

**AGENDA
KNOXVILLE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MEETING OF AUGUST 16, 2017 - MAIN ASSEMBLY ROOM, 4:00 P.M.**

- ♦ Call to Order
- ♦ Introduction of Ex Officio Members and Visitors
- ♦ [Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting](#)
- ♦ Certificates of Appropriateness
- ♦ Staff Report
- ♦ Other Business

Certificates of Appropriateness:

1) [Certificate No. 7-B-17-DT \(revised 8/16/2017\)](#)

608 W. Hill Avenue - The Overlook (Joshua Wright)
Pre-development - N/A

Description of Work

The applicant has provided additional information regarding the design process that led to the final design presented to the board on the July 19, 2017 agenda, as well as providing a design alternative that was discussed by the board as a consideration but was rejected by the applicant before settling on the final design. The design of the building has one minor change from the previous plan, the doors on the ground floor of the stair tower have been moved to the front elevation. The doors were previously located on the rear side of the stair tower. The applicant is seeking approval from the board for the lobby as presented at the July board meeting (attached).

----- BELOW: Project description presented on the July 19, 2017 DDRB agenda -----

SUMMARY: A new mixed-use residential/office development at 608 W. Hill Avenue, on the block between Henley Street and Locust Street. The proposed development will be located where there is an existing surface parking lot. The new structure will be 5 to 6-stories tall and will include office space in the basement level, below the structured parking. The ground level includes a residential lobby in the center of the Hill Ave. elevation, with stair towers on the east and west side of the building, and under building parking located behind the lobby and stair towers. The development will include 8-10 residential dwellings and 20 parking spaces. The existing building to the west is the River House condos, which is a contributing structure within the Hill Avenue National Register Historic District and is 3-stories on the Hill Avenue elevation, with an additional basement level.

SITE LAYOUT: The building fronts on Hill Avenue and has its pedestrian and vehicular access from Hill Ave. The building projects into the front 5' ground floor setback; the lobby is 1' from the front property line and the stair towers are 4' from the front property line. The stair towers and the garage will be on or very close to the side property lines. The basement office and upper story residential units will be approximately 10' from the side property line. The adjacent River House condos building is approximately 6' from the side property line. The residential levels have a private front porch with private elevator entrances and enclosed bike storage, and a patio on the rear of the building.

ACCESS: Pedestrian and vehicular access is provided via Hill Avenue. There will be two vehicular driveways, one on each side of the central lobby. The driveways will be one-way in and one-way out. The driveways are narrower in width (10') than what is required by the zoning ordinance (20'), which will require a variance approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

EXTERIOR MATERIALS: The stair and elevator towers on the front elevation will be clad in a smooth faced brick. The ground floor lobby will have a clear, anodized aluminum storefront system and a flat roof. The residential patios on the front elevation will have aluminum and clear glass railings, nichia vintagewood fiber cement cladding on the bike storage enclosure, and insulated metal panels on the main body of the building. The insulated metal panels will also be used on the side and rear elevations. The

basement level will have a fiberglass storefront system to infill between the structural concrete columns. The parking garage will have a 4' tall, wood privacy screen to shield headlights from adjacent properties and partially screen vehicles.

MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT: Mechanical equipment will be installed on the roof but it is not anticipated that screening will be required.

LANDSCAPING: There are two dogwood trees proposed between the building and the sidewalk, one in front of each of the stair towers.

Staff Comments

The project is not within a national register historic district, however, is adjacent to the River House which is within the Hill Avenue (National Register) Historic District. When adjacent to a historic structure, the guidelines recommend using a complimentary materials and elements (Section 1.B.3a).

The applicant is proposing two options for the number of stories. Option 1 is 5-stories and option 2 is 6-stories (see sheets A6 and A7). The only difference between the two options is the number of stories. The number of parking spaces does not change.

Applicable guidelines:

Section 1.A.3. (PARKING FACILITIES)

It is important to ensure that parking facilities (both public and private) are safe, accessible, and clearly marked. New parking facilities should be designed to be attractive, compatible additions to downtown. In general, new parking facilities should remain subordinate to the street scene.

GUIDELINES:

3a. Create parking garages that do not contain blank walls. Allow for future commercial uses that may not be feasible at the time of construction.

3b. Locate parking garages under structures, or provide for retail, residential or office uses that line the garage. Corner locations are preferable for commercial uses.

3c. Locate surface parking lots to the side or rear of buildings. No surface parking lots should be created in front of buildings.

3d. Screen surface lots, where they abut a public sidewalk, with decorative walls, fencing and landscaping.

3e. Distribute shade trees within surface lots at a ratio of 1 tree per 8 parking spaces. Trees may be planted in wells between spaces.

3f. Provide pedestrian-scale lighting (10-15 feet in height) that uniformly illuminates the lot.

3g. Access to parking garages should not limit options for future development of contiguous or adjoining space, especially on corners.

