

Meeting Minutes of the Design Review Board (DRB)

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 5:30 PM

Dr. TK Gregg Recreation Center

The Design Review Board (DRB) on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 5:30pm. The following Board Members were in attendance: **Lauren Rogers, Jean Crowther, Tori Babcock, Alexander Newman, and Lukas Hauser.** Representing the City of Spartanburg's Planning Department was **Fredalyn Frasier, Planning Director, Nan Zhou, Planner II, and Oksana Holbrooks, Sr. Administrative Assistant.**

Roll Call:

Mr. Newman: Alexander Newman

Ms. Crowther: Jean Crowther

Mr. Hauser: Lukas Hauser

Ms. Babcock: Tori Babcock

Ms. Rogers: Lauren Rogers (Late arrival).

Ms. Babcock: With the Freedom of Information Act Compliance, public notification of the Design Review Board 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.

Amend the Agenda:

On a motion by Mr. Newman to approve and seconded by Mr. Hauser the case has been moved to the top of the agenda list by a vote of 5 to 0.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 4, 2025.

On a motion by Mr. Newman to approve and seconded by Mr. Hauser, the amended minutes were approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Old Business:

DRB-24-020-00020 – The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Full and Final Approval for the proposed Building, Magnolia Block Apartments located at 187 W Broad Street (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-20-048.00, 7-12-20-049.02, 7-12-20-049.00, and 7-12-20-050.00) with a zoning designation of DT-5 Zone (Downtown Urban District) Owner: Haven at West Broad, LLC. /Applicant: Chris Van Kley, Dwell Design Studio.

GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed redevelopment includes a 5 story apartment building and shared parking structure, with primary frontage along West Broad Street and bound by Daniel Morgan Avenue to the west and Spring Street to the east. It is a part of a larger development that includes 189 West Main Street to the north of Broad Street. The project was presented for Full and Final Approval on March 4, 2025 and the Board voted to continue the case to its April 1, 2025 meeting to allow for additional refinement by the Applicant. The project received Preliminary Approval at the January 7, 2025 meeting.

BOARD ACTION MARCH 4, 2025

DRB Vote: Deferral of application for additional refinement and clarification

On March 4th, the Design Review Board (DRB) voted to defer the application for the Magnolia Residences on West Broad Street. This decision was made to give the applicant time to address the

comments made by the Board. A summary of the Board's feedback was provided to help the design and development team respond to the recommendations, which can be found in the attached materials from the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION

A Final Approval by the DRB is recommended.

AUTHORITY & APPLICABILITY

This project is zoned D-T5 and is a full site redevelopment. Formal design review and approval by the Design Review Board is required.

DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS

- Application is complete.

EXCEPTIONS REQUIRED & PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

- **4.2 Required Shopfront designation:** To exclude these frontages from compliance with the required shopfront designations (proposed as exclusively residential frontage conditions). – **Approved at the 1/7/25 DRB Meeting.**
- **7.1.4.b. Parking Area Access:** To permit access to parking from the primary frontage. – **Approved at the 1/7/25 DRB Meeting.**

CODE REVIEW

Deficiencies noted, or exceptions or deviations required, are noted in *blue italics*

A. **Use Standards:** The proposed use (office) is permitted by right in D-T6.

B. District Standards:

- **3.3.1 Lot Configuration:** Frontage Build-Out: 60% except in Side Yard Parking Overlay – *Compliant*
- **3.3.2 Primary Building Standards:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.4.a Building Height:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.5 Permitted Parking Location:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.6 Building Frontage:** Shopfront – Permitted

C. General Standards:

- **4.2 Required Shopfront Designation:** The frontages of Daniel Morgan Avenue and Spring Street are required to have ground-floor commercial frontages supported by Shopfront & Awning, Gallery, or Arcade frontages. *Exception approved at the 1/7/25 DRB Meeting.*

