

**WORKSESSION**

**Design Review Board Case EE/CDRB #2016-0002**

**2410 & 2460 Mill Road – Hoffman Town Center Blocks 4 & 5**

Application	General Data	
<p><b>Project Name:</b> Hoffman Town Center Blocks 4 &amp; 5</p> <p><b>Location:</b> 2410 and 2460 Mill Road</p> <p><b>Applicant:</b> S/C Eisenhower, LLC</p> <p>Architect: Cooper Carry, Inc.</p>	<b>DRB Date:</b>	May 18, 2017
	<b>Site Area:</b>	5.08 acres
	<b>Zone:</b>	CDD#2
	<b>Proposed Use:</b>	Mixed Use
	<b>Proposed Gross Floor Area:</b>	1,034,925 sf
<p><b>Purpose of Application:</b></p>		
<p>This application is for a Concept III review of a Development Special Use Permit tentatively scheduled for public hearing in November 2017.</p>		
<p><b>Staff Reviewers:</b> Thomas H. Canfield, AIA <a href="mailto:tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov">tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov</a>            Robert Kerns, AICP, <a href="mailto:robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov">robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov</a>            Gary Wagner, RLA, <a href="mailto:gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov">gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov</a>            Nathan Imm, <a href="mailto:nathan.imm@alexandriava.gov">nathan.imm@alexandriava.gov</a>            Bill Cook, <a href="mailto:william.cook@alexandriava.gov">william.cook@alexandriava.gov</a></p>		
<p><b>DRB COMMENTS of MAY 18, 2017 WORK SESSION – SUMMARY:</b></p>		
<p>Staff gave a brief presentation reinforcing ten design principles for the project. The Board noted that the presentation was a reiteration and critique of existing principles with the intention of reinforcing the structure of the critique in order to advance the process.</p> <p>Plaza:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effort to recognize asymmetry was noted. The plaza at present resembles three different rooms. This may not be desired at all times. Carefully ensure the plaza does not have too many elements that might preclude the ability to utilize the entire space for large gatherings.</li> <li>• Explore ways to strengthen the entry and emphasize the act of arrival by considering</li> </ul>		

revision of the vertical building element that meets the trellis and extends up the building near the entry to the market-rate apartments.

#### Mandeville/Stovall:

- The design of the Mandeville frontage has progressed with a variety of horizontal and vertical elements. A board member advised against revealing the parking, and encouraged further development of the frame.
- The column bays should read stronger, although the architect noted the columns are 5' 4", which is quite wide. The board suggested that they all look equal and need a hierarchy. Another suggestion was to change the window pattern at the residential level.
- Some members voiced concern about the possibility of two levels of metal panels screening the garage levels along this frontage. Others were not bothered by a naturally ventilated garage, but thought it important that whatever solution introduce patterning.
- A suggestion was made to accentuate the 3-bay retail element on the Mandeville grocery store frontage moving east from the retail glass corner entry and to extend the glass pattern and framework into this area to unify the façade and extend the anchor retailer presence. It was also suggested to extend the same treatment along the Stovall Street frontage, with the idea that more glass expresses the strong retail anchor most effectively.

#### Mill:

- Some members thought that the functional and mechanical nature of the northwest portion of the Mill Road façade could not be disguised, therefore it should be identified as being different from the rest of the ensemble, but should not dominate the majority of the Mill podium facade.
- The DRB was intrigued by the use of metal panels and the opportunity for a memorable, even potentially artistic element along Mill Road.
- A composition of layered horizontal planes was suggested. This could possibly help to integrate the transformer fence that has been previously shown and discussed as an area of concern.
- Perhaps the light colored vertical element behind the transformer fence be eliminated since it cannot effectively be brought to ground because of the fence.

#### Condo:

- The Board questioned the ivory and chocolate color scheme and suggested that the scheme could be interwoven with the base more effectively.

The Board voiced a preference that future presentations be projected, finding the legibility of the boards difficult given the room and lighting conditions. If interim sketches are provided to the Board between meetings, an entire packet of drawings is not necessary with each iteration, and materials should be kept brief and concise. Both the Board and staff expressed a willingness to review and comment on subsequent iterations of this project design, prior to scheduling another DRB hearing.

Previous comments were given following the March 23, 2017 Work Session.

