



NuLu Review Overlay (NROD) District

Report of the Urban Design Administrator to the Committee

From: Becky Gorman, Planning and Design Coordinator
Through: David Marchal, AIA, Deputy Director / Urban Design Administrator
Date: April 6, 2020
Meeting Date: May 13, 2020 at Noon via Webex

CASE INFORMATION:

Case No: 20-OVERLAY-0015
Classification: Non-Expedited

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Property Address: 1000 E Jefferson Street
Applicant: Loren T. Prizant
Hayfield Realty Group, LLC
3011 Hayfield Drive
Louisville, KY 20205
502.641.8179
Property Owner: same as applicant
Project Cost: Not provided

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The applicant is requesting an Overlay Permit to develop the subject property by building three new residential duplexes constructed out of shipping containers. The scope of work includes the following:

- Two duplexes facing Jefferson Street; and the third duplex facing Wenzel Street in the southwest corner of the property.
- Each duplex will have two levels, each level contains one unit. A unit will be constructed of two shipping containers, with one bedroom, one bathroom, and one kitchen/living room area.
- The second-floor units will be setback 8' to create a front deck for the upper level unit and a covered back patio for first level unit.
- Additional shipping containers, 20' wide, will be placed between the duplex units to create a contiguous first level screen wall, and entry to the interior courtyard for the development.
- The buildings are setback from sidewalk, in line with the existing historic structures along Jefferson and Wenzel Streets.
- Landscaping, new limestone curbing, and ornamental metal fencing are proposed along the property at the sidewalk.

- Green/living roofs are proposed for all structures.

COMPLETION OF APPLICATION:

The applicant submitted via email the Overlay Permit application on April 3, 2020. The application was determined to be substantially complete and classified as requiring a non-expedited review by the Urban Design Administrator on April 6, 2020. The project was scheduled for review by the committee once safety protocols related to the COVID 19 pandemic had been approved and quorum established.

FINDINGS:

The following Principles and Design Guidelines are applicable to the proposal: 4- Building; 6- Site Planning, Parking; and 8- Sustainability. Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to the Principles and Design Guidelines are attached to this report.

Site Context :

The subject property is one parcel approximately .1360 acres, located at 1000 E Jefferson Street. It is bordered by E Jefferson Street to the north, residential structures to the east, an unimproved alley and residential structures to the south, and Wenzel Street to the west. The site is zoned OR2 within the Traditional Neighborhood form district. It is also part of the Phoenix Hill National Register District. The property is currently unimproved.

The residential structures on the parcels adjacent to the subject property are historic brick Camelbacks. On Jefferson Street, the front facades have a door and transom with a hood and decorative trim on the left side of the façade, and ganged windows with decorative trim to the right. The shotgun portion has a hipped roof, and the camelback has a side gable and two windows facing the front. On Wenzel Street, the shotgun portion of these structures has a front gable roof with an arched or half-round window. The front facades include a door and transom on the right side of the façade, with either two individual, or two ganged one-over-over windows to the left of the door. The windows have wide decorative trim. There is a white banding across each of the structures at the top of the windows and below the trim detail. The camelback portion of the structures have a side gable and two front facing windows. These properties have a consistent building setback and a concrete curbing with metal fencing at the sidewalk.

There are industrial type warehouses near the subject property. A concrete block and metal warehouse at the end of the block, at Chestnut and Jefferson Streets (Feeders Supply warehouse). Other similar warehouses are located two blocks north on Wenzel Street (Fresh Start).



1000 E Jefferson Street, Subject Property
(LOJIC, Aerial)



E Jefferson Street, Subject Property
Google maps



1000 E Jefferson Street from Jefferson
Staff photo



Adjacent properties along Wenzel Street adjacent to the subject property
Staff photo

Conclusions

The unimproved parcel at the corner of Jefferson and Wenzel street will have three duplexes made of reused shipping containers. The six dwelling units will be 640 sq.ft. each.

Each building is 2-stories and approximately 16'-0" wide, 19'-0" high, and 48'-0" deep. The buildings' setbacks align with the adjacent existing housing along Jefferson and Wenzel Streets. The 2nd story is setback 8' for a balcony for the upper unit which creates a back patio for the first level. The 2-story units are in the northern corners of the parcel facing Jefferson Street and the southwestern corner facing Wenzel. Additional shipping containers will be placed between the units forming a contiguous street facing front/screen wall along the perimeter of the property.

