

RALEIGH APPEARANCE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2015

Members attending: Cari Jones, Brian O’Haver, Kelli Goss, Rolf Blizzard, Jedidiah Gant, Dean Rains, John Koonce, Robby Johnston, Brandy Thompson

Members excused: Julieta Sherk, Asa Fleming, Damien Graham, Jamie Ferguson

Staff attending: Elizabeth Alley, Rotonda McKoy

SITE PLAN REVIEW

SP-16-15 Ridgewood Apartments

Commission Comments

- The Commission recommends improvements to the site plan, including adjusting the building footprint, to alleviate traffic confusion and congestion including preserving the Y at the Wade Avenue entrance, reconfiguration at the Ridge Rd driveway and potential traffic impacts on the neighborhood. The Commission is concerned the traffic patterns as proposed will encourage users to the back of the building.
- The Commission suggests the addition of publicly accessible open space at grade on the site, perhaps in the location of the proposed one story retail buildings.
- The Commission requests that the applicant provide additional information about current and proposed parking ratios per use at a future meeting. The Commission encourages the applicant to consider adding structured parking to the project, and make creative effort to screen the structured parking, and reconfigure the parking so that it isn’t so visible from the public realm.
- The Commission is concerned that this project looks strikingly similar to many other projects in Raleigh, and encourages design diversity, creativity and innovation in meeting and exceeding code requirements. There is an opportunity for this project to be special and unique, and in the process alleviate community concerns. This is an opportunity to raise the bar.
- The Commission suggests that the applicant continue to refine the skin materials into a cohesive palette, reduce the scale of the base and incorporate a cap to the building. The Commission also suggests exploring a tiering or stepping the building mass to respond to nearby residential character and scale, site topography and the visibility of the site.

- The Commission recommends thinking about site and pedestrian improvements holistically, including a thoughtfully designed bus shelter.
- The Commission recommends recessing the trash room behind the corner element, and suggests placing the leasing center in a more visible and pedestrian accessible location that will activate the corner.
- The Commission suggests the addition of appropriately sized planting beds at the base of the building, and consideration of sustainable stormwater facilities that exceed the minimum requirements.
- The Commission requests more accurate depiction of the Wade Avenue streetscape condition in future renderings.
- The Commission commends the applicant for bringing the project at an early stage for the Commission and community's review, and for considering infill development and reinvestment at this location.
- The Commission recommends the addition of more direct pedestrian pathways between the mixed use building and the greenway entrance to the west.
- The Commission requests that the applicant provide material samples at a future meeting.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Trisha Hasch of the Raleigh Planning Department gave a brief update on the Comprehensive Plan update, including project scope and schedule. After a brief discussion of emerging trends, Commissioner Jedidiah Gant noted that the intersection of technology and infrastructure should be added as an emerging trend, and the need to seize the opportunity of Google Fiber coming to Raleigh.

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

As there was not a quorum, the Commission deferred voting on the March meeting minutes.

STRATEGIC/OUTREACH BUSINESS

Working Group reports:

Design Education- the group continues to think of ways to educate the Commission in advance of hearing administrative alternate cases.

Design Policy- The Commission discussed possibilities of the Hopscotch Design partnership.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 pm.