



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING**

#18-0330

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

DATE: April 3, 2018

TITLE: Motion Relating to a City Commission Request for Review – Alexan-
Tarpon River - Case Number R17055

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Commission analyze the proposal and decide whether to set a de novo hearing to review the application known as Alexan-Tarpon River (Case R17055), a multi-family residential project proposed at 501 SE 6th Avenue.

Background

The City Clerk has received statements of intent filed by Mayor Dean Trantalis, Commissioner Ben Sorensen, and Commissioner Steven Glassman pursuant to the City of Fort Lauderdale Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) Section 47-26A.2, City Commission Request for Review ("CRR") to review the Preliminary DRC approval of "Alexan-Tarpon River", a 216-foot and 8-inch tall, multi-family residential project proposed at 501 SE 6th Avenue in the Regional Activity Center-City Center (RAC-CC) zoning district. An abbreviated set of plans is provided as Exhibit 1. A full set of plans is available upon request. The City Commission Request for Review Memo including staff analysis is provided as Exhibit 2.

The DRC reviewed the project on September 26, 2017. All comments have been addressed and are on file with the Department of Sustainable Development. The project received preliminary approval on March 6, 2018. The project was presented to the Historic Preservation Board November 6, 2017 for review and comment. The Board voiced the desire that the open ground level of the north wing flow seamlessly into Smoker Park and that care be taken to insure that shade cast by the proposed building not impact the park's trees. The applicant has addressed these aspects with the City's Landscape Plans Reviewer and Urban Forester.

The proposed Alexan-Tarpon River development consists of 181 residential units. The subject property is located within the Downtown RAC, where currently 1,088 residential units are available. Should the allocation of the 181 residential units in the proposed development be approved, 907 units will remain.

Adequacy Requirements

The adequacy criteria of ULDR Section 47-25.2 are used to evaluate the demand created on public services and facilities by a proposed development. Water and wastewater is serviced by the City of Fort Lauderdale. A capacity letter was issued by the City's Public Works Department which identified the plant facilities, pump station and associated infrastructure servicing this project and the project's impact on capacity. The capacity availability letter is attached as Exhibit 3.

Parking and Circulation

Vehicular ingress, egress and loading into the site are provided from SE 6th Avenue. The applicant is proposing to provide 201 parking spaces. New sidewalks with canopy trees will be constructed along SE 6th Avenue. A broad Riverwalk entrance plaza is also proposed at the east terminus of south side Riverwalk, between the proposed building and the river's edge.

A Trip Generation Analysis, dated August 22, 2017 and prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc., concluded that based on the proposed land use, the development is projected to generate 912 daily trips (55 AM peak hour trips and 70 PM peak hour trips). As less than 1,000 daily trips, and less than 20 percent during peak hours, are projected, a traffic impact study is not required by the ULDR. The Trip Generation Analysis Letter is attached as Exhibit 4.

Master Plan Consistency

The project is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan's (DMP) and New River Master Plan's (NRMP) intents. A few of the highlights are listed below:

- In order to create a very open and welcoming gateway to Riverwalk, the proposed building is set back 135 feet from the River's edge, while the New River Master Plan for this area calls for 60 feet (see Massing Diagram on Page 4 of this report);
- The accommodation for a high level of openness and lower building height is exceptionally significant in the context of Stranahan Landing, the land on the south side of the New River directly across from Stranahan House. Stranahan Landing was known as the point at which the New River was crossed before the construction of the Florida East Coast Railroad in 1895. Stranahan House, the oldest surviving structure in Broward County, served as a trading post and became the birthplace of Fort Lauderdale in 1911. Due to its historical and architectural significance, Stranahan House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and with the added attention and improvements in this area, it can be further appreciated from the south bank of the River. In addition to creating a welcoming public plaza and providing more openness near the sight of the landing, the applicant has indicated a willingness to provide a marker interpreting the historic significance of the landing;

- The greater distance proposed from the River allows for the creation of an

exceptional public realm space at the entrance to Riverwalk that includes both paved and lawn areas for strolling pedestrians, experiencing significant openness, light and air at the Riverwalk, as well as generous tree canopy. This space transitions seamlessly to the ground floor plaza of the north wing;

