CITY OF REDMOND DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

September 19, 2013

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review

in the Redmond Planning Department.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: David Scott Meade, Joe Palmquist, Craig Krueger, Kevin Sutton

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Mike Nichols, Scott Waggoner, Arielle Crowder

STAFF PRESENT: Steven Fischer, Principal Planner

RECORDING SECRETARY: Susan Trapp with Lady of Letters, Inc.

The Design Review Board is appointed by the City Council to make decisions on design issues regarding site planning, building elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage. Decisions are based on the design criteria set forth in the Redmond Development Guide.

CALL TO ORDER

The Design Review Board meeting was called to order by Chair David Scott Meade at 7:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PALMQUIST AND SECONDED BY MR. SUTTON TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 1, 2013 MEETING. MOTION APPROVED (4-0).

PRE-APPLICATION

LAND-2013-01464, Capstone Overlake Village Block 3 Office

Description: One six-story office building with four levels of underground parking

Location: 155th Ave NE & NE 27th/28th

Applicant: Andy Paroline with Paroline Associates

Staff Contact: Dennis Lisk, 425-556-2471, dwlisk@redmond.gov

Mr. Lisk gave an overview of the project, which is a 225,000 square foot office building on the corner of 156th and NE 28th Street. This also includes four levels of underground parking with 700 parking spaces. There would be a fairly wide pedestrian plaza space on the south side of the building, which is in accordance with the master plan approved for this site. This features part of the urban hill climb pathway that stretches from 156th down to 152nd. The applicant is in the early stages of design, and has studied the massing as well as the access in and out of the site. At this stage, staff is asking the Board to look into the relationship of the building to 156th. There is a Code provision in the Overlake zoning regulations which mandates that the applicant build up to the line along 156th. That means buildings cannot be located any further from the back of the sidewalk than 10 feet. That is a fairly sharp departure from everything to the north of this area along 156th, which is more of a green business campus environment. This project is more of an urban village environment. The applicant has set the building back further than what is required.

Also, the pedestrian plaza space is very important for the site, and staff wants the Board to review how the front entrance will relate to the plaza and how the landscaping will be used to create a vibrant, active space for pedestrians. Part of the plaza will cross the main vehicular entrance, and staff wants the Board to consider how accommodating cars and pedestrians might be done gracefully. Another design element highlighted by staff is building variety. This would be the first office building on the site, and there would be two other office buildings built to the west. Staff would like to make sure that each building feels like it has organically grown up out of the site and comes across as a family of buildings, though not identical twins. Standard building modulation, articulation concerns, and building materials should be a focus for the Board as well.

Architect Patrick Gordon, a principal with Zimmer Gunsul Frasca, spoke to the Board on behalf of the applicant. He noted that this is the first project in Overlake Village for Capstone Development. Capstone was before the DRB a month ago to discuss the residential project on this site and some of the changes in the master plan that had been developed. The applicant said that this project was on the old Group Health site located between 156th and 520, and just south of the Microsoft main campus. The hospital on the site has been demolished and work has started on the spine road through the site. The project has been the subject of many master plans, most recently in 2011. The primary change in the last master plan was to take the hotel from the northeast corner of the site on 156th and move it to the northwest corner of the site. The applicant believes that 152nd is planned to be, especially with light rail going in eventually, a street that has a retail requirement. The idea is that there would be more compatibility between the hotel and the retail stores as well as the light rail station. The applicant has also re-aligned the roads to create a more urban setting.

The project is planned to be done in phases. The first building phase is dubbed Phase 2, which consists of two residential projects, which the DRB saw at its meeting last month from Avalon Bay Development. The first office building is in the upper right-hand corner. The second phase is anticipated to be the two office buildings in the center north boundary of the site. This phase would also include the park and hill climb. There is a lot of interplay between the parking structures, the buildings, the hill climb and the park that the applicant believes creates a mandate that all these elements are built together. The intent is that there is a relationship between these elements such that the park and hill climb flow into each other and activate the whole area. This represents the third phase. The final phases would be the completion of residential properties and additional office properties along 156th. The park and hill climb design will be discussed in full at a future meeting, but the applicant noted that both off of 156th and 152nd, a gateway has been established into this development, into the park and onto the hill climb. The connectivity between the light rail station and 156th is a key part of this and Building Three plays an important part of establishing the gateway off of 156th for that network.

The park will establish a series of places along the hill climb and is not simply a big lawn. There is a significant grade change between 156th and 152nd, about seventy feet, which will have to be dealt with in terms of creating accessibility and a sense of place. The idea is have Building Three establish a northeast gateway into the site. It is also the intersection between the hill climb and the urban pathway along 155th north and south. That intersection will become an important gateway into the site and the park as well as an intersection with the urban trail. The block between 156th and 155th has a 15-foot elevation change. The same thing happens between 152nd and 153rd. The zone in the middle has a 40-foot elevation change. The applicant has been deliberate to make sure that both sides of the site are handicapped-accessible. There is accessibility through the park that may engage with some of the structure and ramp systems, but that will be a challenge with a 40-foot elevation change. A mechanical assist or some kind of connection with the buildings may be required.

