



**Centre City  
Development  
Corporation**

DATE ISSUED: June 16, 2004

ATTENTION: Centre City Development Corporation  
Meeting of June 23, 2004

SUBJECT: Bayview Motel and Apartments Project (south side of Fir between  
State and Columbia streets) – Design Review – Little Italy  
Redevelopment District of the Expansion Sub Area of the Centre City  
Redevelopment Project

REFERENCE: Basic Concept/Schematic Drawings

STAFF CONTACT: Suzanne Drolet, Associate Planner

SUMMARY

Staff Recommendation - That the Board grant Design Review approval with conditions.

Projects Committee Recommendation - At its June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Projects Committee (Dillon, Johnson, McNeely, Raffesberger, Vilaplana) unanimously recommended Design Review approval with conditions.

Centre City Advisory Committee (CCAC) Recommendation - At its June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, the CCAC voted 13 - 1 (3 recusals) and the PAC voted 12 - 1 (2 recusals) to recommend Design Review approval.

Other Recommendations -- At its April 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Little Italy Association's Design Review Committee recommended Design Review approval.

Fiscal Impact - None.

BACKGROUND

Redevelopment Agency Resolution 2130 established CCDC as the Design Review Board for Centre City Redevelopment Projects. The Agency designated the Board as the design review authority for projects which contain over 50 dwelling units and/or 100,000 square feet.

Item Number 13 , Page 1 of 6  
Meeting of June 23, 2004  
Agenda Number 588

The project site is located one block east of the commercial center of the Little Italy neighborhood on the south side of Fir Street between Columbia and State streets. The site is located in the Mixed-Use Residential Emphasis District, which requires a minimum of 80% residential land uses and up to 20% commercial uses. The site is currently occupied by the four-story Super 8 Motel and proposes the addition of seventeen motel rooms to an existing motel for a total of 119 rooms, as well as 77 studio apartments, and 2,600 square feet of commercial space. The motel use is not permitted under the existing zoning and is classified as a Previously Conforming Use. Previously Conforming Uses are allowed to expand up to 20% of the gross floor area of the existing structure with a Neighborhood Use Permit.

This proposed project advances the Visions and Goals of the Centre City Community Plan and the Objectives of the Centre City Redevelopment Project by:

- adding to the range of downtown housing opportunities,
- thereby increasing the downtown residential population, and
- contributing to the vision of downtown as a major residential neighborhood.

**DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

<b>ROLE/FIRM</b>	<b>CONTACT</b>	<b>OWNED BY</b>
Owner/Developer: Moe Siry	Siry Investments	Moe Siry (Privately Owned)
Architect: Ted Smith, Smith and Others	Ted Smith	Ted Smith (Privately Owned)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION -**

Type of housing (condo / rental)	Rental
Total number of units / total square feet	77 / 69,209 sq. ft.
Number of units forecast for site / block	102 / 200
Land Area (i.e., full block, half block, or number of square feet)	32,771 sq. ft. (one third block)
Project density (in units / acre)	105 units / acre
Number of units demolished	0
Number of bedrooms / unit (and unit size)	77 studio apartments (approx. 350 sq. ft.)
Retail	Approx. 2,600 sq. ft.
Parking Residences / Hotel	43 / 48
Stories / Height	4 stories / 87 feet (top of highest tower)
Floor Area Ratio / Permitted	3.0 / 6.0
Inclusionary Housing Compliance	N/A

## PROJECT ANALYSIS

The project is proposed for a 32,771 square-foot site located on the south side of Fir Street between Columbia and State streets, one block east of the Little Italy commercial district. The Centre City Planned District Ordinance (PDO) requires a minimum of 70% street level transparency for this site and Sun Access setbacks above fifty feet for all street frontages. The project proposes a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of approximately 3.0 within the maximum 6.0 permitted for this site.