D. Lot/Site Standards:

- **5.1.1 Lot Frontage:** All lots must front on a street, square, or common open space - *Compliant*
- **5.1.3 Pedestrian Entries from Frontage Line:** Buildings must have their principal pedestrian entrances on a frontage line. - *Compliant*
- **5.1.4 Setbacks:** Front and side setbacks must be consistent with surrounding buildings. - *Compliant*
- **5.1.5 Adjacent Lots:** Grading between lots to be sensitively considered. – *Not Applicable*

E. Utilities and Trash Containment:

- **5.2.1 Underground Utilities:** *Compliant*
- **5.2.2 Solid Waste Storage Areas:** *Compliant*
- **5.2.3 Mechanical and Utility Equipment:** *Compliant*

F. Building Standards:

- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Connectivity:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.2 General Design Principles - Housing:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.3 General Design Principles – Mixed-Use Infill & Redevelopment:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Downtown Should be Urban:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.5 General Design Principles - Put People First:** *Compliant*
- **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:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.5 Façade Treatment:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.6 Building Entrances:** *Compliant.*
- **6.4 Specific Building Design Standards for all D-T5 Mixed-Use and Commercial Buildings**
 - **6.4.1 Roof and Eaves:** *Compliant*
 - **6.4.2 Canopies/Awnings:** *Compliant*
 - **6.4.3 Encroachments:** *Compliant*
 - **6.4.4 Ground Level Detailing:** 60% Glazing in Transparency. *Compliant*
 - **6.4.5 Materials:** *Compliant*

G. Parking:

- **7.1 Parking Area Access:** Parking must be accessed from a rear alley or a secondary frontage unless approved as a Discretionary Review. (D-T5 & D-T6) – *There is a parking access from the primary frontage of Broad Street. – Exception approved at the 1/7/25 DRB Meeting.*
- **7.2 Bicycle Parking:** *Compliance to be confirmed with Final approval.*

H. Streetscape and Site Landscaping:

- **8.1 Required Streetscape:**
 - D-T6: 12 ft zone with 8 ft wide sidewalk and trees in wells: *Compliant*
- **8.2 Parking Area Landscaping:** *Not applicable*

I. Signage: *Staff level approval*

Applicant:

Chris Van Kley, Dwell Design Studio.

Public Comments: None.

Discussion:

Based on the materials reviewed in the submitted packet and the applicant's response to comments from the previous meeting, the Board noted that the revised design has addressed prior concerns. Members appreciated the new, more traditional posts, which better harmonize with the rear balconies rather than competing with them. The revisions to the lobby area were also well-received. Additionally, the inclusion of two new perspective views from Daniel Morgan Avenue helped

illustrate the transition from the more active two-story frontage to the quieter alley side, which now appears more natural and contextually appropriate.

A motion was made by Ms. Babcock, seconded Mr. Newman for Full & Final approval by a vote of 5-0.

DRB-25-020-00002 – The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Preliminary Conceptual Approval for the proposed building, Townes of Howard, located at 535 Howard Street (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-05-113.00) with a zoning designation of DT-4 Zone (Downtown Urban District). Owner: GVL Property Group, LLC / Agent: Bryan De Bruin, VanRock Holdings.

A motion was made by Ms. Babcock, seconded Mr. Hauser for a file the application without prejudice by a vote of 5-0.

DRB-25-020-00003 – The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Preliminary Conceptual Approval for the proposed development, Spartanburg County / City Administration, located at 145 W Broad St (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-20-056.00, 7-12-24-001.00, 7-12-21-062.00, 7-12-24-002.00, 7-12-21-063.00, 7-12-21-064.00, 7-12-21-066.00, 7-12-21-067.00, 7-12-21-069.01, 7-12-21-069.00, 7-12-24-004.00, 7-12-24-003.00, and 7-12-24-003.01) with a zoning designation of DT-5 Zone (Downtown Urban District). Owner: City of Spartanburg / Agent: Michael Schwartz, McMillan Pazdan Smith.

GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed redevelopment along West Broad Street and South Church Street is for a 5 (five) story City/County Administration office building. The next phase, the planned mixed-use building and shared parking structure to the west is not included in this review. This is the first review for Preliminary Approval.

