

Meeting Minutes of the Design Review Board (DRB)
Tuesday, January 2nd, 2024, at 6:00 PM
County Council Chambers

The Design Review Board (DRB) on Tuesday, January 2nd, 2024, at 6:00pm. The following Board Members were in attendance: **Lucy Lynch, Alexander Newman, and Lukas Hauser.** Representing the City of Spartanburg's Planning Department was **Martin Livingston, Community Development Director; Oksana Holbrooks, Administrative Assistant and Tia Keitt, Planner II.**

Roll Call:

Mr. Newman: Alexander Newman

Ms. Lynch: Lucy Lynch

Mr. Hauser: Lukas Hauser

Ms. Lynch: Per the Freedom of Information Act, public notice of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the City of Spartanburg Zoning Ordinance. We have one item on the agenda for new business and no old business.

Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Newman and second by Mr. Hauser, the agenda was approved by a vote of 3 to 0.

Mr. Newman: Motion to approve.

Mr. Hauser: Second

Ms. Lynch: All in favor of approving the amended agenda say aye?

Attendees: Aye.

Ms. Lynch: Okay the agenda for tonight is approved. The minutes from December 5th meeting?

Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 5th, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Hauser and second by Mr. Newman, the minutes was approved by a vote of 3 to 0.

Mr. Hauser: Motion to approve

Mr. Newman: Second

Ms. Lynch: All in favor of approving the minutes of the December 5th minutes say aye?

Attendees: Aye.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Preliminary conceptual approval of the buildings form, massing, and placement on the site for the Oakland Avenue Townhomes Development located at 214 and 218 Oakland Avenue (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-07-118.00 and 7-12-07-117.00). Owner/Applicant: Roy Smalls / Agent: Zedekiah Heydenburg, Site Design Inc.

GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed 10-unit townhome project sits on 0.52 acres across two lots at the corner of Oakland Avenue and East Saint John Street. The southern parcel along East Saint John is an existing parking lot and is nearly completely impervious. There is a 20" water oak tree on the 218 Oakland Avenue parcel located in the front setback area. The proposed units are intended to be for-sale, necessitating a subdivision plat (presumably as a condominium project) prior to final approval.

AUTHORITY

This project is split zoned with the northern parcel (218 Oakland) zoned D-T4 and the parcel along East Saint John Street (214 Oakland) zoned D-T5. Without a rezoning to consolidate the zoning across the entire site, each parcel will have to express compliance individually. Formal design review and approval by the Design Review Board is required.

DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS

- Application complete

EXCEPTIONS

- 3.3.2 Front Yard Setback: The maximum front setback along East Saint John is precluded by an existing electrical easement
 - *Approval Recommended*
- 5.1.1 Lot Frontage; 5.1.3 Pedestrian Entries from Frontage Line; 5.1.5 Adjacent Lots; 6.2.6 Building Entrances: Units do not front a street
 - *Approval Recommended with unit redesign to provide a front door onto an interior court with pavers*
- 5.1.2 Infill Setbacks: The proposed building are not consistent with the surrounding buildings
 - *Approval Recommended subject to confirmation of the proposed elevation*
- 6.3.1 Flat roofs in D-T4
 - *Approval Recommended*
- 6.4.4 Garage Access: Units 3-6 have front loaded garages
 - *Approval Recommended with unit redesign to provide a front door onto an interior court with pavers*

CODE REVIEW

Exceptions or deviations required are noted in *blue italics*

A. Use Standards: The proposed use (dwelling-multi-family) is permitted by right in both districts.

B. District Standards:

- **3.3.1 Lot Configuration:** *Not applicable*
- **3.3.2 Primary Building Standards:** Lots 1 & 2 are subject to D-T4 standards and the remaining are subject to D-T5. – *Setbacks are not depicted on the submitted drawings but when scaled, they appear to be compliant except lots 7-10 exceed the maximum front setback due to an existing electrical easement*
- **3.3.4 Building Height:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.5 Permitted Parking Location:** *Compliant for Lots 1-2 and 7-10*
- **3.3.6 Building Frontage:** *Stoop - permitted*

C. General Standards:

- *Not applicable*

D. Lot/Site Standards:

- **5.1.1 Lot Frontage:** All lots must front on a street, square, or common open space. - *Lots 3-6 front the interior court/alley*
- **5.1.3 Pedestrian Entries from Frontage Line:** Buildings must have their principal pedestrian entrances on a frontage line. *Non-compliant for Lots 3-6*
- **5.1.4 Setbacks:** Front and side setbacks must be consistent with surrounding buildings. *Non-compliant for Lots 1-2*
- **5.1.5 Adjacent Lots:** Grading between lots to be sensitively considered. *Non-compliant for Lots 3-6*

