



Request	DTC Concept Plan and Modifications
Project Name	Permanent Supportive Housing
Council District	19 – O’Connell
Requested by	Marina Ntoupi, with Moody Nolan;
Staff Reviewer	Hammer
Staff Recommendation	<i>Approve with conditions and defer without all conditions.</i>

APPLICANT REQUEST

A request to review a concept plan and modify various standards of the DTC for property located at 600 2nd Ave N., (0.73 acres), west of 1st Ave N. and east of 2nd 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 1st Ave N. to the east and 2nd 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 1st Ave N. and 2nd Ave N. will allow for greater pedestrian and vehicular connectivity as 2nd Ave N. and 3rd Ave N. are at-grade railroad crossings, whereas 1st Ave N. is an underpass that is not impacted by train movements. The Principal Frontage is 2nd Ave N. The primary pedestrian access to the site is from the corner of 2nd 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 1st 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



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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. 1st Ave N. and 2nd Ave N. are considered secondary streets by the DTC, but both present challenges. The approach to the 1st Ave N. underpass creates a retaining wall condition along that frontage and the 2nd 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 – 1st 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 1st 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.