

Design Review Board
Public Hearing
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[background conversation]

0:00:15 Lori Wendling: Has everyone had an opportunity to review the minutes? Any comments or corrections? Anyone who would like to make a motion to approve the minutes?

0:00:34 Barb Thomas: I would like to make a motion to approve the April 2019 minutes.

0:00:38 Pat Hagerty: I will second.

0:00:40 Lori Wendling: All in favor.

0:00:42 All members: Aye.

0:00:43 Lori Wendling: Motion carries. Our first order of business is unfinished business Cochran Avenue and Alexander Circle. The developer, would you like to come forward and state your name and address for record?

0:01:03 Ken Schon: My name's Ken Schon. We're the developers for Alexander Circle, and we're here to talk about hopefully the final review for house number 10, the new build, the new inserted house.

0:01:13 Kevin Barbian: If I may really quick, Ken, jump in. Just for the crowd, and just so you can understand where we're at. The first item on our agenda is about a final, a new home in Alexander Circle, and essentially, we're finalizing the details of that. There's been already subsequent significant meetings leading up to this point. There's a few final details on that. It shouldn't take but hopefully 15 minutes or so is the thought. But that being said, the guidelines for this particular development are different from the central business district guidelines. These were agreed upon, through the federal government, with transition of the property. So if you hear something that sounds odd, or doesn't sound right, it is because the guidelines are very different from what they're going to be discussing for the project here in town. So with that, Ken, I'm sorry. I just wanted to get that in.

[chuckle]

0:02:18 Ken Schon: Thanks, Kevin. So as Kevin mentioned, we've been through this a couple of times with this particular house, and I think we're okay with the sighting of it, we're okay with the massing of it, we're okay with the roof, and most of the fenestration, and we had... The last meeting was about some details, we've had a lot of collaboration, and so we've gone through, sort of, the last thing, there were three items. Mostly, two items were around the entry way, the entry cover, and the entry doors and the sidelights, and that sort of thing. And we've revised that. And also there was a side, an element on the side, that had some detailing that was questioned, and we've redesigned as well.

0:03:05 Ken Schon: So, this is where we were last time. Houses to the side and all that sort of

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thing. But, it really focused, I thought... What I heard, what we heard was the scale of these pieces around here, and then the door and sidelines which didn't seem to be the right period. And then also, this side element, where we had this little small projection on the side for a stair tower, and then we had these windows, and then we had some brick detailing that folks didn't think worked very well.

0:03:42 Ken Schon: So we took another stab at it. We just really beefed up the massing of these piers and simplified it a little bit, and so that didn't have all the, we eliminated the stone lintels across the top, and made these much wider and it seemed to work, not only from the front, but the side on and the scale of it just seemed to work a little better. There's the side view of it. And then the front view. You have a very much more... In fact, this is almost a replica of the door and sidelight, in some of the... A couple of the turret houses, it would be the same door that we're putting in all of the other houses. So I don't know if there were any comments on that part of it, the entrance part of it.

[background conversation]

0:04:49 Chris Manning: How much distance is it between the stair and the sidewalk? Since that projection moved a little closer to the street?

0:05:00 Ken Schon: Well, from the porch, the edge of the porch to the sidewalk is 20 feet. So it's still pretty intimate, but it's not like the first couple of houses that you drive on the concrete.

[background conversation]

0:05:29 Ken Schon: Same depth it's just really beefing up this and working on the proportions.

[pause]

0:05:41 Ken Schon: The other part then is the stair tower itself, or stair piece. And so we worked with, what we were working with was using more rectangular forms in the masonry, but then sort of used an old school kind of trick, where they do a brick panel, and then window-window in that panel. And still have the brick coursing around that element and it seemed to fit and calm it down a little bit because there's other more typical window seemed sort of foreign in that spot. So I hope that works a little better. It's got a lot of the elements that the next neighboring houses have, with the chimney projection and this projection. And a lot of brick, masonry. So that's where we're at.

0:06:40 Lori Wendling: Any comments or questions from any board members?

0:06:46 Chris Manning: I just wanna thank you, Ken, for working with us through this process, from big things down to smaller detail 'cause it all fits together and it's such an important project for our city and history and detail and... So appreciate your efforts to...

0:07:05 Ken Schon: Absolutely.

0:07:06 Chris Manning: Work with us each step of the way.

0:07:09 Ken Schon: You're good to work with actually.

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0:07:13 Chris Manning: It's a nice improvement.

0:07:17 Ken Schon: Everybody reasonably happy?

0:07:19 Mark Thurnauer: I was going to say that. I kinda feel... Having not seen it in the previous round, I feel like it's not really appropriate to critique these changes that was brought forth from the last round. My personal design taste, I think that your entry portico just probably still could use a little more weight with those brick piers or columns, it could be a little thicker, and then it almost could be broader than what sits on top of it, so that things sort of stack in just a visual way, for what it's worth. I see the brick does carry around the side on that front now, alright. Having seen what we were provided in materials earlier, I was going to say that, if you're going to side the gable on the sides. It could be treated that way, maybe all the way around at the roof level, but...

0:08:22 Ken Schon: We've done these piers before and it's a big square brick mass. They look... In three-dimension, they look bigger.

0:08:29 Mark Thurnauer: Okay.

0:08:34 Ken Schon: So it'll be pretty massive.

0:08:39 Barry Petracco: What is the size of that column?

0:08:42 Ken Schon: About 20 inches by 20 inches.

0:08:44 Barry Petracco: It's big.

0:08:44 Ken Schon: Yeah. And two and a half courses.

0:08:51 Ken Schon: Okay.

0:08:55 Lori Wendling: Would anyone like to make a motion to approve or do you have any other questions or comments?

0:09:02 Chris Manning: I'll make a motion to approve.

0:09:05 Lori Wendling: Is there a second?

0:09:07 Pat Hagerty: I'll second.

0:09:08 Lori Wendling: All in favor of approving the revisions made to building 10, say Aye.

0:09:15 All Members: Aye.

0:09:25 Lori Wendling: Motion carries.

[background conversation]

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0:09:29 Kevin Barbian: So the next case that we have tonight are the application for the town center development. A couple... Just a little bit of background I wanna provide for the audience more so than anything, the guidelines for which this design review board review were a set of standards that were designed in 2002. "These guidelines are not intended to," I just wanna read this verbatim, "prohibit hinder or strictly regulate building improvement projects. The guidelines are not intended to return the districts to any one particular style of architecture prevalent in the past. The guidelines are not intended to govern land-use questions. The guidelines are not intended to require that any structure be altered against the owner's wishes." What this is is a collaborative effort. You haven't been here for the last meetings leading up to this presentation, small presentation here, but there's been several meetings leading up to get to the point where we just finished this one item.

0:10:42 Kevin Barbian: And that's kind of the idea here, it's a collaborative effort between our board and the applicant. Ultimately, being the goal that we have an aesthetically-pleasing streetscape, improving the environment for the business, and renew the economic vitality. So that's ultimately the goal of this particular board. Ultimately, the mission also is to once again have a collaborative effort that will preserve and enhance the unique and very community character in architectural styles in our local business districts. This is a pretty much a preliminary or introductory meeting to get some initial feedback by the applicant. This board essentially discusses things such as materials and aesthetics versus some things that won't be discussed, are setbacks, project size, viability, connection to Woodland, those were some of the concerns that we had, traffic.

0:11:43 Kevin Barbian: Those are concerns that are left for the planning commission. The height is for the board of adjustment ultimately, if that ends up going back there. That being said, we'll see where things go tonight. This may or may not include public comment tonight. We're going to see where we get, but we'll get started with Mr. Greiwe and his presentation.

0:12:06 Rick Greiwe: Thank you. We're going to talk in the mic or...

[background conversation]

0:12:06 Lori Wendling: Please state your name and address for the record.

