

**CITY OF REDMOND
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
March 3rd, 2011**

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, Scott Waggoner, Jannine McDonald, Mike Nichols

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Joseph Palmquist, Lara Sirois

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Fischer, Principal Planner; Dennis Lisk, Associate Planner

RECORDING SECRETARY: Susan Trapp, 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 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. NICHOLS, AND SECONDED BY MR. WAGGONER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 20TH, 2011 MEETING. MOTION PASSES (5-0). THE PROPER SPELLING OF MS. MCDONALD'S NAME SHOULD BE JANNINE, INSTEAD OF JANINE.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. KRUEGER, AND SECONDED BY MS. MCDONALD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 3RD, 2011 MEETING. MOTION PASSES (5-0).

PRE-APPLICATION

PRE100016, Overlake Design District Master Plan

Description: Redevelopment of Group Health Overlake Hospital property

Location: 2464 152nd Ave NE

Applicant: Mike Hubbard *with* Capstone Partners

Prior Review Date: 08/05/10, 10/21/10 & 11/18/10

Staff Contact: Dennis Lisk, 425-556-2471, dwlisk@redmond.gov

Mr. Lisk noted that the applicant is preparing a multi-phase master plan for the Overlake site to turn it into a mixed-use, transit-oriented community over the next 20 to 30 years. The project has 1.5 million square feet of residential usage and slightly less than that for commercial uses, including a hotel and conference center. There would be about 40,000 square feet of retail, placed mainly along 152nd Avenue, and with good access to the rail station planned for the area. The applicant has been before the Board three times, talking to the DRB as to how the parks and open space would be involved. The Parks and Trails Commission was part of that last meeting with the DRB. At this meeting, the applicant is presenting a site circulation plan for vehicles, transit, and pedestrians as well as a program for sustainable techniques.

Steve Schlenker presented first on behalf of the applicant, and gave a quick overview of the project for some of the newer DRB members. He noted that Overlake will be a dense, mixed-use neighborhood for the future, and this project will be a catalyst for that. The Comprehensive Plan from the City, as well as some guidelines from Group Health to mark its legacy in the region, have helped steer the design. Regional goods and services are south of the project, and employment at Microsoft is to the north. A 2.6-acre park has been placed in the middle of the project, connecting the uses throughout the site. The topography and its slope will be used to the advantage of the development to increase density. The site will have a signature element, a pedestrian hill climb, which will go from the transit center through the park up to Microsoft. A hotel will be in the northeast corner of the site.

The key to the project is that it is transit-oriented, the applicant says. The plan is to tie in with other transit options around the region. The mobility goals, established by the City, include a connection from 152nd to 156th and also a connection to the street grid, which will be east of the project. A new off ramp from SR 520 will be connected to the project as well. Bicycle traffic will have a connection from 152nd and 153rd, and pedestrians will have paths within the site. Ample sidewalks, parking, and streets will help attract visitors as well. Group Health's goals include creating a feasible infrastructure phasing plan. Mike Hubbard spoke to that issue on behalf of the applicant. He noted that the economic plan for this project is difficult to chart out compared to what it might have been 5 years ago. Thus, the project has been split into smaller building portions to attract developers. Therefore, paying for road infrastructure improvements has been a challenge. The development has been clustered to attract larger capital players. City staff has allowed the developer to use land proceeds to pay for infrastructure, which has been helpful in this complex situation. The plan has to allow for a 25-30 year vision.

A strong pedestrian environment is also important to the applicant. Because of the amount of commercial development, there could be a secondary circulation network involving underground parking garages that might mitigate traffic on the surface. Engineering the streets on the project has been a challenge due to the City street standards, and their locations are fairly well locked in. Bicycle mobility has been helped with a neighborhood connector from 152nd to 156th. Pedestrian routes include plaza spaces, which connect to transit and buses. The hill climb will go from the transit center to Microsoft, but will also have a connection to a more intensely green urban pathway. Some five-minute walking circles have been added, as well, to make easy connections to transit and buses. Sustainability is tied with the mobility and transit access of the project, which helps provide density bonuses. Studies have shown that the ownership of cars is often reduced in a transit-centric project like this, which could improve traffic significantly. Sustainable building features have been added, which include some LEED certification. Storm water will be directed into the City's new storm water system.

