

Downtown Code Design Review Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 2, 2018

Members Present: Casella, Dickson, Hanan, Mosley, Porter, Hastings

Location: 800 2nd Avenue South, Metro Planning Dept. – Davidson Room

I. APPROVAL OF THE 5/3/2018 DTC DRC MINUTES

Hastings moved and Casella seconded the motion to approve the May, 3, 2018 meeting minutes (6-0).

II. CASES FOR REVIEW

1) NES Substation

2018DTC-015-001

Property at 200 and 308 12th Ave North, Nashville TN, 37203

Staff Reviewer: Justin Wallace

A request to approve modifications to the Major and Collector Street Plan and active use requirements along 11th Avenue North.

Staff Recommendation: Approve with conditions.

APPLICANT REQUEST

A request to approve modifications to the Major and Collector Street Plan and active use requirements along 11th Avenue North for property located at 1200 12th Avenue North, within the Gulch South subdistrict of the DTC.

This property is bounded by 11th and 12th Avenues North to the east and west, Church Street viaduct to the south, and Hynes Street, a closed street, to the north. The site slopes away from 12th Avenue North with a grade change of approximately 12 feet. The property is currently used for parking and heavy utilities.

BACKGROUND

The proposed structure will house an electric utility substation. An existing substation, located on a property on 10th Avenue North, will be relocated because of the future increase in service needed for Downtown and the physical constraints of the property on 10th Avenue North. The applicant, NES, is relocating its utilities to 1200 12th Avenue North to optimize overall capacity and has chosen this location for the following reasons:

- Street access to the equipment.
- This location is closest to the existing 10th Avenue station. The new station will need to tie into the existing station, via underground duct banks.
- The property fronting Church and Charlotte is better suited for future development.
- NES is currently at capacity for employee parking, and this location facilitates a parking deck over the Substation and will help mitigate the need for surface parking.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

The proposed building is for new construction and consists of a shell for a utility on the ground level and exposed parking on the second level, which ties into an existing parking structure on the adjacent lot.

Two primary vehicular access entries with garage doorways and four additional loading doorways are proposed along 11th Avenue North. Per the applicant, the doors will be used when maintenance of the utilities is required, occurring typically twice per year. Access to the second level will be received from the existing parking structure on the adjacent lot.

For the purposes of this review, the proposed building is being reviewed as a civic building. Per the DTC, civic buildings are designed and constructed for community use or benefit by governmental, cultural, educational, public welfare, or religious organizations. Civic buildings require review via modification, per the DTC.

MODIFICATION REQUEST DETAILS

Requested modification to the DTC standards (proposal does not comply with the following standards):

1. Major and Collector Street Plan (MCSP) requirements along 11th Avenue North for a 4ft frontage zone, 10ft clear sidewalk with bikeway, 4ft green zone.
2. An active ground floor use requirement shall mean a habitable space occupied by retail, office, residential, institutional or recreational uses, specifically excluding parking and mechanical uses.

ANALYSIS

The DTC requires civic buildings to be reviewed by modification and offers general guidance as follows:

A civic building shall be oriented to streets and public spaces and follow the intent of the particular subdistrict in which it is located with regard to pedestrian orientation, massing, and articulation.

The DTC also calls for civic buildings to be designed with prominence and monumentality.

Several design elements are utilized to create a unique building. Use of overlapping metal panels creates a distinct architectural treatment along the full façade of the building that integrates the various façade components into a solid composition. Vertical elements introduce a secondary material that help to break up the massing of the building and avoid the “blank wall” effect. The spacing of elements, applied screening technique, and architectural lighting help create nuance and visual interest along the street. These design elements contribute to generate a unique presence that contributes to the pedestrian character of the Gulch South subdistrict.

Active use requirement

The DTC requires an active ground floor use for all primary and secondary streets. The proposed project provides no active use along 11th Avenue North (Secondary Street). Because the specific use of the building is for utilities, there will be no habitable or conditioned portion of the building. This typically results in a dead zone or blank wall; however, as described above, the project offers several design elements to help break up the building and add further visual interest along the street.

