

**CITY OF REDMOND
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

March 5, 2015

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, Joe Palmquist, Craig Krueger, Mike Nichols, Kevin Sutton

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Scott Waggoner

STAFF PRESENT: Gary Lee, Senior Planner; Steven Fischer, Manager

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.

PRE-APPLICATION

LAND-2013-01989, Redmond City Center

Description: Two 9-story residential towers to be built in 2 phases

Phase 1: 170 units and approximately 25,000 square feet of retail

Phase 2: 3-stories of office with 4-stories of residential above

Location: 16135 NE 85th Street

Applicant: Oscar Del Moro *with* Cosmos Development Company

Architect: Robin Murphy *with* Stricker Cato Murphy Architects

Prior Review: 12/05/13 & 01/23/14

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

Mr. Lee noted that this was a project that has been before the DRB twice and it has taken a break for about a year. The applicant has come back with some revisions. Staff has some minor issues with the project. Along the front façade, staff has suggested eliminating the balconies to reduce some clutter. Staff also has some issues with the blank walls on the project, which could stick out like sore thumbs without proper architectural detail. At the last presentation on the project, a circular hill climb element was introduced. Now, that element has been reduced. Phase 2 of this project could be developed while Phase 1 is finishing up, but Mr. Lee wanted the DRB to consider how the space would look if only Phase 1 was completed.

Mr. Lee said the mid-block pathways that go through the property might benefit from an administrative design flexibility request which would deviate from the standard cross-section of mid-block pathways at grade. Normally, paths have 11 feet of landscaping on both sides. The applicant has a plan to elevate and split the path, which is different from a typical pathway design. Finally, staff would like the DRB to consider the opening of the loading bay along the street. Staff would recommend a rolling garage door to cover the opening when there are no trucks heading in and out.

Oscar Del Moro presented on behalf of the applicant. He said that this project has a lot of potential. He would like the DRB to help this project reach its potential. He said the project is very unique and could break the open space barrier and public access barrier in a way like never before. He said this project, in this location, could be a catalyst for nearby properties to improve neighborhood design. The applicant is asking for some pedestrian open space that would create a super-block that could be built in phases. The hope is to coordinate with transit authorities to create a very urban development. He has been working with King County for the past eight or nine months, and that collaboration did not come to fruition in a way

the applicant would have liked. He has redesigned the circulation of the tower on this project to respect King County's property, which is adjoining.

Architect Robin Murphy next spoke on behalf of the applicant. He noted that, over the past year, he has been working to include Metro Transit in this development. That effort looks like it will not work, so the project has been re-worked such that the fire lane is entirely on the development site. Previously, the project was reliant on having its fire lane on the Metro site as part of the access to the two buildings proposed. The fire lane now loops around the entire property. Tower B has been compressed from a north-south perspective, which reduces some of the open space around the tower elements.

The applicant noted that often in Redmond, podium developments have a concrete base that is 12 feet tall with retail and commercial parking. Above that is a wood-frame building that is five stories high and open space that is not completely public. The applicant is proposing something different, in that people would be drawn through the space and find connections between NE 83rd and NE 85th, including the skate park, the Metro line, and the residential area to the east. There is a corner element that has been reduced from the original design. The corner will not engage the transit center or the skate park as presented at the last meeting on this project. Pathways on the north and south of the site have been preserved. The applicant would like the flexibility to create a public space that is activated and interesting, which will be a dynamic use of the site.

The applicant showed that, to get an extra story on the site per land use code, 20% of the site must be used for open space. Thus, 20,000 square feet of open space has been created between the two buildings. There is a slight incline in this open space. An accessible ramp goes along side the open space that runs around the retail entry. This is also a fire lane that goes around the site and then back down to grade. Ten feet of landscaping at grade will help complete the current fire lane easement that is used as a pedestrian path. The applicant hopes to also add a new path in the back of the project. Around the perimeter, there is a wall, but it will not remain as concrete. The intention is to create a green wall with pilasters and lighting.