Shipping containers are being used as the main building material which creates an industrial appearance along both frontages. The containers lack architectural detail, new building elements are added to the containers for a more residential appearance. These details should be further refined to better relate to the surrounding residential buildings. The street facing front facade features the container doors with a vertical window opening on the first level, and a 2nd story balcony with metal railings and glass doors. There are varying window configurations on the side elevations which are vertical awning windows, small square casement windows, and large 4-pane square fixed window. Stairs to the upper level units and person doors are in the courtyard area. The container doors, however, are not the actual doors into the units. Access is through the entryways into the courtyard. The design of these entryways, and openings on the containers themselves, should relate to the entries on the adjacent structures to be visually compatible in terms of rhythm, scale, and design.

The container placed between the two units facing Jefferson Street creates a 1-story screen wall for the development. The doors of this container serve as the entrance into the development and the courtyard, where the residential units are accessed. The same type of container screen wall is between the units on Wenzel Street. The size, scale, and lack of ornamentation of this screening could be incompatible with the surrounding context and has the potential to visually overwhelm.

Associated parking is on the street.

Although the guidelines are oriented more for commercial development, the intent and spirit of the Building Design Guidelines is for “new structures to have a ‘contextual fit’ and reinforce the existing pattern.” Important elements “include building setbacks, building heights, building form, rhythm of openings, rhythm of horizontal building lines, color, materials, texture, adjacent building styles, and building details.”

In comparing the proposed development and the existing conditions, the massing and lot coverage of the proposal will bring a more appropriate scale to the subject property; and will improve the street wall along both Jefferson and Wenzel Streets. The 2-story buildings are similar in size and scale to many buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Most of the structures adjacent to the parcel along both Jefferson and Wenzel Streets are residential historic brick Camelbacks with similar roof lines and rhythm of openings. The new development introduces a new building material and Industrial style to this corner. There are Industrial type structures/warehouses near the subject property. A concrete block and metal warehouse at the end of the block, east of the subject property. Other similar warehouses are located two blocks north on Wenzel Street. The rhythm of the fronts of the residential structures include a gable roof with an architectural element in the gable or a hipped roof, a front door with a transom window, and two ganged windows with window molding. The rhythm of the new buildings differ as there are no front “person” doors that face the streets however, the container doors are present. There is a window proposed for the first-floor front elevation. The setback for the balconies corresponds to the rhythm of the Camelback structures. The flat roofs of the new buildings are complimentary to the hipped and gable roofs of the historic structures. Overall, there is a lack of architectural detailing due to the nature of the Industrial character of the development.

The guidelines reinforce the pedestrian experience. The location of the new development, the alignment of the setback with the existing housing along Jefferson and Wenzel Streets, as well as, the continuation of curbing and iron/metal fencing along the sidewalk will provide continuity and enhance the pedestrian experience.

The Sustainability guidelines support the use of environmentally sustainable elements into projects. The proposed development is recycling shipping containers and proposing green/living roofs for the new buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed changes generally comply with the applicable Design Guidelines for the NULU District.

Considering the information furnished, the Urban Design Administrator recommends **Approval with the following conditions:**

1. Detailing on the residential units as well as screen wall and entry canopies shall be refined to relate more strongly to the detailing of the historic residential structures in the surrounding context. Key among these are entrances, openings/windows, trim, and color. The final design and detailing shall be submitted for review and approval by staff.
2. The screening/fencing between the units should be detailed to relate to the existing residential context. It should not be visually overwhelming in terms of long expanses, lack of detail, or excessive height. The final design and detailing shall be submitted for review and approval by staff
3. Exterior lighting shall be of residential scope and not negatively impact neighboring, residential properties. Exterior lighting design and elements shall be submitted to staff for review and approval.

Becky Gorman
Planning & Design Coordinator

David R. Marchal, AIA
Urban Design Administrator

4 Building Guidelines

Checklist

The buildings in the District are not only picturesque but also have strong historic character. New structures should have a "contextual fit" and reinforce the existing pattern of individual storefronts extending throughout the NuLu area. Contextual design elements include building setbacks, building heights, building form, rhythm of openings, rhythm of horizontal building lines, color, materials, texture, adjacent building styles, and building details should be respected in new projects. The Overlay Staff can assist a licensed architect or design professional to develop designs that adaptively reuse these structures to meet the needs of new businesses and services. The overlay staff will also assist the applicant through the review and approval process.

