
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
MASTER PLAN REVIEW**

Property Address:	2501 First Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	McMillan Reservoir		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	January 22, 2015	X	Conceptual Review
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott		Alteration
		X	New Construction
			Demolition

Jair Lynch Development Partners, with plans prepared by MV + A Architects, seeks conceptual design review for a seven story mixed-use residential and retail building on Parcel 2 at the McMillan Reservoir sand filtration site. Parcel 2 is located on the south side of the north service court between the new north-south Half Street and First Street.

Proposal

The project calls for a seven story building atop a two-story below-grade garage. The first floor would have retail facing the north service court and residential on the southern portions of the first floor and on the six floors above. The retail frontage has been designed to have the same 20' high canted masonry wall and setback for the upper floors as the other projects and as called for in the approved design guidelines.

Above the first floor, the building would be composed of two U-shaped forms with outward (east-west) facing courtyards. A bridge element would span over the new "Three-Quarters Street" on levels three through seven. The building's base would be clad in gray stone; the upper floors would be finished with white metal panels, charcoal brick and metal trim, and wood accents at the balconies and windows.

Evaluation

The concept is consistent with the McMillan master plan in its height, general massing, and color and materials palette. The only aspect of the proposal that is of questionable consistency with the intent of the master plan is the bridge element that spans over the new road.

As the Board will remember, the middle section of the McMillan site is composed of several different building types and uses (townhouses, the grocery store, a medical office building, and multi-unit residential) and was the most difficult to make cohesive. The introduction of the three north-south roads was part of a fundamental rethinking of the plan that was presented to the Board in October 2013. This version of the plan included, for the first time, a consistent setback around all sides of the site (allowing the topography to be largely retained and the Olmsted Walk recreated), the design requirement that a 20' high masonry retail base be provided on the north service corridor (with setbacks above) to recall the portal walls, and the introduction of the north/south roads through the site's center section to

provide greater cohesiveness to this zone and to open up views to the maintenance corridors from throughout the site and from each other. It was this version of the plan that the Board ultimately adopted, finding that it would retain significant character-defining features of the landmark sufficient to convey its historic character.

Spanning over one of the north-south streets interrupts one of the open views through the site and increases the apparent size and footprint of the building. While it may result in a more efficient building, it is at odds with the goals of providing reciprocal views and to encourage smaller buildings in this portion of the site that step down in height, size and footprint the large medical office buildings to the north to the finer-grained residential buildings to the south.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept's height, general massing and material palette, with the exception of the road-spanning bridge element, to be compatible with the previously-approved McMillan redevelopment master plan.