



**February 15, 2024**

Paulose Isaac  
Department of Licenses and Inspections  
Municipal Services Building, Concourse  
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

**Re: Civic Design Review for 9903 Bustleton Avenue (Application # ZP-2023-003862)**

Dear Paulose,

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 car dealership at 9903 Bustleton Avenue.

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 the redevelopment of a car dealership spanning multiple buildings into a single building totaling 56,045 square feet. This proposal also includes 257 surface car parking spaces (including customer parking and inventory/display spaces), and two new rain gardens totaling 35,205 square feet. The parcel is zoned both CA-1 (where the new building and surface parking is proposed) and RM-2 (where only landscaping is proposed) and is a by-right project.

At its meeting of February 6, 2024, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**RCO Comments: (Greater Bustleton Civic League)**

The coordinating RCO representative was present and expressed support for the project, noting it is an opportunity to upgrade the streetscape. The representative expressed concerns about the lack of improvements at the intersection of Bustleton and Haldeman Avenues and the locations of the proposed landscaping. It was noted that the proposed rain gardens are out of public view. It was suggested that moving the rain garden on Bustleton Avenue (which would be below street-level) closer to the intersection of Bustleton and Haldeman Avenues would be appreciated. The representative also suggested enhancing the landscaping adjacent to the homes at the northeast of the site to provide more screening from the new building and associated lighting.

**CDR Committee Comments**

The Committee encouraged the applicant to consider ways to make the site more sustainable and help enhance Haldeman Avenue as a greener boulevard. Suggestions included: further exploration of using porous pavement; more green space buffering adjacent residences; added landscaping and islands within the parking area; added landscaping along Haldeman Avenue; using native evergreens such as red cedar instead of arborvitae; and mitigating heat impacts of the large parking area with greater shading with more trees.

**Civic Design Review  
Committee**  
*Established 2012*

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*Interim Executive Director*

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The Committee also encouraged the applicant to be more forward-thinking by highlighting newer technologies that are moving the auto industry in a more sustainable direction, including: hosting EV chargers on-site; incorporating solar arrays/canopies within the parking area; and incorporating rooftop solar.

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,

Martine Decamp, AICP  
Interim Executive Director

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**February 21, 2024**

Shakir Cohen  
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**Re: Civic Design Review for 708 Sansom Street (Application # ZP-2023-008161)**

Dear Shakir,

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 708 Sansom 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 mixed-use tower totaling 185,688 total square feet. The proposal includes 99 dwelling units on levels 5-34, 50 car parking spaces on levels 2-4, 1,495 square feet of retail space and the lobby on the ground floor. The parcel is zoned CMX-5 Center City Core Commercial Mixed-Use and requires two variances and one special exception, as follows:

- Max Floor Area Ratio: 1,493% proposed (1,200 allowed)
- Drive Aisle Width: Valet spaces impede on the drive aisles
- Above ground accessory parking requires Special Exception approval

At its meeting of February 6, 2024, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**RCO Comments: (Washington Square West Civic Association)**

The representative from the Washington Square West Civic Association expressed appreciation for the continuous retail space on Sansom Street and mentioned that the merchants on Jewelers row need parking. They also noted that the Motor Court will require management due to the mix of loading and parking in one space. Lastly, they thought that the trellis/canopy structure above the motor court entrance on 7th Street is awkward.

**RCO Comments: (Society Hill Civic Association)**

The representative from the Society Hill Civic Association stated that their membership is in favor of the proposal overall but would like further dialogue with the applicant. Most of Society Hill Civic Association's concerns are with the motor court and its entrance off 7th Street.

Specifically, they feel there is too much programmed for the space. There are concerns with the singular access point, the dimensions of the court itself, delivery traffic for packages, and with functionality of valet parking.

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The representative offered the following solutions to these issues: incorporating the existing alley to the south of the site into the loading arrangement and replacing parking ramps with elevators.

