



**September 9, 2024**

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

**Re: Civic Design Review for 1524-38 Germantown Avenue  
(Application # ZP-2023-012284)**

Dear Andrew,

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 building at 1524-38 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 mixed-use building including 106,623 square feet of new floor area as well as 61,227 square feet of renovated existing historic structures. This will include 5,506 square feet of commercial space, 200 dwelling units, and 42 vehicular parking spaces within a garage. The parcel is zoned IRMX and is seeking variances for use on the ground floor, maximum height, maximum occupied area, and maximum FAR.

At its meeting of September 3, 2024, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

#### **Registered Community Organization (RCO) Comments**

No RCO or Council District representative was present at the CDR meeting.

#### **CDR Committee Comments**

The CDR Committee stated that the project was a complex one and believed that it evolved nicely since its previous round of Civic Design Review in 2019. The Committee appreciated the restoration of the existing historic structures and the inclusion of additional street trees in the proposal. The Committee also expressed additional concerns and recommendations to improve the project, including:

#### **Site Design**

- Consider continuous tree trenches to manage stormwater and larger tree growth.
- Consider the inclusion of more native species in the landscaping plan.
- Consider widening the sidewalk along Redner Street with proper furnishing and walking zones.
- Consider a centralized and more accessible location for bike storage.

**Civic Design Review  
Committee**  
*Established 2012*

Martine Decamp, AICP  
*Interim Executive Director*

Daniel K. Garofalo  
*Civic Design Review  
Interim Chair*

Leonidas Addimando  
Ashley Di Caro, LEED-AP  
Tavis Dockwiler, RLA  
Clarissa Redding, RA  
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- Update all the drawings to consistently show the proposed updates to the parking garage entrance and circulation. This new parking plan layout and curb cut location still need to be reviewed and approved by the Streets Department.
- Consider the addition of residential entrances along W Oxford and N Lawrence Streets for ground floor residential units.
- Consider connecting the commercial spaces to the courtyard through the atrium space for additional outdoor space and connection for the commercial spaces.

#### **Building Design**

- The gate to the courtyard needs more detail. Please consider high quality design and materials to match the level of the materials proposed for the buildings.
- Consider combining smaller units to create larger units.
- While the change in the material color helps with adding more focus to the historic buildings, consider simplifying the new building additions further to allow for historic structures to be more distinguishable.

#### **Parking Design**

- The parking garage layout is hard to understand. Two curb cuts back-to-back along Germantown Avenue would be dangerous. There are internal conflicts within the parking garage including tight turns and conflicts between different uses.
- Consider rearranging the parking layout to include an internal loading space and defined pedestrian pathways.
- Coordinate with the Streets Department for the best configuration of sidewalks around the Germantown Avenue and Oxford Street intersection.

#### **Sustainable Design**

- Consider integrating roof top solar panels given the amount of sun exposure.
- Continue working with OTIS for the final location of a bike share station.

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,

Martine Decamp, AICP  
Interim Executive Director

cc: Daniel Garofalo, Vice Chair, Civic Design Review, [dkgarofalo@gmail.com](mailto:dkgarofalo@gmail.com)  
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Department of Planning and Development

## Civic Design Review

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### Civic Design Review Committee

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**September 9, 2024**

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

**Re: Civic Design Review for 1520-30 Washington Ave. (Application # ZP-2024-002737)**

Dear Chanwoo,

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 building at 1520-30 Washington 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 7-story, 80'-tall mixed-use residential and commercial building totaling 107,725 gross square feet. This proposal includes 55 dwelling units, 9,412 square feet of commercial space, 71 car parking spaces, and 40 bicycle parking spaces. The parcel is zoned I-2 (Medium Industrial), and the proposal requires zoning variances for multi-family household living and for balconies.

At its meeting of July 2, 2024, the Civic Design Review Committee voted for the project to return for a second review. The applicant team returned to Civic Design Review on September 3, 2024, with changes to the design. At its meeting of September 3, 2024, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**RCO Comments: (East Point Breeze Neighbors and Point Breeze Neighbors Plus)**

Point Breeze Neighbors Plus, an affected RCO, attended the second CDR review on September 3, 2024, and provided comments. The RCO representative stated that they were not in favor of I-2 property being developed with residential uses on Washington Avenue, expressing a preference for uses that provide services and jobs to the community. The RCO representative expressed appreciation for the overall proposed building's aesthetics, while also noting several concerns, including:

- 1) the building height being too tall; and
- 2) the proposed vehicular circulation, requesting that all vehicular entries and exits be located on Washington Avenue.

The coordinating RCO, East Point Breeze Neighbors, which attended and provided comments during the first CDR review on July 2, 2024, attended but did not provide comments during the second CDR review on September 3, 2024.

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**CDR Committee Comments**

The Committee members expressed appreciation for the revisions based on feedback from the first CDR review, including improving vehicular circulation and the impact of the ground floor. Some of these revisions included relocating the Alter Street loading zone to the driveway, making the driveway one-way (entering on Alter Street and exiting to Washington Avenue), and adding brick to the ground floor's southern and eastern facades.

The Committee asked to include staff comments, as follows:

**Site Design**

1. Consider reducing the curb cut on Washington Avenue from 27 feet to 14 feet by shifting loading zones south within driveway.

**Building Design**

2. Staff appreciates improvements made to the Alter Street side of building, but has questions about amount of sunlight needed for the proposed greenery.

**Parking Design**

3. Staff notes the unused area on 2nd floor parking area at the corner of 16th Street and Washington Avenue. Consider expanding ground floor commercial space to this part of 2nd floor by eliminating several parking spaces near this corner to allow for more commercial space.
4. Staff suggests creating a direct walking route from the bike parking to the elevators on 2nd floor by eliminating one parking space.

**Open Space Design**

5. Staff has questions about overall design of roof deck areas (both on the 2nd floor courtyard and 7th floor roof deck); these areas lack detail. More information was requested regarding design and uses.

**Sustainable Design**

6. Provide MERV-13 air filters.
7. Consider rooftop solar.

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,

Martine Decamp, AICP  
Interim Executive Director

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