



## MEETING MINUTES

### Planning & Zoning Commission

Thursday, January 23, 2020

#### CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Newell, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Newell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### ROLL CALL

Commission members present: Victoria Newell, Jane Fox, Mark Supelak, Warren Fishman, Rebecca Call

Members absent: Kristina Kennedy

Staff members present: Nichole Martin, Claudia Husak, Thaddeus Boggs, Aaron Stanford

#### ACCEPTANCE OF DOCUMENTS

Mr. Fishman moved, Ms. Fox seconded to accept the documents into the record.

Vote: Mr. Supelak, yes; Ms. Call, yes; Mr. Fishman, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Ms. Newell, yes.

[Motion passed 5-0]

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Call moved, Ms. Fishman seconded to approve the January 9, 2020 meeting minutes.

Vote: Mr. Fishman, yes; Mr. Supelak, yes; Ms. Newell, yes; Ms. Call, yes; Ms. Fox, yes.

[Motion passed 5-0]

Ms. Newell stated the Planning and Zoning Commission is an advisory board to City Council when rezoning and platting of property is under consideration. In such cases, City Council will receive recommendations from the Commission. For other cases, the Commission has the decision-making responsibility, and anyone who wishes to address the Commission on any of the administrative cases must be sworn in.

Ms. Newell stated that the agenda order is typically determined at the beginning of the meeting by the Chair. Case 2, Germain Lexus, Minor Project Review/Master Sign Plan, will be heard first, followed by Case 1, Bridge Street District, G Block, Informal Review.

#### CASES

- 2. Germain Lexus, 3855 & 3885 W. Dublin-Granville Road, 1913MPR/114MSP  
Minor Project Review/Master Sign Plan**

Ms. Newell stated that this is a request for an addition of a 2,000-square-foot canopy, a wing wall and associated site improvements as well as a Master Sign Plan for an existing car dealership. The site is located southeast of the intersection of West Dublin-Granville Road and Dublin Center Drive and is zoned Bridge Street District Office.

## **Case Presentation**

### Site

Ms. Martin stated that this is a request for a Minor Project Review and a Master Sign Plan for the existing Germain Lexus dealership, located in the BSD-O, Bridge Street District-Office District. The site consists of two parcels totaling 5.6 acres located on the south side of West Dublin-Granville Road, immediately east of the intersection with Dublin Center Drive. The site currently includes two buildings. The used vehicle store is located on the parcel to the east; the new vehicle store is located on the parcel to the west. The area of discussion is located between the buildings. This area currently has a plaza and walkway connecting the two buildings. The two parcels will need to be combined to facilitate the proposed site improvement.

### Proposal

The proposal is for an 83-foot long engineered stone clad wing wall that will be located between the two buildings and a freestanding metal canopy that will extend between the new and used car buildings for covered pedestrian circulation. Within the proposed plaza, there will be areas for gathering, seating and landscaping. Two brick pavers are proposed for the plaza -- a red brick, similar to the existing brick, and a black brick. The larger application of brick will be black to accent the canopy. The red brick is shown beneath the canopy and in line with the axis of the wing wall. Staff recommends that the application of the brick selections be inverted. The landscape plan indicates that two trees along the SR161 frontage would be removed and replaced with a variety of low ground cover, including Hydrangeas, shrubs and grasses. There will also be a variety of outdoor furnishings. The applicant is also proposing a new enclosure for an existing transformer located south of the proposed canopy, which appears to be black AMC to match the canopy. Staff recommends the screening material be revised to be more neutral in color. The proposed architectural character of the wing wall is essentially the same as provided in the Informal Review Plan previously reviewed by the Commission. The wing wall is a variable height of 23-25 feet and slopes from SR161 to the rear of the property. It is a masonry wall clad in stone with two integrated wall signs, which are Lexus logos. The canopy is proposed to hang off the freestanding wing wall. There is a slice through the wing wall where the metal canopy cuts through. Staff recommends that the slice be eliminated, and the stone veneer be continued along the wing wall.

### Master Sign Proposal

At the Informal Review, the Commission recommended the total number of five signs be reduced. Three signs exist today: two on the new vehicle store – one facing Dublin Center Drive and one facing SR161, and one on the used vehicle store, facing SR161. The revised proposal is for four signs, including the addition of two new wall signs (Lexus logos) (24 sq. feet each), which are integrated into the wall immediately opposite each other. The used car store sign (37 sq. feet) and the existing sign on the new vehicle store facing SR161 (44 sq. feet) will be retained. The total square footage requested is 129 square feet; 160 square feet is permitted.

