



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING

#17-0084

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

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

DATE: January 18, 2017

TITLE: Quasi-Judicial Resolution Approving a Site Plan Level II Development
Permit Allocating 659 Post-2003 Downtown Dwelling Units, for Phase 1 of
the Proposed Development - Riverfront - Las Olas Riverfront, L.P. - 300
SW 1 Avenue - Case Number R16049

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a resolution approving a Site Plan Level II Development Permit that includes the allocation of 659 post-2003 dwelling units for Phase 1 of the proposed “Riverfront” mixed-use development.

Background

The applicant, Las Olas Riverfront, L.P., submitted a development permit application for the construction of a development that consists of two towers; 42-story and 38-story on the north side of the New River, between SW 1st Avenue and the Florida East Coast (FEC) railroad right-of-way, in the Downtown Regional Activity Center-City Center (RAC-CC) Zoning District. The development will consist of a total of 1,214 residential units, 58,000 square feet of restaurant/retail space, and a 1,887-space parking garage. At this time the applicant requests the allocation of 659 dwelling units for Phase 1 of the project. The site plan is provided as Exhibit 1.

The development is proposed to be constructed in two phases. The first phase will comprise of the 42-story south tower and southern portion of the parking garage, encompassing 659 residential units, 1,044 parking spaces, 35,045 square feet of enclosed restaurant/retail space, and 18,000 square feet of outdoor dining space fronting on Riverwalk, SW 1st Avenue, and a proposed 25-foot-wide pedestrian arcade parallel to the FEC railroad right-of-way, linking SW 2nd Street and the Riverwalk. Public realm improvements associated with the first phase include a total of 42,000 square feet of publicly accessible space, encompassing the Riverwalk and the west side pedestrian promenade. Another 2,000 square feet would comprise of the right-of-way improvements along SW 1st Avenue. To re-open the view of the New River and provide a direct visual connection from SW 1st Avenue, the development also includes the demolition of the two

pedestrian bridges connecting the east and west parcels of the existing Las Olas Riverfront development. This demolition would occur as part of phase 1.

The second phase will consist of the 38-story north tower and the northern portion of the parking garage, encompassing 555 residential units, 783 parking spaces, and 4,955 square feet of restaurant/retail space fronting along SW 2nd Street. Second phase public realm improvements would comprise of the northernmost portion of the west side pedestrian promenade and the SW 2nd Street right-of-way improvements on the north side, totaling 2,000 square feet.

The pedestrian connection between SW 1st Avenue and Riverwalk, south of West Las Olas Boulevard, and between the east and west parcels of the existing Las Olas Riverfront development, is controlled by the owner of the east parcel, as per the Riverwalk License Agreement. The applicant has committed to improvements along this 17,000 square-foot section as indicated on the site plan. However, as this area is not controlled by the applicant, it is not known at this time whether these improvements will be part of phase 1 or phase 2.

Pursuant to Section 47-13.20 of the City's Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR), Downtown RAC Review Process and Special Regulations, density within the Downtown RAC is limited to a specific pool of dwelling units. The development plan requires a total allocation of 1,214 dwelling units. However, 691 units are currently available to allocate to Downtown projects south of Broward Boulevard, therefore the applicant is seeking unit allocation for Phase I which comprises of 659 residential units, leaving a balance of 32 units.

On January 20, 2016 a land use plan amendment was conditionally approved for an additional 5,000 units to be allocated to the Downtown RAC. The applicant proposes to allocate the remaining 555 units from the new 5,000 unit pool when the land use plan amendment is in full effect. Allocation of the additional 555 dwelling units will require a separate action by the City Commission.

Allocation of post-2003 dwelling units shall not take effect until the application is reviewed and approved by the City Commission. The City Commission is to review the application and determine whether it is in compliance with the criteria and if it is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan (DMP) design guidelines, or has proposed alternative designs which meet the intent of the design guidelines.

The proposed development is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan in that the use is permitted in the Downtown Regional Activity Center land use and more specifically supports OBJECTIVE 1.16: to concentrate development, particularly large-scale, mixed-use development, in the Downtown-RAC to discourage urban sprawl and OBJECTIVE 1.14, POLICY 1.14.4 to preserve the open character and vistas along the New River by moderating building heights on the riverfront and by coordinating public improvements with private development.

