

URBAN DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO: **Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee**

SUBJECT: Minutes of January Meeting

DATE: 21 January 2015

FINAL

The Urban Design Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, January 21 at 9:00am at City Hall. The following members were in attendance at the meeting:

Steve Kulinski, non-voting guest
Marie McKenney Tavernini
Roger Waud
Bruce Machanic, co-chair
Daniel Straub, co-chair

The following Staff, representatives for the Applicants, and citizen representatives were also in attendance:

Maya Contreras	P&Z
Al Cox	P&Z
Dirk Geratz	P&Z
David Kitchens	Cooper Carry Architects
Brandon Lenk	Cooper Carry Architects
Rory Byrnes	CAS Riegler
Adam Stifil	CAS Riegler
Duncan Blair	Attorney at Law

INTRODUCTION

- The meeting was called to order at 9:00am as an extended quarterly meeting of UDAC. The purpose of the meeting was to review the approved conceptual design by BAR for the proposed annex building for the 515 North Washington (The Old Cotton Building) project.

OLD BUSINESS: PROJECT PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

- **515 North Washington Street (The Old Cotton Factory Building).**

This project is being proposed as a renovation and re-use of the original Cotton Factory Building for residential purposes along with the development of a proposed adjacent Annex Building, which will require a Development Special Use Plan (DSUP). The overall project will require a Master Plan Amendment, a rezoning with proffers, the DSUP including special use requests to reduce the number of parking spaces and provide off-site parking within 300 feet of the project, a Transportation Management Plan, and modification requests for the secondary front yard and the side yard for the Annex Building. The project was originally presented to UDAC in January, 2014 with a follow-up presentation in November (see minutes). The committee prepared a letter of support for the preservation and re-use of the existing building, the general footprint for a proposed Annex Building, and the proposed concept design for the 'garden space' along Washington Street. The recent January 7, 2015 presentation was focused on explaining the evolution of the concept design for the Annex Building prior to that evening's BAR meeting and work session. The committee complimented the Applicant on the obvious improvement of the design of the project but also registered the following questions:

 - a) how the proposed Annex Building, and overall project, is compatible with the Washington Street Design Guidelines and the Urban Design Guidelines since the submitted narrative does not adequately meet the requirement of explaining and describing the concept design for this project;
 - b) whether the proposed roof, roof monitor and masonry detailing of the Annex Building is compatible with the guidelines, the adjacent neighborhood, and the historic character of Washington Street.

This presentation focused on an explanation of the results of the recent BAR meeting and an explanation of how the conceptual design of the Annex Building has evolved.

URBAN DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of January 2015 Meeting

Discussion and Vote:

The committee continued to question how this conceptual design for the Annex Building has evolved and what particular Washington Street historical building precedents have been used for inspiration. The committee also complimented the Applicant on the significant work they have accomplished in working with Staff on the conceptual layout and design of the window fenestration for the Annex Building to reflect an historical and architectural connection to the existing building. However, the committee continued to raise the following questions about the conceptual design of the building:

- a) whether the design of the proposed building, including the flat roof and roof monitor, are compatible with the adjacent neighborhood/community and with the historic character of Washington Street (it was suggested that the Annex Building appears to be a perfect fit for the waterfront, but not for Washington Street);
- b) whether the articulated masonry detail on the building elevations reflects and reinforces the intended "simple industrial building" style as noted in the earlier narratives; and
- c) whether the height of the stone base on the building may need some relief to make the north building elevation more pedestrian friendly.

In addition, questions were raised about the potential safety and security of the proposed pocket park on the south side of the site.

The following motion was offered (presented by BM; seconded by RW):

- UDAC endorses the conceptual design of this overall project and the conceptual design of the proposed Annex Building subject to the submission of an updated Narrative that will adequately explain a) the conceptual design of the overall project, and b) the conceptual architectural design of the Annex Building including its historical precedents along Washington Street.

Yes: BM, RW

No : MT, DS

Motion Failed.

Staff led a discussion of whether the project responds to the Urban Design Guidelines. The co-chair (DS) explained that the process used by Staff to guide this project has been flawed from the start especially for a project of such significance on Washington Street (the Staff BAR report includes noteworthy comments by adjacent property owners and by the previous Chair of the BAR). Moreover, the convoluted process makes the determination of whether this project merits the other urban design special use requests a false forgone conclusion. Nevertheless, the committee does not want to make the problems associated with the City's current "planning process" an undue burden on this Applicant. As a result, the following motion was offered (presented by BM; seconded by RW):

- UDAC endorses the conceptual design of this overall project and the conceptual design of the proposed Annex Building subject to the submission of an updated Narrative that will adequately explain a) the conceptual design of the overall project, and b) the conceptual architectural design of the Annex Building including its historical precedents along Washington Street.

Yes: BM, RW

No : MT

Abstain: DS

Motion Approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- No New Business.

ADJOURNMENT

- The Committee adjourned at approximately 11:00am.