



June 12, 2020

Ms. Cheli Dahal
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1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
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Leonidas Addimando
Ashley Di Caro, LEED -AP
Tavis Dockwiler, RLA
Michael Johns, AIA, NOMA, LEED-AP
Elise Vider

Re: Civic Design Review for 33 E. Woodlawn Street (Application No. 1032140)

Dear Ms. Dahal:

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 moving and storage facility at **33 E. Woodlawn Street**.

The proposal is for a six story, 130,688 square foot moving and storage facility on Woodlawn Street, a block off Germantown Avenue. The building includes 12 car parking spaces and 3 truck parking spaces. This project requires zoning variances for use (moving and storage facility in CMX-3), loading (provided spaces are 30.6 feet long when 40 feet is required), parking (12 or 66 required spaces provided), parking (zero van-accessible parking spaces provided), signs (140 SF of signage provided when 100 SF is maximum allowed), and signs (above the 2nd floor window sill in CMX-3).

At its meeting of June 9, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments

Allsion Weiss of the SoLo/Germantown Civic Association expressed concern that the revised building did not take into consideration community member concerns about building height, overall design, or lack of ground floor public programming. She requested the team provide more landscape, and investigate more ways to activate the ground floor.

Ines Love of the Faith Community Development Corporation (FCDC) expressed appreciation that the Design Team had widened the sidewalk from their original scheme, and for the additional of backlit windows to provide more light from the building. She encouraged the team to pursue more ways to be good neighbors to the community.

2. CDR Committee Comments

The CDR Committee was appreciative of the efforts to provide more generous sidewalks, however they felt more could be done to give a more spacious public realm since the developer has full control over the block. The Committee

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encouraged the team to continue to pursue opportunities to bring other amenities to the project such as street trees and sustainability improvements like solar panels.

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

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June 11, 2020

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Elise Vider

Re: Civic Design Review for 1828-42 N Front Street (Application No. 1019245)

Dear Mr. Issac,

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 mixed-use development at **1828-42 N Front Street**.

The proposal is for a residential and retail mixed use building along N Front Street adjacent to the Market Frankford Line. The proposal is for three commercial spaces on the ground floor totaling 7,014 square feet and 70 residential units totaling 75,647 square feet. The project also proposes 27 underground parking spaces. The project is midblock between Berks and Montgomery Streets with N Front Street to the east, N Hope Street to the west. This project has no zoning variances and is by-right.

At its meeting of June 9, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments

There was no RCO in attendance for this project during the June 9, 2020 CDR Meeting.

2. CDR Committee Comments

The CDR Committee was generally in agreement that this was a strong proposal and a good project with many commendable design elements.

The Committee approved of the proposed façade treatments along both N Front and N Hope Streets, specifically the varying materials and their scale. The Committee also applauded the proposed step back of the building's mass, both within the interior courtyard and along N Front Street facing the MFL elevated rail structure. Stepping back from the elevated rail allows for retail activity to extend outside without impacting sidewalk users, while also providing additional room for light and air to reach the ground floor and sidewalk. The Committee encouraged the applicants to highlight this setback at ground level on N Front Street with a different material or delineation.

One CDR member noted that the project was great but could be exceptional with a few small adjustments. The CDR member asked the applicant to consider eliminating some parking spaces underground which would allow for additional soil coverage and area for trees along Hope Street. The CDR member also asked the applicants to consider looking at the residential floor layouts and recommended angling walls to open up the deep courtyard even more and allow for additional viewsheds looking west.

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The Committee did have some recommendations for improving the building's design. CDR members, as well as PCPC staff, noted that the applicant should increase the visibility of the residential entrance on N Front Street to make it more prominent along the heavily used street. Additionally, members requested that the fence on N Hope Street become more transparent. The Committee appreciated the wood material but wanted the applicant to consider sharing the amenity space visually with the neighborhood, at a minimum providing a more open and transparent fence.

Additionally, the Committee requested the applicant consider additional planting options for the courtyard and try to increase the amount of soil and space trees would have to grow. One committee member also asked the applicant to look at different plant ecosystems that are shade tolerant. One committee member also asked the applicant to consider the usability of the courtyard specifically to consider the layout of seating and other site elements and programming.

The Committee members, as well as PCPC staff, praised the development team for the underground parking, allowing for full use of the ground floor for active residential and commercial uses.

Lastly, one CDR Committee member noticed the project is sympathetic to an existing mural on an adjacent party wall and the applicant agreed to work to save as much of the existing mural as possible. The applicant also mentioned working with the artist if the mural had to be recreated.

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

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Elise Vider

Re: Civic Design Review for 4440-42 Ridge Avenue (Application No. 1038287)

Dear Ms. Dahal:

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 mixed-use development at **4440-42 Ridge Avenue**.

The proposal is for a 6 story, multi-use building with 10,720 square feet of commercial space at ground floor, 113,526 square feet of residential units and residential amenities above. The building includes 136 residential units. 96 total parking stalls and 61 dedicated bike spaces are divided between the ground floor and basement levels. This project has no zoning variances and is by-right.

