

## ANN ARBOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

### Staff Report

**MEETING DATE:** August 12, 2020

**PROJECT:** 300 West Huron Hotel  
Project No. DR20-004

**ADDRESS:** 300 W. Huron Street

**ZONING:** D2 Downtown Interface (base)  
First Street Character (overlay)  
Secondary (street designation) – West Huron Street  
Secondary (street designation) – North First Street

**DESIGN TEAM:** Dynamik Design; Nederveld, Inc.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The site is located on the northwest corner of West Huron and North First Streets.

**PROJECT HISTORY:** The site includes an early 20<sup>th</sup> century gas station (300 W. Huron) that is now being used as a massage studio (Relax Station), a turn of the century home that is now being used as a law office (308 W. Huron), and a turn of the century home (111 N. First Street) being used for offices. None of the buildings are in an historic district.

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** The petitioner proposes to demolish the three existing buildings and construct a 5 story (60' tall) 45,871 square foot hotel with 93 rooms, 4 on-site parking spaces and a one-way drive to accommodate solid waste vehicles and vehicles parking on-site. Primary façade materials are proposed to be brick and metal with wood cementitious as a trim material. Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) is proposed to be used on portions of the façade that do not front and are not clearly visible from West Huron or North Ashley Streets (northwest corner of the site). Solid waste will be handled in a trash room on the ground floor in the interior of the site.

The [design plan application](#) illustrates the proposed redevelopment.

#### STAFF COMMENTS:

1. **Zoning Compliance (Area, Height, Placement).** The following provides a cursory review of the proposed development for compliance with the D2, First Street Character Overlay District, secondary frontage designation area, and area, height and placement regulations.

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Lot Area</b>	NA	15,071 sq ft
<b>Floor Area</b>	30,142 sq ft standard MAX	45,871 sq ft
<b>FAR (Floor Area Ratio)</b>	200% standard MAX, up to 350% MAX with green building premiums (52,749 square feet MAX)	328.6% FAR
<b>Rear Setback-North</b>	0 ft MIN	4.1 ft
<b>Side Setback-West</b>	0 ft MIN	1.3 ft
<b>Front Setback - South</b>	0 ft MIN, 10 ft MAX	1.3 ft
<b>Front Setback - East</b>	0 ft MIN, 10 ft MAX	1.6 ft
<b>Streetwall Height</b>	Min 2 stories, Max 3 stories	2 stories
<b>Offset at Top of Streetwall</b>	Average 5 ft MIN	5 ft
<b>Total Height</b>	60 ft MAX	60 ft
<b>Massing Articulation</b>	Not applicable	None
<b>Tower Diagonal</b>	Not applicable	
<b>Building Coverage</b>	Not applicable	
<b>Open Space</b>	Not applicable	

2. **Site Context and Site Planning.** 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 the design team assessed the character of the adjacent streetscapes and buildings in keeping with the recommendations of the design guidelines and incorporated the positive characteristics into the proposed project. The following guidelines are particularly relevant:
- a. Guideline A.1.2 – Enhances pedestrian sidewalk level features and facilities to enrich the pedestrian experience.
  - b. Guideline A.1.3 – An enhanced architectural feature (more vibrant corner element) at the corner is proposed.
  - c. Guideline A.6.2 – New bicycle parking facilities will be proposed near the main entrance on the east side of the site.

