



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
MEMORANDUM

Date: October 5, 2020
To: Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC)
From: Department of Development Services *D.J.*
Subject: DTSP B-3, LLC FOR A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A 6-STORY, 82,577-SQUARE FOOT MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM BUILDING WITH 62-UNITS LOCATED ON BLOCK B-1 OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS SPECIFIC PLAN AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF BELARDO ROAD AND MUSUEM WAY; 200 NORTH BELARDO ROAD, ZONE CBD (CASE 3.3908 MAJ).

At its regular meeting of September 8, 2020, the AAC considered the subject application and provided comments to improve the design of the project. The comments are summarized as follows:

1. Massing – project appears as a “box”; voids on top floors are needed to provide relief and variety to the building; concern with large tower wall element facing park.
2. Building design –
 - a. The composition is too busy. The materials, colors and overall design should be simplified.
 - b. Elevations (particularly the east and within courtyard) need improvement and significant architectural movement.
 - c. Design enhancements should be responsive to the solar/environmental impacts of the site.
 - d. Introduce landscape into upper terraces, especially on east side and interior courtyard.
3. Pedestrian experience – provide larger glazing on south elevation.
4. Circulation – only one elevator is problematic, especially for northerly/northeasterly units on upper floors; consider second elevator for residents.
5. Outdoor amenities – provide communal grilling area(s) in courtyard and/or on other upper floor outdoor spaces.

In response, the applicant has made the following changes:

1. Massing – minor change involving the removal of vertical architectural element from the north, south and west elevations. The rectangular element extended above the roofline in the original design and with its removal, the building creates a horizontal design composition.
2. Building Design –
 - a. With the removal of the vertical architectural elements, there is a continuation of horizontal lines around the building from the balconies and the attached glass railings. Additionally, the accent colors have been removed and softer color tones are proposed.
 - b. The outdoor communal walkway balconies on the east side of the building have been staggered in plan view, which creates areas to integrate live plant materials and provides different shading patterns on this side the building as the sun rises.
 - c. Perforated metal screens are proposed on the outside of the balconies to provide added privacy and visual interest on the exterior. The screens are movable and will create different compositional rhythms on the west elevation and on the interior (west) courtyard elevation.
 - d. Landscape is proposed throughout the balcony areas.
3. Pedestrian experience – glazing area expanded on south elevation.
4. Circulation – modified and relocated the second elevator on the north side of the building, providing access from the parking garage to the top floor.
5. Outdoor amenities – a barbeque is proposed on the third floor pool deck.

The applicant has provided additional narrative on the proposed changes in Attachment 2.

In addition, the applicant intends to install public art on the ground floor of the east elevation, which is adjacent to the pedestrian walkway and two-story building fronting Palm Canyon Drive, as well as on the elevator tower facing the park. The elevation plans show a graphics as place holders until the art is finalized. See Attachment 3 for additional information.

Based on the proposed revisions, the project design has been improved and the project appears to be in conformance with the Architectural Review guidance required for a favorable recommendation to the Planning Commission.

Attachments:

1. 09/08/20 AAC Staff Memorandum
2. Applicant Description of Changes
3. Letter on Exterior Art
4. Public Comment Letters
5. Revised Plans

Attachment 1

09/08/20 AAC Staff Memorandum



ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2020

SUBJECT: DTPS B-3, LLC FOR A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A 6-STORY, 82,577-SQ. FT. MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING WITH 62-UNITS LOCATED ON THE WESTERLY HALF OF BLOCK "B-1" OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS SPECIFIC PLAN AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF BELARDO ROAD AND MUSUEM WAY; 200 NORTH BELARDO ROAD, ZONE CBD (CASE NO. 3.3908 MAJ)

FROM: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY:

The Architectural Advisory Committee will review a Major Architectural application for a new development at the northeast corner of Belardo Road and Museum Way, commonly referred to as Block "B-1" in the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan and the previously planned location of the Virgin Hotel. The proposal consists of a six-story, 82,577-square foot building with 62 residential condominium units.

ISSUES:

- Ground floor retail not proposed along any portion of the building, which impacts the urban design and user experience of the building.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the application as submitted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

<i>Related Relevant City Actions</i>	
04/20/16	The City Council amended the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan allow address project changes to the redevelopment of the Fashion Plaza mall, and the AAC, Planning Commission and City Council approved a mixed-use 112,862-square foot building with 142 hotel rooms on the subject site.

<i>Neighborhood Meeting/Notification</i>	
09/03/20	Electronic notice sent to neighborhood organizations within a mile of the subject property, notifying that the Architectural Advisory Committee would review the project on September 8, 2020.

<i>Field Check</i>	
08/20/20	Site visit by the planner.

