



Design Review Board Case #2017-0006
Hoffman Town Center – Blocks 4 & 5

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Hoffman Town Center Blocks 4 & 5 Location: 2410 and 2460 Mill Road Applicant: StonebridgeCarras	DRB Date:	July 20, 2017
	Site Area:	5.08 acres
	Zone:	CDD#2
	Proposed Use:	Residential, Retail
	Gross Floor Area:	975,000 sf
Purpose of Application:		
DRB Concept review of the Hoffman Town Center mixed-use retail and residential complex tentatively scheduled for public hearing in November 2017.		
Staff Reviewers: Thomas H. Canfield, AIA tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov Robert Kerns, AICP, robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov Gary Wagner, RLA, gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov Nathan Imm, nathan.imm@alexandriava.gov Bill Cook, william.cook@alexandriava.gov		
DRB ACTION, JULY 20, 2017: The Eisenhower East Design Review Board (DRB) unanimously voted to approve the general site plan, building placement and massing. Overall the board was pleased with the development of several aspects of the project such as the brick face of the mid-rise portion of the rental apartment building and revisions to that facade. The board provided feedback regarding several issues to be further addressed by the next DRB submission. Members directed the applicant to simplify and strengthen the lantern features on the sides of the plaza, and explore ways to simplify the architectural treatments used around the base of the plaza. The board was concerned that the renderings and public art placeholder did not convey the vision for the plaza that has been verbally presented by the applicant, and was also concerned that the proximity of parking at the corners could have visual impacts. The DRB suggested addressing the parapet treatment of the podium on the southwest and west facades to reduce visual bulk, and asked the applicant to clarify what glazing was open and what was in the form of vitrines. Open garage facades along Mill Road were a concern and the DRB encouraged further development of the podium façade to better transition with the adjacent senior building. The applicant agreed that senior building architecture would be further developed for the next meeting, and the board also suggested simplifying the high-rise portion of the rental apartment building. The board looks forward to more details about rooftop programming and landscaping, and advised the applicant to consider rooftop all-weather		

accessibility between the senior building and elevator tower to the plaza.

DRB ACTION, MAY 18, 2017: The applicant was advised to further develop the plaza layout and strengthen the entry element of the rental apartments. The DRB gave further direction that the frame of the Mandeville apartment building façade should continue to develop, and that parking levels on this façade be carefully considered. The Board discussed different possible façade treatments along parts of Mill Road where the building housed mechanical elements, and directed the applicant to bring developed massing for the remaining tower for discussion at the July DRB hearing.

DRB ACTION, MARCH 23, 2017: The DRB directed the applicant to explore expanding the plaza and studying asymmetry within, and to reduce the number of architectural materials and expressions. The Board directed the applicant to bring the rental apartment building façade on Mandeville to the ground, while engaging with the street-level retail to form a consistent vertical pattern.

DRB ACTION, JANUARY 19, 2017: The DRB reviewed the overall plan, provided feedback, and directed the applicant to demonstrate the relationship of the towers to the podium, explore ways to provide a varied streetwall by modulating the podium mass, and show how the towers will meet the ground. The Board further directed the applicant to develop a conceptual design for the plaza, show retail uses at the ground level, and show how above grade parking will be screened and integrated into the building design.

I. OVERVIEW

Stonebridge Carras is requesting Design Review Board approval for their proposed buildings at 2410 and 2460 Mill Road (Hoffman Town Center, Blocks 4 and 5) for consideration and approval of the overall direction of the façade treatments and architectural articulation for the condominium and rental apartment buildings with their associated podium, as well as the general massing of the senior building and associated podium. This project has been discussed before the DRB three times this year (January, March, and May). As a result of the DRB's comments at these meetings, the applicant has continued to refine plans, and has been meeting with staff frequently as plans develop.

II. BACKGROUND

Project Evolution

Blocks 4 and 5 have been undeveloped and serving as surface parking lots. In the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan, Block 4 is designated for future office and retail, and Block 5 is designated for future residential and retail. A Master Plan Amendment is required to permit the proposed retail and residential uses for both blocks. A Concept 1 submission for site development plan review (DSP2016-0043) was submitted by the applicant in December 2016, and Concept 3 comments were sent to the applicant June 1, 2017. Architectural plans were first reviewed by the DRB at its January 2017 meeting.

Site Context

Blocks 4 and 5 encompass 5.08 acres (221,238 square feet) located south of Mill Road, east of Stovall Street, and north and west of Mandeville Lane. Swamp Fox Road originally bisected Blocks 4 and 5, but this right of way was eliminated and the site now consists of one large block. Railroad tracks abut Mill Road north of the project site, while Telegraph Road and associated ramps are located one block west of the site.

