

TOWN COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

October 31, 2013

Resolution Conditionally Approving Waivers from the Uptown Design Review Code, Chapter 15, Division 17 for One Uptown Circle

PREPARED BY: Mercy Davison, Town Planner

REVIEWED BY: Mark R. Peterson, City Manager
Steven D. Mahrt, Corporation Counsel
Wayne Aldrich, Uptown Development Director

BUDGET IMPACT: N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval

UPTOWN DESIGN REVIEW COMM'N RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval (7-0)

ATTACHMENTS: Proposed Resolution; Architect Memo to UDRC; List of Proposed Code Waivers; Proposed Site Plan, Building Elevations, Exterior Light Fixtures; Staff Report to the UDRC; Minutes of the October 28, 2013 UDRC meeting are included in the Addendum.

BACKGROUND

In December 2012 a concept plan was presented to the Town Council for the property directly west of the Uptown Circle, known as One Uptown Circle. The same plan was shown to the Uptown Design Review Commission in January 2013. At that time the project design was still in flux, but the developer wanted feedback from the Town Council and UDRC on the general building appearance and massing.

The proposal included a 6-story mixed-use building adjacent to the circle, an 8-story hotel adjacent to Broadway, and a low-rise building adjacent to West Beaufort connecting the two buildings and containing shared amenities (pool, workout facility). The project is subject to both the Uptown design guidelines found in Division 17 of the Zoning Code and the "Supplemental Building Guidelines for the Downtown Normal Roundabout." As part of the presentation of the conceptual plan in January, the architect highlighted the waivers that would be required from the aforementioned codes.

The primary concerns raised by the Town Council and UDRC pertained to the color scheme, proposed use of metal panels, cornice detail on the façade facing Uptown Circle, and details on the 6th floor terrace facing the circle. Since January, the developer has continued to refine the building plans based on many factors, including the design feedback provided by the Town Council and UDRC.

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DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The architect presented the revised One Uptown Circle plan to the Uptown Design Review Commission at an October 28, 2013 public hearing. No members of the public testified.

At the hearing, the architect summarized the project, including how little it has changed since January. The overall project square footage has increased from approximately 165,000 sq. ft. to 168,500 sq. ft. Included within that total are 5,912 sq. ft. of outdoor terrace space for pool users and for the residents and 6,616 square feet of first-floor retail/restaurant space in the mixed-use building. This is down slightly from the 8,500 square feet of restaurant space shown in the January plan. Additional key elements of the One Uptown Circle proposal follow:

Hotel

The hotel remains at 8 stories in height with 114 rooms, banquet facilities, a lounge, and workout room. The first floor includes retail space on the north side and hotel lounge on the south. The primary building materials are brick and glass facing Broadway with a curved corner featuring metal panels and glass facing the intersection of Broadway and Beaufort. The brick will be red-brown in color and will be used throughout all of the buildings. The design of the corner piece has been streamlined and the cornice reduced in mass per the request of the Uptown Design Review Commission in January.

The hotel entrance off Broadway still includes a porte cochere for drop-off; however, rather than the original plan to anchor the support columns in the public right-of-way, the new plan has a cantilever design with all support coming straight off the building. Hyatt has yet to approve this design alternative.

Mixed-Use Building

This portion of the project remains at 6 stories in height with first floor commercial space and five floors of residential units above. The number of units has increased from 34 to 35. The primary building materials are metal panels, glass, and a stone arcade facing the circle, and primarily brick and glass facing North Street. The windows facing the circle will have frames that project forward, creating shadows and visual interest. The metal panels on the portion of the building closest to the circle will be darker than the panels on the set-back portion of the building. Based upon the Uptown Commission's feedback in January, the circle façade includes an enhanced cornice designed as an aluminum sunshade over the fifth floor windows.

The sixth-floor residence has an outdoor terrace with glass guardrail on the circle façade. All residents have access to a first-floor terrace on the west side of the building. This common area is approximately 3 feet higher than the adjacent sidewalk and will be screened with a brick wall and decorative gate.

Below-grade parking is provided, with vehicular access from the alley and pedestrian access via a staircase on West Beaufort.

Pool Building

This structure faces West Beaufort and formerly connected the hotel to the mixed-use building, with the interior space providing shared amenities. The current plans provide an indoor pool connected only to the second floor of the hotel but accessible by the residents of the mixed-use building via their private, enclosed terrace. The pool structure has a metal shed roof that slants back toward the north. An outdoor patio is on the south side of the pool building.

Due to the second floor access to the pool and the significant downward slope in the West Beaufort sidewalk from the circle to Broadway, there is a tall brick wall between the pool terrace and the sidewalk.

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At its tallest, this wall is approximately 14 feet. The wall will be screened by a landscaped area on the west half and by a concrete planter on the east half. Based on the sidewalk slope, there will also be a cast-in-place concrete wall along the sidewalk on the east end of West Beaufort.

Signs

The sign package has not yet been approved by Hyatt; however, the Hyatt signs shown on the plans are standard for the Hyatt brand. The proposed signs include a “Hyatt Place” sign at the eighth story on the east and west facades with the individual letters and logo internally lit, a monument sign in the public right-of-way near the intersection of Beaufort and Broadway, and the Hyatt signature design feature called “The Edge,” which is a vertical metal piece stretching from the second to the eighth floors on the northwest corner of the hotel. This piece has up-lighting. Wall-mounted signs are proposed near the Broadway entrance.

