Design Review Board Case #2016-0001
Carlyle Plaza Two – South Residential Building

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Carlyle Plaza Two – South Residential Building **Location:** 340 & 350 Hooff's Run Drive (ultimately will have a Bartholomew Street address) **Applicant:** Alder Branch Realty Limited Partnership, LLLP; represented by JM Zell Partners **Architect:** Arquitectonica	**DRB Date:**	March 17, 2016
	Site Area:	~ 2 acres
	Zone:	CDD#2
	Proposed Use:	Residential
	Dwelling Units:	382 units
	Gross Floor Area:	~ 505,625 sf (400,795 sf res + 104,830 sf parking)
Purpose of Application:		
Final design review of the first phase of the Carlyle Plaza Two development (south residential building).		
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I. OVERVIEW

Alder Branch Realty Limited Partnership LLLP, represented by JM Zell Partners, is requesting Design Review Board review for the revised Phase 1 of the Carlyle Plaza Two development in South Carlyle (Block 32). This phase was previously approved by the DRB in April 2013, and includes the southern residential tower and liner units along Bartholomew Street, a portion of the parking garage to support this building, the related open space on top of the garage, and the terraced deck between the garage and the AlexRenew tank/field. The applicant now wishes to modify this plan, proposing changes in the size, style, and footprint of the residential tower, the residential unit and parking count, and the limits of the terraced deck and open space.

II. BACKGROUND

Project Evolution

In June 2012, the City Council approved the Carlyle Plaza Two development, which is identified as Block 32 in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan and is part of the South Carlyle CDD (CDD #11). The approved plan calls for four office and residential towers around several acres of high quality open space. The development approved for 755,114 square feet of office floor area in two towers at the northwest portion of the property, and 632,056 square feet of residential floor area in two towers, one at the southeast corner of Eisenhower Avenue and Holland Lane, and one to the south, just east of the existing residential development in South Carlyle on Block 27 the Alexan Carlyle.

With the Carlyle Plaza Two approval, the Council approved the general site configuration, design guidelines, and infrastructure, and allowed the DRB to review and approve the final design of each of the buildings. In April of 2013, the Carlyle Design Review Board approved the design for the South Residential Tower. This phase included the southern residential tower and liner units along Bartholomew Street, a portion of the parking garage to support this building, the related open space on top of the garage, and the terraced deck between the garage and the AlexRenew tank/field. The DRB had reviewed the design for this first phase several times (in November 2012, December 2012, and February 2013) prior to the approval in April 2013.

Site Context

The entire Carlyle Plaza Two site is approximately 6 acres south of Eisenhower Avenue, between Holland Lane to the east and John Carlyle Street and Bartholomew Street to the west. The Alexan Carlyle, an existing five-story residential building is west of the southern portion of the site, and the future Carlyle Plaza One office building will be west of the northern portion of the site. The Alexandria Renew expansion site is immediately south of this property and is an integral piece of the overall development.

Phase 1, where the south residential tower will be located, is on the southwestern portion of the overall Carlyle Plaza Two site. It is bounded by Holland Lane to the east and Bartholomew Street to the west. The future extension of Savoy Street marks the northern

boundary of the phase. The future extension of Limerick Street is the southern boundary of the applicant's property, and this phase will include a connection to a portion of the terraced deck on the northeast portion of the Alexandria Renew site. Today, the Alexandria Renew building and multipurpose field construction is nearing completion.

Overall Project Description

The south residential building has been designed as a 34-story high-rise tower with a 4-story low-rise residential building along the west side to provide an active-use buffer between the garage and existing apartment building on the west side of Bartholomew St. The tower is oriented so the long facades face east and west. These buildings provide a total of 400,795 gross square feet and 382 units (tower: 381,775 GSF, 370 units; low-rise component: 19,020 GSF, 12 units) with 104,830 square feet of parking garage space. The building would reach a height of 354'-2" above average finished grade.

