



Downtown Development Review Overlay

Report of the Urban Design Administrator & Staff to the DDRO Committee

Case No: 18DDRO1011
Classification: Non-Expedited

GENERAL INFORMATION

Property Address: 801 West Jefferson Street

Applicant: Nash Desai
Athena Hospitality
1307 Murfreesboro Pike
Franklin, TN 37064
615-214-9089 ext. 4
nash@athenahospitalitygroup.com

Daniel Whitley
Arnold Consulting Engineering Services
1136 South Park Drive
Bowling Green, KY 42103
270-780-9445

Owner: William Weyland
GWM Realty LLC
815 West Market Street
Louisville, KY 40202
502-215-2489

Estimated Cost: \$7,000,000

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The applicant requests approval for the construction of a new 5 story, 120 room hotel. The total square footage of the building is approximately 68,804sf. The "L" shaped building is located at the corner intersection South 8th and West Jefferson Streets. Handicapped parking and a vehicular drop off area are located at the interior portion of the building, hidden from street view. Additional parking is provided from an existing parking garage located on the east side of South 8th Street. No new curb cuts are proposed along West Jefferson Street; an existing curb cut will be relocated along South 8th Street.

The five story building has a one story cast stone base and the upper levels are composed primarily of EIFs with metal panel accents. Variations in building height and in façade planes are expressed throughout the design. Storefront windows are located along the ground floor of the North and East elevations; South and West elevations have little fenestration due to the hotel's interior functions.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH APPLICANT; COMPLETE APPLICATION

The application was submitted on August 15, 2018. After initial comments by staff regarding the design, a revised set of drawings were received by Planning and Design on August 30, 2018. The application was determined to be substantially complete and classified as "Non - Expedited" on August 30 2018. A public hearing of the DDRO Committee was scheduled for September 26, 2018.

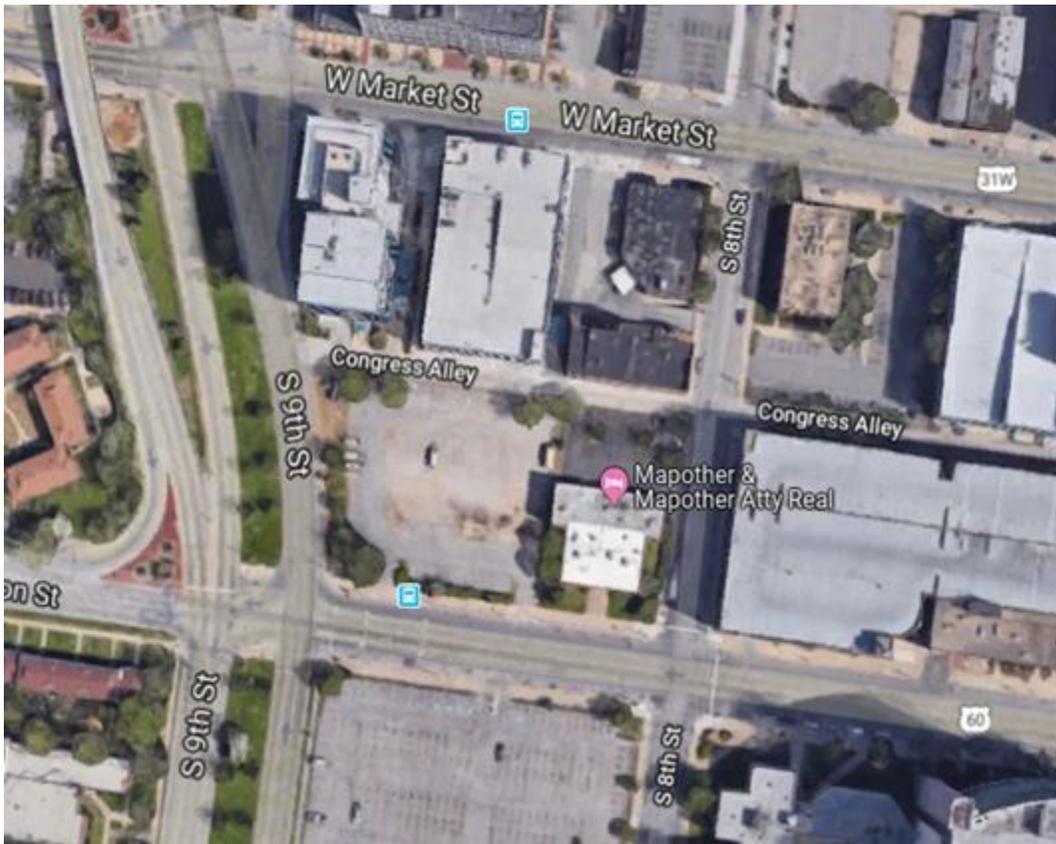
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The following Principles and Design guidelines are applicable to the proposed exterior alteration:

