

ANN ARBOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Staff Report

MEETING DATE: April 12, 2023

PROJECT: Core Spaces - 333 E. William St.
Project No. DR23-0003

ADDRESS: 333 E. William Street

ZONING: D1 Downtown Core (base)
Liberty/Division Character (overlay)
Secondary (street designation) – E. William Street

DESIGN TEAM: Dwell Design Studio

PROJECT LOCATION: The site is located between S. Fifth Avenue and S. Division Street north of W. William Street.

PROJECT HISTORY: The site is currently owned by U of M Credit Union.

PROPOSED PROJECT: The proposed concept includes a 16-story residential complex with approximately 700 beds totaling approximately 230,000 square feet. No parking spaces are proposed nor required although a loading zone is proposed mid-building facing the west. The ground floor of the residential building includes the leasing/amenity room, trash room, utility room, bicycle storage room, elevator/lobby space, maintenance room and townhouse units. A pool and amenity terrace are proposed on the 14th floor.

Primary building façade materials are proposed to include cementitious panel systems, woodstone fiber cement, storefront system and brick.

ZONING COMPLIANCE AND SITE CONTEXT:

1. **Zoning Compliance (Area, Height, Placement).** The following provides a cursory review of the proposed development project for compliance with the D1, Liberty/Division Character Overlay District, secondary frontage designation area, and area, height and placement regulations.

	Requirement	Proposed
Lot Area	NA	26,224 sq ft
Floor Area	104,544 sq/ft MAX (400% FAR)	227,429 sq ft w/ premiums (excludes shafts, terraces, penthouse)
FAR (Floor Area Ratio)	400% standard MAX 900% w Premiums	880% FAR w premiums
Rear Setback-North Library Lane	0 ft MIN; 0 MAX	0 ft
Front Setback-South	0 ft MIN; 10 MAX	0 ft
Side Setback - West	0 ft MIN	0 ft
Side Setback - East	0 ft MIN	0 ft
Streetwall Height	Min 2 stories, Max 3 stories	2 stories along E. William St. 2 stories Library Lane
Offset at Top of Streetwall	Average 5 ft MIN	5 ft MIN average on south & north side frontage
Total Height	180 ft MAX	180 ft (16 stories)
Massing Articulation	Not applicable	NA with this petition
Tower Diagonal	Not applicable	NA with this petition
Building Coverage	Not applicable	Approximately 80% (20,469 sq ft)
Open Space	Not applicable	None proposed

2. **Site Context and Site Planning.** This site is currently used as a credit union with surface parking located at the northern, rear of the site. The downtown library is located directly to the west and the Blake Transit Center is located across from S. Fifth Avenue. Library Lane and the surface lot and below grade parking garage are located directly to the north. To the east is student housing. The design guidelines for context and site planning address the arrangement of buildings and features on the site, including how the site relates to its neighbors, and suggests preferred ways to express and articulate some of the minimum and maximum area, height, and placement standards. Staff finds that the design team assessed the character of the adjacent streetscapes and buildings in keeping with the recommendations of the design guidelines and incorporated a number of positive characteristics into the proposed project. The following guidelines are additionally relevant:

A. Guideline A.1.4 – For mid-block sites, identify adjacent site and building design qualities, noting that a design may be appropriate for a mid-block site that best

serves the area in a secondary role.

B. Guideline A.1.6 - Where adjacent properties are underdeveloped and/or the block lacks inviting and interesting characteristics, consider a building site and streetscape design that helps to create a vibrant pedestrian setting.

C. Guideline A1.7 - On sites that abut an alley, design the alley entry connection to the street to minimize pedestrian/bike/vehicle conflicts while taking advantage of the alley as an open space from which to see and access the new/proposed site and buildings.

Building. The design guidelines for buildings focus on breaking down massing of larger buildings from their lower-scale neighbors. Staff finds that the building mass includes some of the suggested strategies to visually divide the mass, provide clear definitions and a sense of scale. The following guidelines are particularly relevant:

- a. Guideline B.1.1 – Step taller building elements away from lower-scale buildings, locate taller elements at the intersection of streets.
 - b. Guideline B.1.2 – Vary the height of building modules, cornice lines and roof finish elements.
 - c. Guideline B.1.3 – Use a distinct horizontal molding to define the base, provide variation in the façade plane of the upper floors, provide a distinct change in ratio of solid to void (wall to window percentage) to distinguish the base from upper floors.
 - d. Guideline B1.4 - If appropriate to the context, establish a design treatment that includes differentiated building top.
3. **Building Elements.** Building elements include specific features that give character and detail to a building and influence the degree to which a new building contributes to the urban fabric. This section of the design guidelines calls for features and architectural details at the street edge to have a direct impact on the quality of the pedestrian experience and to create an attractive and interesting street front. Staff finds the design achieves some of the goals of the design guidelines for building elements. The following guidelines are particularly relevant:
- a. Guideline C.1.1 – Wall surfaces with visually interesting detailing, textures and colors. First floor canopy that complements the design character of the building and its street front, wall surfaces with interesting detailing, textures and colors.

- b. Guideline C.2.1 – Clearly define a primary entrance and orient it toward the street. Design a change in wall materials, textures, or colors that frames the entry.
- c. Guideline C.3.1 – High level of ground floor transparency is encouraged throughout downtown.
- d. Guideline C.7.1 – Use sustainable building materials whenever possible.

4. **General Comments**

- a. The design team should consider providing solar panels on the roof of the building in order to reduce energy costs and the building's carbon footprint.
- b. Portions (and possibly significant portions) of the project may need to be re-designed to address solid waste access issues.
- c. The following materials are permitted on facades visible from primary or secondary streets: glass, brick, cut stone, cast stone, or high quality, finished metal, such as architectural grade cast or machined steel.
- d. The following materials are prohibited on facades visible from primary and secondary streets: aluminum or vinyl siding, or an exterior insulation finishing system, except for minor design accents eight feet above the level of the adjacent sidewalk.
- e. The following materials are permitted only as trim or accent materials when visible from a primary or secondary street: fiber cement board.
- f. Other materials may be permitted if recommended by the DRB and approved by the CPC for inclusion in a site plan.

DESIGN NARRATIVE FROM THE PETITIONER:

- 5. **Theme of the Design Concept.** The proposed Core Spaces high rise located mid-block will be approximately 16-story residential building housing approximately 206 units.
- 6. **Design Guidelines and Character District.** Located midblock between S. Fifth and S. Division along the E. William St streetscape, the building is wrapped at its base with active uses, including residential lobby and amenity uses as well as two-story townhomes along the east and north sides of the site. Service and loading

spaces have been consolidated along the west side of the site, which faces the library's loading area and parking lot. The ground floor uses are located in a masonry and glass base, with the tower above articulated as a dynamic grid of undulating windows, cementitious panels, and balcony spaces.

7. **Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning.** The site is currently a credit union with a surface parking lot. The proposed development will improve the pedestrian experience by reinforcing the street wall and creating a sense of place. The space will be designed to minimize pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular, and bus conflicts while also creating a pedestrian connection to Library Lane to the north.
8. **Design Guidelines for Buildings.** The proposed FAR is 880%, with premiums, which is less than the maximum 900% FAR. The structure is at the maximum 180 foot maximum in the D1 zoning district.
9. **Design Guidelines for Building Elements.** High quality, durable materials are proposed for the building exterior in alignment with the City's requirement for the D1 Liberty/S. Division district. The primary entrance is proposed to be located along E. William Street with one curb cut to access the site.

Attachment: Elevations and Floor Plans