



City Planning & Development Department

Development Management Division

15th Floor, City Hall
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2795

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STAFF REPORT

June 16, 2015

(21)

RE: **Case No. 12130-P-2**

OWNER: 2001 Main Lodging Partners, LLC
1529 Grand Blvd, Floor 2
Kansas City, MO 64108

APPLICANT/AGENT: Leon D. Osbourn
Kaw Valley Engineering, Inc.
2319 N Jackson
PO Box 1304
Junction City, KS 66441

LOCATION: Generally located south of 20th St and east of Main St.

REQUESTS: To consider approval of a development plan for a hotel in District DX-15 (Downtown Mixed Use).

AREA: About 1.2 acres.

SURROUNDING LAND USE:

North	20 th St, beyond which are surface parking lots zoned DX-15.
West	Main St, beyond which are commercial uses zoned DX-15.
East	Walnut St, beyond which are commercial uses zoned DX-15.
South	Surface parking lots, beyond which is the Kansas City Terminal Railroad, all zoned DX-15.

MAJOR STREET PLAN: The Major Street Plan classifies Main St as a four-lane established arterial.

ARTERIAL STREET IMPACT FEE: The property is not subject to impact fees.
(Informational only)

PREVIOUS CASES:

Case No. 12130-A – On May 26, 1998, the Board of Zoning Adjustment granted approval of lease agreements to provide parking on the subject property which serves an off-site use, expiring on April 24, 1999.

Case No. 12130-A-1 – On May 10, 2011, the Board of Zoning Adjustment dismissed an appeal of the Director of City Planning and Development's decision that the conversion of an existing outdoor advertising sign to an electric digital sign face is not permitted under the zoning ordinance.

SD-1490 – 2001 Main Preliminary Plat creating two (2) commercial lots and vacating the former Walnut St right-of-way in District DX-15 (Downtown Mixed Use (dash 15)). Approved by the City Plan

Commission on August 19, 2014.

SD-1490A – 2001 Main Final Plat creating two (2) commercial lots and vacating the former Walnut St viaduct right-of-way in District DX-15 (Downtown Mixed Use (dash 15)). Ordinance 150193 passed by the City Council on March 26, 2015.

EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The subject property is a 1.2-acre site located south of 20th Street between Main and Walnut Streets and located on the streetcar line. The property is currently developed as a surface parking lot with no structures, landscaping or other notable site features other than an outdoor advertising sign (billboard) adjacent to Main St. The Main-Walnut Viaduct formerly crossed along the southeast portion of the site. This viaduct was demolished last year and a final plat approved by the City Council on March 26, 2015 vacated the right-of-way. The City also engaged in condemnation of the off-site advertising sign (billboard). As a result of this action, the billboard will be removed from this location. These actions taken by the City have created a more developable property. Additionally, the streetcar construction is nearing completion and work will begin in August on the 20th St streetscape improvements (recommended by the 20th Street Streetscape Plan) at this location, representing substantial investment at this location by the City.

PLAN REVIEW:

The owner is proposing development of a three-story, 114-room Hilton Home2 Suites hotel with a 98-space surface parking lot. The parking lot will occupy the ground-level of the entire site, including the length of both the 20th and Main St frontages, with the exception of a small portion of the northwest corner of the site which will consist of a small commercial tenant space, water service/pool equipment room, and the elevator lobby. The remainder of the building, including hotel lobby, indoor pool and guest rooms are all located above the parking lot in an L shape above both the 20th and Main St frontages. The building will be accessible from the elevator lobby at the ground level.

The plan proposes two vehicular entrances; one from 20th St about halfway between Main and Walnut, and a second from Walnut St, south of the hotel building. A total of 5 long-term and 11 short-term bicycle parking spaces are proposed, both of which comply with the minimum number of spaces required by the zoning and development code.

The landscape plan shows street trees along 20th St and Walnut St with shrubs located in planters along both streets. Trees and shrubs are also shown within the parking lot. The plan does not show any streetscape improvements, such as landscaping, along Main St. The plans have been reviewed by Public Works with regard to their conformance to the planned 20th St streetscape improvements. Public Works staff noted there are some minor differences between the streetscape proposed with this development and that planned by the City which should be resolved prior to approval of this plan.

The building elevations consist mainly of red brick and brown aluminum panels with light color masonry at the ground level between the corners of the building. Storefront windows are shown along the proposed commercial tenant space and the elevator lobby. The majority of the ground level street frontage along 20th St will be designed as a low wall constructed of the light color masonry atop which "decorative metal screen artwork" is proposed in an effort to comply with screening requirements. The building frontage along Walnut is similar (but much shorter) than along 20th St. Along Main St the ground level consists of the same materials, but the masonry wall is much taller than along 20th St such that the railing on top extends to the bottom of the building above. The elevations also show locations for potential artwork on the walls

adjacent to the street frontages.