Principle 1: Site Planning, Principle 2: Building Massing, Principle 3: Building to Context, Principle 4: Building to Pedestrian, Principle 5: Parking, Vehicular Use and Access, and Principle 7: Street and Sidewalk Character.

The report of the Overlay Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is attached to this report. The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

Site Context



The site (zoned C3) is located at the NW corner of the intersection of W. Jefferson Street and South 8th Street with Congress Alley running to the north of the site. To the west and south of the site are surface parking lots and to the east of the site is a parking structure. The building on site was constructed in 1976 and was used as an office building.

Conclusions

The proposed structure's height, massing, and scale creates a strong presence at the corner of South 8th and West Jefferson Streets. The new construction is built to the property lines and extends to a majority of the width of the property along both street frontages.

With its corner location, the site has the opportunity to take advantage of the guidelines under **Principle 4: Building to Pedestrian**. Specifically as it reads: "Articulate the building façade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience with design elements such as open shop-fronts or arcades, multiple entries, merchandising and display windows, street front open space with artwork or furniture, awnings, signage, and light fixtures. In some instances raised landscaped beds may be appropriate. As a general rule 50 percent of the wall surface at the sidewalk level should be transparent, utilizing glazing that is not highly tinted or reflective. The current elevations show a one story stone base with limited fenestration". Although the North and East elevations show glazing at the ground level, the South and West elevations do not. Compliance of guidelines of **Principle 4** may be increased by creating variations on the ground floor level such as inset entries, and building piers. These details can provide relief to long expanses of building wall along the South and West elevations.

The proposed materials are mostly compatible with nearby buildings, however the EIFs design as seen here has a more standard, suburban effect and does not meet the intent of the DDRO guidelines. Recent projects have used a more panelized style with high end finishes and contrasting colors for effect. Canopies, awnings, and landscaping could also add visual interest. The proposed elevations read strongly vertically, but a stronger cornice line is encouraged to create horizontal weight.

The proposed relocation of the curb cut along South 8th Street creates a break in the sidewalk and may increase conflicts between cars and pedestrians. DDRO Guidelines **Site Planning and Parking, Vehicular Use and Access** state that vehicular access should be designed to minimize conflicts between cars and pedestrians. Access to surface parking may be available via an alley entrance instead, as recommended by **P3** "c) access from the alley shall be utilized to the fullest extent possible". The proposed relocation will also need to comply with the Access Management Standards and Design Manual within the Land Development Code as well as review by appropriate Metro agencies. The planting of street trees along the street wall is also required by **S4 of Principle 7-Street and Sidewalk Character** "For the sake of visual continuity trees shall be planted in the right-of-way every 25' to 35' along the curb line in order to create a continuous canopy. Tree species and caliper and planting area shall conform to the standards established by the Downtown Streetscape Manual. A mix of ornamental and shade trees should be planted outside the right-of-way for both shade and visual variety."

The drawings submitted do not currently detail for lighting, landscaping, street trees and street furnishings. Further detailing of these elements may provide for improved interaction between pedestrians and the site and increase compliance with **Principle 4 – Building to Pedestrian**.

Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval** of the request for an Overlay Permit with the following conditions:

1. **Applicant shall further detail elevations and articulate the building façade to increase compliance with Principle 4 Guidelines. Drawings shall be submitted to staff for review and approval.**
2. **Applicant to consider reducing the number of curb cuts on the property and consider providing alley access to the site instead of street access. Curb cut relocation must comply with Access Management Standards and the Design Manual**

- within the Land Development Code as well as review by appropriate Metro Agencies.
3. Finalized streetscape design including light fixtures, street furnishings, and paving materials shall be submitted to staff for final review and approval.
 4. All signage shall be submitted to Staff for review and approval prior to installation.

Principle 1-Site Planning

Design Guideline Checklist

Objective

Each downtown site lies with a specific neighborhood, Adjacent to specific traffic corridors and intersections, And may be adjacent to areas of different intensity of Development; may be near public open spaces; may be near historic and/or significant structures; and may contain historic and/or significant structures. These basic issues should be evaluated for the project site and considered at the earliest stages of concept development.

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
SP1	Building placement and orientation. It is intended that Downtown develop as an urban environment with a consistent, animated street wall which defines a physical area that is friendly, active, and safe for the public. Generally speaking new construction should build to the front property line and extend the width of the property. Corner properties should be built to both frontages. Properties with 3 or more frontages should give consideration to the relative character of the frontages and focus development accordingly-primary consideration should be given to orientation toward major thoroughfares.	+	Meets property line along both corner frontages.
SP2	Public space. Setbacks from the property line may be considered provided the setback area is developed as a Public Open Space and amenity or as a location for exterior activity related to ground floor usage of the buildings, such as outdoor dining or retail. Consideration should be given for providing Public Open Space on sites that align with other significant urban elements such as open spaces or vistas, significant neighboring structures or public institutions, axis or terminus or the street grid.	NA	
SP3	Preservation of Existing Structures. Existing structures that are identified locally or nationally as having significant historic character should be retained and incorporated into new development. Modifications to these structures shall be in accordance with the latest edition of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. No application to demolish these structures shall be approved unless the applicant is able to demonstrate that: a) rehabilitation of the structure or its replacement will have a greater positive impact on the economic vitality of the district than preserving the existing structure and that the construction of the new structure would not be possible or economically feasible without the demolition of the existing structure; or b) that the applicant cannot obtain a reasonable economic return from the property or structure unless the existing structure is demolished. Development with the West Main Street local preservation district shall be reviewed by the Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission.	NA	Existing structure to be removed under separate application. The existing building is not a contributing structure to the district
SP4	Site Access. Careful consideration should be given to vehicular site access, on-site circulation, parking, and sufficient access for storage and collection of waste and recycled materials to minimize impacts to the street wall, pedestrian environment, and the streetscape. Consideration should also be given for other types of access such as pedestrian, public transit, and bicycle.	+/-	Need to be reviewed and approved by Metro Transportation team and Public Works.. See condition #2

Principle 2-Building Massing

Design Guideline Checklist

Objective

Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements and massing to reinforce desirable urban features in the surrounding area and district.

Compose the massing of the building to create transition to the height, bulk, and scale of development in nearby less intensive zones.

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
BM1	Arrange the mass of the building in response to the following as applicable: a) Distinct and noteworthy characteristics of the district/neighborhood: b) Adjacent landmark or noteworthy building: c) major public entity or institution nearby: d) neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions: e) Public views and vistas: f) Potentially negative micro-climate issues such as extensive shadows and urban wind effect.	+	Building height and mass is appropriately scaled to site.
BM2	Compose the massing of the building to relate strongly to nearby buildings and create a transition to the height, bulk, and scale of development in nearby less-intensive zones. Buildings on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between the development potential of the adjacent zones. Factors to consider in analyzing potential height, bulk, and scale impacts include: a) distance from a less intensive district edge: b) differences in development standards between abutting neighborhood: c) type and amount of separation between districts, i.e. property line, alley or, street.	+	Most directly relates to buildings to the east and north, as well as larger buildings in the district.
BM3	Design a well-proportioned and unified building. Compose the massing and organize the interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.	+/-	Architectural elements and finish details are not detailed in submitted elevations. More detailing and review required
BM4	The building composition should include a well-defined base at the pedestrian level that fits well into its context. As a general minimum the base should be 2 to 3 stories.	+/-	Cast stone base is one story .More detailing and review required
BM5	To allow adequate light and air to reach the street level, high rise buildings (over 14 stories) should generally: a) be located about 100 feet from other high-rise buildings within the same block: b) have upper stories which are progressively narrower; the higher the story, the narrower.	NA	5 story building
BM6	Rooftops should not look cluttered from any pedestrian vantage point. All mechanical or utility equipment should be well-integrated into the overall design.	+	

