



May 4, 2022

Paulose Issac
Department of Licenses and Inspections
Municipal Services Building, Concourse
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director

Michael Johns, FAIA, NOMA, LEED-AP
Civic Design Review Chair

Daniel K. Garofalo
Civic Design Review Vice-Chair

Andrea Gonzalez
Ashley Di Caro, LEED -AP
Clarissa Kelsey, RA
Leonidas Addimando
Tavis Dockwiller, RLA

Re: Civic Design Review for 1031 Germantown Avenue (Application # ZP-2021-016439)

Dear Mr. Issac,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at 1031 Germantown Avenue.

This letter is a summary of the Civic Design Review Committee's advisory recommendations. It is not an expression of the City Planning Commission's recommendation or opinion regarding zoning variances, special exceptions, or other discretionary approvals associated with this proposal.

The project proposes a total of 81,000 square feet of gross floor area. This proposal is the first phase of a three-phase development which includes 21 townhomes (3419 SF each with roof deck and green roof), a commercial space at the corner of Germantown Avenue and W. Allen Street, 41 vehicular parking spaces, and 19 bike parking spaces. The parcel is zoned CMX-2 and there are zoning refusals for ground floor use, height, rear yard depth, and parking (access driveway, electric parking spaces, ADA spaces).

At its meeting of May 3, 2022, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

RCO Comments: (Northern Liberties Neighbors Association)

Northern Liberties Neighbors Association held a public meeting on March 7, 2022. They did not attend the CDR meeting but sent a letter of support.

CDR Committee Comments

The Committee expressed that this was a well-designed, well-oriented townhome project that works well within its diverse context. The Committee chair appreciated the development team's communication with the community and the design updates made based on their input. The Committee chair also commented that the use of materials and details were well-done.

One committee member suggested the inclusion of solar panels on the roof and the development team said they would look into that option but noted the tall buildings nearby might be a deterrent.

One committee member also appreciated the location of parking spaces below grade and discussed that the courtyard space was a great amenity but could be refined to include design elements that would mark the transition areas between fully public, semi-public, and private outdoor areas. They encouraged the team to look at the transition zones at the front and rear of the townhomes.

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CDR committee discussed methods to create a more mixed-income community and suggested that the development team include affordable units in the future phases of this development. The committee also suggested adding of trees on Germantown Avenue which the development team mentioned would not be possible because of the existing tree trenches in the tree pits. The importance of accommodating the proposed raised bike lane on their Germantown Avenue streetscape was mentioned, as the infrastructure is severely needed. The development team replied that they had already started the conversations with OTIS on that element.

Lastly, the CDR Committee adopted the Planning Commission staff comments:

Site Design

- Staff encourages the development team to ensure the public courtyard is continued and connected to public streets through Phase 3 of this development.
- There is a “pinch point” at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Pollard Street. Please set the building back at this location to ensure the walking zone meets the minimum requirement of the Complete Streets.
- Staff encourages the team to work with OTIS to incorporate the proposed raised bike lane along Germantown Avenue into the design.
- Staff appreciates the inclusion of a public open space as part of this development and asks how the public, semi-public, and private outdoor spaces interact.
- Staff supports the new commercial space and wider steps for the entrance to the public space in response to the RCO and PCPC’s comments, however staff encourages these spaces to be ADA accessible.

Building Design

- Staff supports the building massing, window patterns, and partial set back to match the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Staff appreciates the use of high-quality brick on all elevations.

Parking Design

- Staff commends the development team for locating the parking below grade.
- Staff appreciates reducing the curb cut width along W. Allen Street.
- Staff notes that Phase 3 will require additional needs for loading and trash.

Sustainable Design

- Staff requests more information on the energy and atmosphere category on the checklist.
- This site is within 1000 feet of I-95, consider sound and air quality impacts.
- Staff encourages the development team to include the rough-ins for future EV chargers.



In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director

cc: Michael Johns, Chair, Civic Design Review, mdesigns@msn.com
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Re: Civic Design Review for 1649 N 5th Street (Application # ZP-2021-015889)

Dear Ms. Dahal,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at 1649 N 5th Street.

This letter is a summary of the Civic Design Review Committee's advisory recommendations. It is not an expression of the City Planning Commission's recommendation or opinion regarding zoning variances, special exceptions, or other discretionary approvals associated with this proposal.

The project proposes a mixed-use industrial artist studio and multi-family residential building totaling 130,638 square feet of gross floor area. The ground floor and basement provide artist studio space totaling 14,298 square feet. The ground floor also includes a lobby space, bicycle storage room for 92 spaces and 51 vehicular parking spaces tucked under the building or within a surface lot. The upper floors for the building total 116,240 square feet of residential space and incorporates 200 dwelling units. The parcel is zoned IRMX and RM-1 and is a by-right project.

At its meeting of May 3, 2022, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

RCO Comments: (South Kensington Community Partners)

South Kensington Community Partners held a public meeting on March 23, 2022 but did not attend the CDR meeting and did not provide comments for this project.

CDR Committee Comments

The Committee provided mostly positive feedback for this project.

The Committee commended the development team for their strong design solutions but did question the usability of the by-level artist spaces. The Committee suggested that artists engage in the discussion for future design and construction decisions for the project. They encouraged the developers to work with artists to ensure the functionality of outdoor and indoor spaces, and to study how art can be incorporated further into the design of a potential adjacent sculpture garden.

The development team noted that they are committed to subsidizing the spaces and making sure the spaces are affordable for local residents. The architecture team noted that artists will be included as the design progresses, including how to best incorporate wayfinding and functionality of the outdoor spaces and sculpture garden.

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Many of the Committee members agree with staff comments regarding the recommendations to reduce the curb cut sizes, encourage better screening of the surface parking spaces, and consider higher quality materials for primary facades. The CDR Committee appreciated the applicant's response to staff comments.

The Committee requested that the design team consider including brick materials for upper floors, specifically for primary facades such as N 5th Street.

Finally, the Committee requested that the development team consider on-site renewable energy for a project of this size and scope.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe
Executive Director

cc: Michael Johns, Chair, Civic Design Review, mdesigns@msn.com
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