## **Design Principles for Hoffman Blocks 4 & 5**

May 18, 2017 DRB Work Session

The following is a list of Staff comments concerning the latest DRB submission materials received May 4, 2017, COB and routed on May 5th. Upon review, Staff finds the project design has advanced in some important ways, especially related to the condominium building and the plaza. However, the design does not achieve a number of fundamental design goals previously set out for the project.

Specifically, the plans do not address the suppression of the dominant above-grade parking podium expression, do not carry the tower forms to the ground, continue to lack information or design that provides clarity of entry and circulation for all building users, and do not show and develop the massing and façade design for the third proposed building, or yet achieve a legible, simple and coherent façade language for all three proposed towers.

Staff offers the following comments to further guide the evolution of this building's design:

- 1. Podium: Above-grade parking screening and retail podium expression continues to be a concern. The podium dominates the design visually, and must be broken by means of interruptions, plane changes, and expression.**
  - a. Interruptions: Tower architecture, including fully glazed openings, needs to continue to grade to create interruptions. This is only successful on the condominium building, and has not been achieved elsewhere.
  - b. More significant plane changes in façade plane of podium are needed, as shown in massing diagrams provided by staff (Page 7). For example, recessing the face of the 3 retail bays located to the east of the condominium entry would help to meet the design guidelines for a change in plane along the building face.
  - c. Expression: It is important to have numerous fully glazed sections along "A" streets that successfully interrupt open garage areas and provide a variety of simple, appropriate façades.
  
- 2. Building Forms: Building masses should be articulated, employ predominantly vertical expression, and create active skylines through varied heights, with distinctive or articulated tower tops.**
  - a. Senior housing building does not comply with these principles, specifically the enclosed courtyard. An appropriate form, as shown in staff's massing diagrams (Pages 8-9) must be developed for this building in order to move forward with the review process.
  - b. Market-rate multi-family building on Mill Rd does not yet have a predominantly vertical expression, is not well articulated, and does not create an active skyline.
  - c. Fenced transformer area on Mill Road negates the urban design of this façade – consider providing the transformers in below-grade vaults and create a building presence on this street.



**3. Architectural Vocabulary: Building facades must display a strong, clear and internally consistent language that defines a recognizable character for each of the three proposed superstructures.**

- a. Condominium building displays a consistent architectural expression.
- b. Market-rate multi-family building currently does not achieve this principle. A successful example can be seen in the illustration at left, showing a tower with consistent massing and expression, screening of above-grade parking in multiple ways, varied podium height expressions, and creation of a significant corner feature.
- c. Provide a consistent pattern/rhythm to the fenestration of the market-rate multi-family building.
- d. Eliminate the change in façade at the west side of the tower on Mandeville to make a continuous tower expression to the ground.
- e. No information has been provided for the Senior building design.

**4. Site and Building Functionality: All plans must be developed sufficiently to demonstrate full functionality of the proposed uses.**

- a. Lack of elements such as lobby and grocery pickup areas could result in the need for future design changes that significantly impact the building layout and exterior.
- b. Second floor retail access and circulation patterns between stores are not fully developed.
- c. Senior building lobby location and accessibility is still of concern.

**5. Penthouse Features: Mechanical penthouses on all three buildings should be fully integrated into the building design, massing, materiality, and expression.**

- a. Penthouse of the condominium building is well integrated.
- b. The large, two-mass penthouse currently shown on the market rate multifamily building is additive and not integrated into the building design. In addition, there is another roof structure associated with what appears to be a swimming pool.
- c. Upper levels and roof of the senior building including penthouse are not shown.

**6. Circulation: Must be clearly shown and functional.**

- a. Streetscape improvements (i.e. road diet) have advanced in coordination with staff.
- b. Pedestrian access has not been demonstrated to the proposed grocery store, portions of second level retail, from portions of garage to the plaza, or from the senior building lobby to plaza. These interrelated issues should be defined prior to completing plaza design.

- c. Parking garage circulation, access, and ramp capacity are staff concerns that will be further detailed in the Concept III letter.
- d. Study vertical and horizontal circulation as a visible feature behind the glass wall fronting the plaza.

**7. Entries: Formal relationship between building and entry elements should be strong, legible, and consistent with the site strategy and buildings' design language.**

- a. Senior housing building lobby remains completely disconnected from the plaza on which the building fronts.
- b. Trellis feature on the plaza is too high and leads to a wall and not a door.
- c. Mill Road retail entries and lobbies need stronger definition.
- d. A main entrance is not depicted for the market-rate multi-family tower. Provision for parcel and food deliveries, resident pick-up and drop-off, and taxi queuing are all needs that must be met for a building of this size.

