



**REQUEST
PROJECT**

Concept Plan Review and OHM Review
621 Middleton

**Council District
Requested by**

19 – O’Connell
David Bailey, HASTINGS Architecture, applicant;
Nashville Panorama I, LLC, owner.

Staff Reviewer

Islas

Staff Recommendation

Approve with conditions and defer without all conditions

Applicant Request

A request to approve a concept plan and recommend approval of an overall height modification for properties located at 621, 623, 625, and 633 Middleton Street, zoned DTC (1.2 acres) and within the Lafayette Subdistrict, to allow a 25-story residential building where eight stories are permitted by-right, and 11 stories are allowed with bonus height.

Project Overview

This project is located at the southeast intersection of Middleton Street and 7th Avenue South and includes a mixed-use development consisting of 405 rental units (no STR), 14,770sf of retail, a pedestrian paseo, and 439 parking spaces across three levels of underground parking.

Plan Details

This staff report references drawings supplied by the applicant, dated June 17, 2022, saved in Metro Planning staff files, and available to the committee members online at links supplied by Planning staff.

The project site has frontage on 7th Avenue South and Middleton Street – both of which are classified as tertiary streets in the DTC. Pedestrian entrances to the residential lobby and various retail spaces are located off Middleton Street. Many of the pedestrian entrances, including the residential lobby, are significantly recessed into the building’s front façade to provide expanded outdoor areas along the streetscape. This project also provides a tighter curb radii and double directional sidewalk ramps at the intersection of 7th Avenue South and Middleton Street.

A 20’ wide pedestrian paseo is located to the immediate east of the building and on the project’s property. This paseo will include seating areas, planters, a resident access point, and a retail entrance. The pedestrian paseo advances NDOT’s ongoing Pie Town Mobility Study by becoming the first segment of a pedestrian-prioritized passage that runs through Pie Town, connecting Lafayette Street to Fogg Street.

The building’s underground parking is accessed from 7th Avenue South, while a limited number of parking spaces reserved for the public are accessible from the alley, behind the property. This alley will also serve as space for service and loading.



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MODIFICATION REVIEW

1. Overall Height Modification

- Required: 621 Middleton is located within the Lafayette Subdistrict of the Downtown Code, where 8 stories are permitted by-right and up to 11 stories are permitted using the Bonus Height Program.
- Request: 25 stories.

The process for an Overall Height Modification is outlined in the DTC as follows:

- 1) *The Executive Director of the Planning Department shall determine whether the development has made reasonable efforts to pursue all appropriate bonuses available in the Bonus Height Program.*
 - 2) *The applicant shall hold a community meeting providing notices to all property owners within 300 feet.*
 - 3) *The Planning Commission shall review the modification request and may grant additional height for exceptional design, including but not limited to unique architecture, exceptionally strong streetscape, contribution to the skyline, improvement of the project's relationship to surrounding properties, and improvement to the character of the neighborhood. In some instances, consideration may be given where a project results in implementation of significant community improvements (e.g. quality open space, upgrading public infrastructure, or others determined by the policies of Metro departments) and/or contributes to the implementation of community improvements determined by the policies of Metro departments.*
- Bonus Height Program: A Determination Letter, signed by the Executive Director of the Planning Department, is attached to this staff report, and states the development has made reasonable efforts to use all appropriate bonuses available in the Bonus Height Program. The LEED bonus has been earned by pursuing LEED accreditation. Additional bonuses being utilized include Underground Parking, Public Parking, and Pervious Surfaces.
 - Community Meeting: The applicant held a community meeting on Tuesday, June 28 at 6:30 P.M. and sent notices to property owners within 300 feet. Six members of the public, and six people associated with the project, attended the community meeting. The public voiced strong support of the project. All questions asked were related to clarifying details of the project. This included questions about the visual screening element at the end of the paseo, materials, sidewalks and MCSP requirements, number of units, unit mix, and affordability.
 - Exceptional Design Analysis: The tower of the project is broken up into three sections – staggered in plan and elevation, which creates visual interest in the skyline and creates vertical articulation of the tower massing. At the podium level, portions of the building are carved away to break up the overall length of the building. Activated outdoor spaces, such as storefronts, outdoor dining area, and amenity



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terraces, fill these voids. The use of accent color along the base creates additional visual interest on the first three floors of the building.

The tower exhibits exceptionally strong streetscape. Sidewalks and planting zones along Middleton Street and 7th Avenue South will be built to MCSP standards. In some areas, these standards will be exceeded by 10'-20' due to the carving out of the podium level. These areas are used to activate the space for pedestrians and improve the quality of the public realm. A 20' wide pedestrian paseo, with access off Middleton Street, will be provided along the east perimeter of the property. These external spaces are activated with landscaping, public art, and 14,000 sf of retail uses within the building.