No signs have been selected for the mixed-use building; however, it is likely that there will be first-floor, backlit signs on the North Street, circle, and West Beaufort facades. There may also be a sign naming the residential tower along West Beaufort. These signs will come back to the UDRC for approval at a later date.

Landscaping

The developer plans to landscape the right-of-way in a manner that matches the plantings elsewhere in Uptown. This includes the street trees adjacent to the arcade on the circle.

Lighting

Building-mounted lighting is proposed at various locations on the first floor. Up-lighting is proposed for “The Edge” design feature on the northwest corner of the hotel. Most of the light fixtures are considered full-cutoff and should not produce any glare. There is also a series of decorative wall lights along the west and south facades of the hotel.

The architect prepared the attached, detailed list of code waivers required for this project. All are very similar to what was shown in January. Examples follow:

1. **Height.** Buildings adjacent to the roundabout are permitted to be up to 6 stories or 93’ tall. The proposed mixed-use tower will be 6 stories tall with a height of 65’ at the top of the 5th floor and a height of 77’ at the top of the 6th floor. The hotel height is 88’5”. In the January submittal, the maximum height of the circle façade was 74’ and the hotel was 77’. Also, in January the hotel and mixed-use buildings were more clearly connected by the building facing West Beaufort; however, at this time the buildings are only connected by terraces and a staircase. Thus, for clarity the hotel structure height should be listed as a waiver from the 4-floor maximum height applicable to non-roundabout buildings in Uptown.
2. **Upper Floor Setbacks.** Above the third floor (approx. 44-50’ above sidewalk), all street-facing building facades are required to be set back by a minimum number of feet. The proposed mixed-use tower has an upper-level setback at the 6th floor (65’ above sidewalk), and the hotel has no upper-floor setback.
3. **Entrances.** Public entrances are required on all street-facing façades. Whether there will be an entrance on the North Street façade depends on the configuration of the first-floor commercial space, but it is likely there will be no entrance on North Street.
4. **Anti-Monotony.** Code prohibits more than 15’ of blank wall length. The project includes approximately 47’ of blank brick wall along West Beaufort and 27’ of blank brick wall along the alley.
5. **Lighting.** Code restricts exterior building lighting to the first floor and requires all fixtures to be full cutoff. The proposed development includes an up-light accent for the Hyatt sign.

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6. **LEED.** The hotel component of the project will not obtain LEED certification, which is required by code. The existing Redevelopment Agreement between the Town and the developer includes a waiver from the LEED requirement for the hotel.
7. **Signs.** Code generally limits signs to the first floor and prohibits internal lighting. Code also sets an overall limit on the total square footage of signs. While the proposed development meets the size maximum for signs, waivers are required for internal lighting of hotel signs and for installation of hotel signs above the first floor. Specifically, the Hyatt Place signs at the top of the hotel (west and east facades) have individual, internally lit letters and logo, and the Hyatt Place monument sign on Broadway is internally lit.

Overall, the members of the UDRC were pleased with the proposed building designs. Some concerns were expressed.

Mr. McPherson stated his concern with the amount of metal panels on the roundabout façade and suggested the architect either incorporate more brick or extend the stone used on the arcade to the top of the second floor. In contrast, Mr. French and Ms. Kathro expressed support for the proposed metal panels. The project architect said he would consider how to address Mr. McPherson's concerns.

Mr. Farnsworth and Mr. Kentzler expressed concern with the expanse of brick on the upper stories of the hotel facing north and with the lengthy, blank brick wall along West Beaufort. The architect said he would consider ways to introduce more articulation or brick detail in those areas.

Following its discussion, the commission voted 7-0 in favor of the design presented on the condition that future signs come back through the UDRC process per code.

Town staff concurs with the recommendation of the UDRC. The hotel utilizes traditional brick and glass materials along Broadway and sleek, modern metal panels on the curved corner at the Broadway-Beaufort intersection. The mixed-use building is similarly divided into traditional and modern, with brick and glass on North Street adjacent to the historic buildings and a mixture of metal panels and glass adjacent to the circle. The building heights and massing fall in line with the Uptown roundabout design guidelines with minor code waivers.

Notwithstanding the need for code waivers, the proposed hotel signs are appropriate for the scale of the building and are similar to what was approved for the Marriott. Although the Town has not previously approved signs in the right-of-way, the proposed monument sign near the Broadway-Beaufort intersection is logical for the site.

For these reasons, Town staff recommends that the Town Council approve the design as proposed with the previously mentioned code waivers and with the following conditions

1. Additional design features be added to the brick wall along West Beaufort.
2. Additional design features be considered for the north wall of the hotel.
3. Expanded masonry and/or other appropriate design accents be considered above the arcade on the circle façade.
4. Future non-hotel signs proceed through the UDRC review process per code.
5. Landscaping in the public right-of-way to meet Town staff approval.
6. Appropriate easements be secured for the monument sign proposed for the right-of-way on Broadway.
7. Final Hyatt-approved sign package be returned for Town Council approval if significantly different from the current proposal.