Existing adjacent development is found south of Mandeville Lane on Blocks 6a, 6b, and 6c known as the Hoffman Town Center consisting of an office building and numerous restaurants. The AMC Hoffman Center 22 movie theatre is located southeast of the subject properties across Mandeville Lane and Swamp Fox Road. The Eisenhower Avenue Metro station is located approximately 900 feet to the south on Swamp Fox Road and south of Eisenhower Avenue.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of three residential buildings atop a podium encompassing the project footprint. The podium rises to 64 feet above street level and features five total levels in various configurations of retail uses totaling 211,481 square feet, and primarily above-ground parking totaling 1,569 spaces.

The three residential buildings are proposed as three separate types of residential uses. A condominium building oriented north-south along the Stovall Street frontage is located on the west side of the project, rises 10-stories above the podium (172 feet above grade), and provides a total of 130 units.

In the center of the project is a u-shaped apartment complex that is six stories above the podium along Mandeville Lane, increasing to 12-stories in the center of the site and along the Mill Road frontage. There are 400 apartment units proposed, with the structures totaling 121 feet and 180 feet above grade respectively. The eastern side of the project proposes a senior living building with 200 units in twelve stories above the podium rising to a total height of 112 feet above grade.

A 19,160 square foot (.44 ac) plaza is located north of where Swamp Fox Road terminates at Mandeville Lane. Retail uses are proposed to front onto the plaza. Site amenities include seating, landscaping, shade structures, special paving, other site furnishings, and a place holder for public art or some type of focal point. Open spaces on the podium roof are provided as amenities for the residential uses, but that programming for those spaces has not yet been detailed.

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS

Over the last several months, the applicant has continued to refine the proposal to address comments from both staff and the DRB. Overall, staff believes the design of the building has improved and is beginning to accomplish many of the goals and guidelines outlined by the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan, discussed further below. Additional areas of improvement are discussed below.

Building Design

The design of the Hoffman Town Center project has evolved over the course of several months. In addition to three previous presentations before the Design Review Board, the applicant has met regularly with staff to work through numerous design challenges in order to develop a landmark identity for the project that satisfies the program requirements of the developer and prospective tenants while adhering to the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines.

The primary challenges have been:

- Integrating the tower architecture with the podium structure in ways that visually anchor the vertical building masses to grade and reduce the horizontal expression of the podium
- Developing a variety of appropriate façade languages according to use and location within the site
- Reducing the visual impact of above-grade structured parking

Architectural Design and Articulation: Condominium Building

The condominium building and associated podium serve to anchor the corner at Mandeville Lane and Stovall Street in the southwest portion of the site, best seen on Sheet A8.01. A five-level glass entry lobby functions as the pedestrian entrance for the anchor grocery tenant located on the third level. Vertical circulation and activity will be visible day and night. The store entry doors are parallel to Stovall Street and set back, leaving additional sidewalk space as well as an opportunity for an articulated corner with a solid wall adjacent to the glass entrance. Vertical elements in a dark contrasting color penetrate the podium, come completely to ground, and identify points of entry for the condominium entrance on Mandeville Lane and the garage entrance to the designated grocery parking on Stovall Street.

The proposed design:

- Has successful building coloration, massing and penthouse integration.
- Integrates the color scheme and materials of the tower into the podium.
- Extends the tower design horizontally by wrapping around podium base at Mandeville Lane and Stovall Street.

For the September DRB meeting:

- Study a more three-dimensional, interlocking approach to balconies and building skin when balconies are located at key corners.
- Study repeating the retail and parking level expression used in hyphen fronting Mandeville between the condo and rental apartment buildings, and expanding this to the frontage along Stovall. This would replace the alternating 2-1-2-1 window rhythm and is more expressive of the larger tenant.
- Add drama to the corner entry. It is a key building feature, visible from a great distance. Study the introduction of more dramatic detailing, varied glass sizes, addressing entries to both streets, or other methods to create more visual impact.
- General expression of the northwest corner of the podium is successful, but examine the alignment between the retail and lower vent datum lines along Stovall and the corresponding horizontal openings in the corner element.

Architectural Design and Articulation: Rental Apartment Building

The rental apartment building consists of several forms and facades. The façade on Mandeville Lane is composed of a mid-rise tower that fully meets the street, incorporating a series of columns that define six tall retail bays at the base of the podium. The bays divide the double-height ground level retail spaces, and the upper level grocery space. The column pattern continues upward into the fenestration pattern for the upper levels and residential units. Two levels of parking above the grocery level are screened behind the glass window pattern extending from the residential units above.