Principle 3-Building to Context

Design Guideline Checklist

Objective

A certain amount of architectural diversity is expected in any downtown. However, buildings should be “good neighbors” by relating well to the common patterns of windows, entrances, cornice lines and column spacing around them and reinforcing the overall character of their immediate surroundings. Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features in the surrounding context and district.

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
BC1	Be compatible with the general character of nearby buildings in terms of façade organization, materials, finishes, scale of detail, and respecting established horizontal and vertical elements and spacing in the nearby context such as cornice lines and pier/column spacing.	+	Nearby sites include surface parking lots, parking garages, and buildings of varying height and materials.
BC2	Reinforce the character of nearby buildings having historic or architectural significance by developing designs that respect established cornice lines, horizontal and vertical façade organization, and massing of historic buildings in context.	NA	
BC3	Follow the rehabilitation standards in the latest edition of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation whenever historic or architecturally significant structures are to be altered, expanded, or when new construction is to occur adjacent to such structures.	NA	

Principle 4-Building to Pedestrian

Design Guideline Checklist

Objective

People should have strong visual connections to buildings as a strong building-to-pedestrian relationship helps make downtown feel more inviting and active 24 hours a day. Therefore develop the street level of the building's exterior to create safe, inviting, and active environments and spaces to engage pedestrians. These environments are defined by the used that occur within them, physical space for them to occur, and articulation of the physical surroundings.

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
BP1	Where sidewalk width is limited consider setting portions of the building back slightly to create spaces conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities.	NA	
BP2	Articulate the building façade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience with design elements such as open shop-fronts or arcades, multiple entries, merchandising and display windows, street front open space with artwork or furniture, awnings, signage, and light fixtures. In some instances raised landscaped beds may be appropriate. As a general rule 50 percent of the wall surface at the sidewalk level should be transparent, utilizing glazing that is not highly tinted or reflective.	+/-	Approximately 50% of sidewalk level is transparent with glazing. Limited pedestrian engagement. Canopies, awnings, and landscaping not shown. More detail and review required
BP3	Utilize building materials characteristic of the area having texture, color, pattern, and a higher quality of detailing.	+/-	EIFs is seen throughout the DDRO. Texture and detailing is missing.
BP4	Variations on the façade plane such as inset entries, building piers, and other details can assist in providing relief to long expanses of building wall.	+	Some variations in depth shown on façade plane.
BP5	Building entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street. Principle building entrances should face the street. Entrances should be inviting and easily accessible. They should have a high level of articulation and be well-lit. Canopies or awnings provide protection from the weather.	+	
BP6	Changes in sidewalk material aid in defining exterior spaces and entryways.	NA	
BP7	Develop alley facing facades at least one bay into the alley to eliminate harsh contrasts in the street wall. Provide adequate lighting and signage for quick orientation by motorists and safety for pedestrians.	+	
BP8	Exterior lighting should be designed to be visually integrated into the exterior design of the building. Lighting should be designed to provide illumination that creates a greater sense of activity, security and interest to the pedestrian.	NSI	Lighting plan not provided.

Principle 5-Parking, Vehicular Use and Access

Design Guideline Checklist

Objective

Parking garages, surface parking, and vehicular use areas should have the same qualities and characteristics as any other downtown developments. They should relate strongly to their context, reinforce the urban street wall, and be designed to promote comfort and safety for pedestrians.