0:12:13 Rick Greiwe: I'm Rick Greiwe, Greiwe Development, and this is our introductory session with this board. Again, we're looking forward to receiving some input from you on the design, and I'm sure we'll see you many times like Ken in the future. I'd like to introduce Sari Lehtinen, who's with M+A Architecture, and she's done a lot of projects with us in the past. And our partners, North American Properties will be investing in this and doing construction and Sibey Cline.

0:12:47 Rick Greiwe: And my story pretty much is straightforward. I just do very specific projects. I have a lifestyle project where people are not just buying a condo, they're buying a lifestyle, they like to be in an energetic setting where they can walk. And that's why I've only done this in Mariemont, Hyde Park, Downtown Montgomery, coming up, and here because you have the right bones for that kind of lifestyle community. My target market is very specific.

0:13:17 Rick Greiwe: These are seniors who wanna age in place, they don't wanna go in an institution, they wanna be in a place where they can have control of their future with level floors,

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handicap accessibility elevators to their car. That's the majority of people. Then empty nesters like me wanna get rid of their big house, wanna lock and load, have some fun, travel. Some of these people usually have second homes. And then I'd say a few single people who just never bought a home that are in their 40s and 50s and have the resources to buy a condo.

0:13:49 Rick Greiwe: So that's who we sell these units to. And we've had the same experience after selling 250 condos over the last 10 years. We use high quality architecture. If you look at all of my projects, they're really landmarks in these communities. We try to develop a style that is organic to that community. And we have great interiors. My brother's company is interior design and we make sure the finishes are very distinctive.

0:14:18 Rick Greiwe: And then we try to partner with communities and with cities. We wanna make sure that this is within the vision of the town. And before I decided to come here a year ago, I attended your workshops for your comprehensive plan and I went to two of them, and these are direct quotes from your comprehensive plan: You want a vibrant business district that contributes to the high quality of life you already have here. Got great schools, great housing, great parks, but you want some activity in your business district. Town center is the top priority for improvement.

0:14:52 Rick Greiwe: The highest ranking activity of the city: Recruit new businesses. Desire for neighborhood services up here on the ridge. So they're going down the hill every time they need something, what kind of businesses can we support here on the top of the hill? And then provide new housing types for people that wanna stay where their grandkids and their kids are, those generations, and have a condo that they could stay in town and not go someplace else, 'cause we really don't have this housing type.

0:15:21 Rick Greiwe: So in order to do development, you have to have a city that believes in their comprehensive plan as a vision, and I wanna help you accomplish a vision, but also a site. Cause it's the hardest part for development. And luckily, Dan Gorman was able to assemble all these properties, put them under contract with options to buy. We don't own any of them yet. And the site is perfect 'cause it's right across the street from a block-long commercial development already.

0:15:49 Rick Greiwe: You already have a block-long commercial development across the street from us. And if you look at any town planning, you wanna make sure that the other block faces across the street and creates a sense of place with similar setbacks and with the kind of activity that would have enough density to attract businesses that wanna work there, businesses that wanna sell stuff there, people who wanna dine, shop, play and live. So this is... We couldn't have picked a better site to begin to bring some density that would add vitality to your downtown.

0:16:25 Rick Greiwe: So if you look at this rendering again, this is... We're going to get your input on this concept. This is design concept. We're going to not move into the next phase of design until we hear from you, but you can see we're trying to imitate urban center with block faces that relate to one another. We know that one side of the street is two stories, but this is going to be building on grade. So imagine that big hill gone, all those houses on hills gone, and this will be developed at the same grade as the sidewalk. So you have three stories on one side of the street and two stories on this side of the street, and we make some adjustments here and there to make sure it fits within your zoning. So Sari's going to spend the time really talking about the design, where it came from, and we hope you could give us some good direction. Thank you.

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[background conversation]

0:17:17 Sari Lehtinen: So I want to talk about the site a little bit since we're obviously having to respond to what's going on here. So we have...

[background conversation]

0:17:32 Sari Lehtinen: So we're at the important intersection of Highland Avenue and Fort Thomas Avenue. And across the street from us on Fort Thomas Avenue, there's obviously the business strip of what we have currently there. On our site, we have a collection of houses that are trying to accommodate commercial spaces and there's BB&T and we have the residential neighborhood on Woodland, that's like our immediate neighbor also. So on the first floor plan, I think I'll start with the street.

0:18:13 Sari Lehtinen: So, on Fort Thomas Avenue, we're creating the sidewalk and a pedestrian-friendly environment and we're proposing to bring in a green strip between the street and the sidewalk and replant the street trees there, then having a little more peaceful sidewalk in from that, then we have a green zone of plantings again, and then a partially covered walk. So that walk is partially covered, partially trellised, but it basically gives you two zones where you can walk a little faster on the public sidewalk, and then on this inner...

0:18:49 Sari Lehtinen: You can actually have tables or something up from the businesses if needed. The building has two residential entrances. You see those black arrows or triangles at the bottom of the building plan. They are both marked by trellis-type canopies and they are shared with the commercial activity of the first floor.

0:19:10 Sari Lehtinen: The yellow area on the floor plan is commercial space and the site is fortunately fairly level on Fort Thomas Avenue, so we're able to get one continuous floor and accessible businesses that can be divided in multiple ways, so it has a lot of flexibility because of that. We have also, near the intersection of Fort Thomas and Highland, we have that through building access galleria kind of a walk that also leads you to the residential lobby.

0:19:46 Sari Lehtinen: And next to that, we have another retail space that engages that corner of the building which is very important. Then there's a plaza at the corner of Highland and Fort Thomas intended to have seating and parasols and planting and just a place to kinda slow down and be there. The curb there hasn't been changed at all, so it's kind of using the existing street. And then we have obviously topo change as you go on Highland Avenue towards Woodland Place. The grade goes down about eight, nine feet. It drops off quite a bit. And so we have those two areas on this plan indicate residential. So there's two residential units that are actually above grade level at the bottom.

0:20:33 Sari Lehtinen: At the rear of the building, we are proposing a commercial parking lot that is arranged diagonally so that you can circulate and we propose that we provide lots of plantings there and a good buffer between the residential zone and us, and just to create this green environment that the residents are going to look at from their building but also for the community to see. So it works both ways. Also at the rear of the building, we have a walk that there's a store front

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also both ways, both sides and this is important to the building that it has all sides are finished well, detailed well, everything is important. It will be visible on all sides. And there's the commercial access at the back too. So that's the intent with that.

0:21:24 Rick Greiwe: So this is a challenging project because the city requires commercial on the first floor. So we have to make sure that we curate this commercial space so it complements the people who are buying homes above and becomes an amenity to them, 'cause it happens to be on the first floor, as well as services for the general neighborhood that would make people wanna stay up on the ridge to buy stuff instead of going down the hill. And then also, it would be a combination in this diagram. Again, this is a guideline where we know it's going to be a mix of office, people that provide professional services that want modern space, and we've already got several calls for that. Neighborhood services and food.

0:22:11 Rick Greiwe: Now, what kind of food stall has to be determined because we, again, don't wanna provide any food that would cause smells that would affect the neighbors above. So again, it's going to be curated in a way that benefits the general community as well as the people who live above. And we think we can do it, we have a good retail consultant that is redeveloping Fort Mitchell where the old Remke Project, David Birdsall. So he believes in this site and we're working with him to figure out how to eventually get this done once the project is approved.

0:22:46 Siri Lehtinen: Above that street level of commercial, mostly commercial, we have two levels of residential units. This is our floor plan idea. It has unit types that repeat. Second floor is, in the plan, the same as the third floor, but third floor has volume ceiling and second floor is intended to have 10-foot ceilings. The units are designed around a central living space. So there's a large living area that connects to an open kitchen and there's an adjacent dining room and all this happens in these gable projections that are also prominent to the outside. There's large windows and they're all connected to large balconies and create that connection from the residential units to the street and vice-versa.

