



City of Albuquerque

Planning Department

Richard J. Berry, Mayor

Memorandum

September 9, 2014

To: Suzanne Lubar, Planning Director
Brennon Williams, Zoning Enforcement Officer

From: Kym E. Dicome,
Current Planning Manager

Subject: CUATRO Senior Apartments
DRT# 14-010

This is a proposed 56 unit senior housing project located within the North Fourth Street Corridor Plan (the Plan). The Plan includes Standards that a project must address. The Plan also allows for deviations to these Standards if they are found to be in substantial compliance and meet the intent of the Plan. The applicant has requested deviations to four Standards as stated in his letter dated August 22, 2014 (attached Exhibit A). These deviations have been analyzed by Staff, and a discussion, along with the recommendations for each deviation are listed below.

There is one additional deviation that the applicant did not mention in the letter but it was listed as a comment at DRB Sketch Plat review. The DRB questioned whether the proposed front façade met the Standard for building articulation. Staff has determined that the proposed façade does not meet the Standard quantitatively, but does meet the intent. That analysis is listed below as Item 5.

The Plan requires that the Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) determine if the deviation requests are in substantial compliance, as well as meeting its intent. It also requires that the Planning Director determine if the proposed Project is processed through DRB or EPC, depending on the magnitude of the deviations.

1. Dedication of Right of Way

Section 4 of the Plan includes Conceptual Street Cross Sections (4.1.H) for all of Fourth Street that falls within the boundary of the Plan. These Concepts are intended to enhance the street for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as reduced travel lane widths to slow traffic down. This can only be accomplished with additional right of way (R/W) on Fourth Street. At the Design Review Team meeting (DRT), Transportation Planning noted that a dedication of five feet of R/W may be required from this project site. The applicant requested a deviation from this potential requirement stating that it would adversely affect the design and that a majority of the existing buildings along Fourth about the public sidewalk, not allowing an additional dedication of R/W for this stretch of Fourth Street.

Based on an engineering study that was done by DMD, as required by the Plan after its adoption, it was determined that a majority of the area is built out with buildings abutting the sidewalk, leaving no room for right of way dedication. Subsequently, Transportation Planning has stated that the R/W dedication for this project will not be required. *Therefore, it is no longer an issue.*

2. Building Mounted Signage

The Plan calls for the building mounted signage, including street addressing, to be placed between the second story line and the first floor ceiling and cannot exceed 2 feet in height. With the proposed building design, the allowable signage would be 2 feet in height and 300 feet long totaling 600 square feet (sf). The sign would have to be located 10 feet above the ground floor, which is the area where the portal, which runs along the entire front façade, is to be located. There is also the potential obstruction of view by the proposed street trees. The applicant wants to place the sign in the middle of the building running vertical for better visibility, and also so it does not conflict with the location of the portal. The sign would be 4 feet wide and 22 feet long totaling 88 sf, and would be located at the highest portion of the building. The Plan requires that the street address signs be located in the same area, presenting the same conflicts. The applicant is proposing to place two 18 sf address number signs at either end of the building facing Fourth Street. The applicant had discussions with Eric Mendoza, with the City's Fire Marshall's Office, who indicated that their preference is to place the address numbers as high as possible on the building for clear visibility and reduce the possibility of obstructions. (Email – Exhibit B).

The exact location of the proposed signs is not in accordance with the Plan, but with the location of the portal, it makes it impossible to place the sign in the area outlined in the Plan. Additionally, the placement required by the Plan would create a potential obstruction by street trees, creating a unique situation that warrants a deviation to the building mounted sign locations. *Staff finds that the deviation to the building mounted sign location is in substantial compliance and meets the intent of the Plan.*

3. Exterior Lighting

The Plan requires that the exterior building wall lighting to be located 6' to 14' above grade. The proposed building portal that runs the length of the front façade facing Fourth Street will have lighting placed in the ceiling of the structure. This will allow the exterior of the building and the sidewalk to be illuminated, which is the intent of the exterior building lighting. *Therefore, Staff finds that the deviation to the location of the exterior building lighting meets the intent of the Plan.*

4. Parking

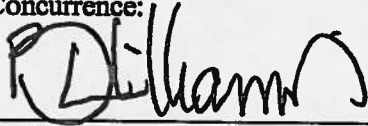
The applicant has requested consideration of a reduction in the required number of off street spaces by 4. There are 14 on street parking spaces abutting the site on the north, east, and south sides. According to the DPM, only 7 can be applied to the parking calculations. But, in essence, there are 7 additional spaces that can be used for this project. Also the project is a senior housing project located on a transit line (4th Street) which will reduce the need for vehicles. *Staff finds that the deviation to the required parking is in substantial conformance with the Plan.*

5. Building Articulation

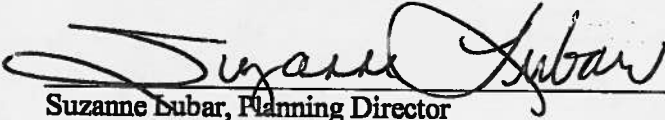
The Plan requires that any proposed projects are designed using one type of the building forms (section 3.9 of the Plan). This project is designed using the Flex Building form. This building type requires that the facades of the building facing a public street, which is longer than 50 feet, must be articulated at a maximum of every forty feet along the street. It also requires that Entryways be located every 40 feet along the front façade. The proposed project has an entry at the middle of the building and two openings at the ground floor that are secured with a gabion wall and metal fencing. While these are not open entries, they accomplish the intent by offering articulation, but allowing security to the complex, which is a concern in a senior housing project. *Staff finds that the deviation is in substantial compliance with the Plan.*

In Conclusion, Staff finds that the requested deviations to the Standards meet the intent of the Plan and are in substantial conformance with the Plan. Staff finds that the deviations are minor enough to warrant that the Site Plan for this project be processed through ~~a public hearing by~~ DRB. This memo along with all of the exhibits (A-K) that the applicant submitted with this deviation request must be submitted with the DRB application.

Concurrence:



Brennon Williams, Zoning Enforcement Officer



Suzanne Lubar, Planning Director