Mark Brumbaugh spoke to the DRB about trees on the site. Many of the trees were on this site from before the time Group Health built here. There are an estimated 1,000 significant trees on the site, but it will not make sense to save native trees due to heavy digging around the project. Mitigation can be allowed on and off the site; 35% tree retention is required by the city. Mr. Brumbaugh says having dense stands of trees on a site like this does not make sense. Mitigation on the site will be hard to manage between the multiple contractors who will be working on the project. The applicant wants to achieve all the mitigation offsite, planting not only trees but bushes and ground cover. Mr. Brumbaugh is working with the City to figure out how many replacement trees would be needed and where they would be placed.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Waggoner:

- Says the mobility concept, as far as the street grid, really starts to lay out a clear diagram of how the project will be split up, which shows the access points to the project. He likes the underground parking aspect, from a user standpoint.
- Mr. Waggoner commented on the sustainable concepts, and asked the applicant if any print guidelines would be applicable to the project developers, such as green roofs.
- The applicant is still considering how to involve LEED certification. Plus, he noted that the LEED certification is changing, and will most likely be very different when this project is near completion.
- The applicant is also trying to consider the minimum density requirement for each small parcel; also, new density requirements from the City will be coming out in April of this year.

Mr. Nichols:

- Says it will be important to look at what is developed vs. what is not developed throughout the building of the project to make sure the site looks appealing the whole way through.
- Mr. Nichols likes the interface of the pedestrian pathway and its connection to transit.
- Mr. Nichols asked if electric vehicle charging sites would be added. The applicant says that would be up to the individual developers.
- Mr. Nichols asked if, during the removal of vegetation of the project, the appearance of the project would be maintained and consistent from developer to developer.

- The applicant says that is under consideration, but it is not clear how much grading will have to be done. He is hoping to leave some native vegetation around the main road as developers start to build.

Ms. McDonald:

- Likes the overall concept with connections to transit and light rail. She is noticing more of a focus on 152nd and the retail there rather than 153rd, which would push people to go through the site more.
- Regarding the trees, Ms. McDonald noted that it would not be practical to keep a number of trees. She asked if there was a way to incentivize the re-use of the trees, once they have been cut, for other sustainable practices on site. She says that would help identify the site and give it character.

Mr. Krueger:

- Says this is a great plan with an exciting concept, especially the hill climb and transit focus.
- Mr. Krueger asked about the phasing of the project, and the mobility planning goals. The applicant says the first commercial permit would trigger a main "spine" road to be built through the project, and a road along the side of the park near 153rd.
- The applicant says the hope is there is not a constant road project, and development would happen around that road construction.
- Mr. Krueger asked how vehicles could mix with pedestrians safely on the project. The applicant says he will be changing access points off secondary roads to help that happen. The applicant admits there will be challenges in that effort due to the topography of the site.
- Mr. Krueger asked how the exit off SR 520 would connect with the project. Mr. Lisk says that would be a one-way exit, and it would basically duck under 148th.
- Mr. Krueger asked if parking spaces should be placed along 26th and other streets around the project, and asked how wide those roads would be.
- The applicant says 26th is an internal access road for the site, but it connects directly to the transit center. That has dictated the width of the 26th, which was laid out by City staff. Mr. Lisk added that an urban pathway was needed as well as parking for that roadway.
- Mr. Krueger asked about sustainability and connecting storm water to the regional storm water system. Mr. Lisk noted that there is a need to deal with storm water in Overlake in a comprehensive way, and the idea is to create a system to handle water with three big vaults in the neighborhood.
- The first vault would be in the eastern side of the Sears store in Overlake, which could have a park over it in the future. The goal is to have the vault built by 2015. The next two vault facilities would include one in the urban park and one under the transit plaza of the Group Health property.
- Mr. Lisk says rain gardens and other amenities will be added to help deal with storm water, too.
- The applicant noted, in response to an earlier comment, that he wants to plan for retail on 152nd for now, and then let the market dictate where other retail stores could go.
- Mr. Krueger echoed Ms. McDonald's thought about re-using trees on the site. He asked if there was a heritage tree that could be preserved on the project.

Mr. Meade:

- Says the grid is getting more defined, but asked if this site would stand out, or blend in with adjacent uses to the project area.
- Mr. Meade says there are some green concepts that can work into the infrastructure of the project, from timber to other re-uses. He says the landscaping standards for this project should include some large-scale concepts that would be appropriate with the large buildings on the project.
- The applicant said that the site should have a sense of place, and should stand out rather than blend in. Mr. Meade agreed, and said that this project should be the leader, with the surrounding neighborhood adapting to it.
- The applicant says the landscape designs for the individual sites have been a struggle, due to so many unknowns. The applicant says the DRB will have a role in those designs, which Mr. Meade says makes sense. Mr. Meade does not want the applicant to constrain himself for the long term.
- The applicant says in the present planning scenario, the Parks Department will be part of the process for the park and urban trail, which will involve good public input.
- Mr. Krueger asked about pedestrian safety around the spine road of the project, which the applicant assured him would be in place. Mr. Meade thanked the applicant for his time.