### Recommendation

The Minor Project Review proposal has been reviewed against the applicable criteria, and staff recommends approval with the following seven conditions:

- 1) The applicant combine the two subject parcels prior to submittal of a Building Permit;
- 2) The applicant revise the utility enclosure plans to update the cladding to an alternate material in a neutral color, subject to staff approval;
- 3) The applicant revise the wing wall and canopy design to eliminate the application of ACM on the wing wall in favor of stone;
- 4) The applicant update the site plans and landscape plans to inverse the application of the red and black brick selections so red brick is predominately visible from the parking lot;
- 5) The applicant update the enlarged site plan to show pavers in lieu of a concrete walk consistent with other plan sheets;
- 6) The applicant pay a fee in lieu for trees that are removed and not replaced on site;
- 7) The applicant work with the City's Zoning Inspector to identify opportunities for at least two tree replacements within existing islands and landscape beds.

The Master Sign Plan proposal has been reviewed against the applicable criteria, and staff recommends approval with one condition:

- 1) The applicant submit a Master Sign Plan to Planning prior to sign permit submittal that reflects the approved MSP with all applicable sign dimension.

### **Commission Questions**

Ms. Fox inquired the reason staff has recommended the two brick colors be inversed. In looking at the proposed centerpiece, she understands the proposed use of black as a neutral and opposing color to the stone. The Planning report indicates staff's intent was to have the red brick closer to the parking lot.

Ms. Martin stated that this site was originally developed prior to the Bridge Street District as a PUD. At that time, the architecture was negotiated in great detail. Generally, these two buildings have a traditional character with red brick accents above the windows, so the change would complement the existing traditional architecture.

Ms. Fox stated the report indicates the number of signs reflect the number of parcels. If this site is combined into one parcel, would the number of signs and square footage permitted also change?

Ms. Martin responded that it would not, because the Code language is per building or parcel.

Mr. Fishman inquired if having one extra sign would be consistent with Code.

Ms. Martin responded affirmatively.

Mr. Fishman inquired if that is because two parcels are combined.

Ms. Martin responded that the total square footage is consistent with Code; the number of signs exceeds Code. However, Master Sign Plans are intended to deviate from Code.

Ms. Call stated the square footage of the sign being deleted is 34.4 square feet, and the square footage added with the one additional sign is 48 square feet, for a net gain of 13.6 square feet

of signage. She assumes the logo is being added per branding standards, as it is more recognizable.

Ms. Martin indicated that is correct.

Mr. Supelak inquired if there is a monument sign on the site.

Ms. Martin responded that there is none.

Mr. Supelak inquired if they would be permitted to have one.

Ms. Martin responded that it would have had to be included in the Master Sign Plan request.

Ms. Newell inquired the condition of the two trees intended for removal.

Ms. Martin responded that her understanding is that they are in good or fair condition, and the three trees with a caliper of over six inches would be eligible for replacement.

Ms. Newell inquired if staff had reviewed potential places the trees could be replaced on site, as opposed to paying a fee in lieu of replacement.

Ms. Martin responded that the site is densely planted, and many of the trees on the site have matured; however, the Landscape Inspector has identified two locations on site, as required by Condition 7.

Ms. Call stated that the staff report indicates that, "Code permits one sign per building or parcel with a second being allowed for parcels with over 100 feet of frontage on two public streets." This application has four signs, with the logo on the wing wall indicated as comprising two of those four signs. Those two signs are of the same logo, back to back, on each side of the wall. If there was an opening in the wall, and the logo was embedded in that opening and visible on each side of the wall – would that count as one sign or two?

Ms. Martin responded that it would likely count as one sign. A double-sided monument sign counts as one sign.

Mr. Supelak stated that a monument sign is considered one sign, facing two directions.

Mr. Call stated that if this were considered similarly, there would only be three signs on the parcel, and two buildings.

Mr. Fishman stated that he believes the two existing signs were granted due to a hardship situation. The signs are too high but were permitted because the building was constructed incorrectly. The applicant has already been granted a variance for the existing signs, which are very visible. As the discussion in those earlier minutes reflect, there was concern about the building mass; therefore, the trees were added in the front to "soften" the view of the site along SR161. Due to the existing, highly visible signs, logos are not needed for wayfinding purposes. The proposed wing wall would add even more mass, which would be completely inconsistent with the earlier intent. What is the rationale for adding more mass, making it more visible and also adding more signage?