The lighting plan submitted shows no building mounted lighting along the adjacent streets, but shows parking lot light poles throughout the parking area south of the building. The lighting results in illumination levels exceeding the maximum set by the zoning and development code (0.18 footcandles or fc) in three locations: at the drive entrance from Walnut St (max. of 6.6 fc shown), along the south property line (max. of 5 fc shown), and along Main St south of the building (max. of 3.4 fc shown). The developer believes that the increased illumination is needed at the drive entrance from Walnut to increase its visibility. Staff is supportive of the increased levels given the urban location and the surrounding land uses. The elevations also indicate that proposed signage will consist of two wall signs identifying the tenant at the northwest corner of the building and one awning sign mounted to the awning above the elevator lobby entrance. Other signs shown are directional in nature. Details regarding this signage are not provided with this plan.

ANALYSIS

The subject property is a highly visible property, located at an important intersection in the community, immediately adjacent to two substantial public improvement projects: the 20th St Streetscape Improvements, and the streetcar. Development which occurs in such locations should be designed with these improvements in mind and thus should be pedestrian friendly and transit supportive. With that in mind and given the recommendations of the Greater Downtown Area Plan (see below), staff recommends that the developer continue to work with staff to identify modifications to the ground-level of the building and parking areas in order to achieve a more pedestrian friendly transit supportive development at this important location.

Greater Downtown Area Plan

The property is subject to the recommendations of the Greater Downtown Area Plan. The plan recommends appropriate land uses as well as densities, site planning and design recommendations. The following recommendations are relevant to the proposed project:

1. Structured parking garages should be located on the interior or rear of the block surrounded by buildings whenever possible or at the zero lot line.
2. When located along a street frontage, and where feasible, developments are encouraged to include first floor pedestrian active uses such as retail and services.
3. In mixed use areas buildings should maintain and reinforce street level pedestrian activity regardless of size or use. This might include a design that:
 - a. Provides street-level, pedestrian-oriented uses.
 - b. Maintains a continuous, transparent, highly permeable and active street wall.
 - c. No more than 25% of any primary street frontage should be occupied by uses with no need for pedestrian traffic. Drive-through uses are discouraged.
4. The exterior finish and architectural articulation should enhance the facade design, complement surrounding buildings and screen the parking area. Blank walls on parking structures are discouraged, particularly on Corridor Streets (Main and 20th are both Corridor Streets).
5. Openings should be screened to obscure parked vehicles. Ramps and sloping floors should not be expressed on the outside of the building, particularly on a facade with frontage on a primary street.
6. Buildings should have a primary entrance facing and directly accessible from the public street, rather than oriented towards side or rear parking areas. For corner lots in mixed use areas, building entrances are encouraged on both streets.
7. Large blank walls along streets should be avoided whenever possible. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest. Some possible methods for treating blank walls include:

- a. Installing vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials.
 - b. Setting the wall back and providing a landscaped or raised planter in front of the wall.
 - c. Providing art over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface.
 - d. Dividing the mass of the wall to create a visual impression of a series of smaller buildings or sections.
8. Create buildings with human scale.
- a. Buildings should be designed with a variety of scales, creating a scale and level of detail at the street level appropriate to the pedestrian.
 - b. Clearly articulating different uses at lower building levels will aid in creating a sense of human scale in mid- and high-rise buildings.

Summary

Staff's main concern is that the ground level of nearly the entire site consists of a parking lot with the hotel elevated above the lot. This arrangement is generally not supported by the Greater Downtown Area Plan, is not necessarily pedestrian-friendly or transit supportive. While the zoning and development code requires no parking at this location, staff understands the practical need for some parking for this type of use at this time and we are confident that modifications may be made to the proposed plan such that it would comply with the intent of the area plan, result in an improved pedestrian experience, and allow most or all of the parking to be retained.

In furtherance of these goals, staff has and continues to recommend that the ground-level of the site adjacent to 20th and Main consist of an interactive use such as a commercial tenant or hotel lobby with a storefront and entrance from the street. In response to this, the applicant has revised the plans to locate a small (23 ft by 23 ft, about 530 sq ft) commercial tenant space at the northwest corner of the building adjacent to the intersection. This is an improvement over plans originally submitted to staff which showed no ground-level commercial use. Staff's preference is that this space be larger than currently proposed for two reasons: to extend the active use along the street frontage to the extent possible and to make the space more attractive to potential tenants. It is worth noting that this recommendation is consistent with past recommendations and approvals for similar projects along the streetcar route. The Courtyard/Residence Inn currently under construction north of 16th St between Main and Baltimore will have a parking garage along Main St and the majority of the garage's ground-level street frontage will be dedicated for commercial tenant spaces. Staff understands that one potential rationale for not providing a larger commercial space is that it would result in the loss of parking. This may not necessarily be true because all of the spaces exceed the width required by Chapter 52 of the City Code. In other words, reducing the size of some of the spaces may allow the developer to both retain the same (or nearly the same) number of spaces currently proposed while providing a larger commercial tenant space.