0:23:38 Rick Greiwe: But again, even if you buy a smaller unit with just two bedrooms versus a unit with two bedrooms and a study, the central space is the same in every area. So you feel like you're in a big volume living area even though your unit might be a little smaller. And then on the third floor, we eliminate the two units on the top, so the elevation change on Woodland is not so severe, we have some renderings we'll show you later. So these two units go away on Woodland on the third floor.

0:24:10 Rick Greiwe: Again, we're programming this with this mix of units. We'll learn more about the final mix once we take prospective buyers to Mariemont. We've got a project that should be finished in a couple weeks so people get to see the size units. They can walk into 1,700-square-foot units, see what that's like, go into the 22, and actually see what happens when you move from a house that has many floors to a house that is on one level. So it'll be a great way to test the product types and level of interest that we need to go forward with this project.

0:24:43 Sari Lehtinen: Underneath the commercial on street level, we have a parking garage that serves the residents of the building. So there's an elevator service that takes you there, a trash room, so it's out of sight, and the parking for residents and their guests.

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0:25:00 Rick Greiwe: So here's visitor parking here. So this is an open door to the neighborhood that allows the door to go up and down inside the building and any noise associated with that, which we use residential garage doors so they're not commercial grade, so they're very lightweight, they're not noisy. So this would be secured here with the doors and this would be for people that might have a college kid home for the weekend. Or have someone who helps clean their unit, they would get access into the building to get to the elevator. And then these would be residential spaces here. One of the things we wanna point out, the siting of this property is very important because we're using your guidelines to site this along the road, so you can create a town center.

0:25:50 Rick Greiwe: But it's interesting to see that all the existing buildings, BB&T, 19 Fort Thomas, etcetera, those are the existing footprints of those structures. So this building will be actually closer to the street of Fort Thomas and not as close to Woodland and we realize that it's going to be taller by a few feet, but we're using the same elevation for the parking lot so it's not going to grow beyond this footprint. We'll be able to keep all the green space and buffer zone that has got some mature plants in there. We'll be able to get rid of this unsightly parking lot that's mainly used by an accounting firm during the day and by the dance studio at night. And then here is the building that takes the same width of Grosser's accounting building, it pretty much stays pretty close to that width, and then the exit to the street. We're trying to fit into the site using topography.

0:26:49 Sari Lehtinen: Then how did we land with what we're proposing here for the design and the exterior? We studied the building stock in Fort Thomas, and obviously there's a wonderful collection of all kinds of architectural styles and materials and beautiful residential buildings, and there's Tower Park which of course has historic significance. And it just seems that with the choices that are available, there's so much to look at and so much to relate to, that maybe taking the material choices kind of relating to Tower Park might make sense. So we are proposing something that uses brick and stone masonry kind of materials. Also we are building a mixed-use building, so it has a residential component and it has a commercial component and these two things kind of get married in this situation. And the residential streets, there's... The large image is there to just kind of illustrate the rhythm of gables that is quite enjoyable on some of the streets in Fort Thomas that I think is very inspiring. There's all kinds of covered porches and different uses of materials, stone and brick and so forth.

0:28:15 Sari Lehtinen: And then we have the commercial component, and this is now something that has historically also happened in small towns is that you have a mixed-use building, you have a commercial first floor, and you have one or two levels of residential above. And how to make that pleasant, how to make that sidewalk inviting, how to make it so that there are places to be so that there's enough shade, there's sun, there's options to be choosing from. So this is our proposed treatment of the elevation. We're proposing two different shades of red brick, and a stone masonry veneer, everything full masonry veneer. And a store front level on the first floor that follows the back of the building kind of, then the building bays and the balconies project over it creating this covered walk that we've talked about and the trellises in areas where you don't have balconies. We're also proposing to provide projecting bays, window bays in these living rooms that happen at their gable locations and put these large windows in there that act as kind of a lantern and welcoming element.

0:29:32 Sari Lehtinen: We have dormers to make most of the roof shapes and the peaks of the gables that create those volume ceilings for the living rooms. Here's a site section to illustrate what

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happens at the site. We have the Woodland Place houses on the left. We have a parking lot for the commercial at the back, and then there's our building with three-stories plus the underground garage, and Fort Thomas Avenue, with the... Like you can see the covered walk. There's a strip of plantings and then there's a sidewalk and then there's another strip of plantings with the trees and then Fort Thomas Avenue with its median. Kind of a close-up of the same thing here, just to illustrate it a little more. So that kind of also shows on the left those are balconies. So they align with those gables. So we're creating a little bit of three-dimensional play for the facade.

0:30:35 Sari Lehtinen: This is a rendering that's at the intersection of Highland Avenue and Fort Thomas Avenue. The corner is the most prominent feature of this building and its proposed to be clad with this stone masonry veneer and it connects to this plaza in front of it with plantings, parasols, tables. There's a trellised walk that takes you along the building side. So there's like several zones of pedestrian activity there. And I think this kind of illustrates the scale of the building relating to the existing commercial development in there. This is the other end of the building next to Schone Kitchen Designs. We're on Fort Thomas looking towards Highland Avenue.

0:31:23 Sari Lehtinen: The massing of the roof is intended to create the massing make it something that kind of creates that actual elevation and then the peaks of the gables kind of stick up from that. And this illustration then is kind of a partial aerial view illustrates just that we're doing... We're also treating the back of the building with the same level of detail as the front of the building.

0:32:00 Rick Greiwe: So again that would be why we're here, we'd like to help Fort Thomas define their downtown with a landmark piece of architecture that is right at the center of your town, at the gable of your town. We'd like to offer some modern commercial space for small businesses that would enjoy working, living, and playing in the same neighborhood, which is a growing trend. We think we can create a community gathering place that would be filled with very diverse audiences, and provide a new housing type that the city currently doesn't have. That's what we're trying to accomplish and we look forward to your input on the design concept.

0:32:42 Lori Wendling: Thank you, Rick, sorry... Our review this evening, as Kevin stated earlier, is a review of design concepts only. We will be looking at and having discussion on materials, street presence, balconies, pergolas, streetscape, parking areas and the like. So, I'd like everyone maybe, if you want... I don't know how much time everyone's had to review this in advance of tonight. If you wanna first, ask any questions of the developer. We will discuss among ourselves to start.

0:33:20 Pat Hagerty: Just a couple of things, one, I'm sure this plan that you have is just generic. One of the things you wanna make sure you incorporate is in the sidewalks, the brick type detail, what we've done in the business district and it doesn't show up here but I'm assuming that's going to be part of what you're going to do.

0:33:46 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, phase two, we have to bring in all the details to how the signage band is going to work on, that stone facade and how the flags are going to look and what size for the businesses. How we're going to use your materials from the current streetscape, where the cuts are going to be in the center median which we think we can match pretty good. So no, all those rich details, including the landscape plan, all has to be submitted before the next phase.

0:34:13 Pat Hagerty: One other comment was, looking at this, was from a roof plan standpoint,

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I'm assuming that you're going to be putting most of the condensers up on the roofs 'cause you really don't have any other place to do that. You may wanna think about whether you actually run your roofs a little higher to create a little bit of a visual block for those condensers that are on the roof. I don't know how big they're going to be, large ones for commercial places, I'm sure the residential ones will be fairly small.

0:34:56 Rick Greiwe: Let's do another... If you go see some of our projects, you'll never see a condenser from the street.

0:35:00 Pat Hagerty: Right. That's what I'm getting at. Walking down South Fort Thomas heading toward the city center, near the bank or the post office, you won't be able to look up and see all of these condensers poking up [chuckle] over the roof.

