



**Design Review Board Case #2011-0003
Carlyle Plaza (Blocks 26A, 26B, and 28)**

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Carlyle Plaza Two (South Carlyle) Location: 760 John Carlyle Street, 1800 Eisenhower Avenue, 340 Hooff's Run Drive (Blocks 26A, 26B, and 28) Applicant: Carlyle Plaza, LLC (JM Zell Partners), represented by Ken Wire of McGuire Woods	DRB Date:	February 16, 2012
	Site Area:	6.23 acres
	Zone:	CDD#11(South Carlyle)
	Proposed Use:	Residential and Office
	Gross Floor Area:	755,000 sf Office 633,000 sf Residential

Purpose of Application
<p>Concept design review of the proposed Carlyle Plaza development which will include one or two office building(s), two residential buildings, a parking structure with open space on top and a transition area between the street level plaza and elevated open space.</p>
<p>Staff Reviewers: Tom Canfield, AIA tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov Gwen Wright, gwen.wright@alexandriava.gov Gary Wagner, RLA, gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov Katy North, AICP, LEED AP katye.north@alexandriava.gov James Roberts, james.roberts@alexandriava.gov.</p>
<p>DRB ACTION, JANUARY 19, 2012: The Board reviewed options for tower massing and the transition area. With regard to the tower massing, the Board did not have a strong preference for one option over another, but did want to ensure that all of the options provide a greater variety in height and the building tops are well articulated. With regard to the transition area, the Board suggested that the area needed to be better incorporated into the buildings (perhaps carrying it inside the building or extending the building out into the space) and the stairs at the ground level should be more inviting. There was also extensive discussion of the benefits of enclosing all or part of this area in an atrium space to make it useable year-round and also to mitigate the negative aspects of a north slope condition.</p> <p>DRB ACTION, NOVEMBER 17, 2011: The Board reviewed a draft outline for the Design Guidelines and discussed a process moving forward with the review of the development. The next meeting will be a worksession to discuss design alternatives and further details for the Design Guidelines.</p>

I. OVERVIEW

Carlyle Plaza Two, LLC has submitted new materials for review of the development in South Carlyle. At the previous DRB meeting in January, the Board reviewed options for the tower massing and treatment of the transition area. The focus of this meeting will be to provide feedback on:

- Transition area (continued discussion)
- Tower massing (continued discussion)
- Limerick Street extension
- Holland Lane elevation
- Alternate pedestrian/bike ramp location

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Transition Area

The applicant has provided three variations of the Garden Block concept. In all three approaches the lower staircase has been revised to be incorporated in the garden blocks rather than a freestanding staircase as shown in the option presented at the January DRB meeting. Also, in each of the options, the elevator has been pulled out of the building and integrated with the cantilevered walkways to provide a comparable experience of the transition zone whether one is walking or riding. The three approaches show a few different options for providing covered and possibly enclosed space and also show different options for the size of the cantilevered runways. Finally, two of the approaches show two alternate options for a secondary staircase up to the green deck from the middle platform.

The approaches have incorporated a lot of the feedback received at the January meeting. The applicant should continue to consider the following comments with the final design:

- Consider how to extend the transition area into the two side buildings and how to incorporate more enclosed areas along the garden wall.
- The attractiveness and usability of the transition space with/without atrium element(s).
- Relationship of wall/garden blocks with plaza. Can water spill out into the plaza design?
- Will the cantilevered walkways and stairs pose building code issues uncovered?

Tower Massing

The applicant has provided two updated massing configurations for the site in response to the DRB feedback from January. Although the height and numbers of stories is not provided, the two configurations again keep the office building the same, but change the height between the two residential buildings. Composition A shows the southern building as the taller building, whereas Composition B has the northern building as the taller building. Both of these options seem appropriate given the variation of height that is spread across all three buildings.