As noted above, Phase 1 also includes a portion of the garage to support the building, the associated open space, and the terraced deck connection to the AlexRenew tank/field. While these elements were already reviewed and approved by the Board and Council during the overall DSUP approval, the new or modified components of the design such as the architectural style of the residential tower, the scope and extents of the landscape deck, the relocated loading areas, amount of parking provided, and the interim conditions are subject to DRB review at this time. The applicant will also need to show developed site plans that show the landscape deck features and details and additional information about the revised parking scheme, and how it fits into the full build out of the Carlyle Plaza Two.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The main focus of this new submission for the South Residential Tower is on the significantly modified architectural style of the current proposal. Staff has concerns regarding the apparent deviations from the Design Guidelines of the currently proposed building, particularly when viewed in comparison to the suggested style and massing portrayed in the approved DSUP. Since this submission does not provide an illustration depicting the building massings of the remaining three towers of the Carlyle Plaza Two complex, it is difficult to analyze the new tower's design in regards to its compatibility with future phases of construction. Another major concern is the current proposal's compliance and alignment with the Carlyle Plaza Design Guidelines. Specific design approaches and techniques are called upon within these guidelines, and staff does not feel that the current submission adequately fulfills these guidelines in many cases.

Other aspects of this submission include the change in the size of the parking garage, the location and number of parking and loading entrances into the garage, and the modified scope of the landscape deck and screening materials. Staff has addressed and analyzed these changes within this report and would like to continue to work with the applicant on these elements of the proposal, once the architecture and style of the building has been vetted and discussed by the Carlyle Design Review Board.

Building Design - Architecture

The proposed design is a strong but simple form, consisting of three rectangular solids of approximately equal height, with the middle volume slipped approximately 25 feet to the south. The creates a dramatic cantilever effect to the south at the 16th floor and another to the north at the 26th floor with resultant large outdoor terraces at the same levels on the opposite building face. The geometry of stacked blocks is constrained to the north-south direction, resulting in flat sides facing east and west. The building rises to just under 358 feet from the sidewalk along Bartholomew Street to its highest point, which is a uniformly flat top, where the building skin has been extended up to conceal a 14 foot high mechanical space.

From the east, the building appears to be 315 high due to the proposed above-grade parking structure and landscaped deck. The building skin expression is dominated by a large-scale grid of dark, presumably metal frames in a two-story, 12 foot wide by 19 foot high module. These metal frames are infilled with slightly recessed clear glazing, metallic mullions and slab edge covers in a single window module that is unvaried throughout the building. This rhythm is broken only by the addition of recessed balconies in certain locations and the introduction of horizontal expression lines, created by adding additional dark metal covers to the intermediate floor bands in certain locations. This results in a stair-step pattern which alternates directions between the various "block" forms.

Building Design - Analysis of Compliance with Design Guidelines

The current design seems wholly focused on the desire to create an iconic form through the structurally "shocking" slippage of the three primary building masses to create a single form with considerable visual tension. While it unquestionably achieves this primary goal, it does not respond as directly to a number of other design guidelines – either the site-specific Carlyle Plaza Design Guidelines approved by Planning Commission and City Council May 18th 2012, as amended November 27th, 2013, or the City-Wide Design Guidelines, approved by the same bodies in 2006.

At the macro scale, great attention was paid to the site massing and relationships among the four proposed towers during the initial approvals. The same should be done here: assuming that the original massing concept of height spiraling up from lowest to highest towers is still relevant, this needs to be reaffirmed, and a decision made as to which tower will dominate. With focus now on the south residential tower to initiate the realization of the Carlyle Plaza Two vision, it would make sense to set this building as the highest tower in the complex, and to use the entire 375-foot maximum height permitted in the

current structure, as it is also the closest building to the Capital Beltway and enjoys the most commanding viewshed.