**8. Parking Garage Screening: Above-grade parking garage facades shall be architecturally treated to be in harmony with the overall building design and to screen parking in critical areas.**

- a. Architectural quality and materials must comply with the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines for "A" Streets.
- b. Where tower architecture extends to grade, garage openings shall be fully glazed and consistent with the facade above. A diagram to achieve this was provided by staff (Page 7).
- c. Plan, section, and elevation details of the various systems proposed to achieve this screening need to be provided.
- d. Excessive use of corrugated and perforated screening materials to screen parking on Mandeville and Stovall is still a concern.

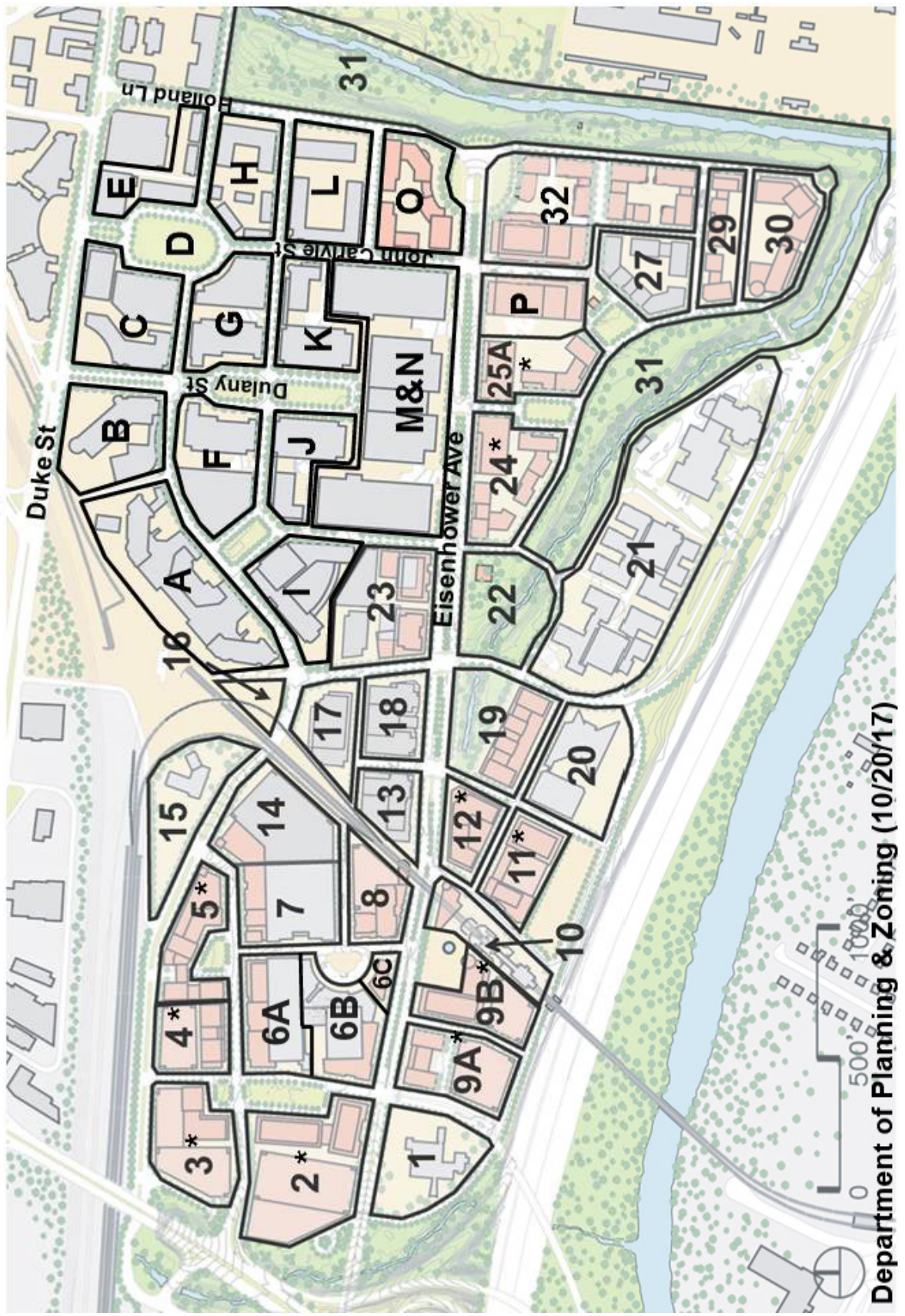
**9. Building Materials: Compliance with Eisenhower East Design Guidelines.**