Limerick Street Extension

Since the green deck covers several acres of land and connects seamlessly to the ASA field to the south, there is no opportunity for a traditional east-west public street. The portion of Limerick Street (the southernmost east-west street between ASA and Carlyle Plaza Two) that goes through the garage and under the green deck will be open to the public to provide a connection. Having a

street run through a garage is not typical and careful consideration of how this space is designed is needed to ensure it is an inviting space that feels both safe and public. The applicant has provided a section of the area with some suggested materials to use inside the space. The space will be two stories tall. The applicant is proposing a solid wall along the ASA property line (south side of the connection) with painted perforated metal panels and integrated lighting. As represented in the current submission, the space does not appear welcoming and friendly: the fins seem to intrude into the limited sidewalk space, and the balance of the space does not successfully disguise the fact that the street is passing through a parking structure. A coordinated ceiling and lighting treatment might accomplish this better, and there is more than sufficient height in which to play with ceiling forms (18 feet plus to almost 23 feet.)

More details will be needed to fully review this concept for the street connection. However, the following should be considered for the final design of this space:

- Make the entrance to the “street” visible from Holland Lane so it is obvious there is a public connection.
- Study the section
- Explore adding pedestrian elements such as sidewalks through the “street” since the open nature of the space will likely make some pedestrian access inevitable.
- Provide standard street striping and materials to reinforce the public nature.
- Use perspective views to demonstrate the quality of space and experience.

Holland Lane Elevation

The applicant has proposed a design scheme for the Holland Lane elevation that faces the RPA and the existing ASA facility, although a portion will be visible from the Beltway. The concept includes using a sculptural fencing material along the pedestrian/bike path to provide a variety of heights and textures along the path. The fence could be carried through to wrap around the ASA field, which would help provide a coordinated look for the green space. However, staff is concerned with the extensive use of the fencing material. Below the path, most of the façade will be the parking garage. Portions of each level would be exposed with horizontal bands woven into the materials along this façade.

Staff understands that this façade will be much more utilitarian than other sides of the development. Active uses are not appropriate along this side of the garage, but an integrated design should still be carried through. The initial images present a unified concept that does not overpower and is complementary to the pedestrian/bike path and buildings. Careful review of the materials will need to occur to ensure the wall does not create an unpleasant experience for those travelling along Holland Lane. Additional perspectives of this façade would be helpful, particularly ones showing the appearance and materials from a closer, eye-level viewpoint.

Alternate Ramp Location

In response to the concerns about the proposed access to the residential building through the plaza, the applicant has proposed an alternate concept. This involves shifting the location of the pedestrian/bike ramp to the east side of Holland Lane, which then allows for a layby with a direct connection to the lobby of the northeast residential/hotel building. Instead of hugging the east side of the building, the ramp would start on the east side of Holland Lane in the African

American Heritage Park and cross over Holland Lane to rejoin the original location of the pedestrian/bike path over the green deck.

This is a creative proposal that could provide a good solution to the access issue previously discussed. It also has the added benefits of connecting the bike path along the east side of Holland Lane, removing any conflicts between the ramp and the plaza, providing more open space for the plaza, and also eliminating pedestrian/bike conflicts with vehicular traffic. However, there are number of issues would need to be addressed before moving forward with this design:

- What will the ramp look like from the northern portion of Holland Lane and the African American Heritage Park?
- What are the impacts to the park and the RPA?
- Is there enough clearance under the ramp for vehicular travel, including ASA trucks?
- Treatment of ramp materials and design: is the woven mesh appropriate as the defining material for this much of the elevation, or should it be one element in a vocabulary of materials?
- Relationship between the relocated ramp and the east side of Residential One building.
- Maintenance and ownership issues, since a portion of it would be on City property.

III. CONCLUSION AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the DRB give direction to the applicant regarding the proposed transition area scheme, the tower massing, the Limerick Street extension, the Holland Lane façade, and the alternate ramp location. The applicant should return to the DRB in March to discuss refinements made to the plan to address these comments as well as present more detailed Design Guidelines.

Next Meetings:

Thursday, March 15th – Proposed

Thursday, April 19th – Proposed if needed