

**9/21/05 BASSETT DISTRICT / ALEXANDER CO. PRESENTATION ON  
BROOM STREET LOFTS (CAPITOL WEST PROJECT)**

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

This meeting was attended by ten downtown residents, five Capitol West Steering Committee members, three members of the development team, and Alder Mike Verveer. Following the developer's presentation and comments by steering committee members, attendees were asked to rate the Broom St. Lofts development by filling out a questionnaire. Eight of the ten residents returned the forms, summarized as follows:

**Quality of architectural design**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 6

Unsatisfactory: 0

Not sure/no opinion: 2

*Additional comment: It isn't the modern architecture that bothers me, but rather, it is my lack of confidence in the developer. If properly executed, the modern design could contrast effectively with the existing buildings, but all too often budgets leave modern design looking cheaply built and uninspiring.*

**Design compatibility with surrounding neighborhood**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 1

Unsatisfactory: 6

Not sure/no opinion: 1

*Two additional comments: The 4- to 5-story, modern, boxy, monolithic, design stands in stark contrast to its 1.5 to \*2.5\*-story (Where are the 3-story buildings that were so often referred to at the meeting? Has anyone really looked at what is across the street?), Victorian, small-footprint, neighbors across Broom street. It is simply not compatible in terms of design, though it may not need to be compatible to enhance the neighborhood architecturally.*

*I don't perceive the designs to be in keeping with the neighborhood. Simply because they claim it, doesn't make it so.*

**Quality of proposed building materials**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 6

Unsatisfactory: 1

Not sure/no opinion: 1

*Additional comment: Cedar, lap siding contrasted with light stucco sections, should add warmth to the design, but I feel there could be improvements such as a stone facing at the foundation. It is hard to judge this given the limited information that was presented at the meeting.*

**Four-story building (no mezzanine)**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 2

Unsatisfactory: 4

Not sure/no opinion: 2

*Two additional comments: I think it is essential that these lofts be in scale with the opposing buildings. The proposed lofts are simply too tall for my tastes.*

*Four stories is more than I'd hoped for.*

**Four-story building plus mezzanine**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 1

Unsatisfactory: 5

Not sure/no opinion: 2

*Two additional comments: Any additional height in the building should be accompanied by concessions in the footprint, design, massing, etc. in the original structure. If you go higher you should offer to go smaller elsewhere. The mezzanine does not enhance the design of the building sufficiently to sell me on its inclusion.*

*The additional height in their Plan B is worse.*

**Proposed balcony projections**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 1

Unsatisfactory: 6

Not sure/no opinion: 1

*Two additional comments: No projections into the public r-o-w over the Broom setback. In general, I think the prevalence of hanging and corner balconies detract from the look of our downtown buildings. Porches and balconies should be an integral part of a building's structure having interior spaces below, like those found on the Quisling Towers and similar buildings.*

*I oppose all intrusions into the ROW as well as the setback. This includes stoops and steps. If they want balconies or raised entries, they should fit them within the space already allotted.*

**Sufficient green space**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 3

Unsatisfactory: 2

Not sure/no opinion: 3

*Additional comment: This is another example of a downtown PUD nearly filling the lot with brick and concrete and only giving a thin skin of greenery. I suspect*

*that a healthy environment needs more than skin-deep green space ringed with terrace trees. Where are the interior green spaces where real trees can thrive?*

**Quality of landscaping**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 4

Unsatisfactory: 0

Not sure/no opinion: 4

*Additional comment: Satisfactory due to the plantings in the 13' setback on Broom St.*

**Pedestrian-friendly environment**

Excellent: 1

Satisfactory: 2

Unsatisfactory: 0

Not sure/no opinion: 5

*Additional comment: Satisfactory due to 13' setback on Broom St. and the attempts at a residential feel at the pedestrian level.*

**Minimizes noise and light impact on surrounding neighborhood**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 2

Unsatisfactory: 0

Not sure/no opinion: 6

**Quality of life for future Broom St. Lofts residents**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 3

Unsatisfactory: 1

Not sure/no opinion: 4

**Overall quality of this development**

Excellent: 0

Satisfactory: 3

Unsatisfactory: 2

Not sure/no opinion: 3

*Additional comment: As happens when forcing a balloon into a confined space, this development is bulging out wherever it can. It doesn't feel like it was designed to \*fit\* the space, but rather as if it was designed to \*fill\* the space. This is an unsettling trend.*

Attendees were also asked to comment on what they perceived to be the overall positive and negative aspects of the development. Those responses are as follows:

**Positives:**

*Mix of façade materials on Broom St. for an appearance of several buildings*

*Green building design*

*Developer willing to invest in the neighborhood. It will be around for a long time so I hope a great deal of thought goes into the development. Thank you.*

*A more pedestrian friendly and residential in nature use for this block is a good idea.*

**Negatives:**

*Too close to Broom St.; too tall (especially w/ proposed mezzanine)*

*Trying to fit too much into this space.*

*Lack of design considerations of fitting in with historic homes across street.*

*Probable negative impact on already congested Broom St.-West Wash.*

*Intersection.*

Results compiled by: Stefanie Moritz, Chair, Capitol West Steering Committee, Bassett District