+	Meets Guidelines	NA	Not applicable
-	Does not meet Guidelines	TBD	To be determined; insufficient Information
+/-	Meets Guidelines with conditions as noted		

Guideline	Finding	Comment
B1 Existing structures in the NuLu area are strongly encouraged to be sustainably renovated and reused.	NA	
B2 Buildings should be "pedestrian-friendly". Design building facade elements that promote a pedestrian-friendly environment including: building to the edge of sidewalk, large storefront window openings at the ground floor, awnings, canopies, lighting, and entrances that face the street.	+/-	The new development consists of residential duplexes intended to fit within the context of adjacent, historic residential structures, as opposed to a commercial context. The buildings' front and side setbacks align with the adjacent structures. There is an entrance to the development from Jefferson Street through the container doors. Entrances into individual units are accessed from the courtyard. Due to the Industrial character of the shipping containers, there is a lack of architectural detail. Some animating features to the containers are proposed.

B3	All storefront windows and doors at ground level shall have clear glass or light window tinting. Severe window tinting or mirrored glass is not permitted unless reapproved by staff for "special conditions". Examples of "special conditions" may include restaurant kitchen areas, storage space, and restrooms that would need to be hidden from public view.	NA	Structures are proposed as residential, not commercial
B4	New structures should be located at the front property line. Building sites should provide side yards wide enough to allow for maintenance of the building unless common party walls are provided on the lot line.	+/-	Structures are sited to align with neighboring residential structures
B5	High quality materials and historically appropriate architectural details at the ground floor / street level of buildings can both accent buildings, and provide visual interest for pedestrians and motorists.	+/-	The adaptive reuse of metal shipping containers for the development introduces an industrial style and material to this corner of Jefferson and Wenzel Streets. Most of the adjacent structures are brick residential buildings with historic architectural detailing. There is a lack of architectural detailing due to the nature of the Industrial character of the development but architectural detailing will be instrumental in relating the new structures to their context and the District. The architectural detailing should be refined to better relate to historical detailing in the context.
B6	New structures greater than 3 stories high may be permissible if taller portions are set back from the street frontage so that overall sight lines are compatible, and if the increased height is not intrusive towards adjacent structures.	NA	
B7	New structures must be a minimum of two stories high and should be no shorter than one story beneath the height of adjacent properties.	+	
B8	A visual terminus, such as a cornice at the top of a wall helps articulate the architecture, and gives it a completed finished look.	+/-	As the context is historic, single family residential structures a top line cornice is not the defining architectural feature. The new structures should, however, relate to other significant features of structures in the context such as scale of detail, openings, trim, etc.
B9	All new mechanical equipment that is visible from a public right of way should be installed to have a minimal impact on adjacent properties and from public view unless the equipment is solar dependent. In this instance, function supersedes design. Replacement of existing mechanical equipment is considered general maintenance and will not require a staff review. Additional permits and approvals by other government agencies or authorities may be required.	TBD	The location of mechanicals was not specified in the application, but is assumed to be on or near the structures themselves and within the courtyard.
B10	Permanent service counters, service bars, decks, or similar structures may not be constructed in front of a building's primary street facing facade.	NA	

6 Site Planning and Parking Guidelines

Checklist

Site planning is an important part of any project. Sites should incorporate attractive and maintainable landscaping to enhance the hard-scape of the building. Plants should be used to minimize the visual impact of parking lots and service areas in the District.

+	Meets Guidelines	NA	Not applicable
-	Does not meet Guidelines	TBD	To be determined; insufficient information
+/-	Meets Guidelines with conditions as noted		