There are two levels of parking, one at grade and one below. The parking area is about 30,000 square feet. There is a mezzanine space between the two buildings. In Building A, looking north, there is a loading and unloading area. Next to that is the access to the parking and also ten feet of landscaping. A section of Building B, looking north, shows 11 feet of landscaping at grade. There is an existing eight-foot pathway, an elevated driveway, and open space looking west. The below grade parking is ten feet deep with some shoring on the east. There is a grocery element to the project that has a two-story brick rotunda. The colonnade originally in the project has been removed. The loading area for Building A has three elevators and stairs. The driveway into the site involves the use of a security gate. The driveway begins at grade, but goes down into the parking structure. Fire code has determined that an access route should be provided to the three elevators. There is a retail space between the two buildings, which curve and open up to the south. The office entry has a fire lane wrapping around it.

Andy Rasmussen with Wiseman Design Group next spoke to the DRB with regard to the landscaping. He said the constraints of the fire lane could provide an opportunity for open space that is inviting and multi-purpose. An entry sequence has been created with a ramp and other pedestrian access points. A lighting feature has been installed that carries across the entire space. This would create a large plaza area between the two buildings. There are hanging planters with vegetation and a stairway that goes up to an open space plaza. A trellis element has been installed in the plaza as well. There are numerous seating opportunities throughout the plaza. A stairway draws pedestrians down into the circulation of the larger neighborhood. The hope is to create an accessible route into the project, which will involve some coordination with the Parks Department.

An existing walkway outside the site could remain as is or turn into a planting area. Decorative paving elements have been placed throughout the site. Street trees have been placed along the main road. There is a setback of two to four feet between the project and the Metro property. Vines and bright plantings will be placed in this area to create a green screen. Building B also has open space, but it is not accessible from the plaza area.

Mr. Murphy continued to describe the changes between last year's design and the current proposal. The buildings, A and B, will be built in phases. Previously, Building B opened up as it went to the west. Now, the building has a stronger presence at the street and opens up southward as opposed to westward. The courtyard opens up to some southern light and softens the space between the buildings. Buildings A and B will both have a strong brick base. Retail, residential, and office units have been provided. The brick base on Building A modulates between two and three stories high. On Building B, it would be three stories all the way around and is not entirely brick. The office portions of the building have been set apart from the residential and retail units. Shadow studies show that in the summer, when the sun is at its highest, the impact on the residential building to the east is minimal. In the fall, shadows will fall across NE 85th. In December, shadows will fall from all buildings in the area.

The project is surrounded by open space currently, including some open lots. The entry to the grocery has a 20-foot tall plinth with brick and a concrete base. Metal panels have been used and there is a colonnade at the residential entry. The brick has been extended up to the second level. The two-story base to the building is now 30 feet tall, whereas it was only 20 in the previous design. The office element has three stories, two that are 12.5 feet and one that is 15, which creates a strong base.

The applicant said he did not have a problem removing the balconies that Mr. Lee suggested. The roof has some struts on it that make a unique statement at the corner. Between the buildings, there is a curve that opens to the south and creates an open space that draws people in. There could be an opportunity for a coffee shop connected to the grocery at the ground level. Residents, retail users, office workers, and pedestrians from the general public will use the site, which should provide a unique semi-public mixing area in the middle of the project. The open space will be activated, but there are some constraints from the fire department. A lower, transparent wall could be installed in the plaza area and benches that flip down could potentially line the fire lane. The entry to the office building could be activated with some retail.

The mezzanine is open to the east and west, which is different than the original design. The mezzanine has a butterfly roof above it. At NE 85th, there are beige, white, and brick elements, along with wood windows at the grocery and residential entries. Contrasting colors are placed in the inset balcony areas. If a balcony feature is not used, a lanai might be proposed. The hope is to provide a minor splash of color. The east elevation of Buildings A and B uses brick to create a strong base. The south elevation of Building A has a faceted curve that could involve more of a use of color. The applicant showed how the project would be built in phases. He is still working on how the buildings would be occupied and accessible during the construction process.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Nichols:

- Asked about creating cavities at the ground floor level, which appears to be missing something in the storefront area. The applicant noted that there were colonnades in the previous design. Currently, six canopies have been proposed.
- Mr. Nichols agreed with Mr. Lee about using a door to close off the loading bay when it is not occupied. Mr. Nichols liked the idea of having some green screens around the raised podium area to make it look less industrial.
- He liked the use of the water feature between the buildings. He asked about the west elevation, which also looks a bit industrial in its use of color and blank wall spaces. Mr. Nichols said some more interest could be added to this part of the design.

