



March 10, 2023

Cheli R. Dahal
Department of Licenses and Inspections
Municipal Services Building, Concourse
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19102

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Re: Civic Design Review for 14-24 S 21st Street (Application # ZP-2022-009035)

Dear Cheli 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 building at 14-24 S 21st Street.

This letter is a summary of the Civic Design Review Committee's advisory recommendations. It is not an expression of the City Planning Commission's recommendation or opinion regarding zoning variances, special exceptions, or other discretionary approvals associated with this proposal.

The project proposes a multi-family residential building totaling 289,152 gross square feet. This proposal includes two commercial spaces – one on the ground floor (17,790 sq ft.) and one on the second floor (10,260 sq ft.), as well as 292 dwelling units on floors 3 to 28. The project includes two floors of underground vehicular parking for 110 vehicles and 104 bicycle parking spaces. The parcel is zoned CMX-4 and is utilizing four bonuses (underground parking, green building, public art, and mixed-income housing (low income)) and thus is a by-right project.

At its meeting of March 7, 2023, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

RCO Comments: (Center City Residents Association (CCRA))

The RCO representative noted a well-attended meeting for the review of the project. Many members of the RCO had questions about the public room, which is no longer part of this zoning application. The RCO was not notified by the applicant that the public room was removed from this design and asked for further follow up at a later date. The RCO representative had favorable comments regarding the lighting design of the project. Additionally, there were several questions about construction impacts in particular with the adjacent Mutter Museum.

CDR Committee Comments

The Committee was generally in favor of this proposal but provided the following comments about the project.

The Committee asked about the viability of commercial space on the second floor and asked about uses, access, and overall shared parking between residents and commercial users.

The CDR Committee commended the affordable housing units proposed on site, and requested to see a more varied mix of unit types and locations. The additional variety

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of unit types could serve families and would impact the affordability aspect of the project. PCPC staff confirmed that the types of units and selection of units would happen during the building permit review.

The Committee noted appreciation of the underground parking, but agreed with staff comments that there should be a ground floor bicycle parking room for easier access rather than traveling down two floors of underground parking to reach your bicycle. There was a request by one committee member and PCPC staff to consider Ludlow Street for vehicular access to the parking garage rather than having the grouped curb cut condition on S 21st Street. The Committee noted that off-street loading on the site was a positive, but the long expanse of curb cuts is detrimental to pedestrian circulation.

The Committee recommended reviewing the walkability, access, landscaping and overall pedestrian experience of the proposal. While there are many new benefits to this project, it was noted that the walking condition for pedestrians seemed tight in some locations, creating potential conflicts. There was also a request to remove the bollards surrounding the sidewalks on site, in particular along Ludlow Street. Finally, there was a request for additional public amenities, such as outdoor seating or public restrooms, to be incorporated into the design. The outdoor entrance plaza needs an improved permanent open connection to nearby streets.

The Committee also noted that the building responds well to the neighborhood context in terms of massing and scale. There was a request to provide private outdoor space for more units, specifically to add balconies for more units.

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: Michael Johns, Chair, Civic Design Review, mdesigns@msn.com
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Department of Planning and Development

Civic Design Review

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March 9, 2023

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Re: Civic Design Review for 225-39 N 13th St (Application # ZP-2022-012706C)

Dear Matthew 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 building at 225-39 N 13th Street.

This letter is a summary of the Civic Design Review Committee's advisory recommendations. It is not an expression of the City Planning Commission's recommendation or opinion regarding zoning variances, special exceptions, or other discretionary approvals associated with this proposal.

The proposal is for the erection of a seven story 59,560 square foot building for use as visitor accommodations (81 units) with 1,740 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor. Floors three through seven will utilize modular construction. The parcel is zoned CMX-3 Community Commercial Mixed-Use and is a by-right project. The roof decks are proposed to be non-occupied. The applicant will seek a special exception for their use at a later time.

At its meeting of March 7, 2023, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

RCO Comments: Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation (PCDC)

The proposed use (short term rentals) is not in line with PCDC's mission. In addition, PCDC does not believe the building is in character with its surroundings which include row homes and other residential uses. PCDC encourages the developer to lease the commercial space to a business connected to Chinatown.

CDR Committee Comments

Members of the CDR committee were disappointed to hear that the RCO and development team were not in agreement and encouraged further coordination after the CDR process is complete. The CDR committee suggested a mix of home ownership units and affordable rentals to help bridge this divide and to help address Philadelphia's housing affordability crises.

The CDR committee appreciated the ground floor setback and open spaces included in the proposal's design. In addition, they commended the design team on reaching a majority of the sustainability metrics and their use of on-site renewable energy production.