At its meeting of June 9, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments

There was no RCO in attendance for this project during the June 9, 2020 CDR Meeting.

2. CDR Committee Comments

The CDR Committee was generally very appreciative of the changes that had been made to the project and the attention that was given to the comments from the first review. Improvements to eliminate the pinch point along Ridge Avenue and to revise the pathway through to Kelly Drive were particularly impactful. The Committee encouraged the team to continue to develop the public space at the southern façade to ensure that it is feasible and accessible, with additional amenities such as public restrooms as appropriate.

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.

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June 9, 2020

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Re: Civic Design Review for 1708-10 Tioga Street (Application No. 941161)

Dear Mr Krishnan:

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 multi-family residential building at 1708-10 W Tioga Street.

The project is bound by Tioga Street to the North, and private parcels to the east, west, and south. The current use of the site is a vacant lot between existing residential uses. The project proposes 50 residential units with no provision for off-street parking or loading. The site is zoned RSA-3 and the project has zoning refusals for multi-family uses, parking, open area requirements, setbacks, and dimensional requirements for roof decks.

At its meeting of June 9, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments:

Members from Tioga United Registered Community Organization attended and offered comments on the project design. These included:

Parking

The committee expressed concerns about the lack of parking which causes seniors to walk long distances. Additionally, at an earlier community meeting the developer was asked to provide underground parking for the dwelling units and to consider permit parking on Tioga Street.

The development team responded that the target market of seniors is not expected to drive, and this is consistent with their earlier dialogues with community organizations. The development also pointed out that the lot has only one frontage and it is not wide enough to accommodate off-street parking. They also felt that permit parking for 50 residents could cause more problems for neighbors on the block.

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Density

The RCO has concerns about the density of the project. The size and number of units in this project is too much to bring into this neighborhood, especially considering an adjacent site which was approved for 34 dwelling units.

Materials and Setbacks

The building's color palette does not have enough life and variety. They should want to bring back some life into the building with different colors of materials. The RCO also asked that the project should be setback similar to other housing units within the block.

[The development team responded that the project is setback 5' and 8' is the requirement in the zoning code.](#)

Civic Design Review Presentation

The drawings and scheme presented at the RCO meeting is different than the scheme presented at Civic Design Review and there is a request that the whole building be brought back for community input.

[The development team responded that the changes to the CDR presentation are a result of the changes requested by the community at their RCO meeting, including dropping a floor and reducing the number of units.](#)

2. CDR Committee Comments:

Overall:

The CDR committee expressed support for the project, including the creation of a place that is health centered with social services and the provision of affordable housing. The use of a single loaded corridor and broken up bays of units was considered to be a good design solution for a dense housing project. They also noted that every bedroom has a window, which is not always the case in dense housing proposals.

Access for persons with disabilities:

The committee had a discussion regarding access for people with disabilities, including questions about access through the lobbies and the entry and the amount of units which were accessible. The committee recommended using a ramp to access the side yard to ensure that people with disabilities had access in the event that the lobby elevator stopped working.

[The development team responded that the elevators were being used to accommodate access between split levels and that 2 units would be built as fully accessible and the remaining 48 units would be built such that they could be converted to full accessibility.](#)



Building Materials

The committee echoed the comments of the Registered Community Organization representatives and expressed the need for the buildings to have more color and more thought. The all brown façade should be re-examined and the applicant should consider good stone detail elements.

Additional Design Refinements to Consider

The committee urged the development team to consider a range of additional adjustments to the design. These included recommendations to incorporate two-bedroom units and consider alternate location for the trash room, such as the back of the building. Additionally, there were suggestions to make oversized elevators to facilitate the use of the bike room in the basement. The committee also notes that the side yard space is long exterior space and a curious condition. The Committee urges the development team to pursue clever design strategies that the design team can come up with to make those spaces an amenity while also maintaining the emergency egress path.

Ongoing Communications with the Community

The committee is urged to continue to have dialogue with the community to resolve the concerns that they have expressed.

3. The CDR Committee adopted PCPC staff comments, which included:

Side yard Recommendations

Planning Commission staff had additional comments for the side yard which included recommendations to provide night lighting for safety and security and to provide shade tolerant plantings in the recessed courtyards. PCPC staff also recommends that the development team consider how privacy is maintained for units adjacent the footpath, clarify the intended use of the space and to specify whether or not it is gated.

Relationship to adjacent buildings

PCPC staff notes that the relationship between the adjacent three-story housing and the proposed project is very abrupt. PCPC staff recommends adjustments in height or massing to create transitions, setting back the building to match the adjacent structure, and using landscaping to soften changes in building form and materials. PCPC staff also notes that much of the eastern façade of the building can be seen from 17th Street. Consider higher quality materials and more refined architectural details on the party wall.

Landscape and environmental conditions

PCPC staff notes that street trees are missing and at least one is required by code. PCPC staff also asks that the development team consider saving some heritage trees and incorporating them into the site plan.

Sustainable Design comments



PCPC staff notes that additional energy and atmosphere metrics are now required under the 2018 Building Code updates. PCPC staff also recommends that the development team consider 3rd Party or LEED certification.

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
Director of Planning and Zoning

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