0:35:19 Sari Lehtinen: Yeah, we can accommodate it with this roof. It's... That's the, it creates this kind of nestle for the mechanical unit, yeah, yeah. There's plenty of room for that, yeah.

[overlapping conversation]

0:35:39 Chris Manning: I wanted to start with a couple of broad comments first, and then maybe get into some detail. First, I just wanna say I've been involved in the community plan and last several actually and been on this board since it started, this is a very exciting project for us all to be talking about. I think it does build upon some of the intentions that came out of the community plan process, but it's big, it's complicated, very important.

0:36:10 Chris Manning: So I think it's important that we take our time and do this right and look at all the details and discuss them. I really appreciate the effort that the development team has gone to look at the community, to participate in the process, to get to know the community, to believe in it, to start this design dialogue. I know Rick from a long time ago and I'll say, just like Bloomfield/Schon, a very high quality developer, a very high quality person, very civic-minded. We're lucky to have developers like that working with us. And so I'm excited about that too. It is challenging. We heard some of the comments of planning commission. I attended that meeting. I wanted to hear those conversations and hear the voice of the community and we have a lot of things to work for.

0:37:13 Chris Manning: But I'm confident that we are working with a good group. We have a lot of good talent in the board and we can give it our best effort. Pat brings up the roof. The roof is one of the things, to me, that is one of the most challenging for this project. You see this payout in our new school projects. Everybody wants to build on this residential character that we have, which is a good intention, but sometimes those roof lines get really difficult for big builds and sometimes they make big buildings even bigger. And so what's that magic formula for the roof line? I think it's something that really needs to be studied carefully. And particularly in a business district like this that is very eclectic in its architectural styles, we have flat roofs, we have gable roofs, we have all kinds of different heights, it's not like we're trying to match something. And so I appreciate the effort that you went through to study the architecture of the community and you can tell that you're trying to be responsive and place specific and that's good.

0:38:39 Chris Manning: But that roof line is a big deal, and the mass of it is a big deal. And how

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we deal with that's going to take some finesse and some study. Sort of working my way down to, the color scheme is another one that... You have a great architect on your team, and I saw his work, and it's really good. And you're starting to employ a lot of the tools in the toolkit to provide depth and variation, and break down the scale. But to me, the color scheme in particular, and the red brick, two shades of red, given the eclectic nature of our business district, we may experiment with that a little more, I think. Because having so much of the same two colors, again, sort of adds to the mass, in my opinion, a little bit.

0:39:44 Chris Manning: And so, these are just things that need to be carefully studied, and options explored, and pluses and minuses discussed. And through that journey, you come up with the best solutions. And then the streetscape, Pat mentioned the streetscape, I think if you really look closely at our streetscape, the way it's set up, sidewalk goes all the way out to the curb, and there's no lawn strip. There's tree wells, and so as people are getting in and out of cars. So how do we layer that streetscape consistently with how we have it in the rest of the district, I think is really important as well. And all these things kind of add up to the presentation to the street. Again, not saying anything about particular heights, or setbacks, or things like that, that are not in our purview, but all these things contribute to the scale and mass that is perceived at the street. I'll stop there for the moment.

0:40:58 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Yeah, and I'll echo a lot of what you said. I think that was very well-put. I do appreciate you guys investing your time and resources in looking at the potential for this corner, which is super significant in town. And while I appreciate some of this... I guess I view tonight as a bit of a design boutique. We're in a studio, and we're at a mid-term presentation, and we're in front of a jury, and we're looking at the quality of the design. And starting at a very high level, and then ultimately as we progress through this process, getting down to, as our guidelines prescribed, the type of trash can that might be associated with retail establishment on the first floor. So from a high level, if I'm being critical, I think that the nod to Fort Thomas is by using two tones of red brick. And I'm familiar with your work, you do put out a great product. I don't take any exception to that, but if you read the elevations that we have in front of us, they are really pretty close to what's in Mariemont, with a change in materiality.

0:42:10 Jeffrey Sackenheim: So if you look at the fenestration pattern, particularly on the back side of the building, in the way that the windows are positioned in the gable, in the projecting gable elements, and then in the bays in between, it's very, extremely similar, at least the way that it's represented here to what was done there, to the little detail that's at the top of the gable. Again, on both sides of the building where there's some decorative wood elements at the top there, to even the way that the porches are positioned on the building and the way that they're represented here looks very similar. So I don't know that I feel like there is a real direct effort to read the community in terms of how the architecture is represented here. Probably my biggest overall concern in not speaking directly to height or setbacks is the overall mass and scale of what's proposed, and it does feel really big.

0:43:09 Jeffrey Sackenheim: While... And I'm not going to try to design the building for you, but breaking it into two buildings with space in between the two, or breaking it into three buildings with space in between the three, would go to really breaking down the scale of the overall size of this building, which is going to be close to the size of the high school, I think, once completed. Which is big, and long, and tall, and immediately up against the street, even though, again, I will commend you on providing some relief and providing some space at street level that can be activated and can

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be a spot for my wife and kids to go get ice cream or pizza. I appreciate that.

0:43:57 Jeffrey Sackenheim: I think providing relief between buildings would probably result in better use of the rear parking, which otherwise, as I look at the plan, you have a retail, or cafe, or something that has two frontages, one facing the Avenue and one facing the rear parking lot with access to both, which came prove challenging to the functionality, the interior of that space. And if there was relief between the buildings, we can have an open-to-the-sky, a place to walk between the buildings, and not have to come into the rear the property or through a central hallway. So I think that's kind of just very high-level opinion from me.

0:44:57 Mark Thurnauer: Yeah, I'm not so personally bothered by the continuity of a block-long, continuous unbroken facade. We, in this community experience this area of town mostly on foot, and when you're walking through our town, walking a block is not a long journey, but what makes a walk pleasant is variety.

0:45:26 Mark Thurnauer: It's okay that it doesn't have a break to it, but when it's all the same, that there's a monotony to it that maybe almost expands that length, right? So to me, that study of what is your experience at the eye level and up close. You had an image that was of another community where you were underneath a portico. And all the facades of those store fronts, there must be a guideline that essentially established that all of those store fronts were the same, and that they all had divided lights and they were all the same color. And that might appear like it gives it a nice harmony, but in fact, what it does is it really just expands it. It's just this long thing. So I wonder whether or not it's worth studying, whether... While the masonry for the whole commercial level for the stone looks to unify it at an experiential level, it may not be the best thing from a pedestrian standpoint.

0:46:43 Jeffery Sackenheim: I think to Chris's point, you used the word eclectic, and I had written down that the opposite of the avenue was developed over time, and while there is a continuous commercial district on that side and it varies single story and two-story buildings over there, there's a yellow brick one, there's one that's been painted gray, there's a green one that's two stories tall, there's the building that has the mansard roof that faces the street that's three stories tall. So there is variation over there that I think speaks a little bit more to a small town center and not a big town center. So...

0:47:29 Chris Manning: You could go too far with that eclecticism too, and just come up with a mess. But I guess there's some room in-between. In my mind, for some exploration that tests some variation and color and treatment and depth and see how that helps break down the mass a little bit and make it feel like it's a little more eclectic like the other side.

0:47:54 Sari Lehtinen: Is it appropriate to respond?

0:47:58 Lori Wendling: Sure.

0:47:58 Chris Manning: Yeah, it's a dialogue.

0:47:58 Sari Lehtinen: Yeah, I feel like there's a fine line there where you go into the Disney World before you start pasting on things. And just like you said, Jeffrey, it's the other side was built

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at several different times, and we don't have the luxury here, we're building it at one time. So how do we do that? So I agree, there's some kind of a middle ground to be found, but I do want it to not be schizophrenic, crazy, untrue to what it is. Those kinds of things. Thank you.

0:48:32 Chris Manning: Agreed.