Ms. Fox stated that her understanding is that the approved height of the existing banner signs is 17 feet; however, they were installed at 22 feet and will remain that height.

Ms. Martin responded that Code limits the height of wall signs to 15 feet measured to the top of the sign. The Commission approved signs for this building that were 17 feet to the top of the signs; however, the applicant installed them at 22 feet. The new sign is proposed to match that condition.

Ms. Husak clarified that in 2009, the Commission approved a Final Development Plan (FDP) with a text modification allowing the signs to be in the locations in which they now exist.

Mr. Fishman responded that approval was based upon a hardship -- the building was already built and the signs installed. In addition to that variance, the dealership was also granted a second hardship variance for the used car building, which had been mistakenly built closer to SR161 than permitted by Code. Because they have already received two variances that were based on hardship, he does not understand the need for permitting another deviation from Code. Typically, additional signage is granted due to hardship – inability to see the business. He drove by the site today, and the building and existing signs are very visible.

### **Applicant Presentation**

Jonathan Grubb, Architectural Alliance [Archall], 49 East Third Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201, stated that the design intent has not changed due to the site restrictions and conversations with the client and Lexus home office. They have re-oriented the building. Previously, it was at an angle and now it is perpendicular. The materials remain the same. In regard to the signage, Lexus is requiring all dealers to upgrade and include the logo, per its new brand standards. As a concession, the dealership's most dominant sign on SR161 will be eliminated in lieu of the two additional smaller signs.

Ms. Fox inquired if the sign that will be removed is at a greater height than the one on the pre-owned vehicle building.

Mr. Grubb responded that it is the same height.

Ms. Fox stated that the building, as shown in the design provided with the Informal Review application was located at an angle, which was more interesting. The canopy has also been reduced to covering only a sidewalk, not a gathering space. At the Informal Review discussion, the applicant indicated it would be a place where people could have an event. Now, it is a small, open patio. Quite a few changes have been made since that earlier review; the most significant one being that the exterior of the transformer cover was shown in the earlier proposal as being stone. Many of the previous attractive elements have been eliminated with this revised design. What were the reasons for these changes?

Mr. Grubb responded that the change in building orientation was due to the electrical easement for the transformer. They cannot construct a new structure over that easement, which runs perpendicular between the two buildings. The canopy size was reduced per the applicant's request, who indicates he no longer intends to program that space to the extent originally envisioned. The revised design slims down and refines the canopy and allows the blade wall to stand on its own. The revised cladding material for the transformer screen wall will obscure the site more effectively.

Ms. Fox stated that because there is stone on the building, the previous material made it appear to be a structure rather than an attempt to hide something. An attractive, stonewall backdrop is a much better look. She inquired his opinion regarding inverting the brick colors.

Mr. Grubb responded that they have no objection.

Ms. Newell inquired if they have provided samples of the engineered stone material that is proposed.

Mr. Grubb responded that they have not brought a sample with them.

Ms. Newell requested a description of the product.

Dustin Todd, Architectural Alliance [Archall], 49 East Third Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201, stated that it is Aris Craft Stone, an actual masonry veneer.

Ms. Newell inquired what is the rationale for the proposed tree removals. The trees do not appear to obstruct construction.

Mr. Todd stated that removal of the two trees in the islands at the front of the site would tie in the proposed interior landscaping to the front of the site, appearing to extend the plaza in that direction. There is concern that the existing trees out front might divide the site, which is not consistent with the walkable space that has been discussed.

Mr. Newell stated that she would prefer to see the trees remain, particularly given the proposed plant materials. The foliage of Hydrangeas will disappear in the winter.

Mr. Fishman stated that he agrees that trees should not be removed unnecessarily. The purpose of the installation of those trees was to soften the look of the building. Consistent with that spirit, Dublin also added some trees within the median. It looks beautiful from within and without the dealership. He is opposed to removing those trees.

Gregory R. Krobot, Landscape Architecture, 231 Buttles Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, 43215, stated that of the four trees in the courtyard, two would be removed. Initially, the intent was to place the pavement around the trees; however, these trees are aged ornamental pear trees, which tend to fall apart when they become aged. Because their roots lie at the ground surface, it is not possible to pave that area and save the trees.

Mr. Fishman inquired if the trees were Cleveland Pear or Bradford Pear. The former does not fall apart as do the Bradford Pears.

Mr. Krobot responded that the trees are Redspire Pear, which also are more durable than Bradford Pears. Regardless, there was a need to be very careful with these trees or remove them. The other two trees at the southern end of the courtyard will be retained.

