

Design Review Board Case # 20-0002
Block 32 – Carlyle Plaza II / Carlyle Park Towers

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Block 32 – Carlyle Plaza II / Carlyle Park Towers Location: Block 32 – Eisenhower East Applicant: Carlyle Plaza, LLC c/o McGuireWoods LLP	DRB Date:	January 21, 2021
	Site Area:	Block 32 – Eisenhower East
	Zone:	CDD #11
	Proposed Use:	Residential, Retail, Parking, and Open Space
	Net Floor Area:	1,387,170 square feet (entire Block 32 development)
Purpose of Application: DRB review of the architecture for the Tower One and Tower Two buildings proposed within the new first phase of the Carlyle Plaza Two / Carlyle Park Towers development.		
Staff Reviewers: Robert M. Kerns, AICP robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov Thomas H. Canfield, AIA tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov Nathan Imm nathan.imm@alexandriava.gov Anna Franco anna.franco@alexandriava.gov		
<p>DRB HEARING FOR ARCHITECTURE, JANUARY 21, 2021: The DRB voted unanimously to approve the overall architecture for the Tower 1 and Tower 2 buildings, on a motion by Mr. Tom Canfield, seconded by Mr. Roger Lewis, carried on a vote of 4-0, with Mr. Alan Lynch absent.</p> <p>The vote was followed by a work session on the open space, where the Board made observations and recommendations regarding the proposed open space for the development. Some Board members noted that many of the proposed changes were significant changes from the originally approved plan, which the DRB really liked. Some stated a preference for a wider space over Savoy Street and the “diving board” platform over the transition zone to the South Circle Park. Other members noted that the water features associated with the transition zone could be further incorporated into the ground level plane for the South Circle Park and asked the applicant to consider moving water elements in the South Circle Park off-center. The Board also emphasized the importance of elevator access to the above-grade elevated deck. The Board generally agreed that the applicant needed to create stronger visual emphasis for all three elevator shafts.</p> <p>The Board generally supported the proposed design changes but asked for supplemental material to be provided at the next DRB meeting, including information on the proposed pedestrian paving for the project, showing proposed building materials and how buildings interact with the ground plane on the open space renderings, and what measures could be</p>		

implemented to invite park visitors up the transition zone steps. The DRB agreed the applicant shall present a revised open space plan at the next scheduled DRB meeting for review and endorsement.

DRB WORK SESSION, DECEMBER 17, 2020: Based on the feedback from the October 22, 2020 DRB meeting, the applicant worked to address the Board's feedback and recommendations and made several changes to the building architecture, including:

- Changes to the front porch of the residential units to make them look more residential rather than commercial.
- Changes to the grid pattern on the building so the dimensions of the grid change throughout the building.
- Plantings incorporated at the top of the 4-story base along John Carlyle Street.
- Modifications to the façade of the 4-story base so that it is more difficult to distinguish between which levels have residential units which levels are garage.
- Removal of the LED lights that spanned the height of the two towers.

Overall, the Board found that the applicant's materials and architectural design were acceptable. The DRB was prepared to approve the architecture, but due to timing and potential noticing issues, the Board decided to wait until the January 21, 2021 DRB meeting to formally approve the architecture.

DRB WORK SESSION, OCTOBER 22, 2020: The Board generally found the scale, form, and massing of the two tower buildings both effective and successful. The Board complimented the applicant's massing and stated the two tower buildings accommodate excellent views from every direction and provide efficient light and air to all units in the building. The Board also commended the differing heights of the two tower buildings and the variety and limited shadows it creates. The board also supported the applicant's placement of residential liner units along the above grade parking garage which screen most of the garage from the public realm. Overall, the Board stated they would approve an endorsement of the architecture in the future, but would like to see the following changes:

- Consider removal of the recessed LED vertical lighting that spans the entire height of both towers.
- Differentiate the 4-story base located along John Carlyle Street from the adjacent tower architecture by exploring darker building material colors and massing that creates the base as its own form on the building façade.
- Incorporate plantings on the façade of the 4-story base along John Carlyle Street so that pedestrians are more aware of the green space/open space deck above.
- Modify the façade of the 4-story base so that it is more difficult to distinguish between which levels have residential units fronting John Carlyle and which levels are garage.
- Alter the design of the residential liner units along John Carlyle Street so the read more as residential rather than commercial.
- Consider changes to the spacing of the grid on the face of the building.

Block 32 – DRB Architecture Review

Background

The applicant, Carlyle Plaza, LLC, represented by McGuire Woods LLP, is requesting Design Review Board (DRB) review and comment on two new tower buildings at the southeast corner of Eisenhower Avenue and John Carlyle Street. The two towers are part of the larger Eisenhower Block 32 development (see Attachment 1 “Eisenhower East Block Map”), which extends from Eisenhower East to the north, Limerick Street to the South, John Carlyle Street and Bartholomew Street to the west and Holland Lane to the east and had been previously designed and approved as a pair of office towers.

Approval Process

In addition to this DRB submission, the applicant has submitted a DSUP (Development Special Use Permit) amendment for the Carlyle Plaza II development, which was approved in 2012, in order to provide for a shift in use from office to residential above and beyond the quantity currently allowed. If the DRB approves this DRB submission, the DRB’s approval will be forwarded to Planning Commission and City Council for consideration in their review of Tower One and Tower Two DSUP amendments.

DRB Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this DRB meeting is to conduct a final review of the proposed architecture and vote on approval of the architecture. Further, the DRB will discuss the applicant’s proposed open space design as a work session item. As such, no vote is to be considered regarding the open space at this time. The open space vote will occur at a subsequent DRB meeting.

