

DOWNTOWN REVIEW BOARD AGENDA

ITEM NO: 6A and 6B

STAFF: RYAN TEFERTILLER

FILE NOS:

AR DP 16-00296-A1MN18 – QUASI-JUDICIAL

CPC R – 18-00045 – QUASI-JUDICIAL

PROJECT: HILTON GARDEN INN AMENDMENT AND DENSITY BONUS

APPLICANT: MWT DESIGN STUDIO

OWNER: NEW VISION HOTELS



PROJECT SUMMARY:

1. Project Description: This proposal would allow multiple changes to the previously approved Hilton Garden Inn building: 1) addition of an 11th floor restaurant through use of the Form-Based Code's Density Bonus provisions; 2) numerous changes to the building façade; and 3) a separate application to allow slight relief from the Form-Based Code's minimum glazing standards (57% glazing where 60% is required) on the Bijou-facing façade. The site is located at 125 N. Cascade Ave., is 13,500 square feet in size,

is zoned FBZ-COR (Form-Based Zone – Corridor Sector), and is located on the southeast corner of N. Cascade Ave. and E. Bijou St. **(FIGURE 1)**

2. Applicant's Project Statement: **(FIGURE 2)**
3. Planning & Development Team's Recommendation: **Approval of the application with technical modifications**

BACKGROUND:

1. Site Address: 125 N. Cascade Ave.
2. Existing Zoning/Land Use: FBZ-COR (Form-Based Zone – Corridor Sector) / The site is currently under construction for a 10-story hotel with ground floor commercial uses.
3. Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:
 - North: FBZ-COR / commercial and civic (parking) uses
 - South: FBZ-COR / commercial and office uses
 - East: FBZ-COR / commercial and office uses
 - West: FBZ-COR / office and civic uses
4. Comprehensive Plan/Designated 2020 Land Use: Regional Center
5. Annexation: Town of Colorado Springs (1872)
6. Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use: Experience Downtown Master Plan (2016) / Activity Center Mixed Use
7. Subdivision: Town of Colorado Springs (1871)
8. Zoning Enforcement Action: None
9. Physical Characteristics: The site is flat and is currently being redeveloped in conformance with a recently approved development plan.

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT:

One hundred and fifty-eight surrounding property owners were notified of the proposal shortly after the application was submitted. This notification provided basic information regarding the application, and instructions on how to submit comments to Staff. Staff received only two comments regarding the project; both were in support of the applications **(FIGURE 3)**. Additional notices will be sent and the site will be posted prior to the Downtown Review Board hearing.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA AND MAJOR ISSUES

The Hilton Garden Inn project was originally approved in July of 2016. The plans illustrated a 10-story, 164-room hotel with multiple commercial tenant spaces at ground level. The application met all standards associated with the Downtown Form-Based Code and was therefore reviewed and approved administratively.

The current application would allow multiple changes to the previously approved Hilton Garden Inn building including the addition of an 11th floor restaurant through use of the Form-Based Code's Density Bonus provisions as well as numerous changes to the building façade. While the façade changes, including the administrative relief application, could have been reviewed administratively, both applications are being referred to the Downtown Review Board (DRB) since the proposed 11th floor addition requires DRB approval.

The property is zoned FBZ-COR (Form-Based Zone – Corridor Sector) which has a maximum building height of 10 stories. Although it has not been used to date, the Form-Based Code includes the ability to exceed maximum building height by incorporating project elements that provide exceptional benefits to the project, the surrounding area, and/or Downtown as a whole. Project elements that are eligible for additional building height include: affordable housing units,

green or sustainable building techniques, historic preservation, significant public art, and a couple different parking related items. Section 3 of the Form-Based Code, Density Bonuses, establishes a point system where inclusion of one or more of the eligible project elements within the project is rewarded with points that can then be used to receive additional stories beyond the standard building height maximums in Section 2 of the Code. The actions required to earn points are quantitative and therefore minimize subjectivity and/or discretion on behalf of staff. Additionally, the additional building height cannot be granted administratively by staff; DRB approval is necessary.

According to Section 3.3 of the Form-Based Code, 3 density bonus points are necessary to earn one additional story beyond a building's maximum as described in Section 2.3.4. The Hilton Garden Inn Amendment proposes the addition of significant bicycle storage in order to earn the required 3 density bonus points. Specifically, the project includes 26 bike storage racks in a secure bike storage room, along with employee locker rooms with shower facilities in the basement of the hotel. While the proposed bicycle storage facilities will not directly benefit the hotel guests or retail customers, they will be a welcome addition to many of the staff that are employed within the building. Given that the hotel has no on-site vehicle parking, driving employees will have to locate off-site parking often at a substantial cost. Many may choose to take public transit or ride their bikes to work to avoid the cost and hassle of locating parking. The provision of the proposed bike facilities will ultimately help free-up public parking opportunities in the area for other employees and customers in the area.

The other element of the proposed project is more straight-forward. After administrative approval of the project's development plan in 2016, the project architects and engineers completed work to establish a final utility service plan for the project. This plan required the creation of significant vaults, meters and venting along the north façade of the building, none of which were anticipated during the development plan review process. The proposed development plan amendment reflects a revised Bijou-facing façade including the new utility infrastructure elements.

While significant efforts have been made by the applicant, Colorado Springs Utilities, and Planning staff to minimize the impacts of the required utility infrastructure on the street-level design of the building, this issue forced the proposed Administrative Relief request to allow 57% glazing on the Bijou façade where a storefront building type normally requires at least 60% glazing. By code, Administrative Relief applications are reviewed using three formal criteria:

1. The strict application of the regulation in question is unreasonable given the development proposal or the measures proposed by the applicant or that the property has extraordinary or exceptional physical conditions that do not generally exist in nearby properties in the same zoning district and such conditions will not allow a reasonable use of the property in its current zone in the absence of relief, and
2. The intent of this Zoning Code and the specific regulation in question is preserved, and
3. The granting of the administrative relief will not result in an adverse impact on surrounding properties.

Staff finds that all three criteria are met and recommends approval of the administrative relief application as well as the proposed development plan amendment and density bonus request.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

AR DP 16-00296-A1MN18 – HILTON GARDEN INN AMENDMENT AND DENSITY BONUS

Approve the proposed amendment to Hilton Garden Inn development plan along with the granting of density bonus points to allow the addition of an 11th story to the building based on the findings that the requirements found in section 3 of the Form-Based Code are met once the following technical modifications are addressed:

1. Add the file number (AR DP 16-00296-A1MN18) to all plan sheets as well as the amendment history box.
2. Clarify the scope of the amendment with clouding and plan notes.
3. Clarify the implications of phasing on the plan's building elevations through plan notes and labels.

CPC R 18-00045 – HILTON GARDEN INN ADMINISTRATIVE RELIEF

Approve the proposed administrative relief request for the Hilton Garden Inn to allow 57% glazing on the Bijou façade where 60% is the minimum standard based on the findings that the criteria found in Section 7.5.1102 of City Code are met.