Mr. Fishman stated that in his experience, those trees have a lifespan of 25 years before beginning to look aged. His preference would be to leave these two trees in place, as well, and when they do become aged, replace them with two new pear trees.

Mr. Krobot responded that the pavement would need to be eliminated in that case. The objective was to add a gathering place instead. To accomplish that, Mr. Martin, City Landscape Architect, indicated that replacement trees would be planted elsewhere on the site.

Ms. Newell stated that would be possible. However, there are two existing plant beds with low plantings immediately in front of these trees, where trees could be planted.

Mr. Krobot responded that is correct. The difficulty is that the blade wall with its sign would be positioned between the two trees, so that design would not work well.

Ms. Newell stated that she is not in favor of removing the trees unnecessarily.

Mr. Fishman indicated that he is skeptical of the blade wall, because it is not consistent with the original intent to have the building blend into the landscaping. The blade wall is essentially a sign wall, for which there is certainly no hardship need. The existing building is very visible from SR161; any driver looking for the Lexus dealership can recognize it easily. He would prefer the blade wall be eliminated, not the trees.

Mr. Krobot stated that for half the year, the site is less visible. He first visited the site during the summer, and due to the double row of trees on SR161, he could not see the signage from the intersection of Dublin Center Drive with SR161.

Mr. Fishman stated that the trees are not that high. When travelling east on SR161 during the summer, the building is quite visible. He concurs with Ms. Newell regarding unnecessary elimination of the trees.

Mr. Krobot stated that as a landscape architect and horticulturist, he agrees; except in this case, it is not compatible with Lexus' preferred design.

Ms. Call requested clarification of where would the trees would sit horizontally, if they were preserved.

Mr. Krobot clarified their position.

Ms. Call noted that it appears the trees would obstruct the view of the proposed logo.

Ms. Fox stated that the design shown with the Informal Review was more inviting than this design. With that design, the gathering space and engagement with the street appeared to create a "front porch" to SR161. With the canopy changes, the revised design is simplified to the point of essentially being a sidewalk cover. With the earlier Informal Review, the Commission stated that some vertical elements of trees would be needed at the corners of the building. She understands if a couple of trees must be moved because of the design, but there is space at the corners of the building for some shorter ornamental trees that would never reach the height of the Lexus logo. The current landscaping around the building looks dated and should be updated along with the new landscaping. With this Minor Project Review, the canopy design has been simplified to the point that it is much less inviting.

Mr. Todd responded that some of the changes to the canopy were due to the location of the electrical easement. The canopy was located to the west in the previous design. However, they needed to avoid the risk of placing foundations in the easement. That left only the other side of the site – the preowned vehicles side. The reason the canopy was shortened significantly was to avoid having it project beyond the face of the preowned vehicles building. The building needed to be more dominant than the canopy.

Ms. Fox stated that is unfortunate. That revision changed the "feel" of the patio design. In addition, the proposed landscaping is seasonal.

Mr. Krobot stated that in addition to three varieties of Hydrangeas, evergreen shrubs are included. Staff had indicated that the desire was to see four seasons of color, and they have attempted to provide that.

Ms. Call stated there are two separate buildings on now adjoined parcels. In addition to the square footage sign allowance, is there a number of signs allowed per building or per parcel?

Ms. Husak stated that this site was originally zoned as a PUD, which specified the heights for wall signs. That PUD was amended prior to adoption of the Bridge Street Code (BSC). The site was under the Bridge Street Code for a couple of years, which allows certain signs per building and per site. In 2014-2015, the BSC sign requirements were amended to address the sign requirements for sites that were not developed under the BSC differently than those developed under the BSC regulations. That change reverted this site back to the standard Code regulations. The Code the site is currently subject to permits one wall sign per building. The parcel that has frontage on two rights-of-way – the used vehicle building, would be permitted to have two wall signs, or the allowance would be one ground sign, two ground signs for two parcels.

Ms. Call inquired how much frontage the applicant has on SR161.

Ms. Husak responded that they have enough frontage to be permitted two signs, more than 100 feet.

Ms. Call stated that, although they will remain two separate buildings, the wing wall would be an architectural feature that would appear to join the separate buildings. The canopy and the wing wall tie the site together. Looking at the current sign -- due to the number of letters, the business name is not instantly recognizable, while a logo would be. The brand's desire to utilize their logo is understandable. Additionally, if one of the existing signs will be deleted and replaced with a third sign that is visible from both sides of the wing wall, then the overall square footage of sign will be reduced over ten square feet. There would continue to be three signs, consistent with Code, allowing for the brand identification and meeting the Commission's desire to reduce total sign square footage. In her view, having a gathering space at a car dealership is not a priority. Deleting a gathering spot, while still preserving a canopy cover and providing visual differences is attractive. She likes the wing wall design. Although she also prefers to see trees retained, it does not make sense to do so if they will obstruct the view of the logo. From her perspective, the proposal is for a wing wall that will tie two buildings together; provide more articulation on the front façade; replace a sign that has numerous letters with a logo; and delete ten square feet of signage.