The project was reviewed by the Design Review Team (DRT) on September 7, 2016 and by the Development Review Committee (DRC) on September 13, 2016. The applicant has addressed DRC and DRT comments. The application, record and report of the DRC and DRT are attached as Exhibit 2. Additional documentation is on file with the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) and is available upon request.

The proposed development does not include the three locally-designated properties at the SW corner of SW 1st Avenue and 2nd Street, all recorded as 300 SW 1st Avenue.

The project was presented to the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) at its meeting of December 5, 2016. The HPB voted unanimously to acknowledge receipt of the information regarding the project and expressed concern about the effect the project would have on adjacent and nearby historic properties, and requested the City Commission consider the details of the design. In addition to the concerns regarding massing, the HPB asked that the project be sensitive to the adjacent historic properties and the H-1 Historic District on the west side of the FEC railroad tracks.

The application was reviewed for consistency with the design guidelines of the DMP and the New River Master Plan (NRMP). The project is consistent with the DMP's intent to create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly "live, work, play" downtown environment. It is also consistent with the intent of the New River plan's intent for this location which defines it as central activity destination in the heart of the Riverwalk District, envisioned as a major retail and entertainment hub located at the existing Las Olas Riverfront site.

Project highlights are listed below:

- The building maximizes active ground level uses through the inclusion of 35,045 square feet of restaurant/retail space on two levels fronting Riverwalk. To provide connectivity along SW 2nd Street, between the Downtown Core and the Himmarshee District, 4,955 square feet of restaurant/retail space is planned fronting SW 2nd Street;
- To enrich the public realm and provide a more spacious and connected pedestrian experience around and through the site, an expansive, double-height, unenclosed ground floor space, dubbed the 'Las Olas Plaza,' links West Las Olas Boulevard with a pedestrian arcade between SW 2nd Street and Riverwalk, paralleling the FEC railroad tracks. The Las Olas Plaza also provides connectivity between West Las Olas and the Riverwalk crossing of the railroad tracks. In total, the proposed development includes approximately 40,000 square feet more of public realm compared to the existing development on the site, of which the Las Olas Plaza comprises approximately 25,000 square feet;
- Further providing pedestrian connectivity, the project, and specifically the Las Olas Plaza, has been designed around the proposed Wave streetcar station in the 200 block of SW 1st Avenue;

- To provide an active west frontage facing the Himmarshee District, the parking garage is lined with residential units. Residential units also line the parking garage on the south façade facing Riverwalk. The east façade garage screen, facing SW 1 Avenue, is composed of an image applied to metal fin louvers that twist in profile to create an artistic pattern. The twisting screen allows varied degrees of light and activity to show from behind and creates an interesting pedestrian experience that reads differently from varying points in the surrounding area. A glazed façade, aligning with the space between the towers above, interrupts the metal screen and includes projecting, multi-level terraces for people to gather and interact;
- The parking pedestal, on which the towers sit, is capped with the landscaped, 91,000-square-foot amenity deck on the 13th level. Continuing the theme of the expansive 'Las Olas Plaza' on the ground level, the amenity deck, which is the base level of the towers, sweeps around and under the towers providing covered, double-height, as well as open-to-the-sky, lounging and recreational space. 51,000 square feet of the amenity deck is open to the sky, with the balance under building or canopy cover. This double-height open space between the amenity deck and the towers provides a clear break between the base and the towers, further reducing the mass of the project;
- While the preferred maximum building 'streetwall' length is 300 feet, the length of pedestal along the FEC railroad right-of-way totals 495 feet and the pedestal length along SW 1st Avenue is 416 feet-10 inches. The design guidelines of the DMP state that site-specific solutions should ensure that the treatment and articulation along elevations provides attractive and pedestrian-friendly walking environments. To mitigate the impact of these 'streetwall' lengths, the west façade of the parking pedestal is proposed to be lined almost entirely with residential units. As such the west face of the pedestal is almost entirely composed of floor-to-ceiling glass curtain wall. Meanwhile, balconies of the west façade of the pedestal will alternate on every other floor, providing articulation and a pleasing rhythm. The east façade of the pedestal is lined by a combination of residential units, on the southernmost 67 feet, closest to Riverwalk; glazed translucent glass screening, aligning with the 64-foot-wide space between the towers above, interrupts the artistic metal screen and includes projecting, multi-level terraces for people to gather and interact. The terraces will be accessed directly from the individual parking levels. The resulting artistic metal screen panels on either side of the translucent glass façade measure 83 feet-5 inches in length to the north and 178 feet-1 inch in length to the south. The corridors providing access to the units of the west façade wrap around the north façade, where they are enclosed in floor-to-ceiling glass, and continue southward along the east façade for 38 feet, overlooking the adjacent historic properties, and thereby mitigating the impact of the garage pedestal on the historic properties;
- Similarly, the preferred maximum streetwall height in the Downtown Core is nine levels. However, the proposed pedestal is 12 levels in height. To mitigate the