Back of house operations will be kept to the alley behind the building, and existing above-ground utility lines will be buried underground. Additionally, the 621 Middleton project has made an offer to upgrade the sidewalk section on the north side of Middleton Street along the Nashville Rescue Mission property.

The proposed pedestrian paseo is an infrastructure improvement comes out of NDOT's Pie Town Mobility Study. This segment would be the first of a planned pedestrian-prioritized passage that would run through Pie Town, connecting Lafayette Street to Fogg Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The project aligns with the goals and objectives of the Downtown Code. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions and deferral without all conditions:

1. Prior to building permit approval, all bonus height actions identified in this application must be approved, including those that require a deed or restrictive covenant.
2. The applicant shall comply with NDOT's recommendations and with any proposed traffic improvements that result from the project TIS.
3. If implementation of final TIS recommendations has a substantial effect on the building or site design, revisions to these plans shall be reviewed by the DTC DRC.
4. All overhead lines along the site's frontages shall be buried.
5. The proposed residential units shall not be converted to a short-term rental use, memorialized by a deed restriction or covenant, as reviewed by Metro Legal.
6. Prior to building permit approval, final exterior art design shall be reviewed by Planning staff. Planning staff may require the DTC DRC review of the design, if deemed necessary.



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**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT
OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Planning Department
800 Second Avenue South
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219-6300

May 27, 2022

Attn: David Bailey, AIA, LEED AP
Hastings Architecture
225 Polk Avenue Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37203

Re: Determination on DTC Bonus Height Program Efforts for 621 Middleton

Mr. Bailey:

This letter serves as a determination to submit an Overall Height Modification application for 621 Middleton. This letter does not indicate support or guarantee project approval.

The project site is located within the Lafayette Subdistrict of the Downtown Code, where 8 stories are permitted by-right and up to 11 stories are permitted using the Bonus Height Program. The proposed development includes a 25-story residential building with retail space on the ground floor and a pedestrian paseo.

Exhibits submitted to Planning Staff on May 19, 2022, demonstrate the use of the following Bonus Height Program options:

- Underground Parking – Approximately 126,000 sf of bonus height is being earned by providing three levels of underground parking
- LEED – Approximately 33,200 sf of bonus height is being earned by pursuing LEED accreditation
- Public Parking – Approximately 26,000 sf of bonus height is being earned by providing publicly-accessible parking spaces within the project's garage
- Pervious Surfaces – Approximately 19,200 sf of bonus height is being earned by providing pervious planting areas on the first, third, fourth, fifth, and 20th floors.

Additionally, the project has committed to the following exceptional design elements that further support the Overall Height Modification request:

- Unique Architecture/Contribution to the Skyline – At the podium level, portions of the building are carved away to break up the overall length of the building. Activated outdoor spaces, such as storefronts, outdoor dining area, and amenity terraces, fill these voids. The building's tower, which is broken up into three sections, creates visual interest in the skyline.
- Exceptionally Strong Streetscape – Sidewalks and planting zones along Middleton Street and 7th Avenue South will be built to MCSP standards. In some areas, these standards will be exceeded by 10'-20' due to the carving out of the podium level. A 20' wide pedestrian paseo, with access off Middleton Street, will be provided along the east perimeter of the property. 14,000 sf of retail uses, public art, and landscaping will activate these spaces.
- Relationship to Surrounding Properties/Character of the Neighborhood – Back of house operations will be kept to the alley behind the building, and unsightly above-ground utility lines will be buried underground. An offer has been made to upgrade the sidewalk section on the north side of Middleton Street along the Nashville Rescue Mission property.
- Significant Community Improvements – This proposed pedestrian paseo is an infrastructure improvement comes out of NDOT's Pie Town Mobility Study. This segment would be the first of



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a planned pedestrian-prioritized passage that would run through Pie Town, connecting Lafayette Street to Fogg Street.

With these commitments, along with the efforts to utilize the Bonus Height Program to its fullest potential, this project may proceed with the next step in the Overall Height Modification process – submitting a formal application. The project will receive detailed review by Metro Planning and other Metro departments and agencies once a formal application has been submitted. Some specific conditions may be addressed during the overall height modification process while other more minor details may be addressed through the final site plan process.

Please note that this letter does not waive the project from the requirements of Metro Planning or other Metro departments and agencies. Reconsideration of this determination may be warranted if the applicant team is unable or unwilling to follow through with any of these requirements, or with any of the commitments described above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucy Alden Kempf".

Lucy Kempf
Executive Director
Metro Nashville Planning Department

CC:
Matt Spaulding
Tom Lowe
William Hastings
Doug Sloan