Even with the provision of the commercial tenant space at the corner, staff remains concerned with the remainder of the street frontages and believes additional modifications to the building and streetscape should be made to provide a better pedestrian experience in these areas. Such modifications may include a combination of landscaping, screening, lighting, artwork, and building materials, design or articulation. While some improvements have been made in this regard, staff would like to continue to work with the developer to identify additional modifications.

RECOMMENDATION:

City Planning and Development Staff RECOMMENDS APPROVAL of Case No. 12130-P-2 based on the application, plans, and documents provided for review prior to the hearing and subject to the following conditions as provided by the Development Review Committee at its May 20, 2015 meeting:

1. That two (2) collated, stapled and folded copies (and a CD containing a pdf file, a georeferenced monochromatic TIF file, and CAD/GIS compatible layer of the site plan boundary referenced to the Missouri state plan coordinate system) of (a revised drawing /all listed sheets), revised as noted, be submitted to Development Management staff, prior to ordinance request showing:
 - a. That a landscape plan, prepared, sealed and certified by a landscape architect licensed in the State of Missouri be provided that conforms to the approved 20th St Streetscape Plan to the satisfaction of the Public Works Department and to the landscape requirements of 88-425.
 - b. That a note be added to the plans stating that all signage shall conform to 88-445.
 - c. That conformance to the design standards for short-term (88-420-09-B-2) and long-term (88-420-09-C-1-a) bicycle parking be demonstrated on the proposed plans.
 - d. That a note be added stating that all dumpsters and mechanical equipment be screened in conformance to 88-425-08.
 - e. That the developer continues to work with Development Management Division staff on the design of the commercial tenant space and that the developer work with staff to identify additional elements for the building frontage and/or streetscape that will improve the pedestrian experience along said streets. Such elements may include a combination of landscaping, screening, lighting, artwork, and building materials, design or articulation.
2. That the developer constructs streetscape improvements required of the 20th St Streetscape Plan and the zoning and development code along 20th St and Main St.

The remaining conditions are recommended by the Land Development Division of City Planning and Development. Please contact Brett Cox at 513-2509 or brett.cox@kcmo.org for more information.

3. The developer shall submit a Storm Drainage analysis from a Missouri-licensed civil engineer to the Land Development Division evaluating proposed improvements and impact to drainage conditions. Since this project is within a "Combined Sewer Overflow" (CSO) district, the project shall be designed to retain rainfall of 1.5 inch depth over the entire site to simulate natural runoff conditions and reduce small storm discharge to the combined sewer system. Manage the 10-year storm and 100-year storm per currently adopted APWA standards. The analysis shall be submitted, and the developer secure permits to construct any improvements required by the Land Development Division prior to approval and issuance of any building permits.
4. The developer shall verify vertical and horizontal sight distance for the drive connection to Walnut Street and make improvements to ensure local jurisdiction and/or minimum AASHTO adequate sight distance standards are met.
5. The developer submit a letter to the Land Development Division from a Licensed Civil Engineer, Licensed Architect, or Licensed Landscape Architect, who is registered in the State of Missouri, to identifying sidewalks, curbs, and gutters in disrepair as defined by Public Works Department's "OUT OF REPAIR CRITERIA FOR SIDEWALK, DRIVEWAY AND CURB revised 4/8/09" and base on compliance with Chapters 56 and 64 of the Code of Ordinances for the sidewalks, curbs, and gutters where said letter shall identify the quantity and location of sidewalks, curbs, gutters that need to be constructed, repaired, or reconstructed to remedy deficiencies and/or to remove existing approaches no longer needed by this project. The developer shall secure permits to repair or reconstruct the identified sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as necessary along all development street frontages as required by the Land Development Division and prior to issuance of any certificate of occupancy permits including temporary certificate occupancy permits.
6. The owner/developer must submit plans for grading, siltation, and erosion control to Land Development Division for review and acceptance, and secure a Site Disturbance permit for

any proposed disturbance area equal to one acre or more prior to beginning any construction activities.

7. The developer shall submit an analysis to verify adequate capacity of the existing sewer system as required by the Land Development Division prior to issuance of a building permit to connect private system to the public sewer main and depending on adequacy of the receiving system, make other improvements may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Rexwinkle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" being particularly prominent.

Joseph C. Rexwinkle, AICP
Planner