

Date: December 03, 2018

Project: Former Salvation Army Buildings

Location: 501 & 505 South Weber St.
Colorado Springs, CO

To: Attn: Ryan Tefertiller
City of Colorado Springs
Urban Planning
Planning & Community Development

501 & 505 South Weber – Project Statement

Project Description:

The applicant is seeking to renovate the existing facades of the two buildings on the property with the intent of providing opportunities for a variety of mixed uses. The subject property is currently zoned FBZ-T2B where mixed use development is permitted. The goal is draw residential, commercial, and office use to the project that would be a catalyst to a vibrant urban experience for this section of downtown.

The facade design for 501 S. Weber seeks to preserve the integrity of the existing brick, while introducing some contemporary materials such as corrugated metal panels, perforated metal screens, as well as transparent and translucent glass. Both of the existing exterior stairwells on the North and South sides of the buildings will be wrapped in corrugated metal and the existing openings will be covered by perforated metal screen the provide protection from the elements and still allow light to penetrate the space. At both the main entrance at Weber and the secondary entrance off of the rear parking lot, “entry towers” have been introduced to help with way finding off of the street and alley. Both entrances would also take advantage of a trellis system to further emphasize the point architecturally. Furthermore on the main level new patios and landscaping will be introduced on both the east and west sides with the intent for indoor/outdoor commercial use (ideally a restaurant/public market). The intention is to construct studio apartments on the second floor which will have their own attached balcony. These balconies would continue the use of metal, but would also introduce translucent glass and wood to the facade material pallet.

The facade design for 505 S. Weber also seeks to preserve the integrity of the original warehouse materials of brick on the street and corrugated metal panels on the remaining three sides. A two story vertical element on the North West corner of the building helps identify the main entry off the street, but also allows the metal panels on the North to wrap the corner. A material change on the sides of the existing entry bump in of wood will also help emphasize the main entry. The existing window openings on both stories will be enlarged to allow for more transparency to the street. Furthermore, the larger openings on the second floor will house roll up glass garage doors with complimentary Juliet balconies to allow for an indoor/outdoor experience. Above each opening will be large metal and wood window awnings to serve as sun shades. On the North, East, and South facades damaged metal panels will be replaced and the garage doors at the loading dock will be replaced with updated glass garage doors.

The proposed improvements to both buildings will update the outdated facades and will add to the life of Weber street with a variety of mixed uses where very little currently exists.

Review Criteria:

2.2 The Sectors

The project is located in the Transition 2 sector of the FBZ.

2.3 Building Type

This proposal is for two existing buildings formerly transitional housing (501) and warehousing (505). We are proposing to convert the buildings into “Mixed-Use” in alignment with the definition found in section 2.3.1.

2.3.2: The “Mixed-Use Building” type is a permitted use in the Transition 2 Sector.

2.3.3 Building Envelopes:

The buildings are existing. The two buildings viewed as a whole comply with the side and front setbacks of the code. The existing rear setback 84’-10” does not comply with the requirements for corner lots (10’ maximum). We are currently not proposing to bring this existing non-conforming condition into compliance.

2.4 Frontages

The existing building most closely complies with the requirements for 2.4.4 “Shopfront”. This is a permitted frontage type for a mixed use building per Table 2.4.6.

2.4.7 Glazing & Fenestration: The Shopfront frontage type requires a minimum of 60% glazing. Our current proposal is to increase the glazing percentage of the west facade of 501 and 505 to 54% and 68% respectively. As an average this is over 60% and brings the two buildings more closely into alignment with the intent of the FBZ.

2.5 Uses

The proposed uses of retail/restaurant (first floor of 501), residential (second floor of 501), and office (both floors of 505) comply with the permitted uses in Section 2.5.

2.6 Parking

Per FBZ requirements, assuming the most intensive potential uses for the building, 178 parking stalls are required. Taking advantage of the 75% Parking Reduction Factor (2.6.1) for a combination of residential and office use, the requirement is reduced to 134 parking stalls. The existing site allows for a total of 33 parking stalls on site. We are requesting a Warrant for this deficiency (see below).

2.7 Block Standards

N/A

2.8 Public Spaces

We are proposing to leave the existing Right of Way improvements, landscaping, street trees, and sidewalk in place. However we will be providing new landscaping in the existing front yard setback of 501 South Weber.

2.9 Signage

Signage will be submitted at a later date.

Parking Warrant Request:

Using the City Zoning parking requirements this site requires 134 parking stalls. The existing lot provides 33 stalls on site. Along the Western edge of the property there are 13 on street stalls; with many more beyond the property line and across the street. Furthermore, the site is within walking distance of public transit and has excellent access to the city's bicycle network. Because of these factors and the close proximity of downtown we are formally requesting a parking warrant.

The property at 501 & 505 South Weber is existing and does not allow for any additional parking stalls on site. We believe these two buildings are salvageable and can be rehabilitated to help create a more vibrant, livable and walkable downtown. The parking that is achievable on-site does not (per the FBZ) allow for an active use and therefore a warrant is necessary.

Warrant Criteria:

5.4.3.1 Is the requested warrant consistent with the intent of the form-based code?

Yes. The Introduction to the Form Based Code states the goal of the code to “further the revitalization currently underway by bringing residents into the downtown, encouraging mixed-use development and maximizing streetscape vibrancy to transform the area into the pedestrian-friendly heart of the region”. We believe this project does exactly that. By limiting the amount of surface parking and revitalizing and re-appropriating two existing buildings into the vibrant city fabric that is downtown Colorado Springs we are meeting the intent of the form-based code.

5.4.3.2 Is the requested warrant, as well as the project as a whole consistent with with Section 4 - Design Guidelines of the form-based code?

Yes. Section 4 starts by stating that the design guidelines were “created to create a high-quality, pedestrian friendly urban environment”. The buildings and rear alley-facing surface parking lot at 501 and 505 South Weber were built long before the implementation of the FBZ however the buildings provide a pedestrian friendly street frontage and an appropriately sized parking lot to help the building function while allowing the city fabric to be pedestrian friendly.

5.4.3.3 Is the requested warrant reasonable due to the proposed project's exceptional civic or environmental design.

Yes. By turning a large storage warehouse (a use that arguably doesn't belong downtown) into a vibrant mixed-use project the benefit to the civic pride of our downtown is unquestionable. It has been proven time and time again that “the most sustainable building is the one that already exists”. We believe that adaptive re-use of underutilized buildings is the most environmentally friendly type of work we can do. Although the existing nature of these buildings does not allow us to park the project per current code we believe the benefits to the civic and environmental realms outweighs the parking deficiency.

5.4.3.4 Is the requested warrant consistent with the Downtown Master Plan?

Yes. The overall goal of the Downtown Master Plan is for a “vibrant, livable, downtown”. This project is furthering this goal.



5.4.3.5 Is the requested warrant consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan?

As you know PlanCOS is in the process of updating the comprehensive plan. This update will go further to enforce the idea that our city (especially our downtown) is made for people first. It will also emphasize the importance of alternative (to the single occupant vehicle) transportation. We believe our project is consistent with this.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with questions and/or comments on this Project Statement.

Respectfully,

Echo Architecture, LLC

by 

Ryan Lloyd

Architect