



Downtown Development Review Overlay

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

Case No: 18DDRO1007
Classification: Non-Expedited

GENERAL INFORMATION

Property Address: 801 West Jefferson Street

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

Estimated Cost: \$65,000

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The applicant requests approval to demolish existing building and clear the site for future development. The applicant will remove building, below grade foundations, and surrounding landscaping. The site will be back filled with dirt and capped with gravel. The site will remain clean, level, and unused until a future development is finalized. The owner is actively seeking redevelopment of the site.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH APPLICANT; COMPLETE APPLICATION

The application was submitted on July 24, 2018. The application was determined to be substantially complete and classified as "Non -Expedited" on July 30, 2018. A public hearing of the DDRO Committee was scheduled for August 29, 2018.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

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

Principle 1: Site Planning and the Overlay Ordinance.

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 is located at the NW corner of the intersection of W. Jefferson Street and S. 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 was constructed in 1976, making it ineligible as a historic building by age. It is not identified locally or nationally as having significant historic character, nor is it considered to be eligible to be so identified. Per Metro Historic Preservation Officer Cynthia Johnson Elmore, there is no known exceptional significance to qualify the building as potentially eligible as an underage resource to the National Register of Historic Places.

The structure located at 801 West Jefferson Street is a two-story masonry building with a surface parking lot in the rear. The building is set back from the property line and sidewalk typical of more suburban style of construction and site design of the time.

Conclusions

The building is a relatively recent structure without historic value and its demolition may therefore be considered. The demolition of the building without replacement, however, will negatively impact the street wall and streetscape of the block, especially since there are already surface parking lots immediately adjacent to the site by augmenting the bleak landscape of surface pavement and lack of urban quality of streetscape and pedestrian experience in this area.

The applicant is pursuing the demolition of the structure located at 801 W. Jefferson Street to better market the site for future development. The proposed demolition is therefore considered a “phased development” – the 1st phase of which is clearing the site and making it ready for new construction. According to the ordinance establishing the Overlay, the Committee may require interim treatment of the site including but not limited to landscaping, fencing, lighting and other such interim treatments as deemed appropriate. These interim treatments would be removed at such time as the next phase of development occurs. The intent is to mitigate impacts of the undeveloped site on the streetscape and character of the Overlay.

Per the Downtown Development District’s Ordinance, 162.03 (B) (4) If a development application involves a phased project, the Urban Design Administrator or the Committee, as authorized respectively under this chapter may, as a condition of approval of a Permit for the first phase or phases, require landscaping, fencing, lighting and such other interim treatments as the Urban Design Administrator or the Committee may determine appropriate for the undeveloped portion of the phased project.

Interim treatments may be designed in relation to the length of time they are to be in place. Lighter, more temporary treatments may be appropriate for a short duration, for example, such as fencing, planters, and site lighting. Site covers such as gravel should be well maintained and kept off the public walk. For a longer period, more permanent measures such as walls and plantings may be considered appropriate.

Future development on the site will be required to comply with the Principles and Guidelines of the Overlay.

Recommendation

Staff concludes that the demolition and clearing of the site is intended by the applicant to be an interim phase of the redevelopment of the site. As such interim treatments may be allowed. Staff recommends **approval** of the request for an Overlay Permit with the following conditions:

- a. **Within three months of demolition, site shall be screened from pedestrian view through a combination of solid building like elements such as decorative fencing and planters**
- b. **Within six months of demolition, in addition to decorative fencing, applicant shall incorporate dense 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**
- c. **If after 12 months no development activity has occurred, Applicant to return to the DDRO Committee with plans for site improvements.**
- d. **Site shall not be used as a surface parking lot**

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 <i>new construction should build to the front property line</i> 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. | NA | Currently only demolition of the building is requested; new construction is not yet proposed. The demolition is considered the “1 st phase” of redevelopment of the site and therefore can be considered for interim treatments such as landscaping, fencing, lighting, etc. |
| 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 | Building on site is not identified, or considered eligible to be so identified, as a historic building primarily due to its age of construction and lack of historic character |
| 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. | NA | Site will not have vehicular access during this interim phase of redevelopment |