

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT RE-REVIEW

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: Sigwalt Apartments
Project Address: 45 S. Chestnut Avenue
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

Date Prepared: July 31, 2017
Date Revised: September 7, 2017

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 17-089
Petitioner Name: Michael Porto
Petitioner Address: CA Residential LLC
 130 E. Randolph Street, Suite 2100
 Chicago, IL 60601
Original Meeting Date: August 8, 2017
Re-Review Meeting Date: September 12, 2017

Requested Action(s):

1. Approval of the architectural design for a new multi-family apartment building.

ANALYSIS:

Summary

The subject design is being forwarded to the Design Commission for review pursuant to Chapter 6 of the Municipal Code, specifically Section 6-501 (e)(1), which states that the Design Commission "shall review all Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Permit and Sign Permit applications for new construction and those improvements which affect the architectural design of the building, site improvements or signage to determine whether it meets with the standards, requirements and purposes of the Design Guidelines and Chapter 30, Sign Regulations."

The petitioner is seeking approval of the architectural design for a new five-story apartment building with 88 residential apartment units and 110 indoor parking spaces. Parking will be located in the basement and partially on the first floor. The proposed site is the southern end of the vacant block on Sigwalt Street between Chestnut Avenue and Highland Avenue just west of the Downtown.

The Downtown Master Plan identifies the southern quarter of this block for 4 to 6 story development. This project requires Plan Commission review and Village Board approval for the following: rezone the property from R-3 One-Family Dwelling District to R-7 Multiple-Family Dwelling District, Planned Unit Development, lot consolidation, and miscellaneous zoning variations.

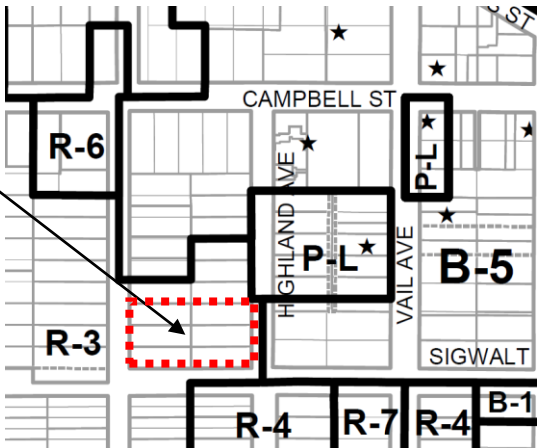
Overall, the proposed design has a nice composition that relates well to the buildings located directly adjacent in the Downtown, such as the Vail Avenue parking garage, Dunton Tower Apartments, and Metropolis Loft condominium. The design includes a nice mix and balance of exterior materials. The colors work well together and complement the adjacent Downtown buildings.

SITE ANALYSIS:



Aerial of Property

Subject Property



Zoning Map of Property

Surrounding Land Uses:

<i>Direction</i>	<i>Existing Zoning</i>	<i>Existing Use</i>	<i>Comprehensive Plan</i>
Subject Property	R-3, One-Family Dwelling District (R-7, Multi-Family Dwelling District proposed)	Vacant	High Density Multi-Family
North	R-3, One-Family Dwelling District / B-5, Downtown District	Vacant	Mixed Use
South	R-3, One-Family Dwelling District / R-4, Two Family Dwelling Units	Single Family Residences	Single Family Attached / High Density Multi-Family
East	B-5, Downtown District	AT&T office building	Mixed Use
West	R-3, One-Family Dwelling District	Single Family Residences	Single Family Attached

PROJECT UPDATE:

This project was reviewed by the Design Commission on August 8, 2017. At that time, the Design Commission and residents expressed various concerns about the design, so the project was continued so that the design could be further studied, revised, and re-reviewed. A summary of comments from the August 8th meeting are as follows:

Staff Comments from August 8, 2017:

Overall, Staff supported the proposed design, but raised the following issues:

- Evaluate the quantity and color of the proposed metal panel siding.
- If possible, evaluate lowering the height of the top floor parapet walls one or two feet.
- Evaluate stepping back portions of the top floor to break down the overall mass of the building, such as recessing balconies at the outside corners.
- Provide additional landscaping throughout the site, in a layered design to soften the proposed building.
- Fully screen the exterior transformer.
- Consider adding specialty paving at the main entrance.