The immediate neighborhood is characterized by low- to mid-rise residential and commercial buildings and surface parking lots. A one-story single-family residence and a one-story office building are located at the interior property line on Columbia Street and State Street, respectively. Across the street to the east and south are Interstate 5, Washington Elementary School and Amici Park, to the west are low- to mid-rise single family homes and businesses.

The project consists of two new buildings and connecting wings that surround the existing four-story structure over two levels of underground parking. The new four-story buildings and additions will accommodate seventeen additional hotel rooms (for a total of 119 hotel rooms), 77 studio apartments, and approximately 2,600 square feet of retail space on the fourth (restaurant space) and ground (retail) floors. Residential units and hotel rooms generally will be in different wings of the buildings but will share the floors, internal corridors, and recreational amenity area on the roof deck. Separate entries serve hotel visitor and residents, with the hotel entry on Columbia Street and the residential entry on State Street. The underground parking garage will provide 43 residential spaces and 48 hotel spaces. Parking provisions will be separated and accessed from different entry points on State and Columbia streets. The four existing driveways will remain in place for this project and reduced in width to meet Code requirements. The pool, which is currently located at street level in the north parking lot, will be relocated to the roof of the project. The site slopes approximately twelve feet from State Street towards Columbia Street, and approximately three feet from Fir Street to the interior property line.

Design Analysis -The Little Italy Focus Plan, adopted in 1993, establishes goals, policies, and programs for the Little Italy District. The Plan contains design guidelines that encourage the preservation of neighborhood scale, use of the traditional 50-foot development pattern, and development of courtyard patios in new projects. Additionally, the Plan recognizes that development on sites over 20,000 square feet must exercise additional design techniques to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood. These guidelines are used in the evaluation of projects; however, they are not regulatory compared to the PDO's development standards.

The existing motel was constructed in the late 1980s based on typical freeway-oriented and suburban development standards, which today look out of place in Little Italy. The proposed project utilizes a contemporary design of new buildings and additions to renovate the

existing structure and accommodate the motel expansion and new uses, while completing the streetwall and hiding the parking areas. Each elevation utilizes a different massing technique as well as color and material treatment, which creates the impression of individual building masses and reduces the perceived scale of the project. Varied roof lines and the three stair towers create strong corner elements and produce an interesting and distinctive project for this site. Primary colors and materials proposed for the project include white and rose-hued shiplap siding and stucco accented with multi-colored masonry, and dark green shingles (south elevation). Black and red are used as accent colors for the balcony and stair railings on the west, north, and east elevations. The windows are framed in black aluminum.

The Columbia Street elevation is primarily composed of white stucco and glass with black metal frame windows and trim and a rose-colored "fanned" roof stair tower. Street activation is provided by the recessed hotel lobby, which is lowered from the current second floor/mezzanine location, as well as the retail space at the south building. A tall porte cochere and window walls above the two garage openings break up the mass of the Columbia Street frontage and provide views into the project. Due to the retaining wall of the existing motel, the design cannot accommodate increased transparency along the street level of this frontage. As such, staff is satisfied with the present amount of glazing, as well as efforts to create a relationship between this part of the building and the street.

The Fir Street elevation is composed of three main segments: the stairways and porte cochere make up the outer edges at the street corners and the main structure comprises the center. Due to the grade change, the project was unable to create usable retail area on this elevation; this leftover area was used to create individual lobbies for three of the lower residential units as well as a stepped planter. West facing apartments have balconies with views to the Bay.

State Street is comprised of the residential lobby entry as well as the parking garages for hotel guests and apartment residents. The three building segments are differentiated by color, materials, articulation, and modulation. The middle portion is highly modulated utilizing inset balconies and stoops to break up the mass, while the northern portion provides a uniform plane of white shiplap siding above streetlevel windows that provide views into the site. The southern portion of the building is characterized by tall glass walls with transparent balconies over the garage opening, a steep stair tower, sloping roofline, and masonry-walled residential lobby entry.