Section 1.B.1 (BUILDING MASS, SCALE AND FORM)

Building form should be consistent with the character of downtown as an urban setting and should reinforce the pedestrian activity at the street level. Creating pedestrian-scale buildings, especially at street level, can reduce the perceived mass of buildings. Historically, building technology limited height and subsequently created pedestrian-scaled buildings typically less than 10 stories. Building technology no longer limits the height of buildings and there are no height limitations imposed by the zoning ordinance for downtown Knoxville. However, there is still a need for buildings that respond to pedestrians. The use of 'human-scale' design elements is necessary to accomplish this. Human-scale design elements are details and shapes that are sized to be proportional to the human body, such as, upper story setbacks, covered entries, and window size and placement.

GUIDELINES:

1a. Maintain a pedestrian-scaled environment from block to block.

1b. Foster air circulation and sunlight penetration around new buildings. Buildings may be designed with open space, as allowed under existing C-2 zoning; or buildings may be 'stepped back' on upper floors with lower floors meeting the sidewalk edge (see Area Regulations of the C-2 Zoning District).

1c. Use building materials, cornice lines, signs, and awnings of a human scale in order to reduce the mass of buildings as experienced at the street level.

1d. Divide larger buildings into 'modules' that are similar in scale to traditional downtown buildings.

Buildings should be designed with a recognizable base, middle, and top on all exposed elevations.

1e. Avoid blank walls along street-facing elevations.

Section 1.B.2. (BUILDING LOCATION)

It is important to establish a strong relationship among buildings, sidewalks, and streets. This is typically accomplished through consistent setbacks that locate buildings on the same line.

GUIDELINES:

2a. Set buildings back five feet in order to provide wider sidewalk space when new construction in non-historic areas is to be more than half the length of the block.

2b. Consider using landscape elements to define the sidewalk edge where a building is to be set back from the sidewalk.

Section 1.B.3. (BUILDING MATERIALS)

New building materials should relate to the scale, durability, color, and texture of the predominate building materials in the area.

GUIDELINES:

3a. Use complimentary materials and elements, especially next to historic buildings.

Section 1.B.4. (ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER)

Buildings should be visually interesting to invite exploration by pedestrians. A building should express human scale through materials and forms that were seen traditionally. This is important because buildings are experienced at close proximity by the pedestrian.

GUIDELINES:

4a. Encourage first floor uses that draw walk-in traffic; businesses that do not require pedestrian traffic should be located on other floors.

4b. Enhance pedestrian interest in commercial and office buildings by creating a largely transparent and consistent rhythm of entrances and windows.

4c. Scale first floor signs to pedestrians.

4d. Differentiate the architectural features of ground floors from upper floors with traditional considerations such as show-windows, transoms, friezes, and sign boards.

4e. Design top floors to enhance the skyline of the block through cornices and details that are harmonious with adjacent architecture.

4f. Encourage the use of 'green roofs' and other sustainable practices, while minimizing the visual impact from the street.

Section 1.B.5. (GROUND FLOOR DOORS AND WINDOWS)

Entrances and ground floor windows should foster pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation. Not every building in downtown needs to have the same window or entry designs; however, repeating the pattern of historic openings helps to reinforce the character of downtown, differentiating it from suburban areas.

GUIDELINES:

5a. Use consistent rhythm of openings, windows, doorways, and entries.

5b. Orient primary front entrances to the main street; secondary entrances should be clearly defined and oriented to streets or alleys, as appropriate.

5c. Design entrances according to the proportions of the building's height and width.

5d. Consider corner entrances at the ends of blocks.

5e. All windows at the pedestrian level should be clear.

5f. Recess ground floor window frames and doors from the exterior building face to provide depth to the facade.

Section 1.B.6. (RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS)

Solely residential buildings, such as townhouses and apartment buildings, are rare in downtown Knoxville. Privacy and safety are concerns with residential units that meet the sidewalk. Mixed use buildings, with apartments above shops or offices, can avoid these challenges and add to downtown vitality.

GUIDELINES:

6c. Encourage the development of mixed-use buildings with apartments over lower story commercial uses.

Section 1.B.7. (MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE UTILITIES)

Utilities can include telephone and electrical lines, ventilation systems, gas meters, air conditioners, fire protection, telecommunication and alarm systems. Adequate space for these utilities should be planned in a project from the outset and they should be designed such that their visual and noise impacts are minimized.

GUIDELINES:

- 7a. Minimize the visual impact of mechanical equipment through screens or recessed/low-profile equipment.
- 7b. Do not locate units on a primary facade.
- 7c. Screen rooftop vents, heating/cooling units and related utilities with parapet walls or other screens. Consider sound-buffering of the units as part of the design.
- 7d. Locate utility connections and service boxes on secondary walls.
- 7e. Reduce the visual impacts of trash storage and service areas by locating them at the rear of a building or off an alley, when possible.
- 7f. Screen dumpsters from view.

