

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

11th & Vermont (1031 N. Vermont Street) – NVR, Inc.

Site Plan Review Committee Meeting

October 19, 2017

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: James Schroll, Nancy Iacomini, Jim Lantelme.

MEETING AGENDA

This was the first SPRC meeting for the 11th & Vermont site plan. The project has completed a Special GLUP Study LRPC process (December 2016 – June 2017) and the County Board has advertised a GLUP change for a portion of the site from “Low-Medium” Residential to “High-Medium” Residential Mixed-Use. This GLUP change allows the applicant to pursue rezoning the South Block (southern portion of the site) from R-5 to R-C. In addition to the rezoning, the applicant proposes a final site plan for 73 multifamily units (South Block) and 12 townhouse units (North Block). The meeting began with a walking tour of the site, during which staff and the applicant’s architect provided information to participants at key locations on the north and south blocks. The meeting agenda began with a presentation by staff reviewing the process to date, outlining the site context and policy context, and then providing an assessment of the proposed site plan and preliminary policy issues. The applicant then gave a presentation on their proposed development program and the details of the proposal. The SPRC led off the discussion with land use and density, which have been discussed extensively throughout the Special GLUP Study process. Next, the committee discussed site design and open space. The meeting ended with a wrap up, and then members of the public were given time to speak.

SPRC DISCUSSION

Presentations:

- The SPRC should focus their discussion on the items contained in the staff presentation Slide #19, in which the County Board outlined the issues that would be decided through the site plan review process.

Site Design:

- Concern that the proposed townhouses mirror each other on both sides of 11th Street N. This street is supposed to be the dividing line for the transition, so there should be a difference in how the townhouses on the south block relate to those on the north block.
- Concern about the placement of the multifamily building in relation to the Westview along the southern property line; there is not enough separation (20 feet of separation is proposed). Concern about the building’s impact on light and air in relation to the Westview’s north-facing units; if requesting modification of zoning standards then no impact to adjacent properties should be found.
- There is concern about the location of the guest parking in relation to the Vermont Court townhouses.
- There is a question about the R-B Corridor Streetscape standards and how they apply to the site.

Staff answered that there is a requirement for a 13-foot streetscape on both sides of 11th Street N., and the applicant is complying with that requirement.

- There is a question about who will be responsible for the maintenance of the landscape/bioretenion planters proposed. The applicant responded that the future HOA will be responsible for that maintenance.
- There is a question about whether there are entrances to the multifamily units from the N. Vermont Street frontage; the applicant responded that there are not. All of the multifamily units have internal entries.
- There was a suggestion that the front entrance to the multifamily building should be better distinguished/celebrated and embellished architecturally.
- Concern expressed about the impact of the four-story townhouses on the existing two-story townhouses surrounding the North Block
- Concern expressed about a “walling effect” on 11th Street N. if surrounded on both sides by four-story townhouses.

Open Space:

- Support expressed for the open space scheme shown in the staff sketch for an alternative layout for the North Block.
- Concern about the lack of dog parks in the area; would like to see open space in this project for an area to walk pets.
- BVSCA supports open space within this project; the only reason there was concern expressed about open space during the Special GLUP Study process was if the inclusion of open space resulted in increased density.
- Is there an opportunity to capture and reuse stormwater? The applicant responded that they are not proposing to reuse stormwater, but capture, treat, and release. They will work with DPR to ensure that street trees are properly maintained.

Wrap up comments:/deliverables

- There should be more information provided as to how the proposed North Block townhouses relate to the surrounding existing townhouse developments. In particular, better 3D renderings/perspectives showing the difference in height between the four-story and two-story townhouses.
- Staff should prepare a map like what was done with the South Block showing the built densities for the site plans north of 11th Street and how they relate to the proposed North Block development.
- Would like to see a rendering/perspective of the alley proposed for the North Block and the townhouse facades along the alley.
- There should be greater study of the relationship of the proposed building to the existing 6-story Westview wing in terms of the impact on light/air/privacy and building separation.
- Would like to see the landscape plan for the next meeting.
- More information should be provided about bike infrastructure.
- There should be more/better street sections showing the streetscapes provided at the next meeting.

Public comment

- The R-C District has a 10% landscaped open space requirement. Would like to see an exhibit detailing how this project conforms to that requirement. Are there any R-C projects that don't conform to that requirement?
- Concern about the design of the driveway down to the garage. The project is bringing cars, loading vehicles, and trash right next to the Westview.
- The South Block is on a hill. Would like to see an exhibit showing the elevations – in actual height from sea level, in relation to the Westview.
- Desire to see a better study of the proposed multifamily building from the Westview.
- Would like to see a map of the Ballston area and where existing open spaces are located.
- Need to see a shadow study for the multifamily building's impact on the Westview.
- Concern that the four-story townhouses proposed on both sides of the street will box in the two-story Victoria at Ballston townhouses.