AUTHORITY & APPLICABILITY

This project is zoned D-T5 and is a full site redevelopment. Formal design review and approval by the Design Review Board is required.

DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS

Application is complete.

FINDINGS- EXCEPTIONS

• **6.4.4.a Minimize Blank Walls & 6.4.4.c.2 Transparency Zone:** To permit in excess of 20 feet of building that lacks transparent windows or doors not exceeding maximum four (4) feet in height above the sidewalk grade along West Broad Street and South Church Street and to have less than 60% of total frontage in ground-level transparent glazing.

CODE REVIEW

Deficiencies noted, or exceptions or deviations required, are noted in *blue italics*

A. Use Standards: The proposed use (office) is permitted by right in D-T6.

B. District Standards:

- **3.3.1 Lot Configuration:** Frontage Build-Out: 60% except in Side Yard Parking Overlay – *Compliant*
- **3.3.2 Primary Building Standards:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.4.a Building Height:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.5 Permitted Parking Location:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.6 Building Frontage:** Shopfront – Permitted

C. General Standards:

- 4.1. Civic/Landmark Buildings: *Compliant except (f) below*
 - i. If indicated on the Downtown Master Plan, they must comply with the recommendations therein. *Compliant*
 - ii. They should be sited to terminate a street vista whenever possible and must incorporate appropriate prominent features, designs, and entrances to celebrate a visual termination. *Compliant*
 - iii. They should incorporate detailing and materials that are authentic to the intended style. *Compliant*
 - iv. A pedestrian plaza, courtyard, or similar landscaped area may be substituted for a required building frontage and minimum setback line. *Compliant*
 - v. Building entrances for civic buildings may be raised above the street elevation and accessed via a monumental stair. *Compliant*
 - vi. They should respect the character of the fronting streets through the provision of a pedestrian friendly orientation including clear entrances from the street and permeable street walls with adequate windows (no blank walls). *See note regarding exception to Section 6.4.4*

D. Lot/Site Standards:

- **5.1.1 Lot Frontage:** All lots must front on a street, square, or common open space - *Compliant*
- **5.1.3 Pedestrian Entries from Frontage Line:** Buildings must have their principal pedestrian entrances on a frontage line. - *Compliant*
- **5.1.4 Setbacks:** Front and side setbacks must be consistent with surrounding buildings. - *Compliant*
- **5.1.5 Adjacent Lots:** Grading between lots to be sensitively considered. – *Compliant*

E. Utilities and Trash Containment:

- **5.2.1 Underground Utilities:** *Presumed Compliant*
- **5.2.2 Solid Waste Storage Areas:** *Presumed Compliant- will be confirmed at the staff review level*
- **5.2.3 Mechanical and Utility Equipment:** *Presumed Compliant*

F. Building Standards:

- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Connectivity:** *See note regarding façade transparency.*
- **6.1.2 General Design Principles - Housing:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.3 General Design Principles – Mixed-Use Infill & Redevelopment:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Downtown Should be Urban:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.5 General Design Principles - Put People First:** *Compliant*
- **6.2 Required Building Design Standards:**
 - o **6.2.1 Architectural Style:** *Compliant*
 - o **6.2.2 Compatibility:** *Compliant*
 - o **6.2.3 Proportions:** *Compliant*
 - o **6.2.4 Wall Materials:** *Compliant*
 - o **6.2.5 Façade Treatment:** *Compliant*

- **6.4 Specific Building Design Standards for all D-T5 Mixed-Use and Commercial Buildings**

- o **6.4.1 Roof and Eaves:** *Compliant*
- o **6.4.2 Canopies/Awnings:** *Compliant*
- o **6.4.3 Encroachments:** *Compliant*
- o **6.4.4 Ground Level Detailing:** 60% Glazing in Transparency. *Exception required*
- o **6.4.5 Materials:** *Compliant*