Section 1.C.10. (NEW CONSTRUCTION WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO AN HISTORIC DISTRICT OR BUILDING)

Infill construction should be designed to reflect architectural and historic qualities. Designs should not duplicate current buildings. Issues of concern will be the siting, size, shape, proportion, materials, and the relationship of all of those to the prevalent character of the historic district.

GUIDELINES:

- 10a. Maintain the setback of adjacent historic buildings. The height of the lower stories should be similar to adjacent historic buildings. Upper floors may be 'stepped back' behind the front facade.
- 10b. Duplicate the horizontal floor divisions of existing buildings.
- 10c. Design windows to be of similar proportions to the adjacent historic building windows.
- 10d. Use ornamental stone, brick work, and trim appropriate to the style of the infill building.
- 10e. Recognize the belt courses, strong courses, cornices, and other elements of adjacent buildings.
- 10f. Incorporate storefronts that complement the openness, bulkheads, and transoms of historic buildings.

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 7-B-17-DT as previously approved on July 19, 2017, including the lobby and modification to the stair tower doors as presented, subject to the following condition: 1) The side elevations be brought back before the board for approval.

2) Certificate No. 8-B-17-DT

418 S Gay Street - Phoenix Pharmacy (Nolan Sherrill)
Pre-development - N/A

Description of Work

This proposal is a revision to the previously approved projecting sign (see the attachment) that was 2'-0" wide by 13'-0" tall (26 sqft) and mounter higher on the building (Certificate 4-B-17-DT). The previous approval included neon illumination.

The new sign is a projecting sign that is approximately 4'-6" tall by 4'-6" wide (approximately 20.25 sqft) and has neon illumination. The sign is proposed to be located above the far right (south) storefront column and will hang from a copper or iron pole that is supported by a guide wire. The sign will have a 1'-6" separation from the building and will extend approximately 6'-0" from the building at its outer edge. The neon illumination will be located over (or outline) the cream colored text and design elements on the sign. The sign will have a clearance with the sidewalk of approximately 10'-0".

Staff Comments

This building is located in the Gay Street Commercial (National Register) Historic District, so the Historic Resources section of the guidelines apply (Section 1.C). The Historic Resources guidelines recommend that signs not be internally illuminated. The board has approved internal illumination in the past but has consistently only approved it when light is able to penetrate only a portion of the sign face, such as the letters and decorative elements; or neon illumination.

The proposed location of the sign is near the right (south) side of the building which is close to the existing projecting sign for the Art Market. Staff is recommending that the sign be moved further to the left (north) to allow more separation between the two signs. As proposed the two signs would be approximately 16 feet apart. If the sign can be located in the middle of the building, it would be appropriate to consider attaching the support pole in the same location as the "Fowler Brothers" sign shown in the attached historical photograph. This would raise the sign up a few feet so it does not block visibility of adjacent signs and will provide an appropriate location to attach the guide wire to the building on the flat brick façade above.

Staff is recommending that the guide wires not be attached to the second and third story pilasters (columns) because the guidelines recommend not damaging historic architectural elements and the rounded pilasters would be more challenging to fix if damaged than the flat brick façade.

Applicable guidelines:

Section 1.C.7. (RECOMMENDED SIGNS - HISTORIC RESOURCES)

Commercial establishments need to advertise. However, advertising signs should be effective and appropriate to historic areas without contributing to visual clutter. Primary concerns are a sign's location, size, material, and illumination.

GUIDELINES:

- 7a. Locate signs above storefront windows, below second-story windows on the sign board, or on the storefront windows themselves (30% is maximum coverage), or off the front of the building as a projecting sign (maximum size: 9 square feet).
- 7b. Create signs that are proportional to the building where they are located.
- 7c. Do not light signs internally.
- 7d. Allow painted signs on building walls in the warehouse area along Jackson Avenue, and in some other locations along Gay Street.
- 7e. Preserve signs that are historic elements of buildings.

Section 2.B.1. (RECOMMENDED SIGNS - THE TRADITIONAL GRID DISTRICT)

These recommendations for signs in the traditional grid district recognize that certain types of signs are more pedestrian-friendly and should be encouraged within the grid district.

GUIDELINES:

- 1a. Wall signs on sign boards that are above a transom or first story and mounted flush to the building façade.
- 1b. Projecting signs of modest size (9 square feet, maximum); a larger sign must be approved by the board.
- 1c. Window signs, less than 30 percent coverage, including neon signs.
- 1d. Building name sign and/or building directory.

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 8-B-17-DT subject to the following conditions: 1) the pole and guide wire support option be used, 2) the sign be located over the second storefront column from the right (south) or above the center storefront column, and 3) the guide wire shall not be attached to a rounded pilaster (column) on the second and third story of the building.

Staff Report:

Other Business:

- The board will have a workshop immediately following this meeting to discuss a development proposed at the intersection of Hill Avenue and Locust Street.

Tabled:

File No. 2-A-16-DT

100 N Central St - Project: Lonesome Dove