

**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES – May 18, 2022**

**CPC ITEMS:**

1. Item No. 1 was withdrawn. The meeting minutes for the April 20th meeting will be considered at the June 15th DAC meeting.
2. **Consideration:** Design Review 020/22 – Proposal for the phased development of a multi-unit commercial property, which requires DAC review because the site exceeds 100’ in frontage along an CT Corridor Design Overlay District. (JC)

The staff planner presented the proposal that will be completed in 4 phases (Ph 1A renovation of existing structure for convenience store and white box tenant space; Ph 1B build-out of the commercial tenant space; Ph 2 gas station canopy and EV charging stations; Ph 3 new car wash; Ph 4 new retail building). The staff planner provided initial design feedback, requesting modifications to make vehicular circulation less of a dominate element by improving the buffer area and including pedestrian pathways, fencing and landscaping. In addition to come into compliance, the site plan needs to be revised to show no more than 2 curb cuts. One-way curb cuts are limited to 12 ft and two-way curb cuts are limited to 24 ft.

The applicant presented their proposal stating that modifications to the parking lot are being considered based on correspondence with the Department of Transportation. They are in the process of completing a traffic analysis. Potential changes include modification of the turning lane, removal of the top curb cut and removal of the center oak tree. Other scope includes the addition of EV charging stations and stormwater upgrades. The applicant clarified that Ph 4, the new retail building will be part of a subsequent design review because the design is not far enough along. Signage will also be part of a separate review, not requiring CPC approval.

By email, the CPA representative recommended modifications to the front façade to maintain more balanced elements along the entire façade that fronts on Chef Menteur Highway. The proposed front elevation reads as 3 bays. The left and center bay include storefront details with a box rib metal panel and canopy. The right bay as well as the west elevation has a blank stucco treatment. The CPC representative commented that transparency requires apply to the primary street façade. The applicant was amenable to the recommendations.

The DPW representative discussed the pedestrian pathways, turning lane and curb cuts with the applicant. The applicant stated that the right turning lane is based on initial DOT feedback. The applicant stated that there is an error that shows two turning lanes and that they would revise. The applicant also stated that a northbound signal would be added. DPW recommended modifications to the sidewalk to make it a straight path (it should not jog but could still join the pathway connected to the parking). Alternately, the site plan could be

modified to add a sidewalk in addition to the one used by the parking lot. DPW suggested the sidewalk link to the existing RTA bus stop. The staff planner noted that the RTA is redesigning the entire transit network with the New Links program. DPW to review revised site plan that shows crosswalks and reestablishes ramps and the revisions to intersection design.

The **PKWYS** representative made a motion for **APPROVAL**, subject to five (5) provisos, which was seconded by the **HDLC** representative and unanimously adopted.

*Provisos*

1. Modify exterior façades to a) balance the massing & transparency ratios and b) continue the clerestory fenestration patterning to the area below it.
  2. Provide a completed traffic analysis
  3. Provide a tree protection plan approved by PKWYS
  4. Reduce the visual dominance of vehicular use areas on the site and ameliorate the buffering strategy, including but not limited to pedestrian walkways, fences, and landscaping
  5. Revise the site plan with DPW approval to show:
    - a. driveways and curb cuts amount and dimensions to be compliant (2 max)
    - b. align the easement of extension of right-of-way (sidewalk) to not job/bend but match the existing sidewalks adjacent to site.
      - i. the applicant could alternatively add a second sidewalk or realign
    - c. to incorporate the existing Regional Transit Authority (RTA) bus stop into the design with a sidewalk connection.
    - d. crosswalks, both within the site and to the site across Chef Menteur Hwy., and reestablishes ramps
    - e. revisions to intersection design
3. **Consideration:** Design Review 023/22 – Proposal for the new construction of a hotel at a site located within a CPC Character Preservation Corridor Design Overlay District. The property is located within a full control local historic district, so the DAC review is limited to site design only. (RB)

The staff planner introduced the case noting the site is located in an MU-1 District, and the applicants are proposing a 5 story, 40 room hotel with just under 34,000 square feet in gross floor area. Commercial uses in the MU-1 District have a parking exemption for the first 5,000 square feet of floor area. In this case, that translates to 3 parking spaces. Therefore, the site requires 17 off-street parking spaces. The applicants are proposing 7 uncovered parking spaces and 5 covered parking spaces. The 7 uncovered parking spaces are not subject to parking landscape requirements because they are under 10 spaces. The remaining required parking spaces will be fulfilled by on-street parking along the front and side streets, which is permissible under the MU-1 zoning designation. The applicants are proposing a loading space in the aisle between the two parking rows. The staff planner

stated this may need to be relocated as the loading area will block the parked vehicles. The staff planner also noted the design is subject to building foundation landscape which has a requirement that the area that is not a hedge row shall be vegetative landscaping.

The applicant presented their proposal, mentioning the plans have already received **HDLC** conceptual approval. The applicant stated the loading space will only be used by a van and their loading requirements are minimal because the size of the hotel is relatively small. They stated they thought it was in the best interest of the neighborhood to retain all off-street parking spaces are proposed, rather than remove one or two spaces to relocate the loading space. The applicant also stated the gravel pavers are permeable in the front yard and should qualify for vegetative landscaping. The representative from **HDLC** stated the Columns hotel used permeable pavers which counted toward their vegetative landscaping requirement. The **PKWYS** representative mentioned the need (but not the requirement) for street trees along the side street to enhance the streetscape experience. The representative also stated an arborist should be present from improvement to the sidewalk to ensure existing trees' roots are protected. The representative from **DPW** stated the applicants will need **DPW** approval for bicycle parking in the ROW. **DPW's** representative also stated that the one-foot planning strip that abuts the sidewalk should not be planted with vegetation that encroaches into the sidewalk, suggesting an alternative that the sidewalk could abut the concrete wall.

