



November 17, 2020

Ms. Cheli Dahal  
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**Re: Civic Design Review for 1 Red Lion Rd  
(Application No. ZP-2020-000653)**

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 package sortation and distribution facility at **1 Red Lion Rd.**

This proposal is to develop the large parcel at Red Lion Road and Sandmeyer Lane in the Somerton neighborhood into a new UPS package sortation and distribution facility with accessory buildings that include an employee entrance and customer service counter as well as a truck wash. The site is zoned I-2, and no zoning variances are required. The proposal totals 1,004,000 gross square feet for the main building, 3,300 square feet for the employee entrance and customer service counter, 7,400 square feet for the truck wash and includes 956 car parking spaces for employees and customers, 879 trailer and storage and loading spaces, and 101 bike parking spaces.

At its meeting of November 10, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments:**

A representative from Somerton Civic Association (SCA) attended the CDR meeting. They provided design comments in a letter, as follows:

- Because of disagreements with proposed meeting format, notice requirements, and meeting materials sent to the Coordinating RCO, SCA and the applicant did not meet ahead of either CDR meeting.
- SCA would like to see more trees on the site, particularly evergreen trees, to provide adequate screening from neighboring residential areas and offset the environmental impact from diesel and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) powered trucks. SCA notes that the applicant proposes one single line of trees and would prefer greater depth of trees.
- SCA would like to learn more about the proposed white-noise backup signals on trucks and how those signals could be audible from surrounding areas.

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- SCA would like to see how anticipated new bus traffic for employees and customers would affect traffic demands and notes that bus traffic should be incorporated into the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) that was completed for the project.
- SCA has requested more information from UPS related to the expected hours of operations.
- SCA has requested more information related to the number of and pollution impact of CNG vehicles and the timeline for them to replace diesel vehicles.
- SCA requests that the applicants provide them with a sound study of the site to demonstrate the effectiveness of berms and other measures that are being used to mitigate the impact of noise on surrounding areas. Anticipated sound impacts from construction should be included in the requested sound study.
- SCA requests that the applicant update the lighting plans that were provided to include the impacts of headlights from vehicles generated by site operations.
- SCA notes that estimated job creation cited by the applicant has increased throughout the CDR process and requests that UPS provide information on how many jobs will be seasonal or part-time versus full-time and union represented and information on job benefits.
- SCA requests that UPS commit to hiring a specific percentage of workers from nearby neighborhoods.
- SCA is concerned about the future use of drones for package delivery from the site and requests that UPS commit to forego future drone use.
- SCA questions the findings from the TIS and questions the effectiveness of proposed roadway improvements on managing congestion generated by site operations. SCA also notes that anticipated impacts from other new nearby large warehousing and distribution sites should be incorporated into the TIS.
- SCA questions how many bicyclists would use the site if bicycle infrastructure is not improved on-site or on surrounding roadways.
- SCA notes that the project will be receiving City and State tax reductions from the 10-Year Tax Abatement and Keystone Opportunity Zone program and questions the short and long-term impact of the proposal on public revenue streams.
- SCA has requested that UPS work with them in creating a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA).

A representative from the adjacent Greater Bustleton Civic League RCO attended the meeting and largely agreed with comments from the Coordinating RCO and CDR Committee.

## **2. CDR Committee Comments:**

At the second meeting, the CDR Committee expressed that they were discouraged by the minimal changes that the applicant had made from the first submission and the lack of dialogue with the community. While they agreed with much of the testimony from the RCO and public, members of the



committee noted that many of the issues brought up are zoning and planning issues outside the scope of the CDR Committee. Members of the committee suggested that these concerns be relayed to agencies that could better address them, such as the Streets Department and SEPTA.

At the first CDR meeting, members of the committee urged the development team to consider strategies that could help make the site an amenity to the community, and how the project could be a model for how a facility of this type in proximity to residential areas could be a net positive for the community.