0:48:33 Lori Wendling: Yeah, I also drove around the last couple days through Mainstrasse in Covington and down Monmouth Street. It was interesting because those streets are a lot narrower than North Fort Thomas Avenue, and they, like the other side of our street, go from one story to three story. But it was good to see examples where they had three and four-story, new, large residential buildings going in, to see how that scaling feels, to be able to see something that's concrete was helpful, if anyone...

0:49:11 Chris Manning: Yeah, I think looking at some other local streets like that is helpful to understand scale, not only vertically, but the width of the street.

0:49:19 Lori Wendling: Monmouth Street is actually 20 feet narrower than North Fort Thomas.

0:49:29 Barry Petracco: Was there ever a consideration to do this in two stories instead of three?

0:49:37 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, with the requirement of doing commercial on the first floor, we wind up with 12 units, and you really can't... You put an elevator in to fire-rated exits, the economies of scale don't work under 18 units. If it was all residential, we could do two stories, but we want commercial too. And the land price is pretty high. So you only have so much in your budget per door per land and that's why... Well, it's three stories because of commercial requirement. And if you want two stories of residential, we could fit that in that site, but that would be against your zoning. So... But there is a way to break the building into two, have two buildings. We could run the numbers on if you lose a few units by having a 30-foot space between two buildings, that's something we could explore.

0:50:45 Chris Manning: If you did that Rick, where would you break it? Can you tell us?

0:50:49 Rick Greiwe: That's what I'm...

[overlapping conversation]

0:50:50 Rice Greiwe: No, we are getting all this input and we couldn't break it... You could break it so whatever the second building is the right footprint for commercial. If you're going to try to do a restaurant that has smells, then you would build a restaurant with an office above it. And, okay, so what's the right footprint to make that work? You drive it by the uses rather than saying, "Let's do it in half," or... But I'd be curious what you think would be a good place to break it. Is there anything magic about halfway or two-thirds of the way, or... I'd be curious what you think.

0:51:34 Chris Manning: Well, so I think good urban design principles will tell you that you want to hold that corner strongly, right? So you go far enough down the avenue before that break that you hold the corner. So whether that's past that first gable or second gable, it needs to hold that corner.

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0:51:54 Rick Greiwe: One on both sides. Okay, so it becomes a continuous rhythm. But other people have suggested porticos, put a couple of porticos in so you break up the first floor, but leave the second and third floor above it. And it might be... As you go out, it might be a place to dine. That's another way to address the massing.

0:52:24 Chris Manning: I know that use zoning... Is a planning and zoning commission issue, but for me, I think the uses here are also driving the scale. And so I know planning commission has some latitude on that first floor retail requirement. And I think we need to be creative together about that ultimately. You really can't take it much further than that, but I would encourage the planning commission to be creative about the retail requirement because it is driving the scale of the building a lot.

[background conversation]

0:53:19 Barry Petracco: My issue is... So, I drive past that corner five, six times a day. In the openness of what it is now, I look at that rendering and it just overwhelms me. It's beautiful, but the scale of it is just more than I expected it to be. It's just different. It's probably something you've gotta get used to and live with it a while, but it's big.

0:53:57 Chris Manning: Biggest challenge of the project.

0:54:00 Barry Petracco: Yeah, yeah. What kind of interest, you said people were, like business, residential, people asking about this property?

0:54:14 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, based upon our experience on what's going on with empty nesters, that is big bulge of people that are in this age group that will trail off at 2030, because we'll be too old to make decisions for ourselves. But there's a segment that just wants this convenient product, they don't wanna be in a nursing home, they don't wanna be around old people, they think they're going to live forever, they wanna age in place, and these are designed so you can do that; everything's handicap-accessible and be in a place where you can walk or stroll instead of having to wait for a van to take you some place like a facility, is a huge trend, and we've been very successful with that, not just with seniors, but in my age group, which is more active and don't wanna spend their time cutting grass, they'd rather be having fun.

0:55:05 Rick Greiwe: So it's usually an age group that's over 60 and it's been successful at Hyde Park and Mariemont downtown, you know what's going on there. It's been successful on the Riverfront, some of the projects that we've done in Newport and Covington. So we think that the demographics are here to do few units. I mean this is the 18, 24 units, so... And again we have something to show people right now, which will give us a good sense of pre-sales. So we would actually try to get some pre-sales, get deposits of 10% before we would move forward. 'Cause it's a new market.

0:55:44 Rick Greiwe: When we did the first one in Mariemont, it was scary too. Nobody had done anything like that before. Each time we go into these neighborhoods, there's enough people that are living in the neighborhood, or are attracted to the location, that might come from other parts of Northern Kentucky 'cause you have such a charming setting here, with the parks and the bridge and the proximity to downtown and it's unique.

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0:56:08 Rick Greiwe: So there might be people that want to get rid of their big house in Triple Crown and want to be in a more convenient location. That has a flat, flat type of housing.

0:56:19 Chris Manning: That housing need was clearly stated need in the community plan, it came out over and over again, people that wanted to stay here and downsize.

0:56:28 Rick Greiwe: And you have some empty nester housing but it's on two levels. The golf course overlooking the water works, there's a couple of ranches over on the golf course that are older. But there's just not much housing type for this age group.

0:56:45 Pat Hagerty: I think the other thing that's nice, that it's bringing to the city center is some more business establishments. When we were doing the planning, the zoning portion and vision plan, a lot of things we realized were that the Midway area seems to now have gotten to a point where there's a critical mass of businesses there and it's starting to really draw people and a lot of people go there because it's a destination. That really has not happened here in the center of the city. And that's one of the things I would hope that this project can do to be bringing in more businesses so that we would get more people that would come and do their shopping and stuff here in Fort Thomas rather than running down the hill to Newport.

0:57:37 Rick Greiwe: Well, I think the office component is really important because there's a growing trend for people who wanna live, work and play in the same neighborhood, ride their bike to work. They have no reason to be downtown.

0:57:47 Rick Greiwe: There are small businesses doing business all over the world and they finally get tired of leaving their house and they hire two or three people and all of the sudden it grows, it takes off. That's what's going on in a lot of the small space that we're renting right now. It's interesting to see how they've knitted in office with every phase, not just retail. And you have a lot of service businesses that are in outmoded space right now that would like to improve their image and there's a lot of professional services, people that live in this town would probably like to be located in their own backyard. As far as these neighborhood centers, it's interesting that retail is changing too. You either buy everything online, stuff like toilet paper, all that stuff, or you want an experience.

0:58:37 Rick Greiwe: There's nowhere in between. And so all the experiences we had, hanging out having coffee, working in the coffee shop, going down to the bread place, but that's what all these young kids are looking for and that's why they love Over the Rhine so much. But eventually they're going to have kids, they are going to say, "Okay, where do I get the best schools in the city?" Fort Thomas, Mariemont, so the towns that they are going to is not just good school, but town centers because they want the same amenities they had earlier on. They wanna walk their kid down to an ice cream. So, anyways, the trends are in your favor. This isn't a new idea. And hitting the scale right, getting the mix of office, services, food is going to be really important to complement what's here already, I just don't wanna shake the dice up and have just the same people move around, we really have to figure out how to compliment business that are here already.

0:59:33 Chris Manning: I'm glad you said that, I mean I think that's a really important part of the retail and office mix, is to find those complements to what's here now, because the people that are

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here now have worked really hard. And you know, it's not easy. And so to find businesses that complement them and may be their synergies that, you know, again, improve the overall business environment because they're together.

0:59:57 Rick Greiwe: Or someone who just wants to step it up, they wanna expand, they want a better, more modern looking space, or stay in the neighborhood and get a better space so.

1:00:08 Barb Thomas: So I have a question. If there was a break in the buildings that would obviously take away additional retail space, right?