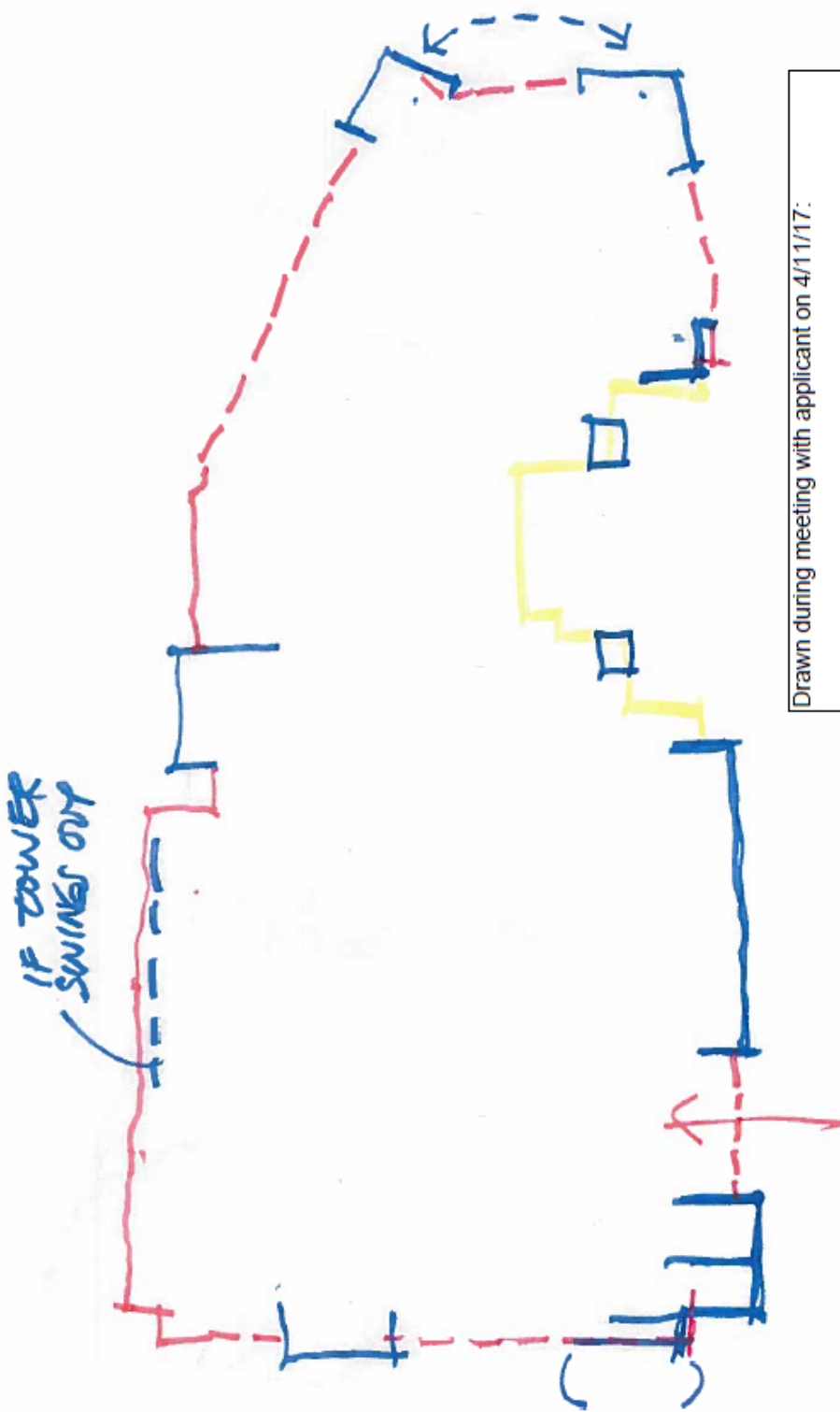
Guidelines call for the highest quality materials and details at pedestrian level. "A" street frontages have the most restrictive guidelines to ensure the highest quality character and appearance. The use of 8"x16" CMU on primary retail frontages on Stovall and Mandeville does not meet the letter or the spirit of the guidelines.