The master plan uses a reference to Harbor Steps in downtown Seattle, which is indicative of what the applicant wants to do. This is not a gesture on a drawing, but an experience. That experience should change along the site from west to east so that it is not uniform. The applicant said that this site should present a series of events from the hill climb to the park that should be really different. The intersection of 155th and the entry road adjacent to Building Three points out how important Building Three is to the introduction of the park. The applicant showed the DRB several views of the site, including an important one that looks back towards 156th.

Building Three is about 225,000 square feet with six stories and four levels of parking below grade with room for 700 cars. The building is interesting, because at the northeast corner, there is a transition from a very different environment to the north, where there is a setback line of 30 feet and a landscape zone along 156th. The applicant is exploring this challenge. He is aware of the intent of the set-to line for the purpose of establishing an urban edge and concurs with that intent. There are some challenges, including a utility easement along 156th that keeps the applicant from complying completely with the setback. An existing vault on the site presents a challenge as well. The applicant is hoping to create a transition from the environment to the north into the Building Three site, such that the building does not look like a car that did not fit into a parking spot. The applicant is also hoping this project can signal that there is a gateway about to happen if a person is coming from the north to the south. The project clearly lines up as

a more dense development, but the plan is a way to make that transition work. A solution to this transition has not been completely fleshed out and more details will be provided at a later meeting with the DRB.

The 15-foot drop on the site, from left to right, will mean that the public space along the entrance road will transition through a couple of levels of the building. There is no retail in this building. It is an office use that will potentially be multi-tenant or single-tenant. It will have a single point of entrance on the corner that intersects with the urban path on 155th and the entrance road. The applicant agreed with Mr. Lisk that the 30-foot setback along NE 28th is an important zone. A sense of place could be established there, raising questions of how much of it should be hardscape, how much of it should be for circulation and how much should be set aside for passive gathering. Early landscape plans for this area show a tie-in to the landscaping of the hill climb. This part of the project is in the very early part of the design considerations.

The entrance point to the garage is a private road, and will serve as a service and fire access for Building 2B. The intent is that this is a pedestrian-dominated environment in terms of its appearance. The applicant wants to be considerate of the 700 cars that will arrive and depart every day and does not want to create a situation that is not safe. The drawing shows an oblong drop-off, which could be moved to the north to establish a clear pedestrian zone. The staff identified this concern in its report and the applicant intends to reply to that. Parking and loading would happen on the northwest corner of the site, but the applicant said this would not be a front and back building. There are neighbors and landscaping on the different sides. On 156th, that neighbor is Microsoft. Moving west, other lower-scale buildings are nearby. Thus, Building Three does not front on 28th and have a backside on the green side, but is rather a 360-degree building, in some sense. The parking extends beyond the perimeters of the building as a matter of efficiency, and in some places, the setback line is over landscape structure.

Building Three is not unlike some of the buildings seen to the north of this site at Troon in terms of height and overall mass. Articulation will be a challenge, but the applicant is hoping the exterior of the building should reflect what is happening on the inside the building. Depending on the tenants, there may be a chance to create a sense of space inside that could be reflected outside. The hope is to create a space that is people-friendly by breaking up the massing. Not all of that articulation has been worked out, but the applicant wants the façade to have a reference to the inside of the building. More details will be provided at future meetings.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Sutton:

- Said that this seems like a good start. Mr. Sutton asked about the 10-foot setback and what was south of the development. The applicant said the overall intent is to be more urban, which implies the concept of build-to lines. The buildings shown on Lot Six could actually be one building, but in either case, the transition would be done and the buildings would go out and meet the street.
- Mr. Sutton said it was interesting to see Building Three step back a little bit and then have the adjoining buildings meet the build-to line. The future buildings would anchor or mark the development with the help of the slight setback presented with Building Three. Mr. Sutton did not take any issue with stepping the building back.
- He was curious to see how the building would address the park. Right now, it appears there is a clear, hard edge. The applicant said there would be additional articulation on the corner above the entrance to the park.
- Mr. Sutton said the preliminary landscape plans show that the landscaping appears to be a continuation of the park, and he suggested a more plaza-like element could help address the park more clearly.
- The applicant said extra attention has been paid to the pedestrian levels of the building. If the lower levels are successful, the overall project will be a success because it will have a solid pedestrian continuity.

Mr. Palmquist:

Asked about 156th and the utility easement. He asked if any of the building could move up to the 10-foot line. The applicant responded that the sidewalk would widen and overlap the back of the

easement. The closest the sidewalk could get, the applicant said, would be about 12 feet. That is assuming a retaining wall could be built right on the edge of the easement.