1:00:15 Rick Greiwe: It would take away some condos, so you'd probably have one building that would shrink to 18 units, which would be okay. I mean if it gets below 18, that wouldn't be good. And then you lose some square feet of commercial, but again there's 19,000 square feet, that's a lot to fill and I think it would be at least one third office which will help, my guess. We haven't gone to the market place yet. And, but what was your question about the two buildings?

1:00:46 Barb Thomas: So in my opinion, personally, is that the mass of building is huge, however when you start taking away the number of retail spaces, you are going to take away the product groups, which really is what we want to bring into the city. We want to bring in more amenities. So I'd be in favor of keeping the additional retail space versus taking away, by dividing the buildings. My other question is this driveway leading in, beside, to the right corner leading into the back, is it the same width as the current driveway leading in, do you know?

1:01:25 Rick Greiwe: Right here?

1:01:26 Barb Thomas: At 20 foot.

1:01:27 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, this is... You're saying curb cut in the middle, it lines up exactly where BB&T's entrance is, but the planning committee wants it 24, 20, I think it's a requirement. So we have to make this a little wider.

1:01:41 Barb Thomas: I'm glad to hear that because that really, 20 foot is going to be a big concern, getting folks in and out of the same parking lot and also coming out of the parking lot, if you are turning right, obviously that curb comes out into the road. And, I mean during a busy day with pedestrians and cars parked along the street, it is an issue.

1:02:05 Rick Greiwe: The traffic study identified that as an issue too. And we've been talking to Ashley about moving our retaining wall back so your visibility is better when you're coming out.

1:02:17 Barb Thomas: Especially after school, children on their bikes, walkers.

1:02:22 Rick Greiwe: Yes, so luckily this is a really slow zone, which is really great. People are driving slow to begin with, but you still have to... The study showed that this is not a problem at all because people have plenty of time to stop here, this is, as much room as you need to stop, but this one we have improved the visibility. And then on this driveway, we're trying to get a variance say 24. But you really only need 20 here for a residential garage, so trying to narrow this. There's a 25-foot curb cut here where the parking lot is. So this parking lot goes away and we got a nice green

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space here. So we'd like to choke this down even more so it's not such a big curb cut, when it doesn't need to be. This one does though, we gotta make that bigger.

1:03:11 Pat Hagerty: That would slow people down too trying to go in and go out.

1:03:17 Rick Greiwe: That's right.

1:03:18 Barry Petracco: How many parking places are there in the garage?

1:03:21 Rick Greiwe: There'll be enough for two per home, and then a few extra ones in case they wanna buy one for their sports car, but you know, who knows. Lots of flexibility as you can see. And again, if we did, divide this, the question is, how can you design the retail building so you can put a lot of office on the second floor and then just all services on the first floor, so you don't lose some of the square feet you hope to get. This is 19,000 feet. We kinda imagine that, one third was going to be office, one third was going to be services and one third would be food like things. So, if you take some of it and put it on top of food, you put the food over here, you won't be losing any square feet which is a good point. If you're trying to create a critical mass.

1:04:11 Barb Thomas: That's right, you don't want to...

1:04:13 Rick Greiwe: And you can tell more about that, than anybody else with the businesses each side of here, right?

1:04:19 Chris Manning: She knows that corner well.

[laughter]

1:04:25 Lori Wendling: Any other questions or comments? Barb?

1:04:30 Rick Greiwe: So as far as following up with some of the comments Jeff and Chris have made.

1:04:36 Lori Wendling: They're going to add few more.

1:04:36 Rick Greiwe: Okay.

1:04:39 Lori Wendling: I usually hold back. Everyone has pretty much covered everything. I have some positives, I did like on this corner, how that balcony is cut out, I think that reduces the mass of the building instead of creating a strong vertical of solid material. I personally am not sure about this.

1:05:06 Lori Wendling: Because actually across the street we do have a higher building, but on this side that guy's two feet; phase him down, one story commercial and single family house.

1:05:21 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, the sidewalk goes along the grade. But up here you're up on the...

1:05:25 Lori Wendling: Right that's elevated.

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1:05:26 Rick Greiwe: So, cut the turrets off a little bit.

1:05:28 Lori Wendling: No, it's this 50-foot tower.

1:05:32 Rick Greiwe: Oh, the tower right here.

1:05:35 Lori Wendling: The tower.

1:05:35 Chris Manning: There's no question...

1:05:36 Jeffrey Sackenheim: I think the tower in general needs refinement.

1:05:38 Chris Manning: There's no question you own an important architectural corner. Like, what the scale of it is, and the nature of it is.

1:05:45 Lori Wendling: It's the highest vertical point right on the corner. If we're trying to reduce the feeling of like...

1:06:03 Rick Greiwe: Okay.

1:06:03 Lori Wendling: And on a positive, I really like the back side. I hadn't seen any buildings finished to that level.

1:06:10 Rick Greiwe: Thank you. We'd like to get the best designers involved, because we sell nice homes. These are our apartments.

1:06:26 Lori Wendling: Well, it's really: Streetscape, parking lot. I just want to say, I assume you are preserving all of the existing grade and landscape areas that are currently there behind the sidewalk, you just want to supplement that?

1:06:41 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, this is an architect's version of landscaping. It's not a plan. So, why don't we get through the first phase and know exactly what everybody approves, and before we come into the second phase we'll have a detailed plan that'll have the name of the species of the trees and everything. But this whole buffer zone's full of bamboo, and honeysuckle, and all kinds of stuff. And we're going to go back in and put some nice trees that will provide a permanent block. Keep the Sycamore, but the rest of it's not that interesting. So, it'll be a professional design buffer. And we also will be putting a little berm in this line here, so you'll never see headlights when you come in here.

1:07:26 Rick Greiwe: And then, we hope to stay out of this hillside, so we don't have to build a big retaining wall that would be not so attractive. Keep this a natural transition down here into the neighborhood. But, I think you're right about, we wanna follow the pattern of your streetscape, that's a good catch. There's no need for a green strip there, like it could just be the same rhythm; people stepping out of their cars onto hard surface, not worrying about wet grass, or... So yeah, that's easy.

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1:07:55 Lori Wendling: Would this be your common area that you'd be maintaining?

1:08:00 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, see, the way this works is that's the public domain here, and this is the same level, which is great, so this is all being kept accessible. So, you could walk along here and this'll all be kept by the association. And we've designed this so we have the maximum flexibility; some stores might want a rear entrance and a back entrance. Some, we might cut some of this in half. And for destination type retail, you know the barbershops there, you might just come in and have a half-bay. We're going to slice-and-dice this after we know who's interested. All these bays are 20 feet, you can put them together, cut them in half. Those are 20 by 60 bays. And the columns of the garage don't really impact the space, so it's a pretty clear span, which is good.

1:08:50 Chris Manning: And that second layer of landscape, on the streetscape is a good thing.

1:08:54 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, 'because you have tables out there.

1:08:56 Chris Manning: Right.

1:09:01 Rick Greiwe: Sales signs out there, this is all where the signage would be on this band out here, so you can see it in the street, it'd be all uniform. And then, I agree with you, I don't think it should be uniform storefronts, Mark.

1:09:17 Pat Hagerty: Or signage.

1:09:20 Rick Greiwe: I think each vendor should be able to design their own storefront. We'll give them an allowance, we might put plate glass in, maybe, I don't know, first before they start...

1:09:28 Pat Hagerty: The signage as well, somebody may want to have a banner type, some people, they want to have something like a big circle, circular. That way there might be some variety on the signage on the windows.

1:09:41 Rick Greiwe: Yeah. Well, we'll get to prescribed sizes first. For triangles, for squares, for circles, and make sure that people have fun. It might be a boot, whatever the boots, or whatever the object was that you're selling.