Mr. Palmquist:

- Liked the project in general. Mr. Palmquist said he was still trying to figure out how this project related to other sites next to it. He said there appeared to be some strange transitions. He asked about the southwest corner of the site and how it would be activated.
- The applicant showed how the southwest corner would have a graceful stairway and ramp elements to draw people into the site. Mr. Palmquist asked if there was a path along the west side, which the applicant confirmed. The idea is to keep that path, but it could possibly be replaced with some additional landscaping.

- Mr. Palmquist confirmed that there was another path on the east side of the project that created a similar situation to the southwest. He said that these access points to the project were his only concerns. Everything else looked good to him. He said the southwest access was particularly important due to its connection with the Metro site.
- The applicant said improving the shared pathways with Metro and the park would be something to consider. Mr. Palmquist said the project looks great overall and does not feel too large. He would like more detail about what happens around the perimeter.

Mr. Sutton:

- Liked Tower A better than Tower B, in that the design seems to be further along.
- Mr. Sutton said that Tower B had a strict three-story podium and not as much variety and change along the base of the building. Tower A, in comparison, has a lot more detail.

Mr. Krueger:

- Asked about the building heights and how nine stories were able to be employed. Mr. Lee said the buildings could go to eight stories by providing the 20% open space. The additional floor is achieved by modulating the height of the building. Mr. Lee said more details might be needed on how the volume of the building is moved away from the street.
- Mr. Krueger asked about where the building was pulled back. Mr. Lee said the upper edges of the buildings modulate at about the third story. He asked for a perspective from the project at the street level to see how the upper floors step back.
- The applicant said the last design did not take as much advantage of the ability to add height. He liked having that type of flexibility and said the new design looks much better, in that the roofs do not appear as flat throughout the project. Mr. Krueger said he would like a street perspective.

Mr. Meade:

- Was mainly concerned about the north elevation. Mr. Meade said this would be a massive building right above the sidewalk. He said the use of colors appears very vertical in this design, which accentuates its size. He said breaking down the building's massing using color in a more horizontal fashion might be a good option throughout the site.
- Mr. Meade loved the storefront elements. He asked about the colonnades that had been removed from the original designs. The applicant explained how the building modulated, going up to the residential units above. The colonnade is still there, essentially, but filled in.
- Mr. Meade liked the building all the way around. He said it was a massive, exciting project. He said it was important for Redmond to have projects like this with more density that create good open space.
- Mr. Lee said this project was early in the process and said one or two more pre-application meetings would be needed before approval. A significant analysis with the Fire Department still needs to happen.
- Mr. Meade asked the applicant to come back with changes in the details at the next meeting, which he hoped was very soon. The DRB and applicant thanked each other for their time.

PRE-APPLICATION

LAND-2015-00322, Redmond Retail Project

Description: Remodel of existing building, includes reuse of existing arcade with the addition of a new entry, gable feature and canopies on the west elevation, indoor nursery, reuse of existing loading area and new support area.

Location: 15291 & 15301 NE 24th Street

Architect: Paul Reed/Jennifer Rinkus *with* Baysinger Partners Architecture

Applicant: Roger Bernstein *with* Oppiden

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

Mr. Lisk said this was the first pre-application meeting for this project, which is at 152nd Avenue and NE 24th Street. For many years, this has been an Office Depot. The applicant would like to renovate the existing building, including the addition of a new gable feature and some interior modifications as well. In general, staff believes the changes will be positive to the structure. Mr. Lisk suggested additional landscaping. There is certainly room in the parking lot for that. Right now, the site has more parking spaces than are allowed under City Code for retail use. If the building continues in its legal non-

conforming status, the City cannot require the addition of landscaping. It would have to be a voluntary act on behalf of the applicant, but Mr. Lisk would like more landscaping to be considered.