impact of the 12-level height, as described, the west façade is lined almost entirely with residential units enclosed in floor-to-ceiling glass curtain wall, punctuated by projecting, alternating balconies. The south façade of the pedestal, facing Riverwalk, is lined entirely with residential units. The vertical mass of the east façade, facing SW 1st Avenue, is mitigated by a 2-level-high band of translucent glass screening on the 11th and 12th levels, extending across the top of the north artistic metal screen panel. Therefore, the north artistic screen panel extends from the 2nd level to the 10th level, while the south artistic screen panel extends from the 2nd to the 12th level. The 2-level difference in height between the two artistic metal screen panels further breaks down the mass of the east façade of the parking pedestal;

- As originally submitted, the plan called for two rectangular towers that overlapped when viewed from the east and west, thereby creating an enormous massive structure on the skyline as seen from the east and west. In working with the applicant, staff suggested the tower design be re-examined to address the massiveness and alignment. The applicant revised the building design to an L-shape to allow for a more significant separation between the towers when viewed from east and west, thereby cutting in half the apparent mass of the project. The resulting L-shaped towers are elegantly sheathed in floor-to-ceiling glass throughout. Balconies are provided on projecting floor plates, while other facades feature uninterrupted shear glass curtain-walls similar to Las Olas River House. Each tower contains a unique feature that carves out notches measuring 4-stories in height, providing for planted 'sky lounge' terraces as open space for residents, and more effectively reducing tower mass and floor plate size. The proposed tower floor plate size consists of approximately 23,000 square feet for the south tower and approximately 22,000 square feet for the north tower. The L-shape plan of the towers allows the floorplates to orient in east-west and north-south directions, thereby breaking the mass of the tower into four components as viewed from all directions. Each floor plate component is under the 12,500 square feet preferred maximum for residential buildings in the Downtown Core;
- The terracing theme continues at the top of the towers creating a pleasing silhouette on the skyline. At 499 feet to its highest rooftop, the south tower would be the tallest building in the City. At its 46th level, the south tower is capped by a double-height cocktail bar space open to the public. The cocktail bar is 1,750 square feet in size, with 3,000 square feet of exterior terrace area. The rooftop bar and terrace will provide sweeping views of the City, the ocean, and the surroundings.

Transportation and Mobility

Vehicular ingress and egress into the site, for residents, visitors and business patrons, is provided from SW 1st Avenue and from SW 2nd Street. A vehicular driveway off of SW 1st Avenue provides garage entry as well as pedestrian drop-off and pick-up. The resulting pedestrian island encompasses sidewalk as well as the proposed Wave streetcar stop on the 200 block of SW 1 Avenue and landscaped area. The applicant is

designing the canopy of the Wave streetcar station such that it will take inspiration from the façade of the adjacent historically-designated building. The applicant is proposing to provide 1,944 parking spaces on site.

The site is bordered by a 29 foot-4 inch sidewalk on its 2nd Street frontage. Along SW 1st Avenue, the sidewalk ranges in width from 7 feet to 17 feet. However it should be noted that the driveway is proposed to be flush with the sidewalk, providing a feeling of spaciousness even at the narrowest point. The southern end of the driveway coincides with the entry into the Las Olas Plaza. The west entrance to the plaza has a depth of 21 feet-4 inches and a width of 150 feet-9 inches. While the grade change on the SW 1st Avenue sidewalk is currently addressed with steps, the proposed streetscape, through a sloped landscaped area in the driveway island eliminates the need for steps and provides a more seamless public realm.