Mr. Supelak stated that there are many monument signs within the City that are essentially the same as this – a section of wall with a sign on both sides. He would be supportive of considering this similarly. He also is supportive of trading out a sentence for a logo. Trees are always a "hot" button in this City, and the Commission does a good job of ensuring their protection. However, there are methods in place to mitigate their removal.

Mr. Fishman stated that the blade wall is obviously there to make the dealership look more dominant. He would be supportive of not having a fee in lieu of the trees they wish to remove but replacing them with other trees of the same caliper in the front of the building to soften the view from SR 161. They are needed in front of the building to soften the view of the pavement, although not necessarily on either side of the wall. While he would not take advantage of a gathering place, the customers would do so. This type of space projects a "feel," similar to patios in front of restaurants, whether or not they are in use.

Ms. Newell stated that she agrees that the revised plan has lost something from the original plan provided with the Informal Review. At that time, she was generally supportive of the project. With the Bridge Street Code, the purpose of a signage package is to permit more creative signage when it is done exceptionally well. However, the original plan was more consistent with the intent of the Bridge Street Code. This application teeters on being just a request for more signage, lacking the creativity presented at the Informal Review. She does not have any objection to logos, as they can be more discreet than and just as identifiable as a sign with many letters on a building. There is also the issue of losing landscaping that will not be fully replaced on site. At the applicant's request, this application could be tabled to permit revision, or the Commission could vote tonight on the application as is. She inquired the applicant's preference.

Mr. Boggs provided clarification of the applicant's choices.

Mr. Todd requested that the application be tabled.

Ms. Call moved, Mr. Fishman seconded, to table Case #2.

Vote: Mrs. Supelak, yes; Ms. Call, yes; Mr. Fishman, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Ms. Newell, yes.

[Motion carried 5-0.]

#### **1. Bridge Street District, G Block, Bridge Park Avenue and Dale Drive, 19-129INF Informal Review**

Ms. Newell stated that this a request for an Informal Review and feedback for a potential development application in Block G consisting of a 4-story condominium building, a 6-story parking garage, and a 7-story, mixed-use building. The site is northeast of the intersection of Bridge Park Avenue and Mooney Street.

#### **Staff Presentation**

Ms. Husak stated that this is a request for an Informal Review of an additional block of development within the overall Bridge Park development. Block G is the subject of this proposal. Following the Planning and Zoning Commission's review of the Basic Plan on September 20, 2018, Council approved the Basic Plan for Block G, along with certain waivers, at their October 22, 2018 meeting. Tonight, the applicant is requesting an Informal Review of the proposed development. Upon consideration of the Commission's non-binding Informal Review, the applicant may proceed with formal applications for Preliminary and Final Development Plans.

The site is located on the north side of Bridge Park Avenue between Dale Drive and Mooney Street, south of Tuller Ridge Drive. The proposal consists of three new buildings on the approximately 2.29-acre block. Building G-1 is a seven-story office building located on the south end of the block and fronting Bridge Park Avenue, Dale Drive and Mooney Street. At the center of the site, Building G-2 is a six-story, 468-space parking garage. Building G-3 is a four-story, multi-family residential building, attached to the parking garage at Mooney Street and fronting Tuller Ridge Drive. The residential building would contain 42 dwelling units and include a .25-acre private amenity space with a pool. A total of 0.47 acres of open space and associated site improvements are distributed throughout the site (.22-acre public open space and .25 acres of private amenity space for Building G3).

One of the Code waivers Council approved was to permit the office building to be seven stories, rather than limited to six stories, per Code. It is anticipated that there will be a single tenant for this building, which will have 145,000-sq. feet of office space; 11,000 sq. feet of retail; 6,100 sq. feet of restaurant space and office lobby space. [Building details and drawings of elevations presented.]

### **Commission Questions**

Mr. Supelak stated that a significant amount of history was provided on this case but it did not contain the inspirational images shown with the Basic Plan. Are these images the same as those earlier images?

