

ADDENDUM
PLANNING DIVISION REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
January 28, 2008

RE: I.D. # 08171: Zoning Map Amendment I.D. 3330, Demolition and Rezoning of 301 N. Hamilton Street from R6 and C1 to PUD-GDP

Requested Action

The applicant has requested approval to demolish six buildings and rezone the property from R6 (General Residence District) and C1 (Limited Commercial District) to PUD-GDP (Planned Unit Development Plan- General Development Plan) to allow for the construction of a 67-unit apartment building.

Previous Action

The Plan Commission **referred** the applicant's requests on December 17, 2007. In making the referral, the Commission asked the applicant to provide the following supplemental information:

- Further work on relocation plans for existing structures,
- Address / improve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and
- Provide more design detail and articulation on building elevations.

Project Status

Planning staff has had two meetings with the applicant to discuss the additional submittal materials. The applicant has provided color plans providing additional detail and clarifications on issues raised by both the Plan Commission and staff.

Analysis of Additional Submittal Materials

Zoning Text

The applicant has clarified the proposed zoning text. The revised text would be submitted to staff along with final sign-off plans, if approved. Permitted uses include the following:

- Residential uses (as shown on approved plans),
- Commercial uses (those permitted in the C1-Limited Commercial District) only in the ground floor of the "Pinkus McBride Building", and
- Residential or office uses on the upper floors of the Pinkus McBride Building.

Relocation / Demolition Information

The applicant has provided a one-page description clarifying relocation and demolition plans. In summary, each of the residential properties has been and will be advertised as a being “available” for relocation. The applicant notes he would provide financial assistance to offset some relocation costs for parties interested in moving the structures. The relocation option would be available until August 15, 2008, at which time the buildings would be scheduled for demolition. General maintenance costs, energy concerns, and recent fires are factors cited by the applicant to indicate limited feasibility in preserving the structures. Further, the applicant notes that none of the homes were designated as landmarks and that the Landmarks Commission voted not to oppose the demolition requests.

Comprehensive Plan / Density

The Plan Commission requested that the applicant review the proposal to better reflect recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan. Staff understands these concerns primarily relate to density. The proposed project has a density of nearly 130 du/ac (dwelling units per acre), exceeding both the recommended density range of 40 to 60 du/ac in the Comprehensive Plan and the current density of approximately 95 du/ac on the subject block.

Staff note that the proposed development has a relatively large percentage of one-bedroom units which increases the dwelling unit per acre calculation. For discussion purposes, staff has also looked at the total number of proposed bedrooms. The proposed building includes 75 total bedrooms on roughly 23,520 square feet. The Nichols Station Condominiums, located directly across the street, has 77 total bedrooms on roughly 31,000 square feet. The massing of the two buildings is similar, although the proposed structure is one-story taller in height. In considering this, staff note that while the density of the proposed project exceeds that recommended in the Plan, it may not be as out of context as suggested purely by the dwelling unit per acre calculation. For example, by changing the dwelling unit mix to include two-bedroom units rather than one-bedroom units, the density would decrease significantly.

Further, staff note that the Comprehensive Plan recommends projects, such as the proposed, be reviewed for compliance with detailed guidelines in a neighborhood plan. This is to account for more site-specific considerations that are beyond the scope of the more general Comprehensive Plan. In the absence of such recommendations, staff review projects against several factors (mass, scale, and character) as it would if it were creating more detailed plan recommendations. At higher densities, these factors tend to be more important measures of compatibility than nominal density. Staff previously concluded that it may be appropriate to exceed the general density range recommended in the Comprehensive Plan on this particular site, however, staff did not believe the initial submittal provided sufficient information to fully evaluate the request. With the additional drawings, staff believe that there is now adequate information to evaluate the mass and design aspects of the project. This is discussed in more detail, below.

Design

The applicant has provided several additional drawings providing detail on the proposed project. Staff note the following:

- The applicant has provided scalable, color elevation drawings for all sides of the building. Such drawings indicate building materials and show the articulation of each facade. Additionally, discrepancies on height and massing on previous drawings have been corrected. These drawings should be considered representative of the proposed massing and articulation of the project. Specific details, including materials, will be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission and would be approved at the SIP phase.

Staff provide two initial comments on the proposed materials that should be addressed at the SIP stage. Staff first recommend that the primary building materials on the Hancock Street elevation be reconsidered and that the applicant reduce the amount of EIFS. Staff also recommend the applicant considers different options for the base of the building along this same frontage to improve its appearance and relationship to the adjacent sidewalk. As shown, the public sidewalk would be directly adjacent to a four-foot poured concrete portion of the building. Staff recommend that both of these issues be addressed in any future SIP submittals.

- The updated drawings show a full four-story building facade versus a three-story building facade with a slight fourth-story setback. This addresses a comment made by the UDC.
- The applicant has addressed the questions on the proposed street wall. Per the attached plans, the wall is approximately 85 feet in length, roughly at the center of the 310-foot Hamilton Street block. The street grade drops and the height of the wall increases as one moves from Johnson to Gorham Streets. The wall at “Section A”, noted on the Hamilton Street Elevation drawing, would be roughly 18 inches in height. At Section “B”, the height would be approximately four and one-half feet tall. Several planting elements will be installed to soften the appearance of the wall. Based on the new details, however, it appears that some of the planting areas would be placed in City right-of-way.
- The UDC and staff have previously recommended that the applicant revise the “saw-tooth” design at the corner of Hamilton, Hancock, and Gorham Streets. It was recommended that the applicant explore different design solutions that better address this prominent corner prior to future approvals. Staff recommend that the applicant revises these plans, per Urban Design Commission approval, at the SIP phase.

Conclusion

The Planning Division believes the proposed project can meet applicable review standards and note the applicant has provided more detail to answer questions noted in the initial review of the project.

Recommendation

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the demolition standards are met and that the demolition permit be **approved** and that a recommendation of **approval** of Zoning Map Amendment #3330 be forwarded to the Common Council. These approvals are subject to the following conditions:

1. Input received at the public hearing.
2. Comments from reviewing agencies (including comments presented at 12/17/2007 meeting).
3. That no demolition permit be issued prior to the approval of a Specific Implementation Plan.
4. That the applicant submits an updated zoning text reflecting the clarifications provided in the revised submittal. This text would be subject to the approval of the Zoning Administrator and Planning Division. Text should reflect the following:
 - a. Residential Uses as shown on approved plans,
 - b. Uses permitted in the C1 district only for the ground floor of the “Pinkus McBride Building”, and
 - c. Office uses permitted in the O1 zoning district only in the upper floor of the “Pinkus McBride Building” as a permitted alternative to the residential units approved on plans.
5. That the applicant revises plans for the corner of Hancock, Hamilton, and Gorham streets, per Urban Design Commission approval, at the SIP phase.
6. That the applicant revises the Hancock Street facade to address the material concerns noted in this report.
7. That the applicant includes a plan for rehabilitating and restoring the existing Pinkus McBride Building as part of the SIP submittal.
8. That the applicant revise site/landscape plans to eliminate encroachment into the right of way, or in the alternative, obtain proper City approvals prior to installing the treatments, as shown on revised plan set.