- The applicant said there was a major power duct bank running through the easement, which is fairly high in elevation. Staff said it would look into this issue.
- Either way, Mr. Palmquist said there was an opportunity to make it so enough of the building is as close as possible to the lot line, which would create an average of about twenty feet. That would be a better transition than having the buildings jump out twenty feet.
- The applicant said the way the building stacks up now, the finished floor level is about three feet below the sidewalk. This could create some interplay between pedestrians and people working inside the building. The applicant said increasing the size of the sidewalk does not necessarily improve the sidewalk or the building.
- The applicant continued, saying that there could be some interplay with the setback line in the upper stories. Or, there may be an opportunity to have part of the building stick out like a lantern of sorts. The applicant is hoping to meet the intent of the lot line requirement.
- Mr. Palmquist said Lincoln Square was a good example, with some conference rooms that pop out on the upper floors. There will be a lot of visibility from pedestrians to create a cool element on the upper floors while keeping the ground floor residents back.
- He said some sort of transition needs to be established from Microsoft corporate office to more of an urban setting so that the buildings to the south do not have the same problem later. Mr. Palmquist was hoping to meet the intent of the lot line Code, and said this could be a better transition than just have the building slammed up to ten feet.
- Mr. Palmquist said the plaza element should be mostly hardscape simply because the park will be
 mostly green. Differentiating the walk would be an important element and would help create a corridor
 to move through the park.
- Mr. Palmquist said the applicant had a good idea for dealing with the pedestrian transition. Moving as much vehicular drop-off area to the north and creating a narrow in and out for cars appears to be a successful solution.
- Mr. Palmquist echoed Mr. Sutton's concern about how the building addressed the park, and there are special opportunities at the entry point to the park. He said the applicant should focus on this entry and how the building transitions as close as possible to the 10-foot line, above all. He said the applicant was off to a great start.

Mr. Krueger:

- Liked the idea of taking the upper floors and punching them out along 156th to help the residents of the lower floors of the building. Mr. Krueger is hoping to see some character photos at future meetings to get a better idea of what this might look like, as well as some ideas about materials.
- He said the southeast corner of the building would be important, too, in terms of announcing a gateway into the building.
- Mr. Krueger is concerned about the pedestrians coming up the hill climb. He asked if a bridge off of 156th had been considered. He said he wanted to find a way to separate the pedestrians. Mr. Krueger said this was an opportunity for active design that would reflect motion and a healthy lifestyle.
- The applicant said that concept extends into the building as well. He would like to draw the tenants out onto the walkway to animate it, make it safer, and have it used more often.
- Mr. Krueger asked if the pedestrian corridor extended all the way to the north boundary or if it made a T-intersection with the hill climb. The applicant said this corridor comes up a hill from 152nd, turns south, and does not daylight until 156th. Technically, this urban path heads south and dead ends at the south of the site.
- Mr. Krueger asked about where that corridor went to the north. The applicant said that there was a
 connection in this area linking to several Microsoft buildings to the north. This is a functional access
 drive, including drop-offs and parking access.
- The applicant said one idea would be to attract tenants that are compatible with Microsoft, such that the connection area would be desirable. Right now, this is simply an access easement and not a City road. Mr. Krueger said he understood, and clarified that this was a four-way intersection, not a Tintersection. The applicant said this area would evolve depending on the tenant.
- Mr. Krueger confirmed there was nothing along the green buffer trail along the north edge that ties
 into the applicant's project. The applicant added that the hill climb is an important part of the park

system. But with 1,400 possible residents using the park on this site, there should be a clear system of connectivity that would give clear pedestrian access to the park for the residents.

Mr. Meade:

- Said that Mr. Palmquist was on target in terms of bringing out some of the upper floors with the lantern concept. Mr. Meade said this project could set the tone in this neighborhood and be an extraordinary building. He urged the applicant to wow the DRB in the design process.
- Mr. Meade said the current design was lush and should continue to develop. He asked about the art logs noted on the site. The applicant said the history of this site extends beyond a hospital. The hope was to integrate that history into the site by reusing some of the timber that comes down during the construction as an artistic, playful element.
- The applicant said the park would encourage imaginative play for children and adults, and that concept could extend from the softscape parts of the park into the hill climb and urban plazas, creating interesting experiences and points of discovery.
- Mr. Meade said he was on board with this idea, and suggested a Redmond manufacturer for the log work. He said this was a thoughtful element with regard to a sensitive issue around trees.
- Mr. Krueger said he would like the applicant to consider the Pearl District in thinking about the design for this project.
- Mr. Meade said the project looked great so far, and said the applicant had done a thorough job. Mr. Lisk said the applicant would be back in two weeks for a joint meeting with the DRB and the Parks and Trails Commission to focus on the park element. The DRB and the applicant thanked each other for their time.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. KRUEGER AND SECONDED BY MR. PALMQUIST TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:52 P.M. MOTION APPROVED (4-0).

November 7, 2013	
MINUTES APPROVED ON	RECORDING SECRETARY