Much like the Washington Square West Civic Association, the Society Hill Civic Association feels that trellis/canopy structure above the motor court entrance on 7th Street is over-scaled and does not provide a sense of entry.

### **CDR Committee Comments**

Overall, feedback from the CDR committee was positive. Members felt that the proposal is much better and more creative than a previous developers' proposal for the same site and that the project will be an asset to the community. It was stated that the building's design works well with existing fabric, and despite the overall height and massing, the design feels light, elegant, and thoughtful. In addition, there was appreciation for the variety and sizes of the residential units.

Committee members complimented the proposed brass pavement details and how they make the motor court feel like a shared space. Members agreed with staff and RCO concerns with motor court but thought that they could be addressed by management within the current design scheme. Committee members were less concerned than staff with planting on the canopies. In addition, they applauded the usage of Princeton Elm trees for sidewalk trees.

Committee members agreed with the staff recommendation for a pedestrian connection to the lobby from Sansom Street through a corridor or from within the retail space. One member stated that the building does not meet 7th Street in a traditional way and encouraged the design team to revisit the trellis/canopy design.

Lastly, it was stated that the parking levels designed with same materials as the residential levels of the building is best solution to above ground parking.

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,

Martine Decamp, AICP  
Interim Executive Director

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Department of Planning and Development

## Civic Design Review

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**February 21, 2024**

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 6174 Ridge Avenue (Application # ZP-2023-006740)**

Dear Richard,

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 6174 Ridge Avenue. A Civic Design Review was also completed in 2023 for this same address under a different zoning permit application and with a different design scheme.

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 mixed-use building totaling 91,400 square feet. This includes 21,700 square feet of commercial space, 94 dwelling units, and 71 vehicular parking spaces. The parcel is split-zoned CMX-2/CMX-2.5 for commercial mixed use and requires variances for building height, number of dwelling units, rear yard setback, and accessory parking.

At its meeting of February 7, 2024, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**RCO COMMENTS (Central Roxborough Civic Association)**

The RCO applauded the development team for their community engagement process. They noted that this is a vastly improved design from earlier iterations and the project is much more responsive to community needs. They noted that the community voted in support of the project at their last RCO meeting.

The RCO supported changes which helped commercial tenants. They noted that higher ground floors lead to more attractive spaces for commercial tenants with higher ceiling heights and better ventilation.

For the adjacent pocket park, the RCO noted that the setbacks contribute to the activation of the space and the reorientation of the building's courtyard towards the park helps with access to light and air. They expressed appreciation for the creation of 3 areas for murals and their willingness to work with the Mural Arts Program to develop them.

They expressed a willingness to support zoning variances in exchange for good design and planning. They support the additional density and increase in dwelling units in order to obtain underground parking in higher numbers and more ground floor retail.

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### **CDR COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

The committee noted how wonderful it is to see a developer work with the community and listen to the CDR committee and the comments it made during the last round of reviews. They also commended the commitment to the engagement process for more than a year which has resulted in a much better project. The committee noted specific improvements and offered guidance on additional refinements.

The committee expressed appreciation for re-orienting the “U” of the building’s courtyard towards the adjacent pocket park. The committee noted that the design has a much better engagement of the public parking lot, but asked the applicant to consider additional refinements to pavement patterns and curb edges to improve the public experience. They expressed support for architectural adjustments from earlier versions, including the taller ground floor and upper floor setbacks. They also encouraged the development team to spend more time on the Leverington Avenue façade, though they recognize some of the challenges on that frontage.

For commercial spaces the committee asked the development team to consider more variation of pedestrian experience and architectural expression at the ground floor level. The committee urged further exploration of material variations, awnings, and other devices to enhance the pedestrian experience.

The committee notes that partnering with good designers can lead to better outcomes. They expressed appreciation for design changes which address many aspects of the project.

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,

Martine Decamp, AICP  
Interim Executive Director

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