PROJECT REVIEW

PRE110006, Redmond Square Apartments

Description: 5-story apartment development with 2 levels of parking; total 238,400 SF

Location: 7941 170th Ave NE

Applicant: Oscar DelMoro *with* Cosmos Development Company

Architect: Robin Murphy *with* Stricker Cato Murphy Architects

Staff Contact: Gary Lee, 425-556-2418, glee@redmond.gov

Mr. Fischer spoke on behalf of Mr. Lee for a staff perspective on this project. This site had gone through the DRB process years ago. By the time the applicant was ready to move forward, there were economic problems that brought the project to an early end. Now, the project is again before the Board with a more expansive vision. It goes across a north-south alley with a connection to 169th. Mr. Lee has written a memo asking the DRB to pay attention to these details:

1. The overall height and massing of the project, and how this building relates to the street. Some of that deals with groundwater and parking in an area with a high water level. That groundwater is about 15' down, so two levels of underground parking would be a challenge.
2. The length of the building, which may not be code compliant.
3. The amount of common usable open space.
4. The "muse" or north-south alley concept on the south side of the project.
5. Residential setbacks along the alleyway.
6. Commercial space or commercial uses.

Mr. DelMoro spoke on behalf of the applicant. He says he is happy to be back working in Redmond; his company has been in the City before Microsoft began and helped devise some early design standards for the City with staff members like Mr. Fischer. He wants to make this a good project for the City. Mr. DelMoro says the site, 1.25 acres, is next to Anderson Park and a community center, which he says begs for a residential project. Mr. DelMoro says the project could be developed to create good pedestrian access. He would like the City to consider vacating the alley on the site, at which point he would grant an easement for City access. Or, the City could allow an easement and let the applicant build over and under the alley. The applicant says the block is a great module for residential living, but working in parking is a challenge. He is hoping to build platforms to create some parking solutions.

The architect on the project, Robin Murphy, spoke next on behalf of the applicant. He noted this neighborhood was primarily multi-family and single-family residential. Most of the existing buildings are two to three stories. Many single family lots on the site are now vacant. The applicant anticipates four-story buildings will be moving into this area soon. He is hoping to create an alley with pervious surfaces, decorative concrete and green walls. The applicant noted that Redmond's population is growing quickly, and will need more housing. He said that the project will have fewer units than what was presented last time, with two and three-bedroom units geared for families. The proposed building length would be 120' and the depth would be 67'. The applicant says having three or four buildings on the site would not be efficient, so he is trying to create two buildings that could create a compromise between what zoning requires and modulation of the roof and walls. He brought up several options for the building, including vacating the alley on the site and possibly creating a courtyard, a muse, and even a bridge over the alley. The hope is to connect the alleys on the site for public gathering and pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

The grade plane analysis shows that the building proposed would have to be split into two. However, getting the proper depth for a parking garage will be difficult due to the high water table. The applicant is proposing entering the site in two locations for parking, one on the higher side of the site and the other using a speed ramp off 169th. On top of the parking would be a podium of sorts that would provide private open space connected to a residential entry point. Stairs and elevators would be on the back on the building. There may be a way to combine those stairs to provide even more private open space between the units. The applicant says the muse element would provide a good combination of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The common open space requirement is 20% of the lot area, which is 11,300 SF (including the vacated alley), or 100 SF per unit. There are 160 units, which would mean 16,000 SF, but the lesser of the two is the requirement. Open space, including play areas for kids inside and outside of the

project, is provided throughout the site, including the rooftop location. The alley is currently 16' wide; the applicant has added a 7' wide dedication and 6' wide pedestrian path of pervious concrete in his design.

Andy Rasmussen spoke next to the Board on behalf of the applicant about the landscaping on the site. The goals of the project include allowing good pedestrian access to residential and retail options and a project that would have a green edge. There are plans to interconnect the open spaces inside and outside the project. The main entrance would be through a lobby area, which would be a large common open space. The idea is to anchor both ends of the alley, with green walls possibly on either side of it. The applicant is also considering some storm water features for the roof water.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Waggoner:

- Mr. Meade noted this was a lot to take in. Mr. Waggoner says the gap between the two buildings on the site could have some nice sun exposure, and helps reduce the height massing of those buildings.
- He asked if more breaks could be provided along the street side; the applicant says the building would be about 65' tall on the street side, with a peak that could go as high as 68'.
- Mr. Waggoner says that perception of height could use some work. He asked if decks or balconies could be added on the street side wall. The applicant says the base and middle floors will be fairly homogenous, but the top floor will have taller windows, perhaps, to break the massing.
- The applicant says the decks will provide the modulation that the zoning code requires. He added that the bridges and roofs make it look like there are three buildings with a cap on top of them, which should also break up massing.
- Mr. Waggoner asked if a solid wall would need to be added between the car and pedestrian lanes in the muse area; he noted that traffic might be slower in this spot and a wall might not be needed. The applicant says vehicle use will be limited in this area.
- Mr. Meade asked about the garage access point for the site, on the west side. The applicant said that there was another ramp coming in from the north, from the alley. To be most efficient, the speed ramp would have to come off 169th.
- The applicant says the plan is to energize the alley with this project, which would encourage pedestrian traffic and could separate traffic to go to either side of the site.
- Mr. Waggoner says it will be difficult to work out the height restrictions. The applicant is asking for flexibility to get the project done.
- Mr. Waggoner asked about the parking provided. The applicant says the minimum, 1.25 spaces per unit, have been provided because the focus is on above-ground quality space.