Guideline	Finding	Comment
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SP1	Development Plans shall minimize the adverse visual impact of utility lines on the area. Underground lines or service from the alley, where feasible, is encouraged.	NA	
SP2	Combining existing small, under-utilized lots to create shared parking areas that are more efficient and more accessible is encouraged.	NA	
SP3	Additional surface parking lots and drive-throughs shall not be permitted in the District.	+	All parking is proposed to be on street
SP4	Parking areas adjacent to the public sidewalks must use landscaping, trees, colonnades or other construction, to maintain the building line created by structures along the sidewalk. Side parking lots which exceed 40% of the total linear lot frontage adjacent to right-of-way shall provide a 36" high masonry, stone, or concrete wall that makes reference to a similar design within the surrounding area extending from the principal structure across the front of the parking area. Surface parking lots with no principal structure shall provide the 36" wall as described. The 36" tall wall can wrap around any existing or proposed monument signage to maintain visibility.	NA	
SP5	Adequate perimeter landscaping, fencing, or a combination of both is required to help screen vehicles and/or equipment from public view. The screening height for vehicle parking lots shall be 36" above finished grade of the lot. This height will enable drivers of vehicles to safely see and avoid other pedestrians and vehicles while screening most parked cars. A 7'-0" max high screened fence or wall can be used for industrial or commercial sites to screen for large vehicles or equipment on site.	NA	
SP6	New commercial developments should provide adequate and significant screening to adjacent residential structures. Opaque landscape buffers and other forms of screening should be used to minimize noise and lighting impact.	NA	
SP7	Fencing and screening shall be constructed of materials compatible with the principal structure.	+/-	The fencing/screening between the units and screening the interior courtyard from the public way is of the same material as the shipping containers. Like the shipping containers, however, the screening/fencing should be detailed to relate to the existing residential context. It should not be visually overwhelming in terms of long expanses, lack of detail, or excessive height.
SP8	Chain link fencing must not be visible within the District.	NA	
SP9	Intensity, location, color, and direction of outdoor lighting shall be sensitive to nearby residential areas.	TBD	Outdoor lighting was not submitted as part of the proposal but is presumed to be residential in design and scope, but lighting of the courtyard particularly could be significant. Exterior lighting should be confirmed and submitted for review
SP10	The number and width of curb-cuts in the District should be minimized to promote pedestrian circulation. Existing continuous curb-cuts should be reduced to widths necessary for vehicular traffic, or removed altogether.	NA	
SP11	Minimum 4'-0" wide landscape buffer area (LBA) containing a 36" minimum height (at maturity) screen shall run along 90% of the lineal area in front of the patio, plaza, or outdoor space that faces the street. This LBA shall include permanent landscaping material such as trees (minimum 1 ¼" caliper size at time of planting), shrubs (minimum 18" height at time of planting), groundcover, and /or perennials. Fences, planters, and/or walls (maximum height of 36") are permitted within the LBA. Landscape buffer plantings shall be installed prior to occupancy or use of the patio, plaza, or outdoor space.	NA	
SP12	Existing trees located within the property or adjacent property along the street, alley, or access easement shall be preserved and protected unless the city arborist determines they are not healthy or are dangerous and	+	

	should be removed. Removed trees should be replaced with appropriate trees approved by the City Arborist. The replacement trees shall be sized at a minimum of 1 ¾" caliper (at time of planting). Replacement tree(s) shall be planted within 3 months of the tree(s) removal or during the next planting season, whichever comes first.		
SP13	The construction or installation of a deck or structure built off the ground and over existing landscaped areas in front of a building's primary facade is prohibited. Balconies located on the second or third floors of buildings that are cantilevered or bracketed, scaled to match the building's facade, and utilize contextual materials are appropriate.	NA	

8 Sustainability Guidelines

Checklist

Incorporating environmentally sustainable elements into the design and construction of the built environment in the District is an important part of any project. Environmentally sustainable elements include: transit facilities, green buildings, heat island reduction, recycled content in infrastructure, and stormwater management.

- + Meets Guidelines NA Not applicable
- Does not meet Guidelines TBD To be determined; insufficient Information
- +/- Meets Guidelines with conditions as noted

Guideline	Finding	Comment
SU1 Transit facilities should have a covered shelter, seating, bike racks, information kiosks, and appropriate signage.	NA	
SU2 New commercial, industrial, and residential buildings should pursue LEED or equivalent energy efficiency standards.	TBD	
SU3 New or replacement roofs with energy efficient "radioactive properties" should be considered.	+	
SU4 New Infrastructure is encouraged to use at least 50% by mass, recycled or reclaimed materials.	+	
SU5 Projects should retain, reuse, and/or infiltrate on-site, all of the stormwater that falls on their parcel(s).	TBD	
SU6 The surface area of a landscaped or pervious condition slated for a repurposed use must maintain a level of permeability greater than or equal to its current state.	TBD	