A taller high-rise tower on the north side of the site is set back from the Mill Road frontage. The street wall along Mill Road is formed by a series of architectural expressions along the podium largely separate from the tower.

When viewed from the south (Mandeville Lane), the high-rise tower serves as a backdrop to the active retail frontage, and is clad to contrast against the mid-rise building. The east side of the high-rise tower comes to ground and a vertical trellis element identifies the building entry at the plaza elevation.

The proposed design:

Mid-Rise:

- Has been revised and refined to form a stronger delineation of the street level retail bays while better connecting to the window pattern of the residential building.
- Is integrated with the podium and effectively masks upper parking levels.
- Has a successful podium in the connecting space west of the mid-rise to where it meets the condominium podium. This area features 2nd floor retail with wide pilasters and a different treatment for garage levels 4 and 5.

High-Rise:

- The original vocabulary for the high-rise portions of the market-rate building, consisting primarily of red brick with projecting light brick trim around window openings, set off against smaller accent portions of light brick, has been retained with little change since the previous submission.

North Side (podium facades along Mill Road):

- The successful “mechanical” screen pattern expression to the east warrants continued refinement. Staff looks forward to developments in both the pattern language and detailing of this area.

For the September DRB meeting:

Mid-Rise:

- A plane change is needed between the mid-rise building face and the podium to its west. Move the building face south to take up the one foot buffer zone. This face can either continue up the full height of the building, or be stepped back at the first level of units.

- As previously noted, consider extending the podium expression, located between the mid-rise portion of the rental apartment building and the condominium building, to the Stovall Street frontage.
- Explore the use of a minimal parapet at the podium roof, with any required fall guard moved back from the edge to reinforce the sense of a set back upper level.
- Consider a more three dimensional expression to the balconies facing Mandeville Lane.

High-Rise:

- Integrate the penthouse forms into the overall building form, massing and language, as has been successfully done on the condominium tower. Turn the challenge of major building equipment into an opportunity for visually dramatic forms.
- As rooftop amenities take shape, increase architectural focus, including more refinement of massing and the addition of other elements such as flying beams and trellis work that help make building tops memorable as called for in the design guidelines.
- Explore more interesting articulation of exterior balconies - especially at building corners, where the void they create can form an interesting solid-void expression that plays off the mass of the adjacent walls.
- Consider simplifying the expression of the garage façade along Mill Road from the rental apartments to the senior tower to more straightforwardly express its function. A “C” street, while requiring a high level of material and finish, does not necessarily need to express a residential window-scaled module in this area.
- Study opportunities for the tower to be strongly expressed along its Mill Road frontage. The current fenced transformer yard precludes this to a great degree, but staff strongly urges the applicant to explore ways to create some degree of open space along Mill Road at this juncture.
- Continue to study other brick colors, metal, precast, and other exterior materials.

North Side (podium facades along Mill Road):

- Reconsider the continuation of the “mechanical” screen expression across the transformer area, which is not successful. It conceals the point where the rental apartment high rise meets the ground, blurs the podium expression, and is not pedestrian-friendly. Staff strongly recommends undergrounding of all transformers and eliminating the fence or screen element with the creation of a ground level “breathing space” to break up the 700’ long wall along Mill.
- Develop a stronger expression of the retail presence proposed. Include design elements that help signal the presence of three lobbies: for pet care, child day-care, and the senior tower lobby itself. This would likely involve the use of a higher proportion of glass, which must then be balanced with previous comments relating to “C” street facades.

Architectural Design and Articulation: Senior Building

The design remains the least developed but has seen recent progress in terms of finalizing a massing proposal. The senior building now consists of a tower placed adjacent to Mill Road, with a primary entrance from Mill Road. Staff believes the entrance and lobby presence in this location should contribute to making the pedestrian experience along this street more appealing.

The vertical expression above the proposed entrance, and a proposed vertical corner expression are positive developments that will enhance the overall project when fully developed.

The podium adjacent to the senior building has also progressed. This area fronts on Mandeville Lane east of the Plaza, and extends around to Mill Road. The portion facing Mandeville Lane continues the retail storefront pattern west of the plaza and extends it east. Staff has concerns about the building void on the corner of the podium east of the plaza and closest to the street. Explore alternatives for additional height in this area.

