



August 17, 2020

Mr. Yaniv Gal
Zoning examiner, Licenses and Inspections
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Philadelphia, PA 19102

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Re: Civic Design Review for 2301 JFK Boulevard (Application No. ZP-2020-001125C)

Dear Mr. Gal:

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 2301 JFK Boulevard.

The project is bound by JFK Boulevard to the south, freight rail lines and the Schuylkill River trail to the west, the remainder of the parcel and an elevated train line to the north, and 23rd Street to the east. The project proposes 262,710 gross square feet of residential and commercial spaces with 275 residential units and 42 parking spaces. The site is zoned CMX-5 and no zoning refusals have been identified for this project.

At its meeting of August 17, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the Civic Design Review process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments:

A representative from Logan Square Neighborhood Association attended and offered comments on the review process and the project design.

The RCO noted that their virtual meeting was well attended with 103 participants. Meeting attendees expressed support for the project design, which is a plus for the neighborhood and brings this portion of JFK Boulevard to life. They agreed with the project's aesthetic and appearance which speaks to other buildings on JFK Boulevard and across the river in University City, including the Cira Centre.

The RCO expressed some concerns with the design of the 23rd Street level and general appearance of the overhead bridges. They encouraged the development team to use maximum creativity with materials and technology to enliven the "dead" space that still functions as a crucial gateway between the Logan Square area and Center City, especially the Market Street corridor. They also questioned if more could be done with how the building, especially at the lower levels, addresses the river and

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trail. They noted that the existing abutment facing the river is a piece of the original “Chinese Wall”, a former elevated rail line that entered Center City. The existing abutment is an interesting part of the city’s history that could be highlighted in the project design.

The RCO also asked for the support of both the development team and the City agencies in assisting with ongoing concerns for traffic and development along 23rd Street. They noted that a lot of construction is already happening on the street and a number of other projects are coming. They asked for assistance in managing the impacts of multiple construction sites and the increase in traffic that will result from the increased density that the new projects will bring.

2. CDR Committee Comments

The Committee complemented the design team for working with a site that is difficult to develop and the design they created has an ambitious and beautiful result. The site design creates a welcomed transformation of this part of JFK Boulevard. The committee accepted Planning Commission staff comments, which have been incorporated into the narrative below.

They noted that the design and final appearance of 23rd Street will be key to the success of the public realm. They also asked if the design of the 23rd Street façade could be done with warmer materials and lighting so that people feel drawn to it. There should also be clearer distinctions between the pedestrian and vehicular entries and the development team is encouraged to work with the transit authority, SEPTA, on the maintenance, finishes and lighting of the underside of the railway bridges.

The Committee and Planning Commission staff also note that internal connections at the 23rd Street level are important for pedestrian access and the public realm. The 23rd Street entrances are likely to have pedestrian and bicycle traffic in and out of the building and safe reasonable accommodation needs to be made between the building elevators and stairs and the sidewalk.

The committee noted that there is an important view and visual connection to this project from the Schuylkill River Trail. They suggested that the enclosure of the parking area be used as a site for public art, something that could help enliven the left-over sliver of the existing abutment. The committee also asked to understand where the property line was relative to proposed vegetative screening. The development team responded that they were exploring setting back the enclosure wall around the parking to allow space for plantings.



The committee asked for more refinement of the loading area that is open to the sky and visible from the sidewalk on JFK Boulevard. The Committee offered a range of suggestions for improving this condition, including:

- Consider extending the landscaping buffer along the sidewalk to the eastern edge of the property boundary
- Consider covering the loading area with a platform that could create a larger plaza area and more active uses on JFK Boulevard.
- Consider a direct pedestrian connection, such as a modest but safe staircase, between the proposed plaza on JFK Boulevard and 23rd Street, which could help to activate the space.
- Consider additional points of public entry on JFK Boulevard to activate the sidewalk

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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August 19, 2020

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 204 S. 12th Street
(Application No. ZP-2020-000710C)**

Dear Ms. Gindhart:

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 **204 S. 12th Street**.

The proposal is for a 32-story multi-use building with nearly 40,000 square feet of retail at the lower floors and 448 dwelling units above with 68 below grade parking spaces on a nearly 18,000 square foot site. A contribution was made to the affordable housing trust fund in association with this project and a public art bonus is being pursued. This project has no zoning variances and is by-right.

At its meeting of August 17, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments

Jonathan Broh of the Washington West Civic Association was in attendance. Mr. Broh appreciated the elegance of the building's architecture but expressed concern that the scale of the proposal was too dramatic compared to adjacent buildings. The use of St. James Street and Chancellor Street as primary vehicular inlets and outlets by the project was questioned due to the narrow widths and character of both streets. Broh requested additional information about the appearance of the loading doors on 12th Street. For the public art bonus, Broh insisted that any art must relate to and respect the LGBT community. Broh indicated that while the three levels of retail were appreciated, affordable housing on site would have been welcomed.

2. CDR Committee Comments

The CDR Committee was generally appreciative of the building design and detailing. However, the Committee did have concerns about the relationship of the building to St. James Street in particular. The team was asked to look at alternatives to the vehicular traffic on St. James to better preserve the scale and quality of the current street. Additional landscaping, street trees, or vegetation were suggested as possible tools to enhance the existing character of St. James Street. The team was also asked to investigate opportunities to pull the building back from 12th Street at the

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ground floor to allow more options for outdoor dining or other activities without compromising the circulation of pedestrians.

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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August 19, 2020

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 230 N. 23rd Street
(Application No. ZP-20200-2593)**

Dear Mr. Ngaba:

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 **230 N. 23rd Street**.