**10. Urban Design Elements: Compliance with Eisenhower East Design Guidelines. Some design elements are not demonstrated.**

- a. Required architectural feature at the northeast corner of Mill Road and Mandeville Lane.
- b. Highest quality, architecturally significant façade is required along the Mandeville Lane frontage.
- c. Plaza window feature as currently shown does not create a strong terminus point for the town center district.

# Eisenhower East / Carlyle Blocks

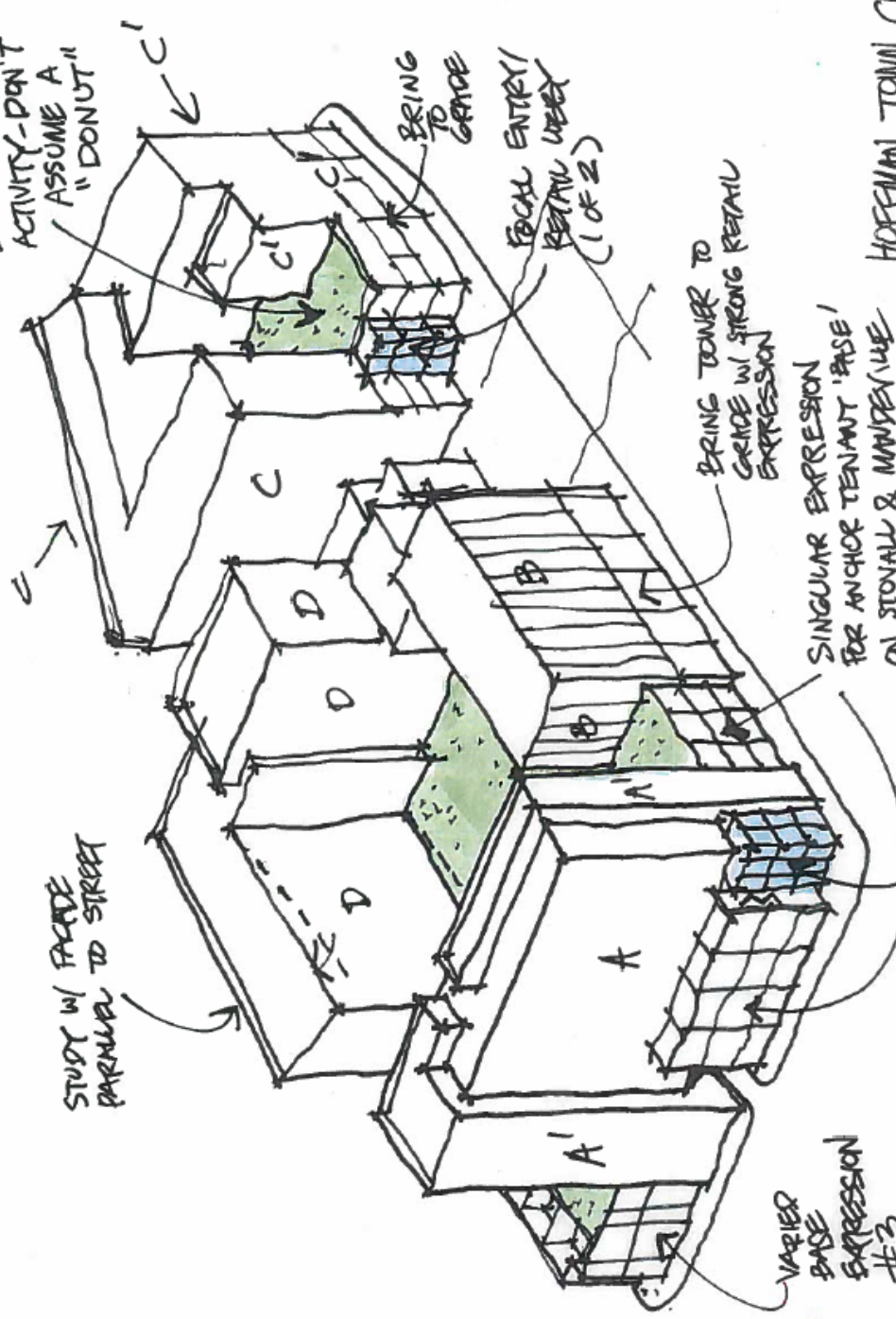




Drawn during meeting with applicant on 4/11/17:

**Blue** = glass must screen parking at podium levels  
**Red** = parking screening can be open or other materials  
**Yellow** = area of focus for architectural unity as recommended by DRB