In terms of tower forms, there has been an expectation, furthered by the graphics used to implement the Design Guidelines, that the massing of the four towers in the final complex would create an ensemble, united by a vocabulary of forms that are stepped, carved, and angled in plan to form prismatic, related tower forms. With the present massing unclear, it is unknown how this unified approach will be achieved. There is also considerable attention paid in the Design Guidelines to tower tops and penthouses, and how those can be employed to create stronger, more memorable forms along the skyline. In the current design, the mechanical equipment is simply hidden behind a uniform screen wall that is used a fence, and does not contribute to form creation, in fact leading to a tower top that appears abruptly truncated.

Looking strictly at the massing guidelines from page 20 of the Design Guidelines, the current design does not meet items 1, 4, or 6: specifically, the penthouse screening strategy employed does not contribute to the building skyline form; the simplified massing does not address requirement 4 or its accompanying illustration, to "subdivide the building volumes with formal articulation and setbacks"; and the liner units along Bartholomew Street should be extended farther to the north to better address the low scale of the Alexan Carlyle to the west.

Continuing through the approved guidelines, there is great emphasis placed on creating distinctive building bases with a "change in materials", the use of "balconies, loggias and shading" as integrated forms to "articulate the building façade,…create visual interest,…and respond to views and/or specific orientations," (p. 28) including specific language that allows balconies to project up to four feet beyond the allowed tower footprint to achieve these dramatic effects. (p. 35: note under "bulk") Furthermore, the applicant proposes to incorporate an arcade along the western frontage of the building along Bartholomew Street. Although an arcade is not required here, it may need to be higher along the landscaped deck.

In describing overall tower forms, the Design Guidelines are very specific: requiring bases that provide "a clear transition in building volume and/or façade treatment from low to high-rise portions;" tower design that works "to break down the scale and de-emphasize the horizontal dimension of broad faces by using changes in material, plane, and fenestration across the façade;" provides "visible volume articulation…to respond to particular tower orientation;" (p. 27) and tower tops which are "designed to create distinction for the buildings, but integrally tied into the high-rise form itself. Each tower should have a unique profile that uses its tower top to contribute to the main vertical building form…mechanical penthouses need also to be incorporated into the building design, and take advantage of how they can add to the expression of the tower." (p.33)

Finally, in discussing building envelope and fenestration, the Design Guidelines state: "It is crucial to achieve variation and not succumb to a uniform "shrink wrapping" of mirrored glass and thin, applied grid patterns. To achieve such variation, it is necessary to

add depth and articulation to the building facades and fenestration." (p. 31) The current facade concept clearly does not meet this requirement.

Building Design - General Analysis

The following observations are in addition to the Design Guideline specific issues raised above, although many of them relate to similar broad design goals.

First, the building massing, with its abrupt horizontal shears, seems to fight the tower's natural desire to soar vertically. The uniformly gridded skin treatment does nothing to counter this effect. In fact, where additional "lines" are added, they are horizontal, and further restrain any sense of vertical thrust. Second, the two-dimensional constraints applied to the formal shear seem to ignore the building's dramatic siting – thinking about the 360-degree views of and from the site, a more three-dimensional form would seem to be appropriate. Third, the skin treatment does not seem to respond to either views or environmental considerations, with the same treatment facing north, south, east and west, regardless of where more shading is needed, or balconies might be more desirable. The skin treatment is also very shallow, and so does not offer the richness of layering that can add so much depth and subtlety to the surface and read of a tall tower. Finally, the tower top, as a result of the selected massing strategy, is literally absent. There are many ways to manipulate these forms and to articulate the building skin and surfaces, which could address these concerns; the other issue raised, as mentioned at the beginning of this analysis, is how this building will relate to the other three towers in the composition. Both of these issues need to be addressed going forward, as the specific building design and massing may impact the proposed massing of the remainder of the ensemble, and vice versa.

Parking

This site is located within the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan, which established a limitation on the amount of parking to encourage the use of transit and limit the number of single occupancy vehicles on the street. The Plan imposes a maximum parking ratio by land use type. Per the Carlyle Plaza Two approved DSUP, a maximum of 1.3 spaces/1,000 gross square feet of residential floor area was approved. The DSUP allows up to approximately 757,000 square feet of total residential floor area, resulting in a maximum of 984 parking spaces for the entire residential portion of the project.

