



November 6, 2019

Ms. Christine Quinn  
Permit Services, Licenses and Inspections  
Municipal Services Building, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

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Tavis Dockwiller, ASLA  
Michael Johns, FAIA, NOMA, LEED-AP  
Elise Vider

**Re: Civic Design Review for 1817 E York Street (Application No. 1003103)**

Dear Ms. Quinn:

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a mixed-use development at 1817 E. York Street.

The parcel, just under one acre, is bound by York Street to the south, Jasper Street to the east, Kensington Avenue to the west, and Boston Street to the north. The site is zoned IRMX and the proposal introduces a mix of light industrial and residential units including 106 residential units, 14,039 square feet of artisan industrial space, 33 vehicle parking spaces and 38 bicycle spaces. The project is by-right and is not seeking variances.

At the meeting of November 5, 2019, the CDR Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the following comments.

**Registered Community Organization (RCO) comments East Kensington Neighborhood Association (EKNA)**

The RCO offered the following comments, many of which were highlighted in their letter rather than presented during the CDR meeting itself:

- Concern regarding the parking garage entrance located off Boston Street. Given that homes also face Boston Street, the entrance should be transparent and brightly lit.
- The ground floor of the proposal should be better designed to increase transparency and provide “eyes-on-the-street”.
- The artist studios should be designed to function as and look like industrial spaces to avoid their later conversion to apartments.

**CDR Committee**

Overall, the CDR committee members had reservations about the nature of the artisan industrial units, how they might function and their scattered placement throughout the building:

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- They encouraged the applicant to consider clustering units on one floor to create a synergy among the artists. Ganged artist units and/or entrances on upper floors would also help.
- Increased public access to the artist spaces might also be beneficial to their function. Direct access for ground floor artist units and increased transparency would further activate the ground floor. The exterior expression of the artist units, as different from the residential units, should be considered.
- The committee discussed methods of activating the courtyard, including allowing visitors to directly access the artist unit spaces through the courtyard.
- There was mention that the artist units should be designed with the appropriate ventilation, access and other systems, and perhaps an added freight elevator would aid their function. Double height spaces could also be considered. The lack of separation between residential and artisan work units was also discussed.

Other comments included:

- They asked the applicant to consider “flipping” some of the ground floor programming with the parking spaces in order to better activate Jasper Street.
- They expressed support for fewer parking spaces because of the proposal’s proximity to the SEPTA’s Market-Frankford Line York-Dauphin Station.

**Adoption of Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) staff comments**

The CDR committee adopted PCPC staff comments, which included:

- Better activate the corner of Jasper and Boston Streets
- Increase the ground floor floor-to-ceiling height to increase transparency, allow for flexibility of artist or commercial use, to better activate York Street.
- Reconsider the screening for the garage elevation to be less opaque.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the committee’s action.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Sharpe  
Executive Director

cc: Nancy Rogo Trainer, Chair, Civic Design Review, [nrt23@drexel.edu](mailto:nrt23@drexel.edu)  
Daniel Garofalo, Vice Chair, Civic Design Review, [danielg@upenn.edu](mailto:danielg@upenn.edu)  
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## PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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### CIVIC DESIGN REVIEW

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Elise Vider

**Re: Civic Design Review for 2401-25 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (Application No. 999024)**

Dear Ms. Quinn:

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed residential development at 2401-25 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

The site is bound by York Street to the south, Palethorp Street to the east, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the west, and a private parcel to the north. The project is proposed on parcels with three different zoning districts, ICMX, RSA-5, and CMX-2. The project includes 102 residential units, 42 vehicle parking spaces and 34 bicycle spaces for a total of 98,434 gross square feet. The Department of Licenses and Inspections has identified dimensional and use variances.

At the meeting of November 5, 2019, the CDR Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the following comments. At the committee's direction, these comments also include comments from the proposal's first CDR meeting which were not addressed by the applicant. The first CDR meeting took place on October 1, 2019.

**Registered Community Organization (RCO) comments – Norris Square Community Alliance**

The RCO representative expressed support for the project and commended the development team for this specific change between the first and second meeting:

- Relocating the residential lobby to the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and York Streets which will avoid conflicts with traffic from the Fire Department on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

**CDR Committee Comments**

The CDR committee was encouraged to see design improvements between the first and second reviews that positively affect the neighborhood as well as improve the project itself. Some specific comments include:

- Recessed stoops and the addition of street trees on Palethorp Street create a more generous and pleasant streetscape.

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CIVIC DESIGN REVIEW

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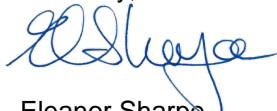
- Increasing the available soil for tree pits by joining them underground will ensure healthier tree growth.
  - Reconsider Cherry trees, as the growing conditions may not be suitable
- Internal parking areas will be much better with the addition of vegetation.
- Corner of York and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets is much more active with the change in the lobby location.
- The CDR Committee appreciates the incorporation of loading zones into the project. This will help reduce traffic on nearby streets.
- The trash room is appropriately located but the development team is also encouraged to provide a trash chute to facilitate recycling collection.

