



**REQUEST
PROJECT**

Concept Review
Morris Memorial Building

Council District

19 – Kupin

Requested by

Paul Bass, Consortium LLC

Staff Reviewer

Cook

Staff Recommendation

Approve with conditions and defer without all conditions.

Applicant Request

A request to approve a concept plan for an adaptive reuse of the six-story Morris Memorial Building with a single-story rooftop addition located at the northeast corner of Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd and 4th Ave. North and within the James Robertson subdistrict of the DTC.

Project Overview

The proposal is for a single-story rooftop addition and minor changes to the cladding and glazing of the existing building. The project features a 128-key boutique hotel and a 6,970-sf speakeasy.

Plan Details

The project site is located at the Northeast corner of Dr. M.L.K Jr. Blvd and 4th Avenue North or Charlotte Ave. The project is for the adaptive reuse of the historic Morris Memorial building for a 128-key boutique hotel and a 6,970-sf speakeasy at the basement level.

The Morris Memorial Building is considered neoclassical and was constructed in the mid-1920s. The building was designed by Moses McKissack, founder of McKissack and McKissack, one of the first architecture firms in the United States to be organized and staffed by African Americans. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1985. Although the structure bears local historic significance, the building is not within a Historic Landmark Overlay or Historic Preservation Overlay and thus is not protected from demolition.

The project proposes to demolish a historic non-contributing loading dock on the east façade presently facing a parking lot, two roof top structures, and a decorative roof railing structure which is to be preserved and reused within the interior of the building. Windows are proposed to be replaced on all facades and a one-story rooftop addition is proposed.



Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 9/5/2024

CONCEPT REVIEW

The project should strive to meet each applicable goal of the Downtown Code Design Guidelines, including **Future Focused Ecological Design, Human-Oriented Design, Contextual and Connected Design, and High-Caliber Architectural Design**. Given the project's role as an adaptive reuse of a historically significant building, the project should make the following efforts:

- The project should preserve historic architectural elements (limestone cladding, decorative roof railing, etc.) for re-use both interior and exterior to the building.
- New materials should complement the existing architecture and materiality.
- Valet and loading of the hotel should operate with respect to the adjacent Elizabeth Duff Transit Center, future proposed bus lanes, and on-street parking.

NDOT RECOMMENDATION

NDOT staff recommends approval with conditions. With the Connect Downtown Action Plan officially complete, the following items shall be evaluated with the proposed development:

1. The applicant shall coordinate with NDOT on scoping and submitting a Level 1 MMTA prior to Final Site Plan approval. The MMTA shall analyze the hotel's functions to ensure that those operations will not impede any future plans in the public ROW per the Connect Downtown Action Plan.
2. The proposed access points shall be evaluated against the Connect Downtown Action Plan to ensure that the operations can be appropriately accommodated with the future buildout of the ROW. Which may impact the proposed operations and/or circulation of said access points.
3. Any proposed curbside uses that impede the future operation of the transit priority corridor, as shown in the Connect Downtown Action Plan, shall be prohibited.
4. The applicant shall coordinate with NDOT and planning on streetscape requirements along all public frontages due to the existing structure remaining.
5. It should be anticipated that there may be a proportional contribution towards the future transit priority corridor within the area, which may be monetary or an analysis-based contribution to help achieve the goals of the project. Further coordination with NDOT and WeGo will be required.
6. The applicant will be required to develop a TDM plan for the future patrons and employees of this development, which shall be finalized prior to building permit approval. Further coordination with NDOT's Meghan Mathson (meghan.mathson@nashville.gov) will be required.
7. Additional traffic comments may be forthcoming after the scoping and submittal of the MMTA.

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. The applicant shall comply with all NDOT recommended conditions.