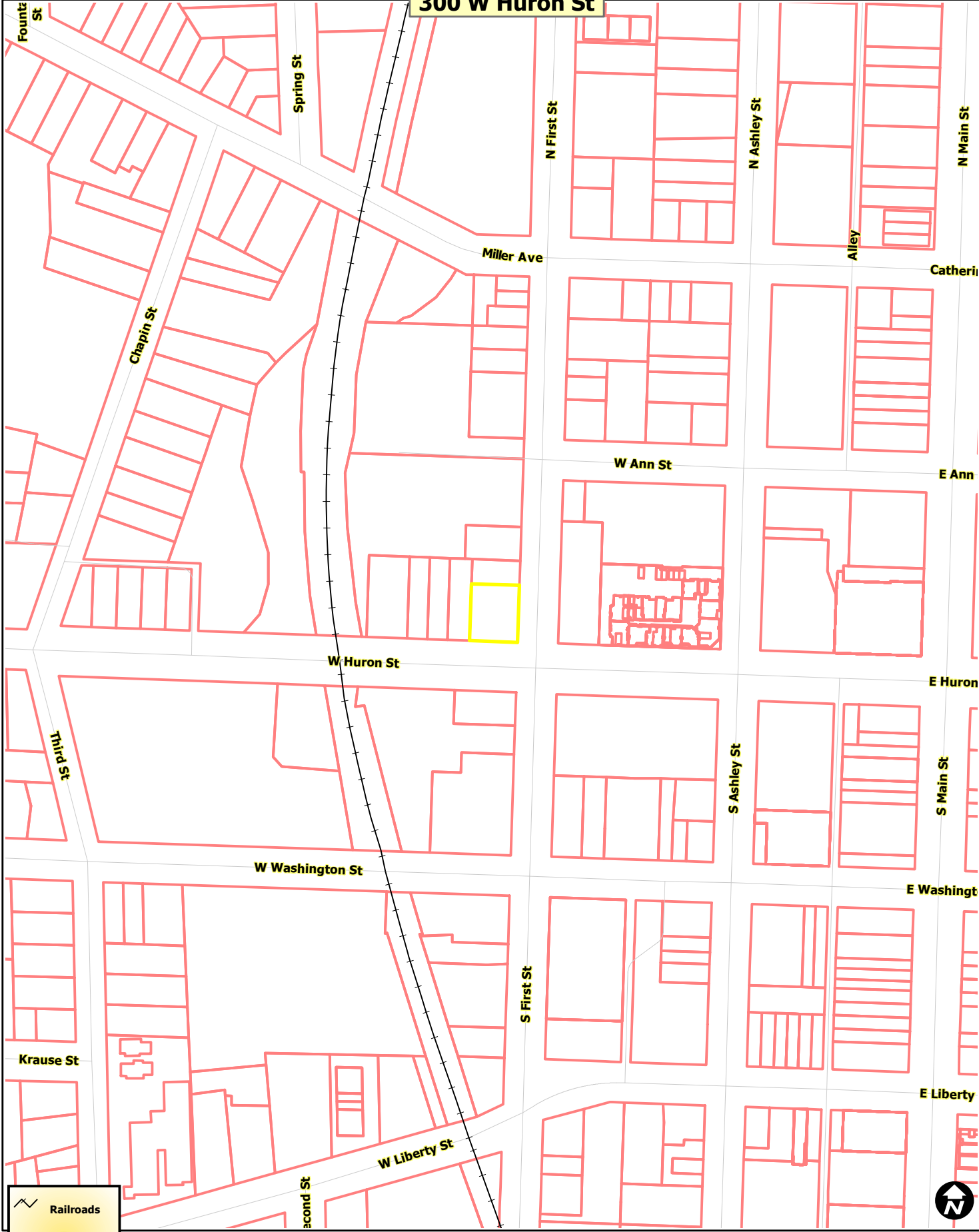
3. **Building.** The design guidelines for buildings focus on breaking down massing of larger buildings from their lower-scale neighbors. Staff find that the building mass includes most of the suggested strategies to visually divide the mass, provide clear definitions and a sense of scale. The following 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 distinct change in ratio of solid to void to distinguish base from upper floors. The design guidelines for buildings focus on breaking down massing of larger buildings from their lower-scale neighbors.
4. **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 call 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 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. c) 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.
5. **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. Consider providing richer panel colors on the tower portion of the building. Darker colors (instead of the light gray) might create a more interesting and prominent feature.
- c. The west setback is too narrow to accommodate windows. Please provide a remedy for this.

Attachment: location map

Prepared by Jeff Kahan, City Planner  
August 6, 2020

300 W Huron St



-  Railroads
-  Huron River
-  Tax Parcels



Map date: 7/14/2020  
 Any aerial imagery is circa 2018  
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