



May 3, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
[sholt@dublin.oh.us]

Sarah Holt, Senior Planner
Dublin Planning Department
5200 Emerald Parkway
Dublin, Oh 43016

RE: 72-84 High Street, Redevelopment
Development Statement and Informal Plan Submittal

Dear Sarah,

We are please to submit for your review and consideration this Development Statement and Informal Plans and Illustrations for the referenced project.

The project is .88 acres located at 72-84 North High Street. Historic records indicate the property was owned by N. Brown in 1856 (Lot 132, approximately 82' wide and 166' deep) with a small, rectangular structure in the SE corner by the intersection of Riverview and North Streets. By 1872, D. Eberly owned the property and almost doubled the structure in size. At this time, the high school, town hall, and Oddfellows Hall were located across the street. A few years later, in 1881, Amanda Davis owned the property. It is probably after this time that the building in the SE corner of the lot was demolished and replaced by a Queen-Anne style frame dwelling and outbuilding along N High Street. According to the County Auditor Historic parcel sheets, by 1920 the property had been divided into two lots, 72 and 84 N. High Street. However, between 1987 and 1988, Jack and Joan Eggspuehler purchased both lots, and divided 72 N. High into two parcels, 72 N High and 20 North Street. It was around this time that the larger commercial structures on the properties were built, incorporating some of the existing structures.

Although the property is in the historic core of Dublin, it has little integrity that reflects the historic character of the area. The multiple additions and renovations create a disjointed composition of structures with little to no historic value. The property was surveyed as part of the 2017 City of Dublin Historical and Cultural Assessment and was recommended as non-contributing to the local Historic Dublin district and non-contributing to the Dublin High Street Historic District boundary increase. Since the property contains no features of architectural and historic significance to the character of the historic district and detracts from the historic character of the immediate vicinity, demolition is a valid consideration. Replacing the buildings will significantly improve the overall quality of the district without diminishing the historic value of the overall district.

The site is currently neighbored by four distinctly differing structures both in terms of architecture and massing. The house to the south across North Street is an historic traditional two-story residential building which has recently been enlarged and transformed into an office and pub with the additions presenting a more contemporary design. The structure to the north

is a newly completed 3 story mixed use structure with a blend of modern elements with traditional proportions. The new library campus across High Street to the west is a very contemporary structure of grand massing and includes a program of exterior plaza space. The historical structure across the High/North intersection is an updated one-story historic stone structure. The 72-84 N. High property presents the opportunity to unify these varying elements and complete the northern portion of downtown Dublin. The proposed archetype, massing, elements, and materials provides a direction toward achieving this aim.

The view of this property from the residential area of North Blacksmith Lane and North Riverview Street present two primary elements. The foreground is the existing structures which have commercial mass with disjointed and uninspired elements. The surface parking is an unfortunate contributing element. In the background, the new buildings to the north present a much larger massing of seven stories, four or five of which are visually evident. The proposed structure would replace these views with a structure of three stories, which is the same number that exist for the current building. The form of the new buildings will utilize a mix of gable roofs, traditional window configurations and surface finishes that reflect the proximate residential structures. All parking will be removed from sight to below grade.

City staff and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) have provided beneficial feedback since introduction of this project 18 months ago. During this time, the Historic District guidelines have been updated. It is recognized that the proposed solution will require a variety of waivers to achieve approval.

The current composition and massing of the proposed redevelopment are driven by collaborative input received from ARB at the hearing on June 23, 2021. We appreciate their willingness to find solutions that address the unique conditions, such as the steep change in grade from High Street to North Riverview Street. The current proposal addresses the key comments received from ARB:

- Scale in terms of views from High and North Streets
- Meets the 30-foot height constraint along High Street
- Provides a composition of multiple buildings
- Differentiated uses between the separate buildings
- Architecture is varied between buildings
- Building façades facing High and North Streets are divided into smaller elements of approximately 30' in width and 2-1/2 to 3 stories in height to reflect the existing building as well as those in the surrounding area. The new buildings reinforce a sense of human scale with the design of doors, windows, storefronts, awnings, porches and breezeways
- The plaza has been shifted to the corner and provides visual and functional connection to the library plaza
- Utilizes all materials existent in other historic district buildings
- The building height along the northern property line remains below the adjacent building to the north, and below the roof line of the new High Street building
- Provides connected walkability from the plaza through the courtyard to the river park
- Parking remains below grade. The program can be accommodated with only one level of parking; however, an additional tier can be added to support improved parking for the district
- Site coverage is limited to 85%
- The eastern façade is provided with a stone base, reflective of the new park across the river

The current proposal responds to direction from ARB that the massing and street appearance be the primary consideration and use be driven by the composition and placement of building on the site. Some observations from this exercise that are driving the proposed use:

- Although the frontage on High Street may be supportive of retail, the functional depth of the property is limited due to the slope to the east. Committing the frontage footprint to retail precludes reasonable viability of the remainder of the site for other uses.
- Parking limitations are not suited for office or retail, but well suited for hospitality. Hospitality contributes the least impactful traffic of nearly any other use. It requires only one primary turn over per day, unlike restaurant or retail with multiple turnovers at peak times. The total count per square foot is also one of the lowest use types. Office requires a much higher count to be viable and impacts traffic at peak hours.
- The sloping of the site creates subterranean conditions on two sides of the property. Very few uses are viable in below grade conditions.

It is recognized that the proposed use as an inn will require a zoning variance.

The substantial public plaza and courtyard becomes a central element to this portion of the Historic District. This highly functional space provides for meaningful interaction between area residents, visitors, and inn patrons. The space will be activated by a bar/restaurant with ample indoor/outdoor spaces, fixed and casual seating areas. Ample covered areas are provided. Multiple public accesses are provided to the underground parking.

The main building facing High Street contains the public areas of the inn. Functions include a modest lobby in the center, bar/restaurant to the north (serves breakfast/lunch/evening light fare) and a secondary elevator lobby that delivers guests to the ballroom on the upper floor facing High Street. The ballroom includes outdoor balconies at both the north and south ends. Access is also provided for a rooftop deck to the east that overlooks the river. The lower level includes a fitness facility and back of house support.

The remainder of the building is composed guest rooms that have varied views of the courtyard, North Street, and the river. Some include exterior balconies.

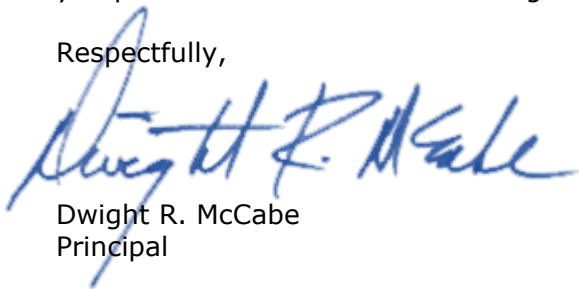
Architectural details are currently conceptual only. Many variations have been explored and the aim is to share some of them with the ARB to discern a path forward. Contextually, the main building facing High Street is intended to evoke the familiarity of an inn from an earlier century, and clearly communicate that function to the public, while also engaging patrons in a more contemporary manner.

We ask that this informal submission be included for inclusion in the upcoming Architectural Review Board agenda for further consideration.

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Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns or if we need to meet again with you prior to the commission hearing.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwight R. McCabe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Dwight R. McCabe
Principal

Cc: Jennifer Rauch

Attachment