a way to keep residents from parking on the street.
- Mr. Lee asked about the mechanical parking concept and how that would affect the parking ratio. The applicant said the mechanical parking would net the site 15 additional stalls, which was not huge, but would provide 1.05 stalls per unit rather than 0.95 stalls without it.
- The applicant asked if residential units could work on the ground floor. Mr. Meade said the applicant should look into a hybrid solution. He said a commercial space could be created, possibly with a niche café.
- The applicant said the hybrid solution would be challenging, in that he did not want to have vacant space for a long period of time. This ground floor would set the tone for the entire building. Mr. Meade agreed that it could be difficult finding the right tenant for the lower floor.
- Mr. Meade said the big challenge is that there is not a lot of pedestrian activity in this area yet. The applicant asked if the lower floor could have four residential units and two commercial units. Mr. Lee said that would not be possible under the Code.
- The applicant asked if some open space could be put on the street front and then changed into commercial units as demand increases in the area.
- Mr. Lee said the Lion's Gate example showed a concept of a convertible space. He said the lower floor for the applicant's project would still have to be commercial rated.
- Mr. Krueger asked if a fitness club would be a good fit somewhere in the site. The applicant said there might be a workout room in the building, but it would not be all that large. The hope is to encourage people to go outside and use the trail and other amenities.
- Mr. Krueger said fitness rooms on the lower floor would have the look of commercial units, but would not be actual retail locations, which might be helpful. The applicant said there would be room in the outdoor spaces for yoga or other recreation.
- Mr. Meade hoped that a retail spot could be an attractive spot off the trail for the site. He said the project was an exciting, cool way to serve an underserved part of Redmond. He said the project could be a game changer.
- Mr. Meade asked about the name of the project, The Carter on the Park. He recommended Carter on the Park instead. The applicant said the name was a work in progress. The DRB and applicant team thanked each other for their time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MR. KRUEGER AND SECONDED BY MR. SUTTON TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:16 P.M. MOTION APPROVED (3-0).**

**June 5, 2014**  
**MINUTES APPROVED ON**

  
**RECORDING SECRETARY**