For the September DRB meeting, the applicant should provide fully-developed architecture, including building skin, massing, penthouse form, color and material concepts. Please consider the following comments:

Senior Tower:

- The building should express its form as two contrasting elements, reinforced by an offset in plane (currently shown at 30 inches, but more is desired) and in height (at least twenty to thirty feet differential). The applicant has proposed achieving this through placing a high-ceiling amenity space on one half of the tower, with mechanical and elevator overrun integrated on top. Staff supports this direction, and looks forward to seeing it carried out.
- It is particularly important to develop a façade language for this tower that is clearly distinct from the other three mid- and high-rise volumes on site; this can be accomplished through a combination of color and material, but should be achieved primarily through a different approach to organization and expression of the elevations.
- Provide a prominent entry canopy in character with the tower architecture to make this more appealing and useful.
- The accent corner shown schematically is a strong response to the urban design guidelines, but should be carried all the way to grade to avoid the appearance of a decorative add-on. It should not be interrupted by the podium as shown on A8.02.
- In general, the east end of the tower, along with the first portion to the west along Mill, should show architecture that carries strongly to the ground. The west half of the building then, as discussed, will be interrupted by a more straightforward garage expression along Mill, and can be interrupted by the podium façade.

Mandeville Podium Façade:

- The breaking up of this mass into two distinct forms is successful, as shown in A 8.02 and A 8.05, although the lower retail levels below the expression change should be better differentiated from each other.
- To lessen the podium expression, study the addition of a significant volume at the southwest corner of the east podium immediately adjacent to the proposed retail/parking glass elevator tower. Study additional ways to fill this void.

Architectural Design and Articulation: Plaza and Retail

The architecture framing the plaza has evolved and become more unified. A new elevator tower element on the east side has been added to balance the podium in front of the senior building and give definition to the east end of the podium facing Mandeville Lane. The entry to the market rate apartments in the northwest corner is prominently identified by a light-colored vertical element that also extends horizontally into the plaza.

The proposed design:

- Has a consistent color scheme and glazing pattern lining the building exteriors fronting on the plaza.

For the September DRB meeting:

- Continue to develop the use of glass at the two prominent corners flanking the plaza. The parking that is still shown at the building faces above the plaza will be visible and the lights disturbing – these areas should be developed as “people space” and the unworkable parking spaces shown eliminated or relocated.

Site Design

City departments continue to review and provide comment on numerous site issues. Concept #3 was reviewed and comments given to the applicant on June 1, 2017. The project is anticipated to submit Concept #4 in the coming weeks. Significant issues of interest to, and under the purview of the DRB are summarized as follows.

Entries and Access

- The garage entry on Stovall Street has been relocated slightly north and is now located where a vertical section of the condominium façade meets the ground. The entry now provides direct access to the second level of parking associated with the grocery store. Access to the lower level of parking from the second level is via an internal ramp. The lower level parking has an additional ingress/egress from the east side of the development off of Mandeville Lane. It is expected that a large volume of vehicle traffic to the grocery store will come via Stovall Street from off-ramps from the Beltway and Telegraph Road.
- An additional parking entrance/exit serving the grocery parking levels is located east of the service entry along Mill Road from the second level of the garage.
- The internal parking layout, ramp configuration, and circulation scheme has improved. The applicant has been working with a traffic consultant to consider internal and external traffic issues.
- As noted in the architecture comments, the entry of the senior building has been relocated to the east end of Mill Road.

Plaza

- The rental apartment building entrance in the northwest corner has been realigned with the trellis feature that functions as a device to signal the entry.
- The applicant continues to work with T&ES regarding the specifications of the raised table extension of the plaza, plantings, and other details.
- The DRB looks forward to seeing detailed development of the vertical art feature as well as the other elements that have been discussed for the plaza at the September hearing.

- Provide a program-based plan diagram for the plaza at the terminus of Swamp Fox Road, and develop the design of the space accordingly.

Amenity Deck

- Staff expects to see this more finalized in the September DRB submission.
- The design of the podium roof-scape / open space as a monolithic plane of extensive green roof is undesirable. Provide a plan diagram or design that utilizes three-dimensional plantings to provide form to the spaces as well as interacting with the form and massing of the architecture of the towers, including trees, shrubs, and tall perennial plantings.

Road Diet

- Street width reductions will create additional sidewalk space for amenities and tree pits. Staff and T&ES continue to work with the applicant on final designs.

Compliance with the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines

The table below provides a summary of how this project complies with the intent of the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines. Additional detail provided in the project narrative examines each street and building façade. Staff is supportive of a master plan amendment to bring the proposal into compliance with regard to use types, height, floor area, and details pertaining to parking.