Ms. Husak responded that they are not. The earlier images were only inspirational images for G Block. With Basic Plan reviews, the intent is to address the streets, lots and blocks, building locations and potential uses in the buildings. Without accessing and comparing the earlier images with those provided for this meeting, she does not know if they are the same.

Ms. Fox stated that the plan indicates a 5-ft. sidewalk along Dale Drive. Currently, there is no sidewalk along that road. As Bridge Park develops, there is already a sense that the sidewalks are narrow given the volume of activity anticipated on them. A 5-ft. sidewalk on Dale Drive would seem to indicate that no activity is anticipated there, but does the overall plan indicate a greater sidewalk width for that area?

Ms. Husak stated that all the frontage of F and G Blocks is along Dale Drive. Although public sidewalks are provided with the projects as a temporary solution for pedestrian connectivity, it appears that, ultimately, a public project will be necessary to make Dale Drive a Bridge Street District street. That future project would require significant increases in the width of the right-of-way along the street.

Mr. Supelak stated that previous Council discussion included in the history does refer to the intent to improve the condition of Dale Drive. It is a side street, that because of this development, it may become an arterial.

Ms. Husak responded that it would require significant improvement to make it consistent with the approved street types in the Bridge Street District. Currently, no funding has been identified for that project.

Ms. Husak displayed the inspirational images of the buildings that were shown with the Basic Plan Review.

Ms. Call stated that the staff report indicated that this proposal does not meet open space requirements, but there has been consideration for where that could be provided elsewhere. She is concerned about "kicking the can down the road," as, often, the proposed accommodation does not occur. Have there been discussions about how to meet the open space requirements within this parcel?

Ms. Husak responded that detailed conversations on that topic have not yet occurred. The discussion has been limited to fees in lieu of, and only a small amount of open space would be required. There is also the potential of using those fees for activating other areas of Bridge Park with excess open space, such as Tuller Flats.

Ms. Call clarified that she is not opposed to using fee in lieu of for already developed open space.

Ms. Fox inquired the distance along Mooney Street from the south end of Building G2 to the north end of Building G3.

Ms. Husak stated that the applicant indicates it is approximately 270 feet.

Mr. Fishman stated that he agrees with Ms. Call's concern about "kicking the can" to a later date. He does not like the "in lieu of" provision. He would prefer that the open space requirement be provided within the respective blocks, if possible.

Mr. Supelak stated that in the history, concerns were expressed about a curbcut on Dale for the parking lot. Would that involve a condition or a waiver?

Ms. Husak responded that it would be neither. It is approved by the City Engineer. In regard to the open space issue – the amount of the shortage of open space in this Block is 0.04 acres, or approximately 1,500 sq. feet.

Ms. Fox inquired if the applicant has worked with staff regarding the design.

Ms. Husak responded affirmatively.

### **Applicant Presentation**

Russell Hunter, Crawford Hoying, 6640 Riverside Drive, Dublin stated that the proposal was short of open space in the Basic Review site plan, because the multifamily requirements were higher. That has been reduced with this plan, so the plan will closely meet the open space requirement in this Block. Those lines will continue to shift as the plan proceeds to the Final Site design. Their team includes architects new to the Bridge Park project, consistent with their overall intent to add variety in the architectural style. In regard to the G1 office building -- they, along with the City of Dublin, are competing for a high-profile tenant. The prospective tenant requires 140,000 sq. feet, so the building is larger than they would have constructed without this specific tenant in mind. Many of the decisions made in this design process reflect the effort to secure that tenant. They anticipate knowing that prospective tenant's decision before the final decisions are made for the office building. In regard to parking, Building G2 will not have the capacity to support the G1 office building. It is difficult to make accurate decisions regarding the amount of parking to provide, and in Blocks B and C, they built too much parking. With the Final Site Plan for G Block, they will be providing an analysis for shared parking for the overall site.

### **Commission Discussion**

Ms. Call inquired if the prospective office tenant is working with an internal or external site selector.

Mr. Hunter responded that they are working with an external site selector.

Ms. Call inquired if this project is competing with other greenfield or with existing buildings.

Mr. Hunter responded that they are uncertain with whom they are competing.

Ms. Call inquired if the prospective tenant were to select another site, would the applicant return with a proposal for a reduced-size building.

Mr. Hunter responded affirmatively.

Ms. Call stated that due to the minimal size, she has no objection to accommodating the 0.04 acres of open space elsewhere. Does the proposed height of the G2 parking structure reflect their observations regarding the other over-sized parking structures?

Mr. Hunter responded affirmatively. They have proposed what they believe will be appropriate.

