

**CITY OF REDMOND
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

April 2, 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, Craig Krueger, Scott Waggoner

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Joe Palmquist, Mike Nichols, Kevin Sutton

STAFF PRESENT: Ben Sticka, 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 Chair David Scott Meade at 7:00 p.m.

PRE-APPLICATION

LAND-2015-00489, 166th Avenue Townhomes

Description: Demolish existing building and construct 18 new townhomes in 4 buildings

Location: 8502 166th Ave. NE & 16640 NE 85th Street

Architect: Dan Umbach with Dan Umbach Architect LLC

Applicant: Jeff Fransen with TF 166th Ave. Townhomes, LLC

Staff Contact: Ben Sticka, 425-556-2470 or bsticka@redmond.gov

Mr. Sticka noted that the applicant is proposing to build 18 new townhomes in four buildings. The buildings would be three and four stories tall. The buildings would be arranged along a double-loaded drive aisle which provides access to individual garages for each of the 18 units. Staff is comfortable with the project as proposed but would like to hear the Board's comments related to the possibility of more modulation of some of the structures.

Architect Dan Umbach spoke on behalf of the applicant. There are four buildings with either four or five units in them. The main parking access is from the south off of 85th. The south-facing units have individual pedestrian entries off of 85th. The rear units have pedestrian entries from the drive aisle and a second pedestrian access out to 166th. There is a fair amount of grade difference on the site now. Currently, there is a plateau that is eight or ten feet above the sidewalk elevation. Thus, all of the units step up one foot from unit to unit going up the hill to the east. There is also a difference in elevation from the front to the back of the site, so the back units are higher than the front units. The front units have stairways up to their entries and internal stairs to get to the parking level. The back units have parking and a daylight basement level. All of these units have access to the rear yard space out of the second level. Every unit has one interior parking space. There are four extra parking spaces on the site.

The applicant showed the DRB some of the developments near the site and the single-family homes to the north of the site. There is some City property to the east of the site which is undeveloped. A number of trees will be replaced on the site and a lot of landscaping will occur. Street trees will be planted on the site and smaller trees will wrap around the site. Decorating paving will be used in the drive aisle. All of the units have roof decks with stair towers leading to them. The units all have one bedroom or office space on the ground floor at the entry level. The main living levels are all on the second story and bedroom levels are on the top floor. The back units are partially submerged, so there is a lower level room with daylight provided through a window well. The main living floor in the back units is at the grade level on the north side. The back units use the habitable attic provision in the Residential Code. Thus, technically, these are all three floors plus a habitable attic space. The front units simply have three floors.

The west end and south side units have a flat roof expression. The internally-facing units have balconies over the entry and there are corner windows on each unit. There is some outdoor patio space in front of most of the units. Patio space is not provided for the units flanking the drive aisle because sight triangles are needed out of the driveway, especially with the grade difference in mind. The shape of the building is driven by the setback requirement for windows into main rooms. The main living spaces are set back further than the utilitarian spaces in the floors below. The applicant considered using shed roofs on the back of the buildings to tie the site together, but that idea was scrapped. From the street, that design could not be seen well and it also made the roof decks feel claustrophobic in the back of the buildings.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Meade:

- Asked about the railings at grade and how high they would be. The applicant said they would be 42 inches, maximum. He said the same effect could be accomplished with landscaping, perhaps. Mr. Meade said there was a balance to be considered, in that the space should not feel walled off.
- Mr. Meade said that was his main concern on the project, and everything else looked fine.

Mr. Krueger:

- Asked about the units and confirmed they had three bedrooms and one parking space. Mr. Krueger asked if more parking spaces would be required. Mr. Lee noted that this site is at the edge of the Downtown Zone, which requires only one parking space per unit, regardless of the number of bedrooms. Guest parking, which is required, has been provided.
- The applicant noted that there would be full street improvements, which may include some street parking on 85th as well depending on fire access requirements.
- Mr. Krueger asked if the applicant had nailed down any colors or materials for the site. The applicant said there would be a lot of fiber cement siding, given the buildings' modern design. Cedar may be used as a material depending on budgetary concerns. A repeated pattern would happen throughout the site with a darker base color, potentially, for the end units.
- A base maroon color is in consideration for each unit with some splashes of accent color. Every building would have a uniform base and body color, but some accent color would give each building a little variety.
- Mr. Krueger liked the project and its modulation, railings, and balconies. He liked the corner elements and the roof decks. He said the project looked great overall.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked if the window pattern could be picked up in the railing on the deck. The applicant said that could happen. The railings, right now, appear as a placeholder in the drawings. Mr. Meade said the strong window form could be echoed in the railing. The applicant said that idea would be considered, with some differences for the end units.
- Mr. Meade said the considerations for materials appear to be on target. He said cedar would be a great choice and he would support using that in the construction. Mr. Meade said cedar would bring a residential quality to the project.

Mr. Waggoner:

- Asked if the dimensions of the site were so tight that the units could not be modulated forward or backward a foot or so. The applicant said not much modulation was possible from unit to unit. The main limitations come from the drive aisle location.
- Mr. Waggoner said the bay windows on some units create a recess on the entries, which provides some good modulation.
- Mr. Meade suggested losing a foot in a unit to add modulation. He asked if the change in materials, massing, and the recesses of the entry doors provide enough modulation, much like a row house.
- Mr. Waggoner said modulation could be added on the north side or the back side, where neighbors would be looking in on the site. He said a fair amount of shadows would occur with the decks and balconies provided. He said the cement panels would be a good choice.
- Mr. Krueger asked if the applicant had seen the material used on the South Kirkland Park & Ride, a synthetic wood, and if it were not good to use. Mr. Meade said that cementitious material was not bad

from a distance, but it does not look convincing up close. Mr. Meade said he was not certain about the hardness of the finish on that material, either.

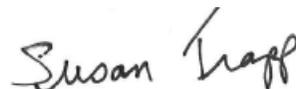
- Mr. Meade said other projects around town have used synthetic materials with mixed results. The applicant said he has used some synthetic materials on past projects and has had to take extra care in doing so. Mr. Krueger said he would prefer not to see those materials on this site.
- The applicant said the builder he is working with on this project often uses cedar. The budget will be the main deciding factor as to whether cedar is used. Mr. Waggoner said a gapped cedar fence in front of the site could look good on the building. The applicant agreed.
- Mr. Meade said the fence element might look a little too rural. He suggested echoing the upper rail design in this location to give it more of an urban look. The applicant said landscaping in front of the fencing would provide a different look. Mr. Meade said a darker stain on the fence could make it feel richer and more urban.
- Mr. Meade said the roof decks looked enormous. The applicant said with flat roofs, those decks simply made sense. Mr. Meade and the rest of the DRB said the applicant could come back for an approval at the next meeting if the same approach to the design was continued. Mr. Meade said he was excited to see someone take this property and improve it.
- Mr. Lee noted that the DRB, which is in the middle of revising the Historic District Design Standards, will get a visit from the Chairman of the Planning Commission, Bob O'Hara, at the next DRB meeting on that subject. Chairman O'Hara will serve as a liaison and report back to the Planning Commission with any developments.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. KRUEGER AND SECONDED BY MR. WAGGONER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:33 P.M. MOTION APPROVED (3-0).

May 7, 2015

MINUTES APPROVED ON



RECORDING SECRETARY