

**Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response**

2020-01-17

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Dear Fraser,

**RE: DP2019-3729 RESPONSE TO UDRP COMMENTS**

Originally submitted to CPAG as part of the DTR1 Response on 2019-10-09  
(*JEMM Properties 'The BRIDGE' MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENT – Bridges Site 13*)

**COMMENTS URBAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL:**

**Summary**

After presentation by the Applicant, the Panel has reviewed and identified significant urban design concerns regarding DP2019-3729. The Application does meet expectations with further review recommended based on the comments below. The most notable Panel commentary relates to the three items summarized below, which support the urban design elements expanded in the table:

- The residential area lacks legibility and should be improved. The panel recommends that the applicant switch the SW plaza to the SE corner of the development, where it will be better located along a primary pedestrian route and will be able to reinforce the visual impact of the SE corner of the building, along with the architectural treatments that are proposed.
- Regarding the removal of the existing street trees on 9<sup>th</sup> Street, the panel recommends that the applicant, the City and Urban Forestry work together to adjust the valuation of the trees, in exchange for providing an enhanced growing environment for new trees, such as structured soil cells, so that in the mid- to long-term the end result is improved.
- The proposed site plan indicates a continuous paving strategy within the project, however it is not continuous with the surrounding Bridges area. The relocation of the street trees on 9<sup>th</sup> Street will create a slight deviation in the pedestrian realm but could be mitigated by planting additional trees (to the 6 proposed) in order to make a stronger experiential and visual environment for pedestrians and motorists.

**Applicant Response:**

- See responses to comments in table below.

Urban Design Element	
<b>Creativity</b>	Encourage innovation; model best practices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall project approach as it relates to original ideas or innovation</li> </ul>
UDRP Commentary	The proposed building is a conventional main street mixed-use building. The building massing is thoughtful and reflects the uses and visual impact.
<b>Applicant Response</b>	<b>No response required. Thank you.</b>

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<p><b>Context</b> Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massing relationship to context, distribution on site, and orientation to street edges</li> <li>• Shade impact on public realm and adjacent sites</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	There is generally a good response to the context of existing and proposed buildings and open space.
Applicant Response	No response required. Thank you.
<p><b>Human Scale</b> Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massing contribution to public realm at grade</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	The residential area lacks legibility and should be improved. The panel recommends that the applicant switch the SW plaza to the SE corner of the development, where it will be better located along a primary pedestrian route and will be able to reinforce the visual impact of the SE corner of the building, along with the architectural treatments that are proposed.
Applicant Response	<p>We feel that relocating the SW public plaza to the SE corner of the site would be detrimental to the ultimate success and leasability of the commercial retail component.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating a plaza at the SE corner would push the retail frontage back and reduce its visibility, screened by the activity of the public plaza. This is a somewhat different condition at the NE corner, as the plaza helps activate the NE corner retail unit, as the building is set back from the North PL.</li> </ul> <p>Relocating the SW plaza to the SE corner would require significant redesign to the entirety of the SE corner of the building. Initial explorations into the impacts of this proposed design change resulted in significant design challenges and greatly reduced the design efficiency of the building.</p> <p>CPAG had previously recommended that the 2 public plazas have a somewhat different feel from each other, and as such we have designed a more “public” plaza at eh NE corner, and a more “private” public plaza at the SW corner.</p> <p>We feel that locating the plaza on the SW corner as shown opens up the corner to residential interfaces along McPherson Sq NE, and McPherson Road NE, helping transition the scale from the busy urban corridor of 9<sup>th</sup> street to the quieter residential square.</p> <p>See also DTR # 19 above. We feel that the current SW location of the plaza is optimal for solar exposure, encouraging year round use.</p>
<p><b>Integration</b> The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking entrances and at-grade parking areas are concealed</li> <li>• Weather protection at entrances and solar exposure for outdoor public areas</li> <li>• Winter city response</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	<p>Regarding the removal of the existing street trees on 9<sup>th</sup> Street, the panel recommends that the applicant, the City and Urban Forestry work together to adjust the valuation of the trees, in exchange for providing an enhanced growing environment for new trees, such as structured soil cells, so that in the mid- to long-term the end result is improved.</p> <p>The panel is concerned with the loading area / community garden area, and suggests that a portion of the (largely shaded) community garden be dedicated to an improved back-up space for service vehicles, in order to avoid the safety issues that will result from backing into the street.</p>