Mr. Meade:

- Is concerned about the height of a project in a neighborhood that does not have that many tall buildings, yet. He does not know how 65' of height could be mitigated with landscape at the ground level.
- Mr. Meade says he hopes the applicant will find ways to make this project smaller and push it back from the street. He understands the applicant wants to reach the maximum unit number, but he simply finds the project is too tall for the neighborhood.
- Mr. Meade noted that decks are not always the best choice to provide modulation to a project. Decks can appear as a solid with the railings they require, and the modulation is lost. He would like to see some richer modulation to soften the elevation and provide more outdoor spaces. With that, he believes the DRB could support the height of the project.
- Mr. Meade says the alley becoming a part of the building appears to be a more viable solution, in terms of the services residents would need.
- Some available street parking may help with the project, Mr. Meade believes. He says under-parking a project like this could kill it. He would like to see more parking provided.
- Mr. Meade asked if there was a clear path chosen for the project going forward. The applicant says that will be next step.
- Mr. Meade says an outdoor space of roughly 50' would be a good consideration.

Mr. Fischer:

- Mr. Fischer noted that putting outdoor spaces on the north side of the Center Plaza, as is presented here, would not provide that much sun.
- Mr. Meade says some east and west light may be available in this proposal, even on the north side.
- Mr. Fischer asked how the project could better engage with the street side of the project, on 170th, possibly with stoops. He would like to see more connections to the street than just a stairway leading up to the center courtyard area.

Ms. McDonald:

- Agreed that better connections to the street were needed, perhaps with stairs coming down from the units. She recommended pulling the units out, slightly.
- Ms. McDonald says putting in some half-stories, perhaps, could provide some attractive enhancement.
- Mr. Meade says if stoops are built, a place to sit and possibly barbecue with neighbors would be a good idea. He says the DRB would be able to forgive some of the massing if the applicant is able to come back and really impress the Board with some different architecture and colors.
- Mr. Meade says the applicant should take a chance to create an anchor piece for the neighborhood, something extraordinary.

Mr. Krueger:

- Asked about the southeast corner of the building, which appears to jut out into the street. He likes the idea of emphasizing the alley, and creating an interior plaza. He would like to see that on the street.
- Mr. Krueger is also concerned about the height of the project, especially in this family neighborhood. He wants to reduce the bulk and massing, and agrees with Mr. Meade that creating stoops might create a better streetscape.
- Mr. Krueger likes the idea of bridging over the alley, which he says makes a good connection for the project that is off the street.
- Mr. Meade says the stoop concept would help add to the neighborhood feel to the area. He wanted the applicant to consider a way to drive people toward Anderson Park, which is right next door.
- Mr. Krueger asked Mr. Fischer if the project stays within the zoning plan for the East Hill neighborhood.
- Mr. Fischer says the applicant has gone through a massing study, and the project stays within the boundaries of the code. Thus, it fits in the neighborhood vision as well.
- Mr. Fischer added that the DRB's job was to help the applicant make the project aesthetically attractive as well as code compliant.

Mr. Nichols:

- Noted that there was a lot of work left to do on the project. He added that the berming on the project makes the project seem detached and even more imposing.
- Mr. Nichols recommended looking into the possibility of stoops, echoing other DRB members.
- Mr. Nichols likes the idea of the muse as a way to engage pedestrian and car access through the site.
- Mr. Nichols says the outdoor spaces appear to be too shaded; he wants to make sure the applicant reconsiders those spaces to bring in more light.
- Mr. Krueger asked the applicant if the parking structure's lower level could be dropped any further to help bring the massing of the project down.
- The applicant says he will be looking into that challenge in the next design phase. The east and north ends have turned into a landscape podium, but he does not want this to turn into a moat of sorts between the project and the street. Some flexibility on the land use side will be required.
- Mr. Meade says he appreciates the work that has been put into the project and he hopes the DRB's comments will help. He says this is a great start to the project.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION MADE BY MR. KRUEGER AND SECONDED BY MR. WAGGONER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:30 P.M. MOTION PASSES (5-0).

MINUTES APPROVED ON

RECORDING SECRETARY