



STAFF REPORT

Downtown Design Review Committee

08/17/2023

Agenda Item VII. A.
Case No. CE-01108
Property Address 1400 N Robinson Ave
Applicant Name Kaitlyn Turner, Williams, Box, Forshee & Bullard, PC
for Richard Labarthe, The Hub at Midtown, LLC
522 Colcord Dr
Oklahoma City, OK 73102
District DTD-1 & SPUD-01248

A. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Request to close the right-of-way for a portion of the north/south alley located south of NW 14th St and east of N Robinson Ave.

B. BACKGROUND

1. Location

This north/south alley is located south of NW 14th St and east of N Robinson Ave.

2. Site History/Existing Conditions

The 1919 Sanborn Maps shows this block containing houses, a duplex and street car right-of-way. The 1952 Sanborn Maps shows that the houses were gone, and the block contained several used car sales businesses, a filling station, a car wash, Norton Brothers Buick (now the Garage Apartments), a drug store, shops, a clinic, a photo business, apartments and a dry cleaners (building still exists at the northwest corner of the block).

In addition to the 2 buildings referenced above, currently there is a parking lot at the southwest corner of the block and the remainder of the block is vacant.

3. Surrounding Environment

To the north, across NW 14th St, is the Heritage Hills East Historic District, which contains residential, churches, office and retail uses. To the east, across N Broadway Ave, is vacant land and the former Dolese facility. To the south, across NW 13th St, are parking lots offices and retail uses. To the west, across N Robinson Ave, is a medical facility.

4. Previous Actions / Other

According to Section 59-3250.2.C., the Downtown Design Review Committee shall have the power to “comment upon and provide recommendations on actions proposed to other City boards, committees, and commissions with respect to the effect of such actions upon the District.”

In 2020, SPUD-01248 was filed to rezone the north half of this block (minus the existing building located in the northwest corner). The base zoning for this SPUD is the DTD-1 zoning district, including the design review process. Although that rezoning application did not go before the Downtown Design District for

consideration and recommendation, the approval of this SPUD zoned this property into the Downtown Design District.

At the June 15, 2023 DDRC meeting, the Committee held a hearing on DTCA-22-00085, for the development of a mixed use project, The Hub. DDRC approved this application with the following conditions:

- a. the applicant obtains a variance from the Board of Adjustment from maximum allowable sign area and the regulation limiting the number of signs to one sign per tenant;
- b. the applicant obtains a variance from Board of Adjustment from the prohibition against parking or maneuvering in the public right-of-way;
- c. the overhead doors for the trash rooms shall remain closed at all times;
- d. the dumpsters shall not be placed outside the trash rooms or in the street or in the right-of-way;
- e. prior to the issuance of a building permit for the parking garage, the applicant obtains a CE from the City of Oklahoma City to close the alley, and approval in District Court to vacate the alley; the CE application will come back to DDRC for a recommendation to the Planning Commission;
- f. the applicant obtains the necessary approval from the Oklahoma City Traffic and Transportation Commission and City Council for angled parking on NW 14th St; and
- g. that revisions addressing the following comments be resubmitted to the Downtown Design Review Committee for final review: relationship to surrounding building design components, transparency at corners, and utilization of street trees, as noted by the Committee and referenced in the staff report.

C. ITEMS IN COMPLIANCE

1. Unless noted below in Section D. Issues and Considerations, all other case items of this proposal comply with the Development Regulations and Guidelines of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance as referenced below:

None

Note: All other Regulations and Guidelines of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance not listed above are either not applicable to this case or apply to elements of this project to be considered as a separate case at a later date.

D. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

1. **Development Guidelines**

This proposal may not comply with the Development Guidelines of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance as follows:

- a. **RE: Request to close alley right-of-way, Case Item A.**

- 1) Description: The applicant proposes to close the right-of-way for a portion of the north/south alley located south of NW 14th St and east of N Robinson Ave.

- 2) Reference: §7200.1.G.(4) Development Pattern

“(a) New development should incorporate the approximate scale and proportions of the traditional block pattern, concentrating mass and height at key intersections and along major pedestrian corridors.”

Reference: §7200.1.A. Purpose and Intent.

“This commercial district is intended to support diverse forms of business and residential activity, including mixed-uses in a single building, within the central area of the City. Development regulations and guidelines in this district are intended to:

- (1) Promote the development and redevelopment of the downtown area in a manner consistent with the unique and diverse design elements and urban character of the downtown districts;*
- (2) Ensure that a proposed use is compatible with the commercial, cultural, historic, and governmental significance of the downtown districts;*
- (3) Promote the downtown area as a vital mixed-use area;*
- (4) Create a network of pleasant, safe, and connected public spaces and pedestrian amenities in the downtown area;*
- (5) Enhance existing structures and circulation patterns; ...”*

Reference: §7200.3. Downtown Transitional District, Limited (DTD-1).

A. *Purpose and Intent.*

“The DTD-1 District is intended to promote a high quality mix of commercial, office and residential uses, including mixed-uses in a single building, for areas adjacent to the DBD District. Development regulations are intended to promote the development and redevelopment of areas adjacent to the DBD District in a manner consistent with the unique and diverse design elements of the area, ensure compatible commercial and residential uses, create a network of pleasant public spaces and pedestrian amenities, enhance existing structures and circulation patterns, encourage preservation and restoration of historic features, encourage preservation of the cultural significance of the central city, and promote the areas adjacent to the downtown business district as dense, urban and mixed-use neighborhoods.”

- 3) Considerations: As referenced above, the Certificate of Approval for the proposed project, The Hub, was approved by DDRC on June 15, 2023 with several conditions, including a condition

requiring the vacation of the alley prior to issuance of a building permit for the parking garage (since the parking garage spans the alley). Approval of CE-01108 and subsequently vacating this alley will fulfill this requirement.

The site plan approved with DTCA-22-00085 shows the construction of the parking garage over the current platted and constructed north-south alley. The applicant states: “it is the intention to allow free public access through the first floor of the garage structure along the path of the alley. This would allow for residents from the Garage lofts to access 14th St as well as keep the passageway for 2-way traffic.”

E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Provide a recommendation of **approval** to the Planning Commission for the request to close the right-of-way for a portion of the north/south alley located south of NW 14th St and east of N Robinson Ave.

Note: Staff recommendations do not constitute Committee decisions.

Attachments: Zoning Map, Application, Design Statement, Drawings, Photos.