Design Commission Comments from August 8, 2017:

The Design Commission felt that the proposed design had good overall proportions, the building height was fine, and the tall windows looked great. However, they expressed the following primary concerns:

- **Metal Siding.** Concern about the appearance, quality, and long-term durability of the metal siding. It was commented that the top floor looked like an addition. Masonry or other more durable cladding materials were suggested.
- **Massing.** Concern about the lack of “push and pull” and flatness of the building massing, and the scale of the east and west elevations as it relates to the adjacent single family homes. It was suggested to recess the balconies on the east and west sides, and consider adding some recesses to the corners or larger apartment units.
- **Cornice.** The top of the wall termination needed further study, possibly a reveal.
- **First Floor, East Elevation.** It was commented that this part of the building lacked the same amount of detailing as the other sides. Additional false windows were suggested to match the west elevation.
- **Sign.** A more contemporary font and style for the lettering on the sign was recommended.

Resident Comments from August 8, 2017:

One resident felt the proposed design looked “awesome” and the different look for the Downtown was welcomed. However, the other residents had various design concerns as follows:

- The design is too boxy, lacking shape and flow. The massing needs to be improved.
- Concern about context with the adjacent single family homes.
- The building is too tall and needs better transition to the single-family homes.
- North elevation is harsh and could be exposed for many years.
- Concern that the metal balconies will rust and become an eyesore.

Design Revisions and Staff Comments:

In response to the feedback received on August 8, the petitioner has made the following revisions to the design:

- **Metal Siding.** The metal siding on the building has been omitted from the design. Charcoal color brick is now proposed on the top floor, and charcoal color fiber cement lap siding is proposed for the panels below the windows and at recesses in the walls.
 - o The charcoal color brick on the top floor of the building is a nice improvement to the design. It gives the building a quality appearance, and works well to tie the building design together.
- **Massing.** The walls on the east and west elevations have been recessed at the location of the balconies.
 - o The recessed wall areas break up the large flat walls, and this is a very nice improvement to the massing and scale of the side walls.
- **Cornice.** A clear anodized metal coping detail has been added around the top of the building.
 - o The cornice detail is a nice improvement to the design, whereas the previous design looked unfinished at the top of the building.
- **First Floor.** The color of the first floor brick wall has been changed from a light “ginger” color to a dark “charcoal” color to match the top floor of the building.
 - o The dark color brick on the first floor is a nice improvement to the design. It coordinates with the top floor, and it works well to visually support and balance the building design.
 - o At least one additional false window should be added to the first floor east elevation to add interest and break up the brick wall.
- **Sign.** The font on the “Sigwalt Luxury Apartment” sign has been changed to a simpler more modern style, and it is positioned off-center on the wall for a more contemporary appearance.
- **Landscaping.** Additional landscaping has been added to the west elevation to soften the building wall. Additional landscaping has also been provided around the electrical transformer, and specialty paving has been added to the main entry landing.
 - o Overall, the landscape design is nicely done, and the additional landscaping along the west wall is a nice improvement which will help to soften the building wall and provide an enhanced buffer for the houses directly across the street. The specialty paving at the main entrance is a nice enhancement to the design and arrival experience.
 - o It is recommended that the Morton Sweetpire around the electrical transformer be changed to an evergreen shrub to provide year round screening.
 - o Consider substituting the Candytuft perennial along the front of the brick garden walls with a different perennial that has more height to soften the wall.

Rooftop Mechanical Unit Screening:

Rooftop mechanical units are required to be fully screened from public view. The proposed design has all of the rooftop mechanical equipment recessed from the exterior walls and enclosed within mechanical equipment screens.

Dumpster and Utility Screening:

Trash dumpsters will be stored inside the building. The exterior transformer on the east side of the building should be fully screened with landscaping or other appropriate method.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Design Commission **approve** the proposed design for *Sigwalt Apartments* to be located at 45 S. Chestnut Avenue. This recommendation is subject to compliance with the revised plans received 9/6/17, Design Commission recommendations, compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and Village codes regulations and policies, the issuance of all required permits, and the following:

1. Add at least one additional false window on the east elevation, first floor.
2. It is recommended that the Morton Sweetspire around the electrical transformer be changed to an evergreen shrub to provide year round screening.
3. Consider substituting the Candytuft perennial along the front of the brick garden walls with a different perennial that has more height to soften the wall.
4. This review deals with architectural design only and should not be construed to be an approval of, or to have any other impact on nor represent any tacit approval or support for the proposed land use or any other zoning and/or land use issues or decisions that stem from zoning, building, signage or any other reviews. In addition to the normal technical review, permit drawings will be reviewed for consistency with the Design Commission and any other Commission or Board approval conditions. It is the architect/homeowner/builder's responsibility to comply with the Design Commission approval and ensure that building permit plans comply with all zoning code, building permit and signage requirements.
5. All signage must meet code, Chapter 30.

September 7, 2017

Steve Hautzinger AIA, Design Planner

Cc: Charles Witherington Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Bill Enright, Deputy Director of Planning and Community Development, Sam Hubbard, Development Planner, Petitioner, DC File 17-089