

DOWNTOWN AREA CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES
March 5, 2019

Members Present: Ray Detter, Carolyn Arcure, Hugh Sonk, Don Duquette, John Splitt, Joan French
Members Absent: John Chamberlin, Kathleen Nolan, Chaz Stucken
Guests Present: John Kotarski, Christine Crockett, Jeff Crockett, Julie Ritter, Jess Letaw, Chuck Bulton, Susan Pollay, Joe Arcure
Jess Letaw, Brad Moore

I attended the DDA Operations Committee meeting last Wednesday and asked Architect Brad Moore for a copy of a rendering of the proposed project he was promoting at East Washington and South State. Instead, Brad Moore volunteered to attend our CAC meeting last night and bring along copies of all of the renderings of the project. He agreed to talk for one hour and answer any and all questions we might have about the proposed development. Of course, I agreed. It was an excellent meeting.

At last February's CAC meeting, we had discussed the proposed 19 story, 241 unit residential and commercial structure proposed for the site. Those present generally supported the by right Planned Project—particularly the inclusion of 20 units of smaller work force housing in the six-story part of the project behind Sava's Restaurant and adequate parking on the lower floors of the residential and commercial structure on East Washington.

Mixed Use on the lower levels was clearly a plus (two story “premium” floors are expected to be approved because of the micro-unit affordable housing planned for the site).

However, a wide variety of criticisms and recommendations emerged from the Design Review Board meeting. The developer decided to come back before the Design Review Board a second time with updated plans on the 13th of February. A Citizens Participation meeting was also scheduled that same evening at 6:00 pm. at the Graduate Hotel—with the hope that they might be able to get any changes made in time for submission to City Staff as soon as possible.

Some of the members of the Downtown Area CAC, along with some near downtown residents were able to attend both presentations before the Design Review Board as well as the large public participation meeting at the Graduate Hotel. We have been impressed with the changes made in the project in response to the questions and recommendation advocated at those meetings. We were also pleased with Brad Moore's willingness to consider all the changes suggested last night. It was a fun meeting.

Yes to the need for a Planned Project with two more stories based on affordable housing premiums.

Yes to the inclusion of affordable housing in the main Washington Street structure as well as in the smaller units planned for the six-story structure behind that building.

Yes to the inclusion of a restaurant and other 1st floor commercial on East Washington.

Yes to many beneficial changes made in design.

Yes to the ongoing consideration of future changes in design to protect the Methodist Church and other neighboring locations.

Yes to further considerations involving further parking possibilities.

There will be other meetings and members of the CAC and nearby neighbors will be there. With each adopted change, the project gets better.