

**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES – April 21, 2021**

CPC ITEMS:

1. **Consideration**: Minutes from April 05, 2021 DAC Meeting
2. **Reconsideration**: Zoning Docket 26/21 – Request by Kundan and Venna Louisiana, LLC for a conditional use to permit a gas station in an EC Enhancement Corridor Design Overlay District on a through lot located at a major intersection, as defined by the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. (VG)

The applicant’s representative , Myles Martin noted the revisions made to the site plan and has added items that were omitted from the original application, which include: a current survey of the property, revised site plan to show the refuse container fenced-in and located on the property, and a revised landscape plan. Chris Young also wanted the committee to know he was present on the call.

The Parks and Parkways representative commented the landscape plan with regard to the small size of the proposed trees and added that they should be larger/taller trees given there are no overhead power lines. The lack of internal trees along Broad was also questioned. The applicant’s representative mentioned the concern for the tanks for the gas, existing bus stop, and fire hydrant and suggested that something topside may be possible once the extent of the underground tanks has been determined. The Parks and Parkway representative pointed out that the fire hydrant should also be noted on the site plan.

The DPW representative commented on the fact that the bus stop in front of the property has been moved and there is no longer a bus stop there. It was also noted that the property lines noted on the site plan don’t appear to align with the survey. The applicant’s representative added that the lines would be adjusted to reflect those on the survey. The DPW representative commented on the distance of the existing sign from the site plan property line and that an apparent right of way should be shown. The applicant noted that the sign location on the site plan would be double-checked for accuracy.

The CPC representative questioned the plan for landscaping along the corner of the S. White Street side (behind the building) and the Tulane Avenue side to prevent unsafe and unpractical parking. The applicant noted that the three legs to the billboard are located behind the building; there could be landscaping added to area that runs parallel to Tulane. The CPC staff also pointed out their concern regarding the parking spaces that are located in front of the building adjacent to Tulane Avenue and Baudin Street.

The PPW representative had a question for the DPW representative regarding the required width of the pedestrian sidewalks. DPW believes the required width at this location is 4 feet. The PPW representative noted that there needs to be street trees added on the Baudin Street side up to the building. The PPW representative and DPW representative discussed the addition of an intentional driveway and curbing should be indicated on the site plan to prevent erroneous parking.

Prior a motion being made, the PPW representative asked of the committee if the site plan needed to be seen again.

The **PPW** representative moved to **APPROVE** the proposal subject to 4 provisos, the **motion was seconded by the Arts Council** representative and unanimously adopted.

Provisos:

1. Additional street trees as discuss on the Tulane Street and Baudin Street frontages.
 2. Curbing on Baudin to direct traffic.
 3. Adjusting the width of the driveways to reflect the DPW standards.
 4. Adjusting the site plan to reflect the property boundaries and exiting curbs along Broad, additional landscaping along Broad, as discussed, and the additional onsite landscaping along Tulane and rear of the building, as noted.
3. **Reconsideration**: Design Review 26/21 – Request by Hai Nguyen, MD to permit the new construction of a three-story 15,670 sq. ft. cold dark shell and parking lot with over 10 spaces within a MU-1 Medium Intensity Mixed-Use District on a site with over 100 feet of frontage along an EC Enhancement Corridor Design Overlay District. (JF)

The item was clarified to be split into two components: (1) The Conditional Use request for the drive-through on site and (2) a Design Review for the building design. These two components will be considered as separate applications through CPC.

The applicant described that they had revised the plans to accommodate the two existing oak trees on Claiborne Avenue by making the two-way driveway on Claiborne an enter-only drive with an exit-only driveway on Cadiz Street. The Holly trees that had been planned for Cadiz were switched in favor of Elm trees to support larger shade trees. The applicant also further developed Option 1 and Option 4 building design to include more color and articulate floor lines. The building meets the 50% transparency requirement on the ground floor and the applicant described the minimal look of the building as intentional to communicate the purpose of the building as an orderly and safe medical building with brand unity.

The Capital Projects committee member found that the building setback as planned is not adequate to clear the critical root zone of the tree and found still that the redesigned structure was not contextual to the adjacent neighborhood. The HDLC committee member agreed, finding that the massing, setbacks and exterior treatment were not reflective of the context. They encouraged the owner, architects and developer to find a way to meet in the middle between the existing building in Gretna and the context of the new building on Claiborne.

The CPC committee member noted the applicant's responsiveness to the comments provided and said they were more comfortable with the proposed design, finding that the design was in keeping with the non-residential buildings near to the subject site.

The Parks and Parkways representative found issue with access from the parking area to the building, state a concern for the island in the parking area which did not seem to direct traffic the way it should. The committee member asked for the site plan to be updated with attention to the internal movement in the parking area and building. This committee member also noted a concern with health of the oak tree which would have to be trimmed significantly. The committee member suggested that the building be moved back five feet, which would be huge in preserving the tree canopy. The Parks and Parkways committee member also voiced a preference for Option 1 using

the horizontal banding in Option 4.