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<p><b>Applicant Response</b></p>	<p>We are currently working with The City to improve the urban street condition of 9<sup>th</sup> Street NE, including adding angled parking, replacing the existing City trees within a more functional tree-trench, and a variety of urban furniture. This strategy was conceptually agreed upon at a meeting with CPAG held on 2019-09-17.</p> <p>All references of the potential community garden have been removed from the application. Please see revised landscape plans for design of this NW area of the site. Revisions have been made to better accommodate the vehicular loading condition.</p>
<p><b>Connectivity</b> Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian first design, walkability, pathways through site</li> <li>• Connections to LRT stations, regional pathways and cycle paths</li> <li>• Pedestrian pathway materials extend across driveways and lanes</li> </ul>	
<p>UDRP Commentary</p>	<p>The proposed site plan indicates a continuous paving strategy within the project, however it is not continuous with the surrounding Bridges area. The relocation of the street trees on 9<sup>th</sup> Street will create a slight deviation in the pedestrian realm, but could be mitigated by planting additional trees (to the 6 proposed) in order to make a stronger experiential and visual environment for pedestrians and motorists. The residential entry lacks definition and legibility. The proposed retention of one existing trees is not supported – the applicant is urged to develop a better entry plaza with properly scaled vegetation and other treatments to improve the legibility and entry experience.</p>
<p><b>Applicant Response</b></p>	<p>We have taken the UDRP paving comments into consideration and have greatly simplified the paving pattern in favour of standard City broom finished concrete. We are still proposing some decorative paving, but the amount and variety has been greatly reduced, focusing on the public plaza locations. The decorative paving is proposed as a mix of standard broom-finished concrete and a dark grey coloured concrete (broom-finish as well). It was determined that the 6 proposed trees along 9<sup>th</sup> Street is appropriate to create a continuous street experience, while still providing visibility to the commercial retail tenants along 9<sup>th</sup> Street N.E.</p> <p>Please see revised drawings for an improved main residential building entry condition. As suggested by UDRP, we are proposing removing the single City tree and shrub bed at the inside corner of McPherson Sq. NE, improving the visibility and sight lines to this main entry. In addition to the proposed removal of this tree, we have made an adjustment to the proposed paving pattern (matching the plazas), further helping define the entry. Bicycle racks have been relocated out of the inside corner and placed on the West side of the entry. This bank of bike racks signify an entry point to the building as well.</p> <p>We have made some adjustments to the elevation design of the main residential entry. This includes changing the proposed wall tile colour from “rust” to “white” in order to give the entry more contrast and “pop”. We have also altered the design to include the angled chamfered “portal” entry, similar the SE retail corner.</p>
<p><b>Animation</b> Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building form contributes to an active pedestrian realm</li> <li>• Residential units provided at-grade</li> <li>• Elevations are interesting and enhance the streetscape</li> </ul>	
<p>UDRP Commentary</p>	<p>The project includes several enhancements such as street furniture, lighting, and plazas.</p>
<p><b>Applicant Response</b></p>	<p>No response required. Thank you.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility</b> Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users</p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barrier free design</li> <li>• Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	The project includes several enhancements such as street furniture, lighting, and plazas.
<b>Applicant Response</b>	No response required. Thank you.
<p><b>Diversity</b> Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces</li> <li>• Corner treatments and project porosity</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	The project includes an appropriate mix of uses.
<b>Applicant Response</b>	No response required. Thank you.
<p><b>Flexibility</b> Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project approach relating to market and/or context changes</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	The townhouses could at some point be converted to live-work units. The retail spaces seem appropriate for other commercial, office or service uses should needs change.
<b>Applicant Response</b>	No response required. Thank you.
<p><b>Safety</b> Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety and security</li> <li>• Night time design</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The panel is concerned that the proposed front residential entry and adjacent bike racks will create a safety issue as the bike racks are hidden and the front entry is not very legible.</p> <p>The panel suggests relocating one of the light standards on the northeast corner plaza where it is in the pedestrian path and will create a hazard especially for those with visual limitations.</p> <p>The proposed SW plaza, in addition to the comments above regarding switching it to the SE corner, may create safety issues. The proximity to the LRT station and to short-tenancy housing projects may attract a transient population, and the proposed plaza is not in a location where there will be much natural surveillance. The existing design includes planters which, depending on the vegetation, create issues with sight lines and safety</p>
<b>Applicant Response</b>	Please see revised drawings. The bike racks have been relocated out of this inside corner, to the opposite (West) side of the main residential entry. This area will be consistently illuminated from the large glass windows of the residential lobby. The SW plaza is be illuminated by decorative light-poles. There are also both the adjacent residential and retail units that look onto this space, providing more eyes-on -the street. Sight lines, visibility and other CPTED principles are considered in designing the planters and choosing planting species.
<p><b>Orientation</b> Provide clear and consistent directional clues for urban navigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance natural views and vistas</li> </ul>	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The project is generally strong, however the applicant is encouraged to emphasize the SE corner of the development more, in order to reflect its location on the high-traffic pedestrian corridor, and its high visibility from the LRT station.</p> <p>The improvement of the front residential entrance will also strengthen this aspect of the project.</p>
<b>Applicant Response</b>	In order to give the SE corner more prominence, and without sacrificing the required retail visibility of this CRU, we have proposed creating a “min-plaza” at the SE corner, with a feature bench. We have given a unique chamfered “portal” corner condition on the SE corner of the building. Please see response above to <b>CONNECTIVITY</b> in regards to the main residential entry.

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<b>Sustainability</b> <i>Be aware of lifecycle costs; incorporate sustainable practices and materials</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site/solar orientation and passive heating/cooling</li><li>• Material selection and sustainable products</li></ul>	
UDRP Commentary	Generally strong, and the panel appreciates that the roof top gardens are appropriately sited w.r.t sun and views.
<b>Applicant Response</b>	<b>No response required. Thank you.</b>
<b>Durability</b> <i>Incorporate long-lasting materials and details that will provide a legacy rather than a liability</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use of low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products</li><li>• Project detailed to avoid maintenance issues</li></ul>	
UDRP Commentary	Appropriate use of materials. Inclusion of an enhanced growing environment for the new trees along 9 <sup>th</sup> Street will also increase durability of the project.
<b>Applicant Response</b>	<b>We are proposing a continuous tree trench for the proposed replaced City street trees.</b>

**End of Urban Design Review Panel Comments.**

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Sincerely,  
**Zeidler Architecture**



**Tyler Loewenhardt**  
Project Designer | Intern Architect, AAA  
M.Arch, B.Env. Des.

cc. Jean Guy Beliveau, Partner – Zeidler