The current proposal for the south residential tower component would result in 381,775 square feet of residential floor area, and the proposed liner units would add an additional 19,020 square feet of residential floor area for a total of 400,795 sf. The proposed plan for this phase provides a total of 382 units with 278 parking spaces within the garage. This results in a parking space to dwelling unit ratio of 0.73, which is below the City's new standard parking ratios used for multifamily housing. In comparison, parking under the Eisenhower East Plan would require a maximum of 520 spaces for this residential tower. While staff understands that the parking standards under the Eisenhower East Plan are maximums, a reduction of approximately 240 spaces for the proposed tower is significant and could have an impact on the design of the landscape deck above, especially if the remaining residential development follows suit.

The applicant will need to demonstrate how they arrived at their parking ratios to determine if an adequate amount of parking is provided for this project. It has also yet to be determined if this substantial reduction in the parking for the residential can be approved as a minor or major amendment.

Limerick Street Garage Entrance

The entrance to the garage at Limerick Street has been discussed at previous DRB meetings and identified as an area that needs careful treatment to minimize the presence of the garage beyond and above the entrance. The applicant originally proposed a metal screen at the exposed level of the garage over the entrance and planters on two levels that will provide overhanging vegetation as an additional screen. Now the applicant proposes to decrease the number of parking spaces to be provided within the parking garage (the design guidelines for Carlyle South stipulate a maximum number of spaces not a minimum). By decreasing the number of parking spaces they may have the opportunity to increase the ceiling height of the covered driveway for Limerick Street. Although this may benefit the overall appearance of the project edge, the applicant needs to demonstrate how the resulting decrease in parking counts and increased ceiling height would impact the approved design of the fins that were intended to provide interest as Limerick St. passes through the garage.

Parking and loading access points

The design team has redesigned the access points for the building. The previous design had showed both the parking garage and loading access points off of Limerick. The new design would keep the parking garage access point off of Limerick, but would move the loading access point to Savoy Street under the covered driveway. Staff does not object to this relocation but feels that there must be a full loading dock provided for both general trucking and trash. In future submissions, the applicant will need to demonstrate how truck maneuvering will work once the area is confined and under the roof deck structure.

Proposed Landscape Deck

According to the conditions set forth in the approved DSUP, the terraced deck and amphitheater connecting the green space on the parking structure and the athletic field above the Alexandria Renew tanks shall be included in the final site plan for the southern residential building or as a separate final site plan. "The construction of the deck shall be commenced prior to the certificate of occupancy for the southern residential building by either Carlyle Plaza, Alexandria Renew or jointly between the two." (DSUP2013-0025, Condition 18).

The previously approved South Residential tower includes the construction of the entire landscape deck, however the new proposal submitted will have a modified scope and size of the landscape deck. Staff wishes to work further with the applicant and the DRB to determine the extents of the terraced deck, while ensuring consistency with the approved DSUP. This discussion will be best informed through additional grading studies and parking layouts and counts - factors which originally directed the size, scope, and height of the landscaped deck.

Temporary Screening
The current proposal provides an abrupt end to the parking deck facing Holland Lane. The applicant should provide a plan for interim conditions to screen the exposed garage structure and provide a temporary design for unfinished edges and areas to be developed in future phases.

IV. CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the DRB continue to work with the applicant to refine the proposal, resulting in a building design that is more in line with that of the DSUP proposal, as approved by the Council in April 2012 and amended in April 2013. Design aspects to be reviewed and refined are: the residential tower architecture (in particular the tower base, top and vertical expression, fenestration and façade depth); the parking garage size, entrances, and screening approach; the size of the first phase of the landscaped deck; and the required interim conditions. Staff looks forward to working with the Applicant and the DRB to reach a strong design that still meets the Design Guidelines for this important location within the City of Alexandria and Eisenhower East.