Another member of the committee urged the applicant to provide details to City officials and the community regarding jobs that will be created from the site, including both construction and permanent jobs. These estimates should also reflect new jobs versus jobs that would be relocated from other facilities.

Members of the committee had several comments related how a large and profitable corporation like UPS could incorporate sustainable elements and strategies for improving multimodal access for a site of this size. One committee member noted that there is an opportunity to plant tree and bush species that support a habitat for local wildlife. The committee appreciates that the applicant had added trees from their first submission, but urges that they go further to provide a denser tree line which would better mitigate noise and air quality impacts, provide more desirable habitat for wildlife, and strengthen the tree root system. Another committee member agreed with the RCO that more evergreen trees should be included to provide year-round screening. The committee encourages a project of this site and visibility to pursue third party certification.

The committee also suggested that other measures to mitigate noise impacts should be considered, such as water fountains and waterfall features.

To enhance multimodal access, the committee recommended that the very long sidewalk along a vehicular drive that connects the main entrance to Red Lion Road be replaced with a separated shared use path for pedestrians and bicycles. The committee also recommended that additional bicycle parking and amenities be provided on site and that the development team should work with the Streets Department to upgrade the bicycle lane along Red Lion Road to a raised bikeway. The committee noted that curb cut widths for access drives along Red Lion Road are oversized for passenger vehicles and package trucks, creating unnecessarily dangerous crossing distances for pedestrians and bicycles. The committee also recommended that walkways be included in the parking lot to connect to the employee entrance and retail building. Lastly, the committee recommended that the development team continue to coordinate with SEPTA to investigate the possibility of improved bus service for the facility, including the potential for busses to enter the facility's property.



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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November 12, 2020

Mr. Matthew Wojcik  
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**Re: Civic Design Review for 1021 N 3rd Street  
(Application No. ZP-2020-003427C)**

Dear Mr. Wojcik,

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 **1021 N 3rd Street** (Liberties Walk block 3).

This proposal is to redevelop the third block of Liberties Walk between Bodine Street and N 3rd Streets in Northern Liberties with a new 8-story mixed-use building while also maintaining the site's east-west pedestrian connection. The site is zoned CMX-3, and no zoning variances are required. The proposal totals 59,379 gross square feet including 1,005 square feet of commercial space, 28 residential units, 12 car parking spaces, and 18 bike parking spaces. Along with 1030 N American Street (Liberties Walk block 2) and the future redevelopment of the first block of Liberties Walk between N 2nd and American Streets with an office building, this project is representative of Post Brother's plans to redevelop Liberties Walk with larger residential units and more usable retail spaces.

At its meeting of November 10, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments:**

A representative from Northern Liberties Neighborhood Association (NLNA) was unable to attend the CDR meeting. They provided design comments in a letter, as follows:

- NLNA requests a bike path through the combined projects (Liberties Walk blocks 2 and 3).
- NLNA is concerned with building height and mass. This project is surrounded on three sides by two and three story single family homes. The height is double that of the adjacent structures. Liberties Walk 3 should taper down from the size of Liberties Walk 2 as it approaches the single family residential portion of the neighborhood.
- NLNA would like to see an active, well lit, open pedestrian experience. NLNA has concerns that this space will feel neglected and unsafe.

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- NLNA encourages the development team to consider a lobby at 3rd street. NLNA would like to see an affordable, active commercial space. To improve the nighttime experience, in terms of safety and comfort, NLNA like to see more restaurants and nightlife than office space on the ground floor.
- NLNA would like to see a plan for reducing potential glare coming off of the southern exposure.
- NLNA is disappointed to see no affordable housing components to any of the projects being presented as a part of this “master plan.”

A representative from the West Girard Progress RCO attended the meeting and commended Post Brothers for training 40 local residents in the building trades and for lending their expertise to RCO’s to help develop affordable housing projects.

## **2. CDR Committee Comments:**

At the meeting, the CDR Committee shared their appreciation for the design and programming of the project and noted similarities to the proposal for 1030 N American St. (Liberties Walk block 2), which was reviewed at the October 13<sup>th</sup> CDR meeting. Further, the committee voted to add the comments for 1030 N American St to this letter, as they apply to both projects. For reference, these comments are printed below.

