



Oct. 12, 2022

Paulose Issac,
Department of Licenses and Inspections
Municipal Services Building, Concourse
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director

Michael Johns, FAIA, NOMA, LEED-AP
Civic Design Review Chair

Daniel K. Garofalo
Civic Design Review Vice-Chair

Andrea Gonzalez
Ashley Di Caro, LEED -AP
Clarissa Kelsey, RA
Leonidas Addimando
Tavis Dockwiller, RLA

Re: Civic Design Review for 20-30 West Allens Lane (Application # ZP-2022-004845)

Dear Mr. Issac,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed multi-family building at 20-30 West Allens Lane.

This letter is a summary of the Civic Design Review Committee's advisory recommendations. It is not an expression of the City Planning Commission's recommendation or opinion regarding zoning variances, special exceptions, or other discretionary approvals associated with this proposal.

The project proposes a multi-family residential building totaling 77,353 square feet of gross floor area. This proposal includes 76 dwelling units, 26 car parking spaces, and 26 bike parking spaces. The parcel is zoned RM-1 Residential Multi-Family, is a by-right project, and utilizes a Green Roof bonus as well as a Mixed-income Housing bonus via on-site affordable units.

At its meeting of October 11, 2022 the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

RCO Comments: West Mount Airy Neighbors

At the meeting, the RCO representative corrected the record of the first meeting by mentioning it was not stated that they had received a parking study from the development team and parking was still a major concern of the community for this project. They also mentioned that the community met with the applicant on September 22, 2022 to discuss the changes in the massing of the building to minimize its effects on the residences along Nippon Street and the adjacent property on West Allens Lane and those comments were not taken into consideration since there had not been any changes made in that regard.

The RCO expressed concerns about the facade on West Allens Lane and recommended the addition of a mansard roof, balconies, or other articulations to help with the appearance of the upper floors. The RCO representative was disappointed to see no changes to the overall massing of the building and had hoped to see more improvements to help the appearance of the building to be more appealing. It was also mentioned that some community members agreed to support a variance for the increased height of the front façade if the development team had decided to reduce the scale of the rear side of the building and add to the density of the front façade.

One Parkway Building
1515 Arch St.
13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-683-4615 Telephone
215-683-4630 Facsimile

www.phila.gov/cityplanning



CDR Committee Comments

At the meeting, one committee member appreciated the addition of the context in the site plan. The committee member also discussed the existing wooden fence which would be visible from the street on the northeast elevation and it would be more transparent and easier to walk around if they were enclosing the private patios. The development team agreed to update those, however mentioned that the one on the property line would be utilized for egress only and would stay as is.

Another committee member believed that the building was too large for its context and suggested reducing the number of residential units on the rear to reduce its impact on Nippon Street. The committee member appreciated the number of windows on the exterior facades which would help all the units have bedrooms with windows, however suggested changing the unit arrangements to add more corner two-bedroom units for more variety. The CDR committee member also appreciated wrapping the building's front façade with the stone material because of its visibility from West Allens Lane.

CDR committee recommended large-canopy trees to be planted on the sidewalk for this development and believed that would help with the perception of the scale of the building in the long term. It was also suggested that solar panels be added to the roof as part of this development and the applicant mentioned that they had started the conversations with Solar States to investigate the possibility of this request.

Lastly, the CDR Committee adopted the Planning Commission staff comments:

Site Design

- Staff notes the design changes made, however believes that there is still a missed opportunity to connect the building entrance and the open space to the sidewalk for better interaction.

Building Design

- Staff suggests more meaningful architectural articulations, higher quality materials, material differentiation, and massing composition to conform with the historical character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood.

Sustainable Design

- Staff encourages the team to meet more sustainable design metrics. Please look into including the solar panels in the design.
- Staff encourages the team to investigate utilization of the raingardens to capture on street stormwater runoffs.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director



cc: Michael Johns, Chair, Civic Design Review, mdesigns@msn.com
Daniel Garofalo, Vice Chair, Civic Design Review, dkgarofalo@gmail.com
Councilmember Cindy Bass, cindy.bass@phila.gov
Charles Richardson, Director of Constituent Services, charles.richardson@phila.gov
Carey Jackson Yonce, Canno Design, Carey@cannodesign.com
Adam Laver, Blank Rome LLP, laver@blankrome.com
Josephine Winter, West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc., josephine.g.winter@gmail.com
Ralph S. Pinkus, West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc., rsp@pinkuslaw.com
Ruffian Tittman, Friends of the Wissahickon, tittmann@fow.org
Janis Risch, Mt. Airy Business Improvement District, janis@mtairybid.com
Ian Hegarty, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, ian.hegarty@phila.gov
Paulose Issac, Philadelphia Licenses and Inspections, paulose.issac@phila.gov
Michelle Brisbon, Streets Department, michelle.brisbon@phila.gov
Kisha Duckett, Streets Department, kisha.duckett@phila.gov
Jeanien Wilson, Streets Department, jeanien.wilson@phila.gov
Casey Ross, Office of Transportation, Infrastructure and Sustainability, casey.ross@phila.gov
Jennifer Dougherty, SEPTA Long Range Planning, jdougherty@septa.org
Paula Burns, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, paula.brumbelow@phila.gov