

# Downtown Code Design Review Committee

## Meeting Minutes

February 3, 2022

*Members Present:* Lustig, Moore, Oldham, Mosley, Yearwood

*Staff Present:* Hammer, Dickerson (Legal)

*Others Present:* Phillip Piercy (Catalyst Design Group), Mike Leonard (General Services), Marina Ntoupi (Moody Nolan), Christina Karpynec (Moody Nolan), Morgan Stengel (Giarratana)

*Location:* 800 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, Development Services Center Conference Room

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### I. Approval of the 12/2/2021 DTC DRC Minutes

Mosley moved and Lustig seconded to approve the December 2021 DTC DRC minutes.

### II. CASES FOR REVIEW

#### 1) Permanent Supportive Housing

2022DTC-008-001

600 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N.

Staff Reviewer: Eric Hammer

Staff Recommendation: Approve with conditions and defer without all conditions

#### APPLICANT REQUEST

A request to review a concept plan and modify various standards of the DTC for property located at 600 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N., (0.73 acres), west of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. and east of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. and the James Robertson Subdistrict of the DTC.

#### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project proposes a 5-story permanent supportive residential building consisting of 90 residential units with 3,500 SF of related office space, 4 parking spaces, and an open space/amenity area.

#### PLAN DETAILS

The general bounds of the property include 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. to the east and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. to the west. The plan also includes the re-dedication of Jo Johnston Ave (called Locust St at the time of original abandonment) as a 46' wide roadway. 23' north of centerline being dedicated by this project with full MCSP improvements being made and the southern half of the street will be dedicated in the future from the Metro-owned property to the south.

This extension of Jo Johnston between 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. will allow for greater pedestrian and vehicular connectivity as 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N. are at-grade railroad crossings, whereas 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. is an underpass that is not impacted by train movements. The Principal Frontage is 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. The primary pedestrian access to the site is from the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. and the Jo Johnston extension, with the primary vehicular and service entrance being located on the Jo Johnston extension. A small amenity area with seating and greenery is proposed at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. and Jo Johnston Ave.

#### CONCEPT REVIEW

- Is the ground floor program arranged in a manner that balances the need for street-level activity with the needs of the land use?

## DTC MODIFICATION REQUEST SUMMARY

### 1. Principal Frontage – Jo Johnston Ave Extension

- Required: When a lot fronts more than one street the following priority shall be given when establishing the Principal Frontage: Primary Street, Secondary Street, Tertiary Street, Other Street.
- Proposed: Establish principal frontage on Jo Johnston Ave Extension, a Tertiary Street.
- Analysis: The DTC requires buildings to establish a principal frontage, which is typically driven by street hierarchy and all other frontages are deemed minor frontages. Principal frontages should be addressed by the main façade of the building, have increased glazing requirements, and are required to have a pedestrian entrance. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N. are considered secondary streets by the DTC, but both present challenges. The approach to the 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. underpass creates a retaining wall condition along that frontage and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave frontage is narrow after right-of-way dedication. Both streets are proposed to be addressed by the site design, but Jo Johnston Ave is an acceptable principal frontage for the purpose of assessing DTC standards.

### 2. Storefront Frontage – 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N.

- Required: 0-10' build-to zone from back of sidewalk.
- Proposed: Building set at 61' from back of sidewalk.
- Analysis: This portion of the site is where the outdoor amenity area is proposed and has a retaining wall condition due to 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N. operating as an underpass for the CSX rail line to the north. The DTC does allow for buildings to front open space, but the proposed space is primarily a resident amenity and does not fall into one of the defined open space types. However, this specific land use is best served by an active outdoor amenity space and the changes in grade make it difficult for a building to address this frontage conventionally.

### 3. Sill Height – Jo Johnston Ave Extension

- Required: Maximum sill height 3'.
- Proposed: Two windows with sill heights that exceed 3'.
- Analysis: Storefront frontage is challenging for residential buildings where the ground floor is a mixture of lobby/active use space and residential units. While storefront frontage is meant to have a high percentage of transparency into the building, residential units require adequate levels of privacy. The proposed building is proposed to have a high percentage of ground floor transparency, but the two windows in question are for residential units on the ground floor. The modification proposed is the minimum necessary to allow for adequate privacy for those units while not compromising the overall intent of the standard.

## 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. Right-of-way shall be dedicated for the extension of Jo Johnston Avenue prior to building permit approval.

Lustig moved and Moore seconded to approve the concept plan and requested modification with staff conditions and an additional condition:

2. The project shall explore and propose design solutions to soften the wall along the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N. frontage, staff to review.

**RESOLUTION**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Downtown Code Design Review Committee that case 1)  
Permanent Supportive Housing is approved. (5-0-0)

**III) Adjournment**