Parks and Parkways made a motion for **approval** with the following conditions:

1. Building be moved back with a minimum 5ft setback
2. Issues with pedestrian access from the parking area is resolved
3. Option 1 incorporates the design from Option 4

And with the following proviso:

1. The applicant shall submit a tree protection plan by a licensed arborist to the Department of Parks and Parkways

The motion was **seconded by CPC**, but **did not pass**.

A **second motion** was made by **Parks and Parkways** to **allow the project to move to consideration by the Director of City Planning Commission for final decision** with the following proviso:

1. The applicant shall submit a tree protection plan by a licensed arborist to the Department of Parks and Parkways

The **motion was seconded by City Planning Commission** and **passed with 3 yays** (Parks and Parkways, CPC, Arts Council) and **2 nays** (Capital Projects and HDLC) and **one member abstaining** (DPW).

4. **Consideration:** Zoning Docket 27/21 – Request by Orleans Parish School Board to permit an to amend the current Conditional Use (ZD098-12) to allow a for a resubdivision and use of a portion of the site as vehicular parking within a OS-N Neighborhood Open Space District and an HU-RD1 Historic Urban Two-Family Residential District on a site with frontage along an HUC Historic Urban Corridor Use Restriction Overlay District and EC Enhancement Corridor Design Overlay District. (EH)

The applicant’s representative presented the project, which is for an amendment to the original conditional use for Samuel R. Bradley, now known as Bradley Bethune Charter School. As the school’s enrollment has grown, it has experienced a shortage of parking availability for staff and visitors. The proposed design will transform a portion of the adjacent open space into a parking lot for school use during the week and available for community use in the evenings and on weekends. The school seeks to preserve the portions of the open space (playground/open field space). The proposal also includes the preservation of a mature Live Oak. The applicant further described that the proposed parking lot will include landscaping, and parking spaces will be constructed of TRUEGRID® permeable paving.

The City Planning Commission (CPC) representative inquired about bicycle parking. The applicant responded that the existing school provides ample bicycle parking installed during the school’s initial construction. The Committee did not have any additional discussion relative to the request.

The representative from the Department of **Parks and Parkways (PKWY)** made a motion for **APPROVAL**. The motion was **seconded** by the representative of **the Historic Districts Landmarks Commission (HDLC)** and **unanimously adopted**.

5. **Consideration:** Zoning Docket 32/21 – Request by Joseph Macaluso Realty Co., Inc., Laurence J. Macaluso Family, LLC, and Florence M. Baker to permit an Affordable Housing Planned Development within a C-1 General Commercial District and an HU-RD2 Historic Urban Two-Family Residential District on a site with frontage along an HUC Historic Urban Corridor Use Restriction Overlay District and EC Enhancement Corridor Design Overlay District. (HD)

The applicant presented the project – The Grove – an affordable housing planned development that comprises a city square at the intersection of Earhart Boulevard and Clio Street in the Hollygrove neighborhood. The applicants propose to rehabilitate a series of eleven existing structures containing between two- and three- units each, with a total of 23 existing units. The property is split-zoned between HU-RD2 and the portion at the corner of Earhart Boulevard and Clio Street being zoned C-1 General Commercial. This C-1 portion would be developed with a new multi-family structure containing 20-units. The properties have access from the rear to a community space and there are three parking areas – 1) 3 space front-in parking space from Earhart Boulevard, 2) 13 parking space from Clio Street and 3) 27 parking spaces from Colapissa with two two-way curb cuts.

The representative from Parks and Parkways (PKWY) commented that the new multi-family structure entry door is oriented to the rear of the site and recommended that pedestrian access to the site be provided from an entry oriented to the corner/ Earhart Boulevard. PKWY also commented that the series of residential structures that share common parking areas and greenspace are not provided with an internal pedestrian circulation system and suggested that this be resolved by connecting the two parking areas with the addition of pedestrian sidewalk with shade from trees. PKWY suggested eliminating the three front-in parking spaces with access from Earhart Boulevard and pointed out that ADA parking to Building B could be provided in the structure’s rear. PKWY commented that existing driveways that are not in use should be removed and the public parkway restored. PKWY requested that street trees be added to Earhart Boulevard and Monroe Street. The representative from the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) requested additional architectural details showing materials. HDLC commented that the proposed form of the new multi-family structure does not follow the corner and that an opportunity to emphasis the corner is being missed. HDLC suggested increasing the window openings, commentating that the window:wall ratio is low. The representative from Capital Projects Administration (CPA) commented that the massing of the structure should be oriented to Earhart Boulevard and also requested additional details of the exterior finishes. The representative from City Planning Commission (CPC) commented that the existing brick structure on Earhart Boulevard is cited in such a way that it disrupts the Earhart Boulevard front-facing view of the project - “The Grove” that contains a community structure and greenspace to service the 43 residential units, referencing a successful design strategy that blends a historic structure with a contemporary addition at the Rosa Keller library. HDLC noted that they would not recommend the removal of the existing structure. The representative from the Department of Public Works (DPW) reiterated that the abandoned curb cuts should be removed. DPW commented that the proposed shrub planting bordering the parking area cuts off pedestrian circulation. DPW stated that the 6 foot wide sidewalk along Earhart may interfere with street tree placement – to be followed up with the applicant and PKWY. The committee suggested that during the administrative review of suggested design changes, that the planner consult with the agencies that provided comments.

