

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 9, 2017

TO: MEMBERS OF THE CARLYLE/EISENHOWER EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB)

FROM: ROB KERNS; DIVISION CHIEF, PLANNING AND ZONING

SUBJECT: CARLYLE PLAZA II – SOUTH RESIDENTIAL TOWER NOVEMBER DRB SUBMISSION

The applicant of the Carlyle Plaza II –South Residential Tower made a submission to the DRB on October 17, 2017 for review by the Board at the November 16, 2017 DRB meeting. The submission is confined to illustrative graphics which describe the landscape design intent for the public and private open spaces.

City staff recommends that the DRB review the submitted materials as a work session or discussion as the applicant's design team has stated that they continue to work through the structural engineering and cost considerations of the project. These considerations may result in changes to the landscape, particularly of the upper terraces, and would then necessitate reconsideration by the DRB if an action is taken. Additionally, we have reviewed the playground area with our internal ADA and playground safety staff, and find that there are significant concerns with its layout, equipment, and access and do not believe that this area is ready for design consideration at this time. Staff offers the following comments in consideration of this submission as points of discussion for the work session:

- The Bartholomew Streetscape:
 - The streetscape paving materials should reflect the City's standard concrete/brick hybrid detail.
 - Staff believes the use of stone paving at the main lobby is a successful design gesture to emphasize the entrance. This material may be allowed upon review by T&ES and with a maintenance agreement.
 - As stated in the Carlyle Plaza South Design Guidelines, the street tree wells should be sized according to the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines.
 - Accordingly, tree grates are not supported on non-retail streetscapes.
 - The overhang at the lobby entrance should be shown to indicate its relationship to the streetscape elements.
 - Provide the size, scale, and overall design intent of the public art piece.

- 5th Floor Terrace and Low Rise Building Roof:
 - The program of the “Front Porch” is not communicated and requires further study.
 - Staff encourages the applicant to refine the paving material palette. The “Pool Terrace Paving” exhibit shows a continuous material throughout the entire terrace, while other plan sheets show varying colors and patterns of materials. The materials selected should be high-quality materials with slip resistance around the pool terrace, and stain resistance on the amenity terrace near the grill and dining areas.

- 16th/26th Floor Terraces:
 - Given the limited size of the rooftop terraces, the applicant should enhance the indoor/outdoor relationship between the “Amenity Rooms” and the “Common Terraces” through the use of coordinated materials and furnishings.
 - The 4 foot railing to match the parapet and 6 foot high perforated metal screen wall do not offer sufficient privacy to the “Private Terraces.” Staff encourages the applicant to study alternatives to provide a more significant physical barrier between the public and private spaces.
 - The program of the “Common Terraces” should maximize view sheds and draw users to these points to take advantage views.

- Elevated Park Playground:
 - As previously stated, Staff has significant concerns with the layout, equipment, and access within the play area, especially for disabled users. Condition #24 of the approved Development Special Use Permit provides specific guidelines for the play area design and lists regulatory guidelines that must be met. Staff suggests that the applicant revise the design of the play area to meet the requirements of this condition and the associated guidelines.

For future DRB submissions and reviews, City staff believes that it is important to focus on the primary architecture and conditions of approval first, prior to completing the landscape review. A number of architectural items are yet to be addressed by the applicant, including: 1) Staff’s direction to the applicant in the September DRB staff report, 2) the DRB’s comments at the September meeting, and 3) two of the DRB’s conditions that were enacted with the July 2016 approval. The following list summarizes these items:

1) Staff’s direction in the September 2017 staff report, which the Board agreed:

- *Utilize vision glass as presented in approved renderings, except for the portion concealing penthouse mechanical spaces.*
- *Staff continues to have concerns that the East/West slots are not sufficiently visually distinct from the surrounding architecture.*
- *Adjust balconies or units to eliminate privacy conflicts and the use of physical barriers within balconies.*

- *Resolve privacy issues between public and private terraces on 16th and 26th floors. Provide details requested (see above).*
- ~~*Return pilotis design to the approved version incorporating circular columns with consistent spacing.*~~ (Item resolved at September meeting)
- *Provide architectural lighting in the garage and provide visual barriers where the parking levels overlook the street.*
- *Identify the soffit material, patterning and any lighting used beneath the 16th and 26th floor projections.*
- *Provide a timeline for use of the “future staging area,” describe and show screening provided.*
- *Show the overhangs of the building that create the “front porch” at the pool level in plan view by using a dotted line or other graphic convention.*

2) The DRB’s action at this meeting in September:

*The DRB voted unanimously to **approve** the design of the pilotis (change from approved round to rectangular and different spacing) at the base of the east and south facades adjacent to the pool terrace. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation to continue further design development of other design details as outlined in the staff report. The Board favored clear vision glass throughout the façade and was concerned that other techniques to cover the vertical and diagonal columns would disrupt the façade design. Balcony design overall is ongoing and the applicant will continue to work through details. Staff was concerned with balcony privacy conflicts on the south façade and between private and public areas on the two sky terraces. The Board noted the unique design challenge and opportunity of the garage entrance at Limerick Street and suggested further study regarding illumination and ceiling design, as well as measures to screen the high section of exposed garage along the north edge of the drive. The applicant will present architectural and landscape material selections at the next meeting.*

3) The DRB stipulated conditions with the original approval in July of 2016:

“2. Provide more setback depth between front and back planes for low-rise units (between 12-16” total difference).”

“3. Applicant will work to minimize visibility of the mullions to reduce contrast between metal and glass.”

Given that the content in the current submission does not include architectural information and subsequently does not address Staff’s comments and the DRB’s comments and conditions of approval, Staff recommends that the meeting on November 16, 2017 in regard to this application be held as a work session to discuss the landscape elements with no formal staff report or action by the Board.