At its narrowest point, the pedestrian portal to Riverwalk between the proposed development and the existing east portion of the Las Olas Riverfront development would be 27 feet-wide. The stretch of Riverwalk in front of the development is proposed to range from 9 feet-7 inches at its narrowest point to 16 feet at its widest. It should be noted that where the Riverwalk is proposed to be at its narrowest it would be actually be 21 feet wide with an approximately 6 foot wide flush planter bifurcating it. The juncture of Riverwalk and the proposed walkway along the west side of the development is approximately 27 feet wide. The west entry to Las Olas Plaza is 64 feet wide. The walkway along the west side, and paralleling the railroad tracks is 22 feet-8 inches wide at its narrowest point and flares out to 42 feet-1 inch where it intersects with the SW 2nd Street sidewalk at its north end.

The applicant's traffic study, prepared by Kimley-Horn, dated August 4, 2016, indicates that the street system surrounding the development site has sufficient capacity to accommodate the new trips anticipated by the proposed project. Further, the site is vested for a 144,720-square-foot shopping center (85,720 square-foot shopping center and 15 screen movie theater). The proposed redevelopment program results in a net reduction of 1,206 daily trips, net reduction of 64 P.M. peak hour trips, and a net increase of 291 A.M. peak hour trips when compared to the vested development containing the 144,720 square foot shopping center. The traffic study is included as Exhibit 3.

The City's Transportation and Mobility Department staff has reviewed the study and has concurred with the findings.

Riverwalk License Agreement

Through amendments to the Riverwalk Licensing Agreement, the City will consent to the multiple overhangs of the balconies and encroachment into the Brickell Ave right-of-way.

Applicant shall acknowledge that the commercial dock space, which borders the applicant's property, is under the exclusive control and use of the City. Any approval to

use the commercial space is subject to a right-of-first-refusal in favor of the owner of the east parcel of the existing Las Olas Riverfront development. The owner of the east parcel shall forego his rights before the City can convey any rights in the Commercial Dock space to the applicant.

Regarding day dockage space, applicant shall acknowledge his/her property does not border the designated day dockage area and has no rights to use the space under the license agreement. Applicant may have a separate agreement with the owner of the east parcel, provided the City's Licensing Agreement is complied with and the appropriate licensing fees are paid. Said agreement will require the signature of the owner of the east parcel of the existing Las Olas Riverfront development as well.

Conditions of Approval

Should the City Commission approve the development, the following conditions are proposed:

1. Applicant shall submit an application to City Commission for the allocation of 555 dwelling units from the new 5,000 dwelling unit pool, with an approved and allocated 659 dwelling units associated with the adopted Resolution providing for a total of 1,214 total dwelling units for the project.
2. At time of permit submittals for each phase, applicant will be required to pay a Park Impact Fee for the proposed dwelling units prior to issuance of building permits in accordance with Sec. 47-38A of the ULDR;
3. Prior to application for final DRC approval, applicant shall provide confirmation from the School District that the residential development is exempt or vested from the requirements of public school concurrency, or a School Capacity Availability Determination (SCAD) letter that confirms that capacity is available, or if capacity is not available, that mitigation requirements have been satisfied;
4. Prior to Final DRC, the applicant must comply with Section 47-25.2.P. of the ULDR regarding archaeological resources by documenting compliance from the State, County, or other agency/entity with jurisdiction over archaeological matters and submitting this information to the City.
5. Prior to Final DRC, the applicant shall provide for City review and approval a bifurcated and amended Riverwalk Licensing Agreement reflecting the conditions and requirements of the proposed project described herein.
6. Prior to issuance of building permit for Phase 2, applicant shall provide a more detailed conceptual staging/storage and construction traffic routing plan for Phase 2. Applicant shall acknowledge that construction debris mitigation measures are to be included in a Construction Debris Mitigation Plan and submitted to the City's Building Official prior to issuance of a building permit for

the subject development. Additional measures may be required to ensure compliance with the City's Code, as deemed necessary by the Building Official;

7. Existing Las Riverfront Special Entertainment District Security Plan shall be validated, amended or bifurcated to reflect proposed project prior to Final DRC sign-off. Applicant shall be responsible for submitting for City approval an updated security plan for the 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 – Site Plan

Exhibit 2 – Application, DRC and DRT Comments

Exhibit 3 – Traffic Study

Exhibit 4 – Resolution Approving Site Plan

Exhibit 5 – Resolution Denying Site Plan

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