The proposal is for a nearly 150,000 square foot, 7 story residential building utilizing modular construction with 180 units and 54 parking spaces offsite. The design features a green roof and courtyard pool. This project has no zoning variances and is by-right.

At its meeting of August 17, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments

Dennis Boylan of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association was in attendance. Mr. Boylan was largely supportive of the project and the team, commending the team for holding multiple meetings to work through neighbor's concerns. He asked that the team continue to keep neighbors informed of any anticipated disruption due to construction, specifically as it relates to any loss of on-street parking along 23rd Street. He expressed support for the addition of a crosswalk and stop sign to slow traffic from the I-676 offramp in front of the project. He asked that attention be paid to the alleyway to the south of the project from 23rd Street to ensure it is inviting and secure for pedestrians. He also requested that the developer ensure continuous access to the community garden near the site, currently accessed through an informal path adjacent to the proposed building.

2. CDR Committee Comments

The CDR Committee primarily expressed concerns about the relationship of the building massing to the 23rd Street offramp of I-676, requesting that the team continue to work to articulate that corner with more sensitivity to both the pedestrian and automobile experience. It was suggested that the color palette and shape the building accents be rethought to ensure a higher level of sophistication. The Committee expressed concern about location of the pool and suggested that another amenity may be more widely used throughout the year. The Committee also

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requested additional consideration of the pedestrian pathways through the site to ensure there are options that are safe, welcoming, and accessible. Finally, the Committee asked that photovoltaics be considered as an opportunity to generate power and provide shade at the roof.

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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August 18, 2020

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Re: Civic Design Review for 501 Christopher Columbus Blvd. and 601-61 N Delaware Avenue (Application # ZP-2020-001850)

Dear Mr. Marshall,

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 **501 N Christopher Columbus Blvd. and 601-61 N Delaware Avenue.**

The proposal is for two 5-story residential and retail mixed use buildings with 481 residential units at approximately 603,000 square feet and several retail spaces totaling 36,800 square feet. The proposal has 196 parking spaces combined between both buildings. The site is located between the Delaware River and Delaware Avenue and replaces the former music venue Festival Pier. The project proposes multiple access points to the river and has an extensive open space and trail system proposed. The project site is zoned CMX-3 and the proposal has no zoning variances.

At its meeting of August 17, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

1. RCO Comments – Northern Liberties Neighborhood Association (NLNA)

The RCO representative noted that there was general consensus from members that project is well-designed, with great access to the Delaware River. The NLNA member noted several concerns about the project's potential environmental impacts, including flooding issues, concerns over sea-level rise and the elevation levels of the new buildings. The RCO requested that the development team continue to focus on sustainable design elements moving forward.

The RCO representative noted additional concerns with circulation including potential issues regarding loading and deliveries and the shared spaces between the existing and proposed Delaware River trail adjacent to the parcel. These circulation concerns were also noted with concerns regarding the proposed round-about and congestion of the proposed pedestrian plaza space. Finally, the RCO group would like to see safety measures for access into and out of the site at the main intersection of Spring Garden Street and Delaware Avenue and the new proposal.

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2. CDR Committee Comments

The CDR Committee spoke favorably of the project overall. They approved of the building's design, scale, setbacks, and façade treatment noting that the varying building materials and ground cover materials create interest and an active public realm. The Committee commended the development team noting that the building's unique angles and setbacks which open views towards the river and the riverfront will be a great resource for both residents and visitors to enjoy. One Committee member noted the project looks like it will be a delightful place to live and experience.

The Committee noted several recommendations for the project:

1. The Committee and PCPC Staff asked about the phasing of the project and requested more information about future development on portions of the parcel that are currently proposed as open lawn spaces.
2. The Committee responded to the RCO comments regarding environmental impacts of the project and seconded concerns about sea-level rise and flood plain impacts. The applicant responded that the project will be completely out of the flood plain, as the development will add fill to raise the project 18' above the flood plain. The applicant also noted that they worked with the US Army Corps of Engineers to refine the project. Finally, the applicant is also removing portions of the original pier and land area, helping to create additional buffer space between the built environment and Delaware River.
3. The Committee and PCPC staff had concerns with potential conflicts between types of activities in some of the public spaces, specifically between pedestrians and bicyclists and retail loading, residential trash and deliveries. The committee recommended continued coordination with City agencies to balance the needs of all users.
4. Some Committee members requested additional information for the intersection of Spring Garden Street and Delaware Avenue. This project essentially extends the intersection east into the development, creating additional conflict points. Some Committee members requested additional consideration for cyclists who will be entering into the site and accessing either the residential units or retail spaces. Currently bicyclists are directed towards the north and south of Spring Garden Street.
5. The Committee noted how important the landscape materials are for this site and recommended finding plants that will help mitigate environmental impacts. Plants that can act as sponges for stormwater management and flood control are encouraged.
6. The CDR Committee noted their desire to see affordable units built as part of this project, with varying price points so everyone can be a part of this positive proposal. The Committee noted how encouraging it was to see courtyards and open space which are open to everyone and have river views, which is not typical for many current Delaware Riverfront developments.
7. Finally, there was discussion about the opportunity to push additional sustainability metrics for this project. NLNA and the Committee requested to see additional sustainable measures such as solar power or green roofs. Solar panels could have energy generating impacts which could improve the neighborhood beyond this site.



8. The Committee also recommended including staff comments including:
 - a. The project contributed positively to the Delaware Riverfront Trail, providing several new access points with activity nodes at the river.
 - b. The positive design of the parking, which is wrapped by active uses
 - c. The project's focus on public open space, which sets a high standard for riverfront development moving forward.

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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