The south elevation (interior property line) was designed to avoid the appearance of an oversized project with tall blank walls. Lower level walls utilize a muted light purple color and vertical and horizontal expansion joints to provide relief, while the upper level utilizes varying heights, color, materials, and stepbacks to create a sense of individual buildings and accommodate window openings. A planter along the third-story outdoor corridor and use of roof shingles (as wall cover) also provide visual relief to the mass and bulk of this elevation.

Sun Access Criteria Overlay– The site lies within the Sun Access Criteria Overlay of the PDO, which requires that buildings be stepped back from the street above a height of 50 feet. Along State and Columbia streets, upper floors are stepped back to form a 45-degree angle above 50 feet. The Fir Street roofline is at 50 feet. None of the three towers encroach into the Sun Access setbacks.

Streetscape Design - The Centre City Streetscape Manual requires that the project install Little Italy paving on all adjacent sidewalks. Sweet Gum trees will be planted along Columbia Street, Jacaranda trees planted on Fir Street, with Chinese Flame planted along State Street. The street lights along all streets will be upgraded to the Little Italy Standard light.

Projects Committee - The Projects Committee discussed the amount of signage, design of the southwest stair tower, and parking provisions. Some Committee members expressed confusion over the project illustrations in the staff report package and the need to provide clearly labeled presentation materials. As a whole, the Committee felt the project would be a major contribution to the neighborhood but conditioned their recommendation for approval upon the applicant's continuing efforts to work with staff and the adjacent property owner over the design of the southwest stair tower.

Centre City Advisory Committee(CCAC) - The CCAC spent a lot of time discussing the project's parking provisions but generally felt that the redevelopment of the site with a contemporary design outweighed the perceived parking deficiencies. Some members expressed concern over the potential for the stair towers as platforms for large freeway oriented signs.

CCAC Pre-Design Subcommittee - Comments from the Pre-Design Subcommittee were generally positive, noting that the project will present a significant improvement to the existing condition of the motel. In particular, the Committee noted that the project appears compatible in scale and would be an "interesting addition to the neighborhood." Concerns regarding parking accommodations, the integration of motel uses with residential uses, and treatment of the Fir Street ground plane were raised.

Little Italy Association's Design Review Committee - The Little Italy Association's Design Review Committee recommended Design Review Approval of the project. The Committee was particularly pleased with the contemporary redesign of the existing motel, massing and elevations of the project, as well as efforts to mitigate the scale differences between the project and adjacent properties.

Consistency with Plans - The Community Plan and Little Italy Focus Plan encourage a diversity of housing types and price ranges. The project provides a mid-rise design of studio apartments, which will add to the diversity of affordable and market-rate apartments and condominiums being constructed in Little Italy. The project is consistent with recent development in the area and has been designed to be compatible with the surrounding

neighborhood. The proposed project complies with the goals of the Community Plan and Little Italy Focus Plan.

Environmental Impact - Under the 1992 Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) and Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), an Environmental Secondary Study is prepared for all developments in the Centre City area in order to evaluate the project's compliance with the Community Plan and PDO and, therefore, the findings and conclusions of the MEIR and SEIR. Unless the project is found to be out of compliance with those planning documents, no further environmental review is required.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

The project provides an attractive design consistent with the objectives of the Centre City Community Plan and Little Italy Focus Plan and complies with all requirements of the Centre City PDO. With the varied roof lines and heights, strong corner elements, an interesting and diverse mixture of colors and materials, the project will present an attractive contemporary appearance that is an improvement to the current condition of the site and compatible with the neighborhood. The design of the southwest stair tower and associated signage remains a concern; therefore, staff recommends that the Board grant Design Review approval of the project as shown in the Basic Concept/Schematic Drawings with the condition that the applicant continue to work with staff and the adjacent property owner to resolve this aspect of the proposed design.

Respectfully submitted,

Concurred by,

  
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Suzanne Drolet  
Associate Planner

  
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Peter J. Hall  
President

Attachment(s):      Basic Concept/Schematic Drawings