



**REQUEST
PROJECT**

Concept Review and Modification Review
Northcap Center

**Council District
Requested by**

19 – O’Connell
Lauren Windsor, R2L Architects, applicant; Ryan Patton,
404 James Robertson Prop, 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 modifications to build-to zone, step-back, and upper-level floor-to-floor height for property located at 300 and 404 James Robertson Parkway, zoned DTC (1.28 acres), and within the James Robertson Subdistrict of the DTC. The site is also within the Capitol Hill MDHA Redevelopment District, which does not have a Design Review Committee; the concept plan and modifications shall then be reviewed by the DTC Design Review Committee.

Project Overview

The project proposes the adaptive reuse of an existing 21-story office building as a multifamily apartment building. The existing building’s eight stories of above ground structured parking will be wrapped with a 9-story liner building with ground floor retail with residential above. In total, the project will consist of 358 residential units, 12,400sf of retail space, and maintain its 403 existing structured parking spaces.

Plan Details

The project site is located at the northwest corner of James Robertson Parkway and 3rd Avenue North. Three retail spaces, the residential lobby, and a coworking space will be located on the ground floor of the liner building fronting James Robertson Parkway. A fourth retail space will be located on 3rd Avenue, on the ground floor of the existing building. All vehicular access to the site will be off 3rd Avenue. This includes the existing structured parking access point and an auto court, which will also provide access to the building’s loading zone.

The existing building will receive new aluminum window systems throughout the tower, new garage screen panels on 3rd Avenue, and new cladding material at the base of the building fronting 3rd Avenue. Its primary materials will be patched and painted. The liner building will be composed of a stone/masonry base, metal panels, and aluminum window wall system.

The applicant has stated that the development is intended to be multifamily residential apartments.

CONCEPT REVIEW

- What elements of this project should set the tone for redevelopment and/or adaptive reuse along James Robertson Parkway? Are these elements being successfully executed?
- What design and planning elements could the Planning Department offer to incentivize the adaptive reuse of existing Downtown structures?



Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 11/3/2022

MODIFICATION REVIEW

1. Build-to Zone Requirement

- Required: 20'-30' build-to zone along James Robertson Parkway
- Request: 0' ground floor build-to zone along James Robertson Parkway
- Analysis: As the existing building encroaches beyond the build-to zone, any liner building would need to do the same. Staff finds that the advantages of the liner building, and its screening of the existing above ground structured parking outweigh the impacts of the requested modification. Furthermore, the design of the liner building's stone/masonry base fronting James Robertson Parkway is successful in grounding the building's pedestrian experience. A slight step-back (of varied depth) occurs after the ground floor, for the remaining height of the liner building.

2. Step-back Requirement

- Required: A 15' step-back, between the 4th and 8th stories, is required for all buildings 8 stories or greater on public fronting streets.
- Request: Provide an 8'-14' step-back on the north side of the building and eliminate step-back requirements for the south side of the building. The south side of the building provides a change in color on the 8th and 9th floors to differentiate it from the floors below and break up the façade. Furthermore, after the 9th floor, the south side of the building provides an approx. 150' step-back to the tower.
- Analysis: Staff finds that modification request meets the intent of the DTC step-back requirement – allowing light and air to reach the street for the benefit of pedestrians.

3. Upper-level Floor-to-Floor Height Requirement

- Required: Minimum of 10' floor-to-floor height for upper levels.
- Request: 9'8" floor-to-floor height for floors 2-9 within the liner building.
- Analysis: Staff finds that modification request meets the intent of the DTC floor-to-floor height requirement – to establish reasonable floor-to-floor height, while maintaining proportionality.

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 Final Site Plan approval, final material and color selections will be reviewed by Planning Staff and may need to be considered by the DTC Design Review Committee.
2. Prior to Final Site Plan approval, the applicant shall provide NDOT with an exhibit showing whether an on-site connection between the existing structured parking garage and the proposed auto court is feasible.
3. The proposed residential use shall not be converted to a short-term rental use, memorialized by a deed restriction or covenant, as reviewed by the Metro Department of Law.
4. The applicant shall comply with NDOT's recommendations and with any proposed traffic improvements that result from the project TIS.
5. 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.