The representative from **City Planning Commission (CPC)** made a motion of **approval** subject to 4 provisos. The **motion was seconded** by the representative of **the Department of Parks and Parkways (PKWY)** and **unanimously adopted**.

Provisos:

1. Addition of internal pathways and circulation.
 2. Consolidation of parking areas to the extent possible and removal of parking spaces that front-in on Earhart Boulevard.
 3. Improved architectural building design of new multi-family structure and community building.
 4. Addition of street trees and landscape plan to be approved by PKWY.
6. **Consideration:** Design Review 44/21 – Request by Atocha St. Charles, LLC to permit the renovation of mixed-use structure within a MU-1 Medium Intensity Mixed-Use District on a site with frontage along an CPC Character Preservation Corridor Design Overlay District. (AN)

The staff senior planner described the application explaining that there are two proposals, one with a possible penthouse addition to the top floor, the other with an interior renovation and minor exterior renovations to the façade of the building to create a retail space on the ground floor and dental office on the second floor. The applicant confirmed the desire to propose two different designs and the representative from CPC suggested each design be labeled as 6A with no additions, and 6B with the addition.

6A- Parks and Parkway commented on the landscape plans and requested revisions for all street trees to receive 24 square feet in area for all existing and newly proposed trees. The representative from Capital Projects Administration requested addressing the entryway and making it cohesive with additional buildings along St. Charles Avenue. The City Planning Commission representative requested bicycle parking on site.

6B – With the addition of the same site comments from 6A, the representative from HDLC requested an awning or some sort of protection over the proposed penthouse to provide protection from weather and the elements. The CPA representative requested addressing the sliding glass doors of the penthouse and recommended a second or additional entryway.

For both phases, the representative from **Parks and Parkway** made a motion to **approve** subject to further review by Parks and Parkway for landscape plans and tree protection, City Planning Commission for bicycle parking, HDLC for design elements on the penthouse as well as comments from CPA about the penthouse design. **HDLC seconded** the motion which was **approved unanimously**.

7. **Consideration:** Design Review 50/21 (DAC Only) – Request by Aquarium of the Americas to permit the renovation of an existing aquarium within a VCP Vieux Carré Park District on a site with frontage along an Vieux Carré Height Interim Zoning District.

The CPC representative introduced the project and clarified the reason for DAC only review. The applicant presented their proposal denoting the scope of renovations to the center of the building and plaza directly adjacent to that portion.

The CPA representative began a conversation regarding the building design, with the applicant explaining their architectural moves, but the CPC staff representative clarified that the review was for site plan only as the building design is under the jurisdiction of Viuex Carré Commission review and approval. The applicant noted that they had garnered conceptual approval from that

Commission. PPW representative asked about the timeline, which the applicant chimed in “fast,” as that would affect the viability of the palm trees being moved during the ideal season, which is summer. PPW also added that integration with the ferry terminal renovations would be ideal, to which the applicant confirmed those conversations were happening. The CPC staff representative inquired about the scope of site improvements, property management sign-off, plaza reverberations from the building, and inclusion of bike parking, all of which is received by the applicant. The CPC representative asked about pedestrian access via the entry and noted the entry plaza doesn’t signify the new entry to which the CPC staff representative jumped in and asked how someone would know about the new entry from Canal Street. The applicant said the form would be helpful, to which the CPC staff representative suggested having a comprehensive wayfinding strategy and translating the architectural movement to the hardscape. PPW vocalized their opposition to the hardscape changes as that pattern had been long established but that utilizing materiality from Spanish Plaza and/or Ferry Terminal plaza renovations would speak to that suggestion.

The representative from **PPW**, made a motion of **approval** subject to 3 provisos, which CPC staff representative asked for a friendly amendment to add a 4th, which PPW consented to. The **motion was seconded** by the representative of **CPC** and **unanimously adopted**.

Provisos:

1. Utilization of hardscape revisions, particularly with materiality and around new entryway.
2. Tree protection/moving and landscape plan to be approved by PPW
3. Inclusion of signage and wayfinding.
4. Installation of bike parking.