G. Parking:

- **7.1 Parking Area Access:** Parking must be accessed from a rear alley or a secondary frontage unless approved as a Discretionary Review. (D-T5 & D-T6) – *Compliant*
- **7.2 Bicycle Parking:** *Compliance to be confirmed with Final approval*

H. Streetscape and Site Landscaping:

- **8.1 Required Streetscape:**
 - o D-T5: 16 ft zone with 16 ft wide sidewalk and trees in wells: *Compliant*
- **8.2 Parking Area Landscaping:** *Not applicable*

I. Signage: *Staff level approval*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

6.4.4 Ground Level Detailing: The proposed window spacing and proportions are appropriate for a civic/office building. However, the frontages along West Broad Street and South Church Street do not meet minimum standards of 60% transparency and there is also a series of retaining walls that represent a blank wall condition.

The transparency is a minimum of 51% glazing for South Church Street and 39% for West Broad Street. The spaces behind these windows are predominately office/occupied spaces.

The retaining wall across the southern portion of the South Church Street frontage has been designed with high quality materials and ground-level plantings to help soften the transition. The treatment is appropriate to building and does not compromise the streetscape.

RECOMMENDATION

A Preliminary Approval by the DRB will require the following exceptions:

- **6.4.4.a Minimize Blank Walls & 6.4.4.c.2 Transparency Zone:** To permit in excess of 20 feet of building that lacks transparent windows or doors not exceeding maximum four (4) feet in height above the sidewalk grade along West Broad Street and South Church Street and to have less than 60% of total frontage in ground-level transparent glazing.

Applicant:

Adam Flynn, **McMillan Pazdan Smith.**

Public Comments:

Stephen Sykes, 205 Woodgrove Trace.

Discussion:

The Board discussed several key elements of the proposed design. Members emphasized the importance of preserving an 8-foot sidewalk with tree wells and requested inclusion of street lighting and site features within the plans. They would like to see a revised design that clearly shows the street lighting layout, the pull-up/drop-off zone, and added parking, ensuring compliance with the 4-foot clear zone requirement.

Board members appreciated the generous plaza space, noting that the applicant treated it with the scale and design typically associated with a DT-6 designation, even though the site may ultimately fall under a different zoning district. There were mixed opinions on the proposed red brick material—some felt it was a missed opportunity to introduce a more distinctive finish, while others believed the color palette harmonized well with the surrounding context and added character.

The building's height was viewed favorably for adding architectural interest, and the tower being positioned two-thirds back was recognized as a thoughtful design move that draws the eye and frames the corner effectively. The Church Street façade was praised for addressing a difficult elevation with strong design elements including the plaza interface, window treatment, and shading features, all of which were seen as appropriately integrated into the overall proposal.

Staff recommends approval of the project and associated variance with reviewing the downtown transportation plan comprehensively.

A motion was made by Ms. Babcock, seconded by Mr. Newman, to approve the preliminary design with the exceptions and variances granted as noted. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

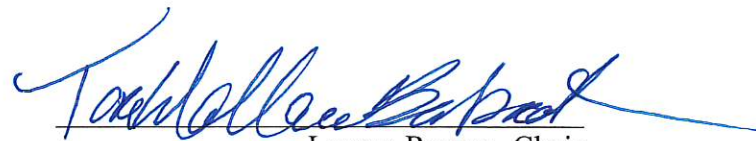
DRB-25-020-00004 – The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Full and Final Approval for the proposed Sign, Hub City Market, located at 214 S Church St (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-14-065.00) with a zoning designation of DT-5 Zone (Downtown Urban District). Owner: Jeet Patel / Agent: Signs by Tomorrow.

A motion was made by Ms. Babcock, seconded Mr. Newman for a file the application without prejudice by a vote of 5-0.

Staff Announcements:

Planning is working on sessions on training with all our boards reviewing our procedure of order and business conducts more to come.

Adjourned meeting at 7:17 P.M.


Lauren Rogers, Chair


Tara Wallace-Babcock,
Vice Chair