Members of the committee commended the development team for their comprehensive approach to development and redevelopment in Northern Liberties and for their openness to work with the community on design issues prior to the CDR meeting.

Another member of the committee stressed that although the embodied energy of existing structures will be wasted through demolition, she understood why the development team was taking this approach. She also lamented that some of the charm of the existing Liberties Walk is lost in the new design

Lastly, the members of the committee urged the design team to continue to work with the Streets Department on the mid-block crossing design details

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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## Civic Design Review

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 1622-40 Point Breeze Avenue (Application No. ZP-2020-994)**

Dear Reeba Babu:

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 commercial building for 1622-40 Point Breeze Avenue.

The project is located on Point Breeze Avenue, with Fernon Street to the north, private parcels to the west and the south, and Point Breeze Avenue to the east. The project consists of 57 residential dwelling units and accessory uses. No parking is provided on site. The site is zoned RM-1 and no zoning refusals have been identified by the Department of Licenses and Inspections.

At its meeting of November 10, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments, Point Breeze Community Development Coalition**

A representative from the Point Breeze Community Development coalition offered these comments. Per the committee's request, comments from the first review have also been incorporated.

The RCO clarified that their job is to represent the voices of the community and there is a concern that no changes have been made in the design since the first presentation. This is one of the reasons that the community has asked for continuances to create more dialogue between the applicant and the community. The RCO also notes that if the developer wants to work with the community, they should be willing to have more dialogue with the community.

The RCO has also expressed concerns with the massing and density of the project, the lack of green space, the lack of parking, and the building's height which is significantly more than buildings on the adjacent blocks. The RCO also wanted more information on what future phases will look like and for the development team to work more closely with the community.

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## **2. RCO Comments, Concerned Citizens of Point Breeze**

A representative from the Concerned Citizens of Point Breeze coalition offered these comments. Per the committee's request, comments from the first review have also been incorporated.

If a developer wants to work with the community, they should be coming to the community to discuss affordable housing. They expressed a concern that no changes have been made to the project since it's last review and restated many of the comments and questions raised during the first review:

Residents do not support the design of the project as it has been presented. The community needs to see the totality of the project, including what is planned for portions of the site fronting Fernon Street, so that they can have a more fruitful discussion. The RCO continues to feel that bonuses are being used to create market rate housing that does not benefit the community, and that the community was never properly notified of the 2035 plan and the resulting density that it could create on this site. The RCO recommends that the site be considered for single family homes rather than multi-family housing. The RCO feels that single family homes and two stories of development would be consistent with the neighborhood.

The shadow studies provided do not show how the proposal will affect the rear yards and bedroom windows of adjacent rowhomes, especially those entered from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. This is not an acceptable shade study report. The community also expressed concerns with glare coming from the glazing of the upper story windows and that the green roof could bring problems due to the pesticides used to maintain it and that it could attract rodents.

The RCO also noted that the numbers shown for minimum lot areas are different in this submission than other earlier submissions. There were also concerns that the proposed loading zone would take up parking spaces on Point Breeze Avenue and that the community should be consulted before the Streets Department approves it. There is also a concern with the lack of parking proposed for the project and the lack of a traffic study. The community wants to see a traffic study to understand how the new project could affect surrounding neighbors and the amount of available on-street parking.

## **3. CDR Committee Comments**

The civic design review committee also expressed concerns with the lack of changes from the previous meeting and stated that their recommendations from the first review still apply. They also incorporated Planning Commission staff comments. Recommendations and comments of both are explained in detail below.

The CDR committee notes that there is a way for the project to provide on-site community amenities, especially considering the applicant's holdings in the vicinity. This includes more than just paying into the trust fund for affordable housing in exchange for greater density. The committee notes that the density and scale of the project are not consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and that the applicant



should consider community concerns with parking and providing open space, such as playgrounds. The committee also asks that the applicant share any long-range plans for the area with the community.