The **HDLC** representative made a motion for **APPROVAL**, subject to three (3) provisos, which was seconded by the **PKWYS** representative and unanimously adopted.

*Provisos*

1. Interpretation from the Zoning Department regarding the loading space and the building foundation landscaping
  2. **DPW** approval for bicycle parking spaces in the ROW
  3. Addition of trees along the side street
4. **Consideration:** Design Review 016/22. This project is a non-CPC item and requires DAC review because it is a public project. This is a proposal for the installation of a pedestrian bridge connecting the Lafitte Greenway and Saint Louis Street near the intersection of Saint Louis and North Gayoso Streets. (DAC only).

The applicant presented the proposal, stating they have been working with **NORD**, **SWB** and **DPW** for conceptual approval. By email, the **CPA** representative recommended modifications to the layout of the pedestrian bridge to align it with N. Gayoso St, rather than St. Louis St. In the proposed location, the pedestrian bridge could lessen the visual obstruction of the water line over the canal. The applicant responded that the water line was a constraint. **DPW** stated that the concept of adding a pedestrian bridge has been discussed, but the Department is still reviewing more detailed plans. The **PKWYS** representative requested modifications to the site plan to allow the ramp to better direct pedestrians to St. Louis Street sidewalk connections, further stating that any existing obstructions, such as light poles could be easily relocated. There were no objections with the ramp on the greenway side. The **DPW** representative stated that the North side of

Gayoso Street recently was improved with new sidewalks, and requested that the connections from the bridge tie into them. In addition, he requested that the pavement be added around the waterline. He also suggested adding either a guardrail or object marker to protect the bridge from the St. Louis right-of-way.

The **PKWYS** representative made a motion for **APPROVAL**, subject to modifications to the site plan to allow the ramp to better direction pedestrians to the St. Louis Street sidewalk and further review by the Department of Public Works during the permitting process, which was seconded by the **HDLC** representative and unanimously adopted.

5. **Consideration:** Design Review 022/22 – For a property located at Andre Cailloux Park (which is bounded by Bayou Road, North Dorgenois Street, and Bell Street). This project is a non-CPC item and requires DAC review because it is a public project. This is a proposal for streetscape improvements to Andre Cailloux Park and the neighboring Bayou Road rights-of-way (DAC only).

Item No. 5 was withdrawn

6. **Consideration:** Design Review 024/22 – for the renovation of an existing structure at a site located within a CPC Character Preservation Corridor Design Overlay District. The property is located within the Uptown partial control local historic district. (RJ)

The **CPC** representative presented the proposal, stating this is a site plan and design review for the renovation of an existing three-story 30,000 sq ft structure in a CPC Character Preservation Corridor Design Overlay District. The structure that is currently retail on all levels will be converted to dwellings above ground floor commercial. Modifications to the existing structure shall comply with the building design standards for the HU-B1 District found in Article 12, Section 12.3.B. This project requires DAC review because it is within a CPC overlay. This site is within the uptown partial control local historic district.

The applicant stated that they have received part 1 SHPO approval for the façade improvements to the existing structure. Modifications include replacement of the storefront at the front elevation as well as restoring the non-historic façade of the 1950's annex with a storefront. Other improvements include new rooftop terraces and a walking patio space. The applicant stated that the parking along Forshey was determined to not be compliant nor does it maintain inherited non-conforming rights, therefore the proposed site plan is proposing to replace the angled parking.

The **DPW** representative suggested site plan modifications that would replace the proposed angled parking spaces with typical on-street parking parallel to the curb, along with the addition of a sidewalk with a normal setback from the property line along Foucher Street and the addition of greenspace. The **HDLC** representative concurred with this suggestion stating it would create a better urban design by adding greenspace as well as contribute to the minimization of flooding. The **PKWYS** representative stated that the landscaping plans are under review by their department, including the preservation of 3 trident maples, the addition of a missing tree within the fourth tree well, and the expansion of tree wells to 24 sq. ft.

The **PKWYS** representative made a motion for **APPROVAL**, subject to suggested streetscape modifications, which was seconded by the **HDLC** representative and unanimously adopted.

7. **Consideration:** Design Review 025/22 – Conceptual pre-application review of a proposal for a new construction of the Village at English Turn, a multi-family residential development. The development requires DAC review because it exceeds 40,000 square feet in floor area. (VM)

The Committee discussed the proposal. By email the **CPC** representative stated that the development seems adequate based on information provided on buildings massing and placement on site. Additional information would be helpful such as design schematics of the 4 story buildings and how they compare to the 3 story prototypes shown in the rendering, as well as, a preliminary landscape plans. No objections at this time. The **HDLC** representative questioned whether the proposal met the BFE requirements, to which the applicant affirmed, stating that the structures would be raised 3 ft. The **HDLC** representative asked what the floor to ceiling height would be, the applicant responded 9 ft. The **PKWYS** representative requested modifications to the interior sidewalk layout to better interact with the edge of the pond. He also commented that such a large community would benefit from amenities such as a swimming pool. The applicant responded that the adjacent parcel would be developed with a clubhouse and pool area and future improvements would include pathways connections across the drainage servitude. He also suggested that the applicants consider ground floor parking to protect greenspace throughout the site. He also suggested that connections be made from individual units to the interior area. He also stated that utility connections should not be located at the front of the building.

There was no motion made at this time. The applicant is to follow up with a formal submittal.