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The CDR committee raised concerns with the wood grain finish aluminum exterior material. The applicant stated that this choice was made due to its recyclability. In addition, the applicant pointed out that this material is not used on the ground floor. The applicant and committee agreed that all exterior lighting would point down and not up.

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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March 8, 2023

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Re: Civic Design Review for 1818 N 53rd Street (Application #ZP-2022-000245)

Dear Paulose 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 1818 N 53rd Street.

This letter is a summary of the Civic Design Review Committee's advisory recommendations. It is not an expression of the City Planning Commission's recommendation or opinion regarding zoning variances, special exceptions, or other discretionary approvals associated with this proposal.

The project proposes a total of 92,511 square feet of gross floor area. It includes 1,298 square feet of commercial spaces, 98 residential units (total of 91,213 square feet), 34 vehicular parking spaces, and 33 bike parking spaces. The parcel is zoned CMX-3 and the proposal is by-right.

At its meeting of March 7, 2023, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

RCO Comments: Wynnefield Residents Association

The representative from the Wynnefield Residents' Association appreciated the development team's efforts in integrating the community's feedback into the design during the process and mentioned that they were not opposed to this proposal. The representative noted that the main concerns of the community were the density of this development and the number of parking proposed, therefore, the RCO did not agree with PCPC staff comment regarding the replacement of the parking spaces with another use.

RCO Comments: Wynnefield Community Neighborhood Association

The RCO representative from Wynnefield Community Neighborhood Association echoed the other RCO's comments about parking and density and appreciated the development team's communication as well. The RCO representative appreciated the inclusion of a dog park for the community use on the site and asked for ongoing community engagement even after the CDR was complete.

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The representative agreed with PCPC staff regarding the relocation of the commercial space to the corner of 53rd and Morse Streets as well as setting the building back at the third floor as opposed to the fourth floor. The development team mentioned it was not possible to setback the third floor because of financial and design-related reasons. The representative also agreed with the CDR Committee about strengthening the connection between the project and the basketball court.

CDR Committee Comments

At the meeting, one committee member expressed their appreciation for the development team's relationship with the community which was reflected in the site plan through several spaces that could be utilized by the community. The committee member acknowledged that this was a complicated site and the proposal was strong.

There was some discussion about the basketball court's connection to the site. It is owned by Philadelphia Youth Basketball and would be used by the community especially for summer youth programs. One committee member emphasized that it would be beneficial to include a connection between the court and this site, and to provide ADA ramps for accessibility for different age groups. The development team responded that the grade change and soil type were two reasons the connection was not provided. The development team has agreed to repaint the pavement and add amenities to the court including bathrooms.

A committee member expressed concerns about the space labeled "future community room" and asked whether this was going to be built at the same time as the building. It was clarified that it would be built at the same time as the building and use by the community had been included in the Community Benefits Agreement. The label was referencing future operations of the space which needs further details. Another committee member asked whether the building included any affordable units and encouraged the development team to take affordability measures into account to avoid displacement of the current community residents.

The committee chair asked the team to add more two-bedroom units and include three-bedroom units in the unit mix which could both take pressure away from parking and provide opportunities for larger families to reside in this community. The committee chair also encouraged the development team to consider solar panels on the roof. The chair also agreed with PCPC staff regarding the number of materials proposed and suggested that the palette be simplified.

Lastly, the CDR Committee adopted the Planning Commission staff comments:

Site Context

- The basketball court was subdivided and removed from the scope of this project. It is elevated and accessed by the public via steps from Euclid Street.
- Missed opportunity to coordinate the development's open space with the adjacent basketball court, including landscaping which could reduce heat island effects for both.

Site Design

- Consider relocating the commercial space to the corner of Morse and 53rd Streets for better interaction with the surrounding area and to activate the primary corner.



Building Design

- Consider moving commercial space to the corner of Morse and 53rd Streets and expand the residential entry for a clearer visual presence.
- Consider setting the third floor back to match the context more closely.
- Staff appreciates the window patterns and outdoor terraces on the south elevation.
- Consider simplifying the material palette.

Parking Design

- Staff appreciates partial underground parking garage.
- The number of parking spaces proposed for this project is over the code requirement, staff recommends replacing those with a more interactive space.
- Per the 14-803.(4)(b)(5) section of the code, the parking garage façade is subject to PCPC review at the building permit stage.

Sustainable Design

- Staff encourages the team to meet more sustainable design metrics.
- This site is within 1000 feet of a railway. Staff recommends that noise reduction and air quality measures be built into the wall assemblies.

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,

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