**Adoption of Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) staff comments, including comments unaddressed from the October 1, 2019 review.**

- PCPC staff urges more drawings that show the relationship between existing buildings and the proposal
- PCPC staff urges the development team to contact the Philadelphia Water Department for more information on submitting the required stormwater management plan.
- PCPC notes that at least two Energy and Atmosphere metrics need to be met based on the updated Philadelphia Building Code
- PCPC staff encourages 3rd party certification of Sustainable Design measures

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the committee's action.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Sharpe  
Executive Director

cc: Nancy Rogo Trainer, Chair, Civic Design Review, [nrt23@drexel.edu](mailto:nrt23@drexel.edu)  
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**Re: Civic Design Review for 4021 Ridge Avenue- Dobson Mills Phase II (Application No. 961780)**

Dear Ms. Quinn:

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of the residential development at 4021 Ridge Avenue.

The parcel totals 3.18 acres, and has limited public right-of-way frontage. The site is accessed from Ridge Avenue from an easement from Dobson Mills Phase 1. The only other street frontage is Scotts Lane, which at this location is not a public street. The proposal includes 133 residential units within three 4-story buildings. There are 92 surface parking spaces proposed and 45 bicycle spaces. The project is CMX-3 and is a by-right project. This project requires no dimensional or use variances.

At the meeting of November 5, 2019, the CDR Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the following comments. These comments also include comments from the project's first CDR meeting, which took place on September 3, 2019.

**Registered Community Organization (RCO) comments – East Falls Community Council (EFCC)**

While the RCO understands this project is by-right, the RCO representative expressed overall concern for the project, including:

- Constructing sidewalks on Scotts Lane is a critical element towards improving the immediate neighborhood's connectivity.
  - For example, the proposal is adjacent to McDevitt Recreation which is used by numerous community members and age groups.
  - Opening the gate to McDevitt Recreation Center could connect people through the recreation center to the East Falls Regional Rail Station.
  - Also consider meaningful connections to Dobson Mills Phase 1.
- The proposal feels like a gated community and is disconnected from the surrounding neighborhood.

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- The quantity of new development being proposed within the immediate vicinity is a concern, including how neighborhood streets, traffic congestion, and utilities will be impacted.
- The RCO representative noted 624 potential new units have been proposed around three main corridors: Midvale, Scotts Lane, and Ridge Avenue.
- They requested additional circulation internal to the site and recommended the proposal should have entrances and exits from Scotts Lane for all transportation modes.

#### **CDR Committee Comments**

Overall the CDR committee members expressed disappointment that the development team did not give greater consideration to the CDR process. The development team did not provide any substantial updates or changes between the September 3, 2019 CDR meeting and the November 5, 2019 CDR meeting. Specific concerns were similar to the RCO and PCPC staff comments, including:

#### **Site Design Comments:**

##### **Access Concerns:**

- The Committee noted that the current proposal does not seem to work for 133 new residential units, one curb cut for an entrance is not enough for 92+ vehicles.
- Several committee members requested the applicant consider using Scotts Lane for both ingress and egress, not just for emergency access.
- The Committee requested additional access routes be provided for pedestrians, bicyclists, and visitors, noting access is very limited outside of vehicular travel.
- The Committee requested that the project connect to Dobson Mills Phase 1 and McDevitt Recreation Center, which would also increase access to the East Falls Train Station.

##### **Scotts Lane Concerns:**

- PCPC Staff and CDR Committee highly recommend that Scotts Lane should include pedestrian improvements, including a sidewalk and furnishing zone with additional crosswalks and safe intersections to adjacent parcels.
- The Committee asked the applicant to consider how pedestrians will get to Ridge Avenue from Scotts Lane.
- The Committee recommended the applicant consider sight line issues into and out of the site from Ridge Avenue.

#### **Building Design Comments:**

- The Committee and PCPC staff asked the applicant to reconsider the layout of proposed buildings, specifically to front on to Scotts Lane in order to strengthen its street wall. This would be consistent with the some of the adjacent context.
- Staff and some Committee members recommended more active ground floors for each of the three buildings
  - Similarly, the Committee recommended that the building design better accommodate those who may be walking, for example adding stoops or additional entries for ground floor units and sidewalks along all frontages of the buildings.
  - The Committee requested that the applicant create more visible lobbies and entry sequences
  - Several committee members encouraged the inclusion of more common space rather than private, fenced in yards. This would also allow for more transparent and active ground floor facades



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- PCPC Staff and the Committee recommended the proposed brick exterior material continue around the entirety of each building.

**Parking Design Comments:**

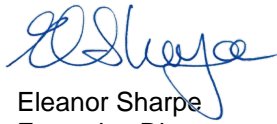
- Overall the project's design seems driven by automobile access, as the project has a moat of parking around each building
- The Committee noted that the internal circulation for all modes of access is unclear. Several members questioned the difficulty in finding where you are going as a pedestrian or in a car.
- The Committee requested additional bike rooms be added in each of the buildings and to consider additional on street or on-site U Racks.

**Sustainable Design Comments:**

- Very few sustainable design metrics are being met. Additionally, PCPC staff noted that the Philadelphia Building Code has been updated and current energy conservation metrics are more stringent.
- The Committee asked the applicant to consider third party sustainable design certification, such as LEED.
- Some committee members brought up additional sustainable design concerns including the site's future erosion impact, and encouraged additional greening and solar panels on top of car ports.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the committee's action.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Sharpe  
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