The committee recommended setting back the fourth floor and also encouraged the development team to consult the community to make other appropriate changes. The committee also asked for a more detailed shade study that showed how the project impacts the yards of existing houses which are entered from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street.

The committee noted parking could be provided on-site with an entrance from Fernon Street to avoid conflicts with the traffic on Point Breeze Avenue. The sidewalks on Fernon Street should be widened to meet the 10' width in the Complete Streets standards.

For building design, the committee encouraged the development team to consider direct entries from Point Breeze Avenue into ground floor units and to reconsider façade materials for sidewalls and upper stories. Sidewalls should use the same quality, if not the same materials which face Point Breeze Avenue and the upper stories should reconsider using such lightly colored materials. The committee also notes that the main entry on Point Breeze Avenue could use better architectural definition.

The committee also notes that few sustainable design metrics are being met and encourages the applicant to go above and beyond the code minimum standards of the building and zoning codes.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe  
Executive Director

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**Civic Design Review**

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Elise Vider

**Re: Civic Design Review for 1700-06 Howard Street (Application #ZP-2020-001306)**

Dear Ms. Akhtar,

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 **1700-06 Howard Street**.

The proposal is for demolition of two industrial vacant buildings, repurposing one vacant industrial building, and proposing a total of 91,230 new gross square feet in 6 stories. This includes 103 residential units and amenities on floors 2-6, ground floor retail space totaling 3,580 square feet, and 35 parking spaces. The proposal is located on an RSA-5 zoning district and requires several zoning variances including use, height, landscape buffering, and screening.

The CDR Committee reviewed this project at two meetings, the first on October 13 and the second on November 10, 2020. The Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process at their November 10 meeting. It should be noted that there were no representatives from the RCOs in attendance at the second review and the CDR committee offered the following comments:

**CDR Committee Comments**

The Civic Design Review Committee thought the project was well-positioned on the site despite being more dense compared to the surrounding area. The committee appreciated the change to the parking garage wall since the first meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup>, however they had hoped to see more alterations on Waterloo Street based on the comments from the previous meeting. They noted the following critiques of the project, described below.

The CDR Committee unanimously agreed with staff that the Waterloo street sidewalk was too narrow. One of the committee members explained how crucial it was to provide a walkable sidewalk for pedestrian safety, mentioning that it would be within the developer's power to set the project back from the property line to accommodate a wider sidewalk. They also mentioned that considering there are existing residences fronting Waterloo Street, the proposed façade does not provide a pleasant view for the residents. There should be more permeability on the parking garage façade to enhance the visual interest. Furthermore, the committee noted that since none of the perspectives include the residences on the opposite side of the street, the illustration of the proposed wall condition is hard to assess.

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There were differing opinions within the committee about the treatment of Waterloo Street. One of the committee members suggested that the development team look at other examples in Philadelphia where narrow streets were treated as “fronts”. He indicated that locating the parking spaces on this side had been a choice which could have been avoided. On the other hand, another CDR member believed that it was not fair to compare this development with the ones in Center City Philadelphia and appreciated the proposal site positioning and design.

Moreover, the development team described an alternative layout regarding Waterloo Street accommodated trees in three different locations along this corridor by relocating two parking spaces to N Howard Street. While the Committee didn't see the illustration, they agreed that could have been a better solution to the issues discussed during the CDR hearing. It was also emphasized that any trees added to this corridor should be shade trees. It was mentioned that if the proposal could add only one foot to the Waterloo sidewalk, it would have a large impact on the quality of the public realm.

The Committee also recommended adapting staff comments including:

- Aside from widening the sidewalk on Waterloo street, staff needed clarification on how the design would prevent the cars from parking on the sidewalk if bollards were removed to accommodate the proper walking zone.
- Staff encouraged the applicant to consider more ways of going above and beyond the code regarding the sustainability metrics.