1:09:57 Lori Wendling: One other thing you might consider is to have an address on the building somewhere, an identifier; we've had problems with some of the other commercial buildings. There's not a way to identify tenants that are in multi-tenant buildings, and mark retailers, they want signage like they're a retailer even though they're on the second floor.

1:10:17 Rick Greiwe: Yes.

1:10:17 Lori Wendling: So things have been sort of sneaking in, in there. And we were like, maybe if there's a more clear place where it's like 60, or whatever their address is, you can tell visitors 60 Highland Avenue, or whatever, and it's very clear.

1:10:36 Rick Greiwe: Now, we've been playing around with names, too, that are place-based, history based, number-based, there was all kinds of brainstorming. You know, let's brainstorm, but

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yeah sometimes addresses are, like our project, in Hyde Park 2770 Observatory. So, we have to do that for not only the people who live there, 'because they might have two mail-rooms, see. You walk onto that balcony, the mailman's going to take care of your stuff here, and packages. And then, the people who live on this side of the building have a different mailroom. So, yeah. We'll have to figure it out.

1:11:10 Lori Wendling: I'm thinking, really, more for the mail.

1:11:12 Rick Greiwe: For the businesses.

1:11:13 Rick Greiwe: Yeah.

1:11:13 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, we'll have to figure out that.

1:11:17 Lori Wendling: Especially if you're subdividing and then end up having people who just front on the back.

1:11:22 Rick Greiwe: Yes.

1:11:26 Rick Greiwe: Yes.

1:11:29 Rick Greiwe: I'd like your guidance on how we follow up with some of the ideas with Jeff, Chris, the architects of the group. So... Just a kind of workshop setting, and kinda talk of your ideas a little more. How do you usually do that with your numbers?

1:11:50 Chris Manning: I know that people have different perspectives about showing alternatives, and then too many alternatives is not always a good thing...

1:12:00 Rick Greiwe: Yes.

1:12:00 Chris Manning: But I think coming back with some alternatives, some alternative studies of roof, some alternative studies of ways of adjusting the depth, of breaking down the building into small pieces. Some studies...

1:12:15 Rick Greiwe: Black and white line drawn.

1:12:19 Chris Manning: I just think going through that healthy exercise of how do we break down the scale of the building, and what are the alternatives? And roof is part of that, color is part of that, some of these architectural amenities and features are part of that. And just share that as alternatives with us, and we can take that dialogue and start to focus in on the strongest ideas.

1:12:42 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Yeah, I think I would really appreciate it if you would take everything that you've heard from everybody in all your various public and non-public meetings and come back with an updated presentation that does just that. And that demonstrates that you listen to the community and stuff can work and stuff can't work and I know we probably can't accommodate everything they hear from everybody, and we all have different opinions and I think this board is charged with not letting just personal aesthetic, opinions drive the advice and

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recommendations that we give to you.

1:13:19 Jeffrey Sackenheim: It's difficult at times, but I think if you listen to the community, and take another run at some refinement and then come back to the various boards, I think that would be good. I don't know what protocol is, in terms of actually sitting down as a group and actively working on it, together, it really hasn't happened on the board, or...

1:13:49 Chris Manning: I think it's better to come back in with some alternatives...

1:13:51 Rick Greiwe: Okay.

1:13:52 Lori Wendling: I think Rick if you address, the overall mass of the building whether that's the design elements, or breaking the building up. And, roof lines. A lot of the things that we brought up, we address sort of thing. Those are the big components that I think concerned a lot of us and citizens, many of us who were at the public hearing. And were there the entire time. And that came up a few times, even though that really wasn't the thing discussed in the meeting.

1:14:28 Sari Lehtinen: I just have a question to you, about, do you have a dialogue with the planning commission? 'Cause I think some of this is kind of driven by the visioning plan and it might be nice to be able to deviate from that a little bit, but I don't know if that's feasible, if that's just an exercise in futility, to go somewhere that's not strictly for the visioning or the requirements that are there. So, is it fruitful to propose something and then come to you? And, like you know, I am just saying how does that work?

1:15:01 Lori Wendling: Kevin, I think we might have discussed the possibility of, did it make sense to have a sub-committee or just one or two members of Planning Commission and Design Review Board to meet, now that they've made public presentations. We've given some input, they've heard some input from them, and see how... I don't even know if anyone from planning or zoning is here tonight, and I think it is important that they hear what we've heard. If there's a way that we can do that, as a work shop working meeting.

1:15:51 Chris Manning: And if we can't, just like you did tonight, this is the same presentation that you gave to the Planning Commission. So I think if you can't, or if we can't... Responding to this concern about scale and mass, coming back with some alternatives would be a fruitful presentation to both, both groups. And you can get some feedback. And I know it's laborious, I go through it myself with projects, but it makes the project better.

1:16:28 Sari Lehtinen: Oh yeah, absolutely...

1:16:28 Chris Manning: In the end, and it certainly makes it fit within the community better. So it's just part of the process.

1:16:37 Sari Lehtinen: Right. Well, I guess I'll just say what I'm specifically thinking, as an option, if you did break this down into two buildings and if you had, one of them was pretty much strictly residential and one of them was pretty much strictly commercial. I think that would really help, because you would have two completely different buildings that function differently, that want to look different, that have different scale. But, that is not per, the zoning requirements.

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1:17:07 Sari Lehtinen: So, having to use commercial space and I'm kind of feeling like while I don't mind doing all this exercise, that's great. I'm not sure what my client's appetite is for additional design time. So, I'm kind of wanting to streamline it to see if there's something that makes more sense or... I think I'd welcome the idea of...

1:17:31 Sari Lehtinen: Alternatives and design studies and I think that's always helpful. But just kind of like on something specifically like that, what are your thoughts?

1:17:41 Jeffrey Sackenheim: I'm going to pretend like money's no object for a second.

[laughter]

1:17:45 Sari Lehtinen: Thank you.

1:17:45 Sari Lehtinen: I'd love that yeah, yeah bring it on.

1:17:50 Jeffrey Sackenheim: I would, this is just, this is just my opinion but I would, given the significance of this location, given what it's taken to assemble multiple contiguous properties in town, given that it's really beyond the schools, the most significant potential commercial investment in town in a long time. I think I would approach it from what is the absolute highest and best use for this location, what is the optimal way to plan it? And of course trying to make the numbers work but, and then if that requires three variances because it doesn't provide the parking that's required, or it doesn't do it's whatever, there's one building that's all residential and there's residential at grade, not residential on, in a mixed use development, but that doesn't conform with planning and zoning, but it's what makes sense and it's what's right for this corner, and for this community.

1:19:00 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Then I think that's the strategy that I would take if I were in your position and I could put something in front of... And I keep saying the community, and the respective boards in the community and I'm not born and raised here, so I'm 10 years in town, I'm starting to feel like I'm accepted here. But no, [laughter] but that is going to be here for the next 100 years and the stuff that is around town and what contributes to the charm and I think why we all either choose to live here and raise a family, or choose to move here is because of all the things that you led with at the beginning and that I can be to my office downtown in seven minutes' door-to-door. I can walk to several parks, or I can... All those things are great, and we get a chance right here to build something that's going to be here for a really long time hopefully, is amazing and you have a wait list for people who, they want you to build all of it right now, but that, we get one chance to do it really well the first time. And if that pushes up against planning and zoning, but it's the right thing to do, I don't know, that's how I would approach it.

1:20:16 Chris Manning: It's just really the first road test for some of these goals that came out of the community plan and I think, I wouldn't come back in with just one alternative where you work on the building.

1:20:28 Sari Lehtinen: Right.

1:20:28 Chris Manning: I'd come in with a range of alternatives and say here's some different

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ways that we could approach it and let's talk about that.

1:20:34 Sari Lehtinen: So I see it kind of like our next round might be kind of sketchy, kind of like more like...

[overlapping conversation]

1:20:40 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Diagrammatic.

