

August 20, 2009 – DRC Summary

2600 SHATTUCK AVENUE [at Parker] (DR#08-30000090): Preview of a mixed-use development comprised of 2 5-story buildings and one 3-story building, totaling 157 dwelling units, 31 affordable units, 22,484 sq. ft. of net ground floor commercial space, and 158 parking spaces; one building to incorporate existing one-story retail building at 2600 Shattuck; second building to be built on parking lot at 2598 Shattuck.

Advisory comments follow:

BUILDING FORM & MASSING, SITE PLAN & PARKING

Sunlight & Views:

- *Streetscape design, as well as retail and restaurant storefront design should take advantage of the sunny spots on the site.*
- *Second floor units facing the streets will be looking into a 4' high wall. These residents will only have a view of the sky when seated.*

Building Massing:

- *Shattuck is a large, wide street and this building height appears to be in scale with it.*
- *Transition to the neighborhood is commendable.*
- *The large cubes sitting on a platform do not provide an adequate sense of scale, nor do they enhance the street or skyline.*
- *Proportions of the upper facades to the base are too similar. There is a base, and a shrunken main body, but no top.*
- *The open strip between the base and the upper building is not successful and weakens the facade.*
- *Massing step down at the neighbor's edge is good, but it still doesn't add any amenities for those still with a blank wall.*

Relationship to Surroundings / Neighborhood Pattern:

- *There was some question as to the value in keeping the existing building, but others thought it made sense to keep the existing Plachek building.*
- *Landmark Analysis needs a more critical review. LPC should look at this project.*
- *Project should do a better job of relating to the existing building.*
- *One drawback with the existing building remaining is that the existing wall on the west property line remains instead of a decent landscaped transition.*
- *Design is jarring. Project should fit better into its context.*
- *Look at reducing the height to the west wall as much as possible, and adding plants which hang down to soften it and relate better to the adjacent backyards.*
- *This site is close enough to the Downtown to look at the Downtown Design Guidelines.*

Public Open Spaces / Landscape Concept:

- *Consider big landscape gestures wherever possible. Increase scale and value of vegetation proposed to create a Gateway/Boulevard statement.*

- *Alley between the two buildings on the north side of Parker is a nice gesture, but should be more thought out for safety issues. It also needs a visual terminus.*
- *Wrap open space around the corners as much as possible.*
- *Look at a pocket park or at least space for benches as a transition to the neighborhood.*
- *Behind public open spaces, provide views into private open spaces as much as possible for more transparency.*
- *Consider adding plant material at the podium level on the street elevations to extend the landscape further up and give a gift back to the City.*
- *Consider working with Public Works to remove several parking spaces on Shattuck and increase the public realm in front of the project.*

Parking & Driveways:

- *Look carefully at where van-accessible vehicles will drop residents off at the north building.*

Pedestrian Circulation:

- *There are safety concerns with disabled residents going from one building to the other for parking.*

Schematic Building Design:

- *Design should be softer and more inviting – not so jarring.*
- *Need a dignified way to address the street.*
- *Design needs to be refined. Look carefully at the materials, colors, scale, textures, and how the project meets the street and the existing Plachek building.*
- *Model has a softer visual impact. The color perspectives are more jarring with their dark and light contrasts, and don't show as much relief of horizontal planes as the model does.*
- *Look at any design changes that can encourage street activity.*

BUILDING DESIGN

Articulation :

- *This location requires a facade with rhythm, depth and handsome detailing.*

Window & Door Treatment:

- *Fenestration on 'rear cottages' should be carefully reviewed for privacy of neighbors.*

Building Entrances:

- *Steps as a part of the street are good. Monumental stairs on Shattuck could be even more monumental.*
- *Develop ground floor lobbies so they are more inviting.*

Building Materials and Colors:

- *Colors should be more subdued, at least on the public faces. Brighter colors inside are fine. Retail signage will add some color and interest on the street frontages.*
- *Brown wall color proposed is too dark.*

Building Design / Details:

- *Hardiboard battens do not provide a handsomely detailed street front.*

LANDSCAPE, OPEN SPACE, & CIRCULATION

Public/Common Open Space Areas / Materials / Plantings:

- *Big trees are important for residents in the building as well as creating a Boulevard.*
- *Water retention recharge areas in the landscape plan are a good direction.*

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