Street Tree / Planting Strip requirement

The DTC requires a total right of way of 88 feet which includes an 18ft total streetscape that includes the following components:

- 4ft planting strip
- 10ft clear pedestrian way with bikeway
- 4ft frontage zone

The proposed streetscape concept is requesting to eliminate the required 4ft frontage zone. In exchange for the modification, the applicant has proposed to offer the following offsite improvements along 11th Avenue from Church Street to Charlotte Avenue:

1. Bury the power lines underground.
2. Eliminate unnecessary curb cuts.
3. Install a privacy fence to visually screen existing storage areas.

The streetscape concept design for 11th Avenue North illustrates a complete street environment with sidewalks, dedicated bicycle zone, street trees, planting areas, on-street parking, and pedestrian elements including streetlights that tie into the existing Gulch standard to the south.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed substation strives to meet the principles of the DTC to create and nurture the character of the Gulch South Subdistrict with an active and attractive street and streetscape. Given the inherent nature of the use of the building as a utility, modifications to standards are warranted. Staff recommends approval of the modifications with conditions:

1. Security fence shall meet the fencing standards of the DTC.

Hastings moved and Mosely seconded the motion to approve the modifications request as submitted. (6-0)

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Downtown Code Design Review Committee that case 1) NES Substation is approved. (6-0).

2) LC SoBro Building D

2018DTC-016-001

Property at 700 3rd Avenue South, Nashville TN, 37203

Staff Reviewer: Jessica Buechler

A request to approve a modification to the Major and Collector Street Plan requirements along 3rd Avenue South for property located at 700 3rd Avenue South, within the Lafayette Subdistrict of the DTC.

Staff Recommendation: Approve.

APPLICANT REQUEST

A request to approve a modification to the Major and Collector Street Plan requirements along 3rd Avenue South for property located at 700 3rd Avenue South, within the Lafayette Subdistrict of the DTC.

BACKGROUND

The project received approval with conditions for a modification to the step-back standard on November 2nd, 2017 by the DTC DRC. The condition was:

1. The ground floor height modification request is deferred to the December 2017 DTC DRC meeting.

The project received approval with conditions for a modification to the ground floor height standard on December 7th, 2017 by the DTC DRC. The condition was:

2. Planning Staff to review the materiality of the ground floor façade design for consistency with the approved modification.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

The proposal is a 7-story multi-family development, consisting of 3 levels of above grade parking that is fully lined with apartments and retail space, and 4 levels of apartments above the parking.

The property is bounded to the north by Elm Street, to the east by an alley, to the south by Ash Street, and to the west by 3rd Avenue South.

MODIFICATION REQUEST DETAILS

Requested modification to the DTC standards (proposal does not comply with the following standards):

1. Major and Collector Street Plan (MCSP) requirements along 3rd Avenue South for a 10 foot sidewalk, 4 foot green zone, and 32 feet curb to curb which includes 2 travel lanes and bike lanes.

ANALYSIS

The applicant was initially proposing compliance with the MCSP, but during site work discovered utility conflicts in the alley, specifically a gas line that requires greater clearance from the building than what was proposed. The applicant explored the option of relocating the gas line with Piedmont Gas, but it was determined that this was not reasonably feasible due to the size of the gas line and utility conflicts in adjacent streets. In order to provide the necessary clearance from the gas line, the applicant is proposing to move the building 4 feet closer to 3rd Avenue South. This moves the building into the ROW that they were proposing to dedicate in order to meet the MCSP requirements. Moving the building 4 feet closer to 3rd Avenue South will widen the alley at the north end from 15 feet to 19 feet and at the south end from 20 feet to 24 feet. The applicant worked with Planning and Public Works on a recommended solution that would meet the intent of the MCSP while also providing the necessary clearance from the gas line. Planning and Public Works are recommending that the applicant move the full curb out 3 feet and provide a 10 foot sidewalk and 3 foot planting strip. Moving the full curb out 3 feet leaves 29 feet curb to curb, which would be sufficient for the future bike lanes that are planned in addition to the travel lanes.

Due to the location of duct banks under 3rd Ave S, street trees may need to be placed in above grade planters rather than in tree grates. This would have been the case prior to moving the building as well.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval. The proposed modification meets the intent of the MCSP.

Mosley moved and Hanan seconded the motion to approve the modifications request as submitted. (6-0)

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Downtown Code Design Review Committee that case 2) LC Sobro Building D is approved (6-0).