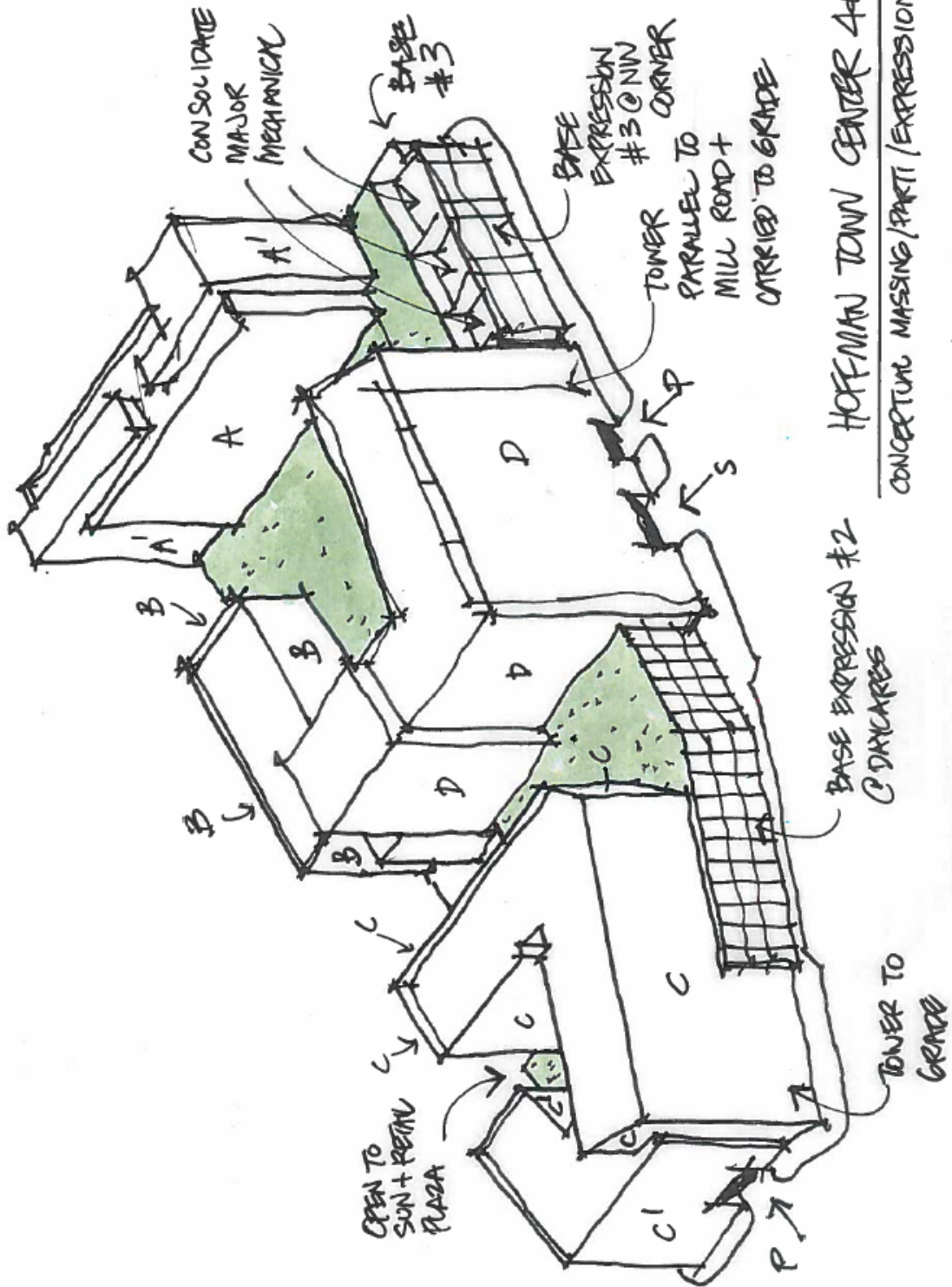
SHOW LIGHT COURT OPEN TO SUN + RETAIL ACTIVITY - DON'T ASSUME A "DONUT"



HOFFMAN TOWN CENTER 4+5  
CONCEPTUAL MASSING/PARTI/EXPRESSION

3/10/17 1 OF 3





HOFFMAN TOWN CENTER 445  
 CONCEPTUAL MASSING / PARTI / EXPRESSION

3/10/17

2 OF 3