1:20:40 Sari Lehtinen: Loose thoughts. Yeah, exactly.

1:20:41 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Big idea, diagrammatic.

1:20:42 Sari Lehtinen: I think so. I think so and then we can start honing it down from there.

1:20:47 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Yeah.

1:20:47 Sari Lehtinen: Thank you.

1:20:48 Lori Wendling: Rick when you were talking about residential and grade, for condominium just so that you didn't have traffic lights and car lights rather, and people looking in your windows, they were elevated generally, three/four feet?

1:21:03 Rick Greiwe: Yeah, the way it works is if the garage sticks out of the ground four feet and you don't know it because it's got landscaping and all kinds of stuff. And then if your windowsill is built so it's at 7 1/2 feet so when you're walking by you can't see into the home. So we have a project like this on Madisonville road that's got a lot more traffic than this location so, and put good windows in there...

1:21:29 Lori Wendling: People that talked about the midway where you have some apartments and retail space or storefront space.

1:21:44 Rick Greiwe: Yeah.

1:21:44 Lori Wendling: Obviously you wouldn't want anything in that. And you wouldn't either.

1:21:46 Rick Greiwe: No that's a different... No so if this was the residential building, this would be 4 foot out of the ground, and you would walk down some, three or four steps to this plaza that would be more private now. The commercial space would be over here and you'd activate this. But yeah all that, this would be four feet, and you wouldn't know it's four feet, but it would be the elevation for the first floor units.

1:22:15 Lori Wendling: What is the, I know this is... I probably shouldn't ask this question cause it's outside of what we did, but I am. Just in the past the city has tried to connect all the backyard areas to cut down on curb cuts for safety and a lot of other things. I was just wondering what the elevation difference was between Schon and the property on this side? Do you know?

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1:22:44 Rick Greiwe: What's the elevation change right here either.

[overlapping conversation]

1:22:45 Chris Manning: Between the two parking lots.

1:22:48 Lori Wendling: She doesn't have a lot.

1:22:51 Rick Greiwe: There's a retaining wall here that looks like it's four feet tall.

[overlapping conversation]

1:22:55 Lori Wendling: You could drive your car. You could drive your car there.

1:23:02 Sari Lehtinen: Yeah, right now you're going up and we're actually proposing to not go as much up.

1:23:08 Rick Greiwe: Well this is going to come down to grade, so currently I don't know what the change is.

1:23:14 Lori Wendling: I was thinking from an overall planning standpoint to the city...

1:23:18 Rick Greiwe: It's less severe back here that's for sure, right here it's very obvious, the hillside is the front of the house but that's an interesting question Laurie, whether you can grade this so you could expand the parking.

1:23:29 Lori Wendling: You said there'd be some common curb cuts between, so people had more outlets...

1:23:34 Rick Greiwe: Because there's three curb cuts now. There's one where the pizza place is, there's one for BB&T, there's like three different cuts you can see on your planner. We're trying to move into one.

1:23:46 Lori Wendling: I think he has four right now.

1:23:48 Rick Greiwe: Four, okay.

1:23:50 Rick Greiwe: But that's an interesting idea, see if that can be flex space if need be, work out arrangements with the owners that don't need it at night.

1:23:57 Lori Wendling: Yeah we know it benefits both parties, it should be, you know a wash if that was something she was ever interested in doing.

1:24:07 Rick Greiwe: Yeah.

1:24:10 Barb Thomas: So since we're up in that corner, I have a question about the commercial trash space that's 20 by 20, is that going to be large enough to accommodate the commercial and the

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residential?

[overlapping conversation]

1:24:28 Rick Greiwe: For the residential trash goes down a shoot. And then the dumpster is rolled out to the street and then the refuse guys pick it up on the truck and drive out. So this would be done from this place, and then the other one would be done here. And this is really close to the buffer, the required buffer, so that is going to wind up being a different shape. You need 20 feet. So we have to rearrange how that's configured.

1:25:00 Chris Manning: And that would be an architectural enclosure and it's nicely detailed?

1:25:02 Rick Greiwe: Yes.

1:25:04 Chris Manning: Cause it's like, you see it when you drive in, so we don't want it to look like what it is.

1:25:08 Sari Lehtinen: And we have that street corner commercial space also kinda getting access to the trash shoots, so that helps a little bit with the commercial threshold.

1:25:20 Kevin Barbian: Lori, if I may. Just in one comment from Jeff's comments about residential versus commercial and considering separation. I just wanna make a comment, obviously with your information that I have provided, there is... I have provided a significant amount of excerpts from our comprehensive plan and just by the fact that we just completed this comprehensive plan, I think the applicant was trying to conform to that with this proposal. So to put residential on first floor, it's not compliant with our zoning, and would have to go through zone changes and a whole other process.

1:25:56 Kevin Barbian: That being said, with us just spending this time on this comprehensive plan, and a lot of discussion spoke to this area. I'm not quite sure, I don't want to say with any certainty, but the amount of discussion that went into that spoke of retail for stores similar in comm... I'm sorry, residential second and third floor. So to change that, ultimately a planning commission would have to... They want to conform to the comprehensive plan, well you're kinda going against the comprehensive plan, so that's the one challenge from a zoning standpoint, or from a planning commission standpoint, is, wow we're exploring this, and well that's not in conformance with a plan we just put a lot of time and effort into.

1:26:45 Jeffrey Sackenheim: Yeah I just pulled that out as an example of like the highest and best use, if it's something that goes up against that, but it's what makes sense then, show us and let us debate it. If it doesn't make sense, then the other document is what we should do, then so be it, but...

1:27:00 Chris Manning: Let's get it right.

1:27:07 Lori Wending: But that would be a planning and zoning issue.

1:27:10 Chris Manning: Right.

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1:27:11 Chris Manning: And at the end of the day...

1:27:13 Chris Manning: Do we come to a conclusion on whether there is the opportunity for a working meeting or should we just...

1:27:21 Kevin Barbian: You know I think the biggest thing with a working meeting would be that it's, you know, you don't create a quorum of any one group, I think it would be something that we could speak with the planning commission to see if it's something their interested in and see if that's, you know... It could help guide the applicant is to a better product when they come back to either one of the committees. Generally, these entities act alone in and among themselves, so the planning commission has a job to do, you have a job to do, and then the board of adjustment has a job to do and beyond, so I don't want to say without absolute certainty that that's something that would happen, but we can certainly look into it.

1:28:06 Lori Wendling: So I guess then for now, look at some revisions, and come back next month? And is there opportunity for interim-meetings or regular meeting, if we were to be interested in something like that, and I'm not sure what your ideal timing is on this Rick?

1:28:28 Kevin Barbian: I'm sure we could adjust the times. Obviously if we, the biggest issue is making sure we get plenty of advertising, the advertising is the biggest issue in advance. And by the time we make a decision and then get an advertisement out, it usually ends up being a month, because we have to advertise well in advance to get into the newspaper a week and a half in advance so, that's the challenge as far as modifying those times.

1:28:53 Lori Wendling: Well let's just stay with what we do, but we know that those things are out there. Clear as mud.

[laughter]

1:29:04 Rick Greiwe: Thank you.

1:29:04 Chris Manning: Well thank you it's a very exciting project, we appreciate all the effort you've put into it and it's challenging but if we work through it together we'll come up with a solution.

1:29:20 Rick Greiwe: Thank you.

1:29:22 Lori Wendling: Thank you.

[background conversation]

1:29:25 Lori Wendling: Is there any other new business? Anyone have anything? Motion to adjourn.

1:29:36 Mark Thurnauer: Okay. I'll make the motion to adjourn.

1:29:38 Chris Manning: Second.

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1:29:40 Lori Wendling: All in favor?

1:29:40 All members: Aye.

1:29:42 Lori Wendling: We are adjourned, thank you.

[background conversation]