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
P1	Parking garages. A parking garage visible from the street should be integrated into its surroundings and provide active and inviting street level appearance. The garage should: a) follow all Principles and Guidelines for building and site design: b) minimize the use of ramped floors visible from the street: c) openings and entrances should be in scale with people. Parking garage entries shall be minimized in size but fully articulated as an opening in the structure. Pedestrian entrances should also be fully articulated. d) screen parked cars from pedestrian view.	NA	
P2	Surface parking lots and vehicle use areas. Generally speaking, development of downtown sites solely as surface parking lots or vehicle use areas is discouraged due to their negative impact on the street wall, streetscape, and pedestrian-friendly character of downtown. Specifically, demolition of buildings for development of new surface parking lots is discouraged. Surface parking and vehicle use areas elsewhere, when deemed appropriate, should adhere to the following: a) surface parking and vehicle use areas should not create gaps along the street and sidewalk. They should be fully screened from pedestrian view through a combination of solid building like elements such as colonnades, decorative fencing, and dense decorative landscaping intended to continue the street wall. Dense landscaping intended for screening should be 3' high at time of planting and maintained visibility and safety. The screening may be also an opportunity for Public Art.; b) Provide adequate interior landscaping, especially shade trees.; c) When associated with a principal structure on the same site, surface parking, loading, and waste/recycling storage and collection areas shall be located fully behind the principal structure on the site.	+	Some handicapped parking offered on site. Landscaping shown along surface parking area.
P3	Vehicular access and design: a) curb cuts and vehicular access shall be designed in conformance with the Access Management Standards and Design manual within the Land Development Code and appropriate Metro agencies: b) vehicular access should be designed to minimize conflicts between cars and pedestrians: c) access from the alley shall be utilized to the fullest extent possible, where the alley is unimproved or of insufficient width or length for the new development it shall be improved as part of the project for viable use: d) existing curb cuts that are not proposed to be re-used should be removed and replaced with walk and curb compatible with the current standard design for that location: e) existing curb cuts to be re-used should be minimized in width and number to the fullest extent possible: f) driveways should be located to be shared with adjacent properties whenever possible: g) driveways and vehicular entrances should not occur in dominant locations on the site: h) provide adequate directional information for motorists	+/-	Existing curb cut to be relocated.

Principle 7-Street and Sidewalk Character

Design Guideline Checklist

Objective

Downtown streets and sidewalks should be safe and attractive for both cars and pedestrians. Getting from one place to another should be a pleasant, comfortable, and rewarding downtown experience.

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
S1	Developments involving new construction and or modifications to existing curb and sidewalk along the frontage(s) of the site should include improvements to the streetscape including sidewalk and curb in accordance with the current standards for that street and the Street and Road Side Design Standards of the Land Development Code.	-	
S2	Street furnishings. Street furnishings including but not limited to benches, news racks, bicycle racks, and trash containers shall conform to the standards established by the Downtown Streetscape Manual.	-	None shown
S3	Lighting-Street lighting for public streets shall conform to the standards established by the Downtown streetscape Manual. On-site lighting should also be compatible with street lighting standards.	NSI	None shown
S4	For the sake of visual continuity trees shall be planted in the right-of-way every 25' to 35' along the curb line in order to create a continuous canopy. Tree species and caliper and planting area shall conform to the standards established by the Downtown Streetscape Manual. A mix of ornamental and shade trees should be planted outside the right-of-way for both shade and visual variety.	-	None shown
S5	Pedways. The pedestrian environment is substantially impacted by the actual number of pedestrians engaging in activity on the street level. Generally speaking, the more pedestrians engaging in activity at street level the more the streetscape environment feels active, inviting and safe. Overhead pedestrian walkways (pedways) have real potential to negatively impact the street level environment by removing pedestrians from it. Overhead pedestrian structures therefore are generally discouraged. When a pedway is deemed to be appropriate it should: a) be designed to be architecturally compatible with the design of the structures at the end: b) have articulated street level access or clear direction to access points for pedestrians: c) provide entry points within each building that are comparable to street level entrances like lobbies that are attractive and have clear directions to internal circulation elements and other internal use: d) give consideration for views underneath including material finish and lighting: e) not have permanent signage	NA	