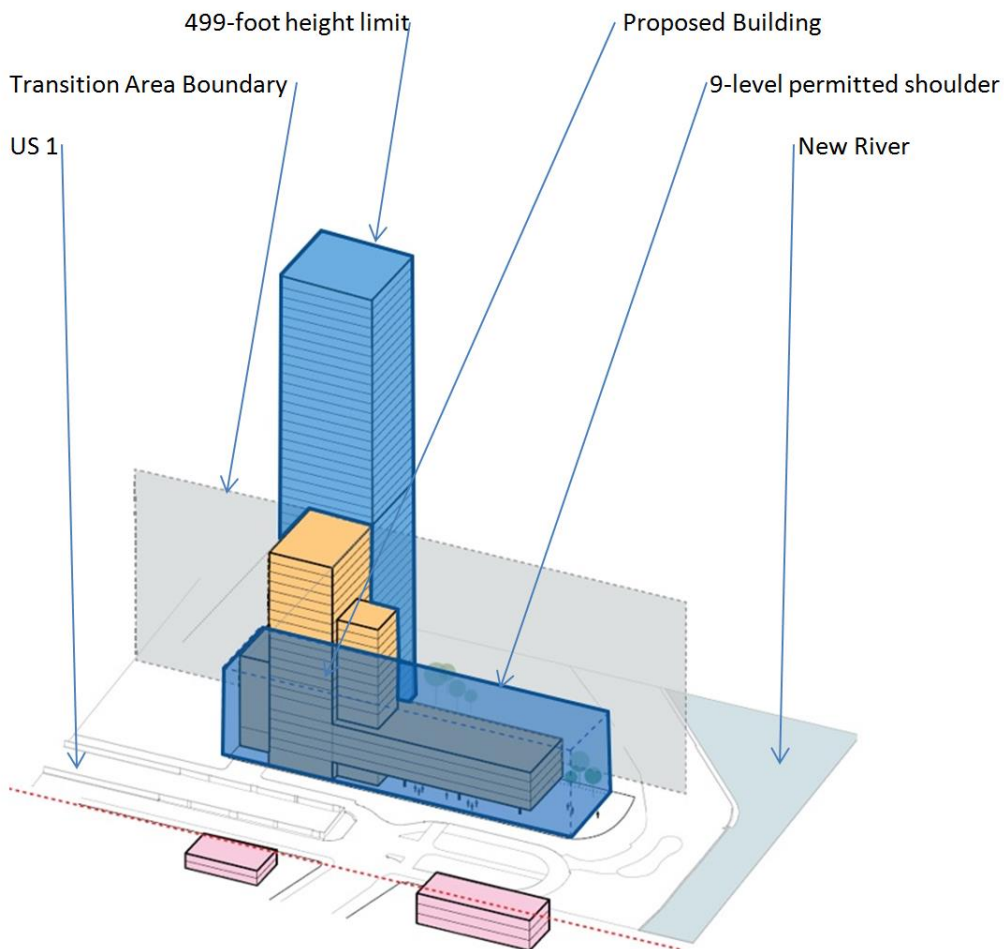
- In order to allow maximum connectivity within this area of the Riverwalk and Smoker Park, as well as an improved and safer environment for residents of the Rio Vista neighborhood, the ground floor of the north wing of the proposed building is open to the elements, serving as a large, covered plaza which helps to define public and private areas and activate the Riverwalk, while promoting public interaction and “eyes on the space” and can also create suitable space for programming, if so desired;
- By providing habitable space at the ground level of the south wing, including a lounge and fitness center enclosed in floor-to-ceiling glass, and through the unenclosed ground level of the north wing between the Park and the US 1 corridor, the proposed building will create an appropriate east side edge for Smoker Park;
- In response to its siting between two major public spaces, Smoker Park and the US 1 corridor, the building is designed to face both the street and the park, in stark contrast to the existing building on site which was built before the park was created and which turns its back to it;
- At 12,500 square feet or less, the tower floorplates are well within the maximum preferred size of 12,500 square feet, creating a pleasingly slender tower and allowing for sufficient light and air to reach the ground;
- The mass of the proposed building is further broken down through its composition as an ensemble of discrete volumes clearly differing in size, orientation and cladding materials;
- The façade compositions, consisting of a grid of vertical rectangles, is articulated by the projecting vertical and horizontal members of the grid, while projecting and recessed balconies enrich the arrangements. Further, the upper north wing is clad entirely in glass providing a touch of skyline drama, and representing a high level of architecture;
- The parking garage, while not lined with habitable space, is the same volume as the south wing above and is effectively screened and camouflaged in order to convincingly appear as habitable space;
- In order to maximize sustainability and provide a pleasing view from taller, neighboring high-rises, the roof of the north wing will contain the landscaped pool

and amenity area, while the roof of the upper north wing will feature a terrace opening from the 15th level of the south wing.

Massing Diagram

The massing diagram below, created by the applicant, illustrates how the proposed building mass relates to the site and the Type II Transition Area found in the DMP. The diagram illustrates the following:

- The proposed building (yellow) shoulder height is well below the nine-level maximum (blue);
- A building tower of up to 499 feet in height could be built on the portion of the property beyond the Transition Area;
- The property location, size and NRMP design guidelines would permit a building significantly closer to the river's edge than the one proposed. In addition the proposed building also includes unenclosed ground floor on the north wing which significantly contributes to the public realm.



City Commission Request for Review

Pursuant to ULDR Section 47-26A.2., City Commission Request for Review:

If an application for development permit is approved or denied and the ULDR provides for City Commission request for review ("CRR") as shown in Table 1 of Section 47-24, Development Permits and Procedures, or other provision of the ULDR, the City Commission may adopt a motion to set a hearing to review the application if it is found that the new project is in an area which due to characteristics of the project and the surrounding area requires additional review in order to ensure that development standards and criteria have been met and to ensure that the area surrounding the development is protected from the impacts of the development. The process for CRR may be initiated by a statement of intent filed by any member of the City Commission with the City Clerk with a copy to the department. Except as provided herein, the motion shall be considered within thirty (30) days of the decision by the lower body.

The motion approving a CRR shall set a date for consideration of the application no later than sixty (60) days from the date the motion is adopted. Notice of the hearing shall be given to the public by posting a sign at least ten (10) days before the hearing in accordance with Section 47-27, Notice Procedures for Public Hearing. Review by the City Commission shall be by de novo hearing supplemented by the record below and the same standards and criteria applicable to the development permit shall be applied. At the conclusion of the hearing the City Commission shall take action approving, approving with conditions or denying the application.

Should the City Commission wish to proceed with the CRR request, a hearing must be set within the requisite sixty (60) day period to consider the application relative to the Alexan-Tarpon River project.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018* initiative, included within the Neighborhood Enhancement Cylinder of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- Goal 5: Be a community of strong, beautiful, and healthy neighborhoods.
- Objective 2: Enhance the beauty, aesthetics, and environmental quality of neighborhoods.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Community*.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Abbreviated Plans Set

Exhibit 2 – City Commission Request for Review Memo

Exhibit 3 – Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability Letter

Exhibit 4 – Trip Generation Analysis Letter

Prepared by: Randall Robinson, Planner III

Department Director: Anthony Greg Fajardo, Sustainable Development