Ms. Call noted that she is a proponent of over parking a site versus under parking, because infusing more cars on the streets is not desirable. With the G1 building, the current rendering for the building is less attractive than that shown with the Basic Plan Review. The inspirational drawing appears to have more articulation and a mix of materials for the balconies. Have other materials or designs been considered?

Mr. Supelak stated that in building an urban center, there will be some background buildings and some signature buildings, such as the AC Hotel. The G1 Building has the potential to be a signature building, as well. The height variable alone adds interest to the building. However, the renderings of the elevations do not appear to do it justice. The larger gestures on the architecture are good, but if this will be a signature building, there is opportunity to add more interest in the design. The elevations of the G2 Building leave much to be desired, as well. Two of the facades, in particular, will be experienced in the public space or the private pool area. On those facades, there is opportunity to create a more attractive design through use of materials or adding greenspace next to it. They are large walls, so some aesthetic sensitivity would be important. The architecture of Building G3 is good. The transition in materials from the brick to the paneling system can be done well or poorly. It would be important to make sure those materials are offset, adding relief to the massing. Turning the corner of the building to the street side, the top of the building is flat the entire way. If the Code permits it, providing different masses in certain locations could alleviate that.

Ms. Fox stated that she likes the fact that Building G1 is more unique, but prefers the way in which the inspirational drawings broke up the mass. Although one elevation in the current renderings is interesting, the other elevations are essentially linear. If possible, adding a curved element to the front would be attractive. Everything else in the District appears to be rectangular, with strong lines and sharp corners, so making a change in the shapes and forms and including some softness in the signature piece would add interest. The G1 Building has opportunity to provide more of that. She likes the restaurant and retail uses on the bottom level, but there is only a 40-ft. by 20-ft. patio. This building is next to some residential development. It is difficult to achieve street activity with such narrow sidewalks, so we are dependent upon the greenspaces, much of which appear to be essentially through chutes or byways. When there is opportunity on the corner, with a building such as this, to create a space sufficiently large for some placemaking – that will make the building more interesting and activate the street. There is opportunity to create more liveliness there, especially since the private space next to it will never be utilized by the public. She would like to see more front door invitation to Building G1. In regard to Building G2, she would prefer not to see a parking garage next to a residential building. If possible, the two buildings should blend and the appearance of the parking garage be more disguised. She would discourage mimicking Block D; there is opportunity here for architecture not seen elsewhere in the District. As proposed, the building looks like a 1970s parking garage.

Mr. Hunter stated that G block is much narrower than many of the other blocks. When designing a parking garage, a slope of 6.6 percent cannot be exceeded. If the garage were compressed more, the ramps would exceed that Code allowance.

Ms. Fox inquired if the parking garage could be hidden behind the residential building.

Mr. Hunter responded that turning the building 90 degrees would impact the developability of Block G. This is a very challenging block, because it is “pinched” in the middle. However, this

parking garage is significantly shorter along the road than the other parking garages in the District. It is 120 feet in length; the parking garage in Block C, for example, is 300 feet in length. Ms. Fox suggested that, aside from the ingress/egress opening on the ground floor, the other openings should be disguised so that the walkway does not appear to lie past an open parking garage. She encouraged them to make the walk past the building more inviting. In regard to Building G3 – she is not enthusiastic about repetition of the loft idea in the District. In addition, she would be interested in seeing some architecture that appeared to have evolved more naturally in the area. Otherwise, one loft building has nothing different to offer from the others. In regard to the uninviting greenspaces, essentially byways, she would like to see the configurations of those spaces be made more unique and inviting. In urban cities that have evolved naturally, there are square greenspaces and round greenspaces. In these blocks, the spaces squeezed between buildings are essentially the same.