E. Utilities and Trash Containment:

- **5.2.1 Underground Utilities:** *Compliance presumed*
- **5.2.2 Solid Waste Storage Areas:** *Sutera location shown on plan - compliant*
- **5.2.3 Mechanical and Utility Equipment:** *Compliance to be confirmed with final approval*

F. Building Standards:

- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Connectivity:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.2 General Design Principles - Housing:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.3 General Design Principles – Mixed-Use Infill & Redevelopment:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Downtown Should be Urban:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.5 General Design Principles - Put People First:** Streetscapes should be composed of wide sidewalks for walking, seating, public art, and landscaping. *Compliance required – current drawings do not show the correct streetscape improvements along both street frontages*
- **6.2 Required Building Design Standards:**
 - **6.2.1 Architectural Style:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.2 Compatibility:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.3 Proportions:** *Compliant*

- 6.2.4 Wall Materials: *Please confirm*
- 6.2.5 Façade Treatment: *Compliant*
- 6.2.6 Building Entrances: *Non-compliant for Lots 3-6*
- 6.4 Specific Building Design Standards for all D-T4 and Residential Structures
- 6.3.1 Roof and Eaves: *Flat roofs in D-T4 required Discretionary Approval by the DRB*
- 6.3.2 Façade Design: *Compliance presumed but needs to be confirmed with measurements*
- 6.3.3 Building Entrances: *Model depicts intended compliance. Please confirm compliance with the 2 foot finished floor elevation (FFE) over existing grade for Lots 1-2 and 7-10 with dimensions on the elevation drawings*
- 6.4.4 Garages
- a. Garage Setbacks: *Garages on Lots 3-6 are not recessed a minimum of 5 ft*
- b. Garage Width: *Garages on Lots 3-6 may not exceed 50% of the façade width*
- 6.3.5 Materials: *Compliant*

G. Parking:

- Parking Area Access: *Parking is provided via a rear court/alley*

H. Streetscape and Site Landscaping:

- 8.1 Required Streetscape:
 - D-T4: 11 ft zone with 6 foot planting strip; trees every 50 ft; and a 5 ft sidewalk – *Correct drawings to show compliance with standards*
 - D-T5: 12 ft/14 ft without tree wells; 8 ft sidewalk; trees in wells – *Correct drawings to show compliance with standards*

I. Signage: Not applicable.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

Internal Units without Street Frontage/Courtyard Fronting Homes: The current plans show Lots 3-6 to be internal and have no street frontage. Garage access is from the alley/court but the front doors are around the back side of the buildings facing some unattractive elements of the adjacent buildings and providing poorly accessible guest access. We believe that an appropriate design solution would be to adjust the plans for those 4 units to provide a front door and a garage from the interior court. The plans have already been adjusted to replace a typical asphalt alley with pavers to create a courtyard aesthetic. There are several good built examples using this detail and we believe that it would dramatically improve the marketability of the units and the livability of the residents. Based on our correspondence with the design team, it is our expectation that they will also adjust the unit design accordingly. Presuming this adjustment, we support this configuration.

- **North facing elevation of Lot 2:** Because the unit is set forward of its neighbor to the north, the side elevation will be more exposed. Based on the submitted models, we believe that the number and placement of the windows is sufficient to avoid any blank wall condition that would be highly visible to anyone heading south on Oakland Avenue.
- **Existing 20 inch Water Oak Street in the front yard of Lot 2:** There is a large canopy tree in the front yard of Lot 2 that appears to have a healthy canopy. A tree of this size is of great benefit to the entire neighborhood and its preservation is strongly encouraged. Given the minimal setback, it is likely that there would not be sufficient root zone

remaining for it to remain healthy, however, we believe that it is worth the retention of an arborist to consider options to save it. It would add immediate financial value to the new units and continue to provide shade and rainwater benefits to the entire neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend preliminary approval conditioned on the modifications noted above.

Applicant:

Roy Smalls, Owner
Zedekiah Heydenburg, Site Design Inc.
Isaiah Dunlays, Engineer

Public Comments:

P.K. Hicks, 131 Cragmoor Dr, Spartanburg, SC 29376.

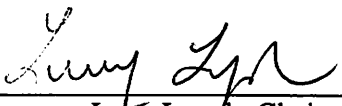
Discussion:

An unattractive parking lot turned into a housing project concept serves a good benefit to community.

A motion was made by Mr. Hauser, seconded Mr. Newman to preliminary approve the form and massing of the structures with a conditional approval of frontage tree for lots 3 & 6 and changing the entrance of the two rear facing units and placing entrance to the front and coming back with final by a vote of 3-0.

Staff Announcements: None

Adjourn meeting at 6:43 PM



Lucy Lynch, Chairperson