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
Land Use	Office and retail (Block 4) Hotel and retail (Block 5)	Residential and retail	Requires plan amendment
Retail Locations	Ground floor retail: -“A” streets: 50’ depth, 15’ interior height -“C” streets: no requirement	Multi-level retail	Yes
Allowable Gross Floor Area	395,000 sf or 474,000 sf with an affordable housing density bonus	518,000 sf	Requires plan amendment
Building Height	Maximum height of 220 feet 10 to 15 stories	172, 121, 180 feet 11 to 17 stories	Requires plan amendment

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
Building Setbacks	-“A” streets: 7’ minimum at 40-60’ for 60-70% of frontage -“C” streets: 5-10’ at 40-60’	The overall design of the building uses a layering of materials and a massing scheme of four main building components that largely satisfy the intent of this guideline. The height of the podium is 64’ feet along the Mandeville Lane frontage, and 55’ feet along the Mill Road frontage.	Yes
Street Frontage: A Street (South, portion of West facade)	-Minimum of 90% of facade shall meet the build-to-line -Main building entries, spaced minimum 50’ -No curb cuts	Excepting the plaza, all facades meet the build-to-line. There are numerous building entries, consistent with a mixed use project with street-level retail. Residential building entries are widely spaced from each other. Retail entries are distributed throughout. There are no curb cuts on the frontages of Mandeville Lane and Stovall Street that are designated “A” streets.	Yes Yes Yes

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
Street Frontage:	Buildings shall generally be built to the build-to-line	All facades meet the built-to-line.	Yes
C Street (North, portions of West and East façades)	-Parking and garage entries	The parking garage and loading entrances are provided along frontages designated “C” streets.	Yes
	-Curb cuts	There are curb cuts on the frontages of Mill Road and Stovall Street that are designated “C” streets.	Yes
	-Main pedestrian building entries generally shall not be located along “C” street frontages.	The entrance for the senior building is located on the east end of Mill Road. Staff supports this location.	No
Parking Structures	-“A” streets: Structured parking shall be screened with active uses of at least 30’ in depth from the building face. -“C” streets: Parking structures may extend to the street façade. Facades shall be architecturally treated to be in harmony with the overall building design.	Parking on Levels 4 and 5 does not have the required 30’ of active uses on “A” streets. Staff and the applicant have worked closely to propose architectural designs that minimize the visual presence of parking.	No
Architectural Articulation	Special elements such as towers, gateway elements, corner elements, and focal points to draw attention to the building. Innovative use of materials, articulation, and transparency at the base. A distinctive architectural feature within the plaza and at the northeast corner of Mandeville and Mill.	The building is divided into four distinct towers. The design layers masonry, metal, and glass to create varied facades in multiple shades. The plaza design serves as a focal point and terminus from the Metro station. The building base has generous glass that allows transparency and views of activity inside.	Yes

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
Massing	Provide a clear base, middle, top with appropriate building setbacks and street walls	Requirements for retail spaces help define building bases. Attention has been given to emphasizing verticality and diminishing the podium. Top treatments are simple and restrained.	Yes
Street Sections	66 foot right of way, with two 11 foot travel lanes, 8 foot on-street parking lanes and 14 foot sidewalks.	Existing rights of way exceed 66 feet. T&ES is working with applicant to finalize “road diet” treatments that allow for increased sidewalk area along key frontages to accommodate outdoor dining, etc.	Yes
Public Realm – Parks and Squares	“North Square” designated as an urban square terminating the visual axis of Swamp Fox Road.	The proposed plaza is larger than the plan requirement and is an important visual anchor and public gathering place.	Yes
Public Realm – Streetscape elements	Provide streetscape elements per the Plan	Light fixtures, sidewalks, benches, trash cans, bike racks, bollards, and tree wells will be provided per the Plan	Yes

V. CONCLUSION

Staff recommends DRB **approval** of the overall direction for the façade treatments and architectural articulation for the condominium and rental apartment buildings with their associated podium, and advancement of the design with consideration of the items described in the Project Description and Staff Analysis.

Staff also recommends DRB **approval** of the overall direction for the general massing of the senior building and associated podium, and advancement of the design with consideration of the items described in the Project Description and Staff Analysis. Staff recommends additional study of the massing along Mandeville Lane in order to balance the void created by locating the senior building farther north.

Approval is contingent upon City Council approval of a Master Plan Amendment to convert the land uses to permit residential and additional retail, permit additional height,

and permit modifications pertaining to parking. The DRB shall provide continued guidance through approval of the final exterior design of the buildings.

Eisenhower East / Carlyle Blocks