Proposal

The applicant, Carlyle Plaza, LLC, proposes to construct two towers of varying height on the Block 32 development site within Eisenhower East, approximately 0.4 miles from the Eisenhower Metro Station. The applicant proposes residential units with ground floor retail in Tower One (the north tower) and residential units in Tower Two (the south tower). The towers are conjoined at the base by an above-grade parking structure that ascends approximately 4 stories above the ground floor retail and lobby space.

Staff Analysis & Recommendations

The current architecture submission is largely unchanged from the previous submission for the December 17, 2021 meeting. For the December meeting, the applicant had worked to address several of the Board’s comments to produce attractive final building designs that complements the public realm, the entirety of the Block 32 development, and other existing and proposed buildings within the neighborhood.

Staff believes that the proposed building architectural design is now acceptable and meets the intent with regards to both the Carlyle Plaza Design Guidelines and the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines. The DRB will conduct a final review of the building materials when building material samples are submitted as part of the Final Site Plan phase of development. Staff does not have any further recommendations regarding the building architecture.

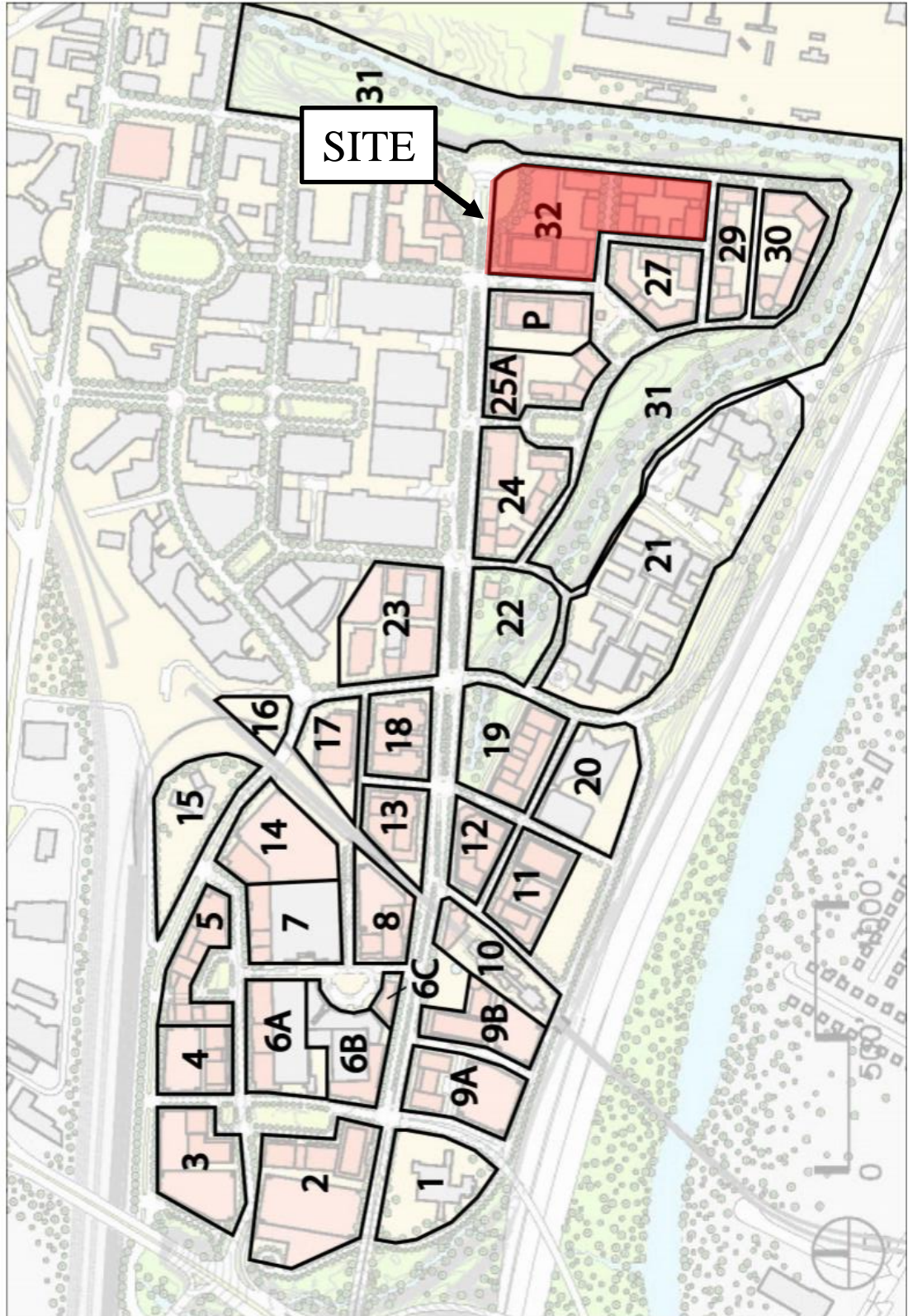
The DRB is responsible for review of projects for conformance to the urban design precepts of the Eisenhower East design guidelines, and as such, reviews the overall landscape architectural design of such spaces. The spatial requirements, designation of public access, program of activities or amenities, required access, connectivity to transportation networks (including bicycle and pedestrian), and provision of public art are planning and design requirements of the City and the DSUP process and therefore are not included in the DRB's responsibility to review and provide recommendations. Similarly, compliance with other City-wide requirements such as the Landscape Guidelines and Green Building Policy will be reviewed and recommended for approval through other venues.

Conclusion

Staff recommends that the DRB vote to endorse the architecture for both Tower 1 and Tower 2 buildings as they are shown in the submission received on January 8, 2021. This endorsement will not include the design of the site layout or open space areas at this time.

Attachment 1: Eisenhower East Block Map

Eisenhower East / Carlyle Blocks



Attachment 2: Approved Site Plan