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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Department of Planning and Development

## **Civic Design Review**

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Elise Vider

**Re: Civic Design Review for 1900-22 N Front Street (Application Number: 2020002921)**

Dear Ms. Reeba Merin Babu,

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 **1900-22 N. Front Street**.

The proposal is for a 6-story residential and commercial mixed-use building with 105 residential units, totaling 71,967 square feet. The project also proposes a ground floor commercial space totaling 6,676 square feet. The project does not include on site parking spaces but is adjacent to the Market Frankford Line (MFL) Berks Street Station. The project includes several garden courtyard apartments and an accessible courtyard for residents with a dog run. The proposal sits on a CMX-2.5 zoned parcel and is a by-right project.

At its meeting of November 10, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments**

Two Registered Community Organizations spoke during the meeting on November 10. The coordinating RCO – Norris Square Community Alliance (NSCA) and West Girard Progress (WGP). The NSCA representative provided the following comments:

- The RCO representative noted that residents from Hope Street, which are adjacent to the project had concerns about sun and shade impacts from proposal.
  - The RCO requested a shade study for the development proposal, which was provided before the CDR meeting.
- The RCO requested for more lighting along Front Street.
- The RCO initially had several questions and concerns regarding trash logistics, specifically where the trash room would be located and how it would be picked up. The RCO representative noted that these questions have been addressed prior to the CDR meeting.
- It was noted that many of the community's concerns have been addressed in the design shown at the CDR meeting. The RCO representative also mentioned that the applicant and RCO will be having

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- another meeting on November 11, 2020 to address any outstanding concerns.
- The NSCA representative noted that they have had good communication with the development team and have been happy with outreach so far for this project.

The second RCO representative from West Girard Progress (WGP) provided the following comments:

- The RCO representative noted they were unable to make the first RCO meeting back in August 2020 but requested to attend the follow up meeting on November 11, 2020.
- The WGP representative noted that the proposal was a nice-looking building and sits well within the context of the neighborhood.
- Lastly, the RCO representative noted their good relationship with the development team and attorney, remarking that the team has always been professional in the past for previous projects. The representative noted this project as a great example of how development teams can work well with communities for large scale projects.

## **2. CDR Committee Comments**

The Civic Design Review Committee had a number of positive comments and generally agreed that this proposal was commendable with many thoughtful decisions. The Committee and PCPC staff did provide the following comments:

1. Several CDR Committee members noted their appreciation of affordable housing within the proposed project. They commended the applicant for including affordable residential units, and not just paying into the Affordable Housing Fund, this project will have affordable housing within the new building.
2. The CDR Committee noted the use of high-quality building materials, helping emphasize a well-designed project. The Committee specifically called out the use of the brick detailing on the ground floor.
3. The Committee was encouraged to hear of the positive communication between the development team and RCOs. They were pleased to learn that development team attempted to address concerns before the CDR meeting, and also that they were willing to meet again to discuss any outstanding concerns.
4. Several Committee members noted that the density seems to fit well within neighborhood scale and along the Market Frankford Line.
5. As a word of enthusiasm for this project one committee member noted that this project was “Funk-a-licious” – noting nice detailing, high quality materials and fits well within the neighborhood context.
6. The Committee was also glad to see some green space incorporated into this proposal, specifically noting that the garden apartments were really well designed. It was discussed that typically the courtyard areas of multifamily apartment buildings are usually unprogrammed “throw-away” spaces. This



proposal utilized this space well, incorporating private area and greening elements.

7. The CDR Committee did provide some comments to improve the project including encouraging the development team to consider stepping the building back from the Market Frankford Line station and structure. The committee requested the development team consider pulling the building back, maybe just at ground level for just a foot or two, to allow for outdoor ground floor uses. This would provide additional light and air along the sidewalk. It was also noted that this architect was able to do something similar just one block south of this site, setting the proposed building back from the MFL structure.
8. The CDR Committee agreed that this project was a great model for infill development. It makes all the right design moves; it is a strong project that does a lot of things really well.

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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