

City of Alexandria

Old Town North

Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC)

September 2023 Meeting Notes

[FINAL]

Wednesday, September 6 at 9:00 a.m.

Hybrid: City Hall, Room 1101 and via Zoom

Recording Link:

https://alexandria.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=29&coa_view_id=29&coa_clip_id=5991

Committee Members in Attendance

Steve Kulinski, Chair (SK)

Katherine Bingler (KB)

Zaira Suarez (ZS)

Abbey Oklak (AO)

Committee Members with Excused Absence

Tom Soapes (TS)

City Staff in Attendance

Stephanie Sample (SS) P&Z

Daniel Welles (DW) P&Z

Catherine Miliaras (CM) P&Z

Applicant Members in Attendance

Chase Eatherly (CE) Architect/HCM

Gregg Eberly (GE) Bowman Consulting

Steven Mikulic (SM) McGuire Woods

Melanie Ray (MR) Architect/HCM

Christopher Jones (CJ) Winn Development

Agnes Artemel (AA) Artemel & Associates

Quynn Nguyen (QN) Winn Development

Wanda Sherrod (WS) ARHA

Thomas Jones (TJ) ARHA

Community Members in Attendance (in Person or Virtual only if a Question was asked)

Fatima Ghalayini (FG)

Soued Botrous (SB)

Ehab Ibrahim (EI)
Berhana Hassain (BH)
Estele Laerse (EL)

INTRODUCTION & OLD BUSINESS

- The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:03 a.m. as the July 26, 2023 meeting of UDAC.
- KB motioned to approve the July 26, 2023 Meeting Notes; AO provided a second. **The motion passed for the approval of the Meeting Notes, 4-0.**

NEW BUSINESS

Note: Presentation materials on the below items are located at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/boards-and-commissions/urban-design-advisory-committee-serving-old-town-north>

Second Presentation of the proposed redevelopment at Ladrey Apartments

- CJ and MR walked the committee through the changes since the last meeting, highlighting the more detailed street sections and the improved pedestrian experience along all three streets, including paired loading/a new garage curb cut, and architectural updates. Additional details related to drop-off/pickup along Wythe Street and within the garage were included in the presentation.
- During their presentation, CJ and MR noted that while they can provide more space for green roofs, they are also reserving space for proposed solar panels, which is a requirement of the project's green building certification.
- EI expressed concern about traffic and construction noise.
- KB said she was pleased with the improved corner piece and the pocket park, as well as the architectural updates.
- ZS brought up a question previously posed in an email to the committee, to which he asked the applicant team to consider incorporating a lay-by in the drop off area. CJ said that they wanted to be consistent with the Old Town North Urban Design Standards and Guidelines (OTNUDSG) for a pedestrian-friendly street with vistas leading to the river along Wythe Street.
- CJ followed up noting the canopy will provide weather protection for residents being picked up/dropped off, also indicating that residents will have access to the garage for drop off, if desired. CJ confirmed that drop-off/pickup is an operations issue that will be worked out as the building becomes habitable.
- AO noted that the proposed improvements on Wythe Street do not meet the OTNUDSG, with a 6' landscape amenity panel. CJ responded indicated the slide wasn't updated but that they would revise the proposal to meet this requirement.
- AO followed up, complimenting the architectural changes and suggested that the benches in the pocket park be reoriented to allow people to enjoy the mural. AO also suggested that

the team look at other locations for drop-off/pickup that should be safe and easy for residents to access.

- SK asked about the construction type and CJ responded that there would be 2 stories of concrete podium for the 7-story portion and 1 story of podium for the 5-and-6-story portions. CJ mentioned that the hyphen should be more transparent on the upper floors and that the corner open space will be a usable pleasant space but only if Dominion allows for solid coverings over the transformer. SK inquired about the use of vinyl windows at the lower levels and the amount of fiber cement siding showed on the exhibit, asking the applicant team to explore a mixture of fiber cement panel and lap, further discouraging the use of fiber cement on the street elevations. SK concluded said that the materials of some individual building portion did not seem to relate to one another.
- SK brought up the neighbor noise and traffic concerns expressed earlier by EI and noted that there is a traffic study which should address any mitigation measures. CJ noted that the corner bump outs proposed as part of the project would be traffic calming, further indicating that the noise associated with demolition and construction would comply with the City's noise requirements.
- KB said that she would like to see more details about the drop off at the next UDAC meeting.
- The applicant team intends to return to the committee for a third presentation.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:03 a.m.