Ms. Newell stated that she understands that they have a premier client for whom they are attempting to achieve as much square footage as possible with a 7-story building. However, a 7-story building located on the hill will be more prominent than anticipated. Therefore, she has no objection to the height of the parking garage, as it will help offset the scale of the office building. When comparing the earlier, inspirational images with the current images, the inspirational images depicted a significant amount of positive and negative space, or recesses, on the elevations. The ground and the upper floors were not “box-like” because of the many changes in the facades -- unlike the building images provided for this meeting. The entry feature is attractive, which will make that elevation interesting, but the other facades appear flat, lacking depth, with no accentuation of positive and negative spaces. The top floor is consistent with the bottom floor. Due to the height of this building, they may want to consider treating the upper floor differently than the ground floor. The greenspaces should be public spaces. She appreciates the desire to provide a private pool for the residential building, but that will eliminate some public greenspace. She has studied the site, looking for a way in which to improve that condition. Perhaps there is the opportunity to skew Building G1, thereby increasing the amount of usable greenspace between Buildings G1 and G2. Building G2 clearly looks like a parking garage. To date, all of the parking garages with Bridge Park have been treated uniquely; however, this parking garage has not been treated artistically. She assumes they can come up with something more creative for that huge brick wall. In regard to Building G3, the plans do not provide much detail. She has no objection to the building being all brick, as presented, as long as the brick detailing is very attractive – projections and reveals, etc. She recalls an earlier statement regarding the inspirational images that one of the buildings was mimicked after an industrial building, which is a style she appreciates. The mullions on the residential building are too consistent. Building G3 could be a good candidate for the industrial look.

Mr. Fishman stated that when the Bridge Street Code originally was developed, the consultants discussed at length the intent to have variations in architecture and to have open space/gathering opportunities. He finds it disappointing that this site will fall short of meeting the open space requirement. He enjoys visiting the Bridge Street Corridor, but has noted the narrow pass-through areas, and is concerned that in 20 years, those narrow pathways will provide an opportunity for graffiti and crime. That has been the experience of similar older neighborhoods. It is important to ensure that the quality of the area, including its greenspace, endures for many years. He does not object to an all-brick building, as long as the brick design incorporates variations and has character. In summary, his concerns are that sufficient public greenspace and gathering spots be provided and that there are variations in the architecture.

Ms. Call stated that the purpose of open space is for the public's view and experience. Using open space for a private pool is inconsistent with the purpose of open space.

Mr. Fishman stated that is his concern, as well. While providing some private space is necessary to sell the condominiums, a pool would do nothing for the aesthetics and feel of the entire area.

Mr. Hunter stated that he has always viewed this issue as the difference between a front yard and a backyard. As was noted, some amenities are necessary to sell these condominiums but here, that space is rather small. If this space were to become a public space, there would be strangers outside the residents' rear windows. A balance is necessary, and they have tried to provide both public and private spaces. Private amenities do not count toward open space requirements, whether they are on the ground or in the air. There are many private open spaces on different floors of the buildings throughout Bridge Park. If Bridge Park were to be viewed from the top down, much more greenspace is seen than that located at the ground level. Their goal is to give the residents opportunities to have backyards, while living in an urban environment.

Ms. Call inquired if the private pool was not factored into the required open space for this Block. Ms. Husak responded that it was not. The open space plan differentiates the private versus publicly accessible open spaces.

Mr. Fishman stated that the Commission's concern is the public open space – those areas that create the "feel" for the site. Instead of pass-throughs, there should be areas that invite people to gather and mingle.

Ms. Fox clarified that open space can be a plaza or square, not just greenspace. In Historic Dublin, people sit on benches next to a sidewalk and enjoy ice cream -- that is placemaking. There could be opportunities along the perimeter of the G1 Building or with the front porches of the G3 Building to create interest at the street level, surrounded by natural materials. Simply benches providing a place to have a morning coffee would activate the street without requiring much space. The desire is to eliminate the homogenous feel of these urban streets that have no welcoming character outside the front door. This can involve simply finding ways to provide comfortable spots for people to sit and stay a short time.

Mr. Fishman stated that in Historic Dublin, people congregate in areas separated from the sidewalk to have ice cream, use electronic devices and chat. These pocket gathering areas are very popular. That is what was envisioned when the Bridge Street Code was developed -- assurance that there would be pocket parks everywhere in the District.

Ms. Newell stated that it would not be that difficult to accomplish in this Block. For instance, if the pool house were to be recessed further toward the pool, moving it out of alignment with the garage face, it would gain back some of the missing greenspace and create a nice gathering space without affecting the private space. Eliminating a row of lounge chairs and shifting the pool back slightly would not affect the goal of the development. Such little tweaks would result in something more spectacular.

Mr. Supelak stated that in summary, the desire is create more pocket gathering spaces in place of open space pass-throughs. Consider other open space opportunities, such as skewing the G1 Building slightly to provide a vibrant open space on the corner.

Ms. Newell stated that skewing that building would also create an opportunity to make the front entrance more prominent.

Mr. Hunter thanked the Commission for their input.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Husak reported that a joint work session with City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Architectural Review Board has been scheduled on Thursday, February 13, 2020.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

[Adopted 3-05-2020]  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Planning and Zoning Commission

*Judith K. Beal*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk of Council