Roger Bernstein spoke to the DRB on behalf of the applicant, which has a connection to Orchard and Sears. Orchard went into bankruptcy, and Lowe's acquired the operation in 2013. Even though Orchard is run by Lowe's, the company runs separately as a home and garden store. Orchard is going through a complete re-branding that is reflected in the bright, new design of this project. The floor will be pulled up to give a cleaner look, LED lighting will be added, and the building will have a nicer overall feel. Within the shell of the store, a plant nursery will be added. Wrought iron fencing will be installed to allow the plants to breathe. Vented skylights will be installed as well. Rainwater capture units will be used to water the plants. The focus is to repurpose the building, re-skin the front, and give it a nice look. He would be open to options for landscaping.

Jerry Baysinger with Baysinger Partners Architecture presented to the DRB on behalf of the applicant. This building has been on this site for about 40 years. It was a challenging project when it was built due to the sloping nature of the site. A 20-foot high retaining wall is on the east side of the site and the parking lots slopes a bit more than normal for a retail store. The building has a tilt-up design, which will not be changed. The function, however, will see some changes. The proposed plan would take out some loading docks on the south side of the building. Across the front of the building, there is a colonnade that will be retained but updated with a more contemporary feel. The columns will be wrapped differently, and more of the colonnade will be added to the right of the entry. To the left, there will be a wood feature to create a more natural, Northwestern look.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Nichols:

- Asked about the soffits used in the colonnade element. The applicant said the soffit is currently gypsum board, and that has not been considered for changes.
- Mr. Nichols asked about the LED lighting and if new lighting would be installed outside the store, too. The applicant said that is not part of the plan. A study of the lighting levels in the parking lot has not been completed yet, but the plan is not to replace the lights.
- Mr. Nichols said the design looks like a good upgrade that would benefit the neighborhood. He encouraged the applicant to listen to the staff suggestion to add more landscaping.

Mr. Palmquist:

- Said the project looked much better than what was there before. Mr. Palmquist said the project could potentially be ready for approval at the next meeting.

Mr. Sutton:

- Said the project looked good. Mr. Sutton asked about the primary material at the left of the entry. The applicant said it was painted concrete. An added feature of an arbor is being considered.
- Mr. Sutton said he was not excited about the arbor element.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked if there was more than one color of brown on the existing pilasters. The applicant said that was a rendering issue and the pilasters were actually all one color. The applicant said he would bring the actual colors to be used at the next meeting.
- Mr. Meade asked about the green-colored roof and if it were part of the new corporate branding. The applicant said that was indeed the case, but he said he was open to other options. Mr. Meade said the trellis could work well to create a garden store look. He asked about the coping at the top of the building.
- The applicant said the coping would be painted, but most likely not replaced, as the roof is in good condition. Mr. Meade said a gray color could help the coping pop out and create some good interest. The applicant said the height of the gable could help in that regard as well.
- Mr. Meade said adding landscaping outside the building would benefit the applicant in showing off the nature of this new garden store. He recommended adding some pavers to create more of a pedestrian zone outside the building.

- Mr. Meade asked if shopping carts would be used. The applicant said the store would not have larger items, like lumber, but he was concerned about the slope of the site and how that would impact shopping carts. Corrals for the carts would be put in place outside the store.
- Mr. Meade said paying more attention to the parking lot would give the project a good look and help contain pedestrian and vehicle traffic. He said the lot could be an amenity to the site in more ways than one. He said the project could come back for an approval at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. NICHOLS AND SECONDED BY MR. PALMQUIST TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:15 P.M. MOTION APPROVED (5-0).

April 16, 2015

MINUTES APPROVED ON

Susan Trapp

RECORDING SECRETARY