DETAILS OF APPLICATION REQUEST:

<i>Site Area</i>	
Net Acres	0.84 Acres

<i>Surrounding Property</i>	<i>Existing Land Use Per Chapter 92</i>	<i>Existing General Plan Designation</i>	<i>Existing Zoning Designation</i>
Subject Property	(Identify existing use per classifications)	CBD (Central Business District)	CBD (Central Business District)
North	Parking lot	CBD	CBD
South	Rowan Hotel	CBD	CBD
East	Mixed-use Building	CBD	CBD
West	Future Downtown Park	CBD	CBD

<i>General Plan Areas or Master Plan Areas</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Downtown Urban Design Plan	Y
<i>Specific Plan Area</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan	Y

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed building is located on Block “B-1” of the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan, which was previously approved as a Virgin hotel. The Applicant now seeks to develop the 0.84-acre site as a residential condominium building. The property is bound by Andreas Road to the north, Belardo Road to the west, Museum Way to the south. The Downtown park is located to the west and the Kimpton hotel is located to the south. A pedestrian paseo and a two-story mixed-use building exist to the east.

The residential building is 82,862-square feet in area and includes 62 condominium units (a reduction in scope from the 112,862-square feet, 142-room Virgin Hotel). The building is six stories and sixty feet in height. The table below describes the proposed uses on each floor of the building:

<i>Floor</i>	<i>Use</i>	<i>Total units</i>
1	Lobby, lounge, fitness room and office amenities; back of house functions (trash room, utility room, etc.) and two 1-bd units, seven 2-bed units	9 units
2	Two 1-bd units, nine 2-bed units	11 units
3	Pool/spa and two 1-bd units, nine 2-bed units	11 units
4	Two 1-bd units, nine 2-bed units	11 units
5	Two 1-bd units, nine 2-bed units	11 units
6	One 1-bd unit, six 2-bed units & two 3-bed units	9 units
Total units:	11 1-bd units, 49 2-bed units,	62 units

ANALYSIS:

Site Plan:

The building is oriented like the previously approved Virgin Hotel building. The main entry is located at the southwest corner of the building where communal amenities are also located and include a lounge and office space, fitness room and office area. The common area pool and spa deck is situated on the third floor near the southwesterly corner of the structure to take advantage of the mountain views to the west and south. The trash room will be accessible from Arenas Road. Pedestrian sidewalks currently exist around the perimeter of the site and the existing underground parking garage will be accessible within the new building via two existing access points.

Mass and Scale:

As it relates to mass and scale, staff analyzed the project setbacks, building height, building stepbacks and maximum building square foot below. These four criteria are identified as specific urban design requirements in the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan and impact the overall mass/scale envisioned for Block “B” and “B-1”

Setbacks. In the table below, the setbacks required for Block “B-1” are compared with the proposed building setbacks, noting conformance as applicable:

<i>Setbacks</i>	<i>Specific Plan Requirement</i>	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Conforms?</i>
- Street Setback, Andreas	12 feet	12 feet	Yes
- Street Setback, Belardo	12 feet	25 feet	
- Street Setback, Museum Way	12 feet	15 feet	
- Easterly Setback	12 feet	14 feet	

Building height. The maximum allowed building height for the Specific Plan is generally 60 feet, except hotels may be approved in excess of 60 feet when approved by Planned Development. The proposed building will have a roof line of 60 feet and varying appurtenances (mechanical screening and elevator shaft) rising an additional four to seven feet in height.

Height Stepbacks. Stepbacks are intended to provide additional distance from the street for taller building elements to improve long-distance views and reduce any 'canyon effect' for pedestrians. The Specific Plan defines stepbacks as, "...the horizontal distance a building face must be set back from the property line at each given height." The following table shows the actual and required stepbacks for the proposed project:

<i>Minimum Building Height Stepbacks</i>	<i>Specific Plan Requirement</i>	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Conforms?</i>
Andreas Rd			
- 0-30 Feet in Height	0	12 feet	
- Over 30 Feet in Height	10 feet	12 feet	
Belardo Rd			
- 0-30 Feet in Height	0	15 feet	Yes
- Over 30 Feet in Height	15 feet	15 feet	
Museum Way			
- 0-30 Feet in Height	0	15 feet	
- Over 30 Feet in Height	10 feet	15 feet	

While the project meets the above stepbacks, it is important to note that the building rises vertically with no visual stepbacks from the ground to the top floor along all streets. The Virgin Hotel building was approved in a similar configuration.

Maximum Allowed Square Footage. The Specific Plan establishes limits for development intensity using standards for maximum square footage (floor area), maximum building mass (volume) and minimum public / common open space area. The maximum permitted square footage on Blocks B/B-1 is 155,000 square feet. Combining the proposed 82,577-square foot building on Block B-1 with the existing 32,246-square foot building on Block B, the total area is 114,823-square feet in size, which is well below the maximum intensity permitted by the Specific Plan.

Building Design and Detailing:

The proposed building is composed of concrete block, stucco, metal panels and clear anodized aluminum storefront. Balconies are proposed around the building consisting of perforated metal guardrails. Metal eaves and balconies provide solar control for windows.

Standards for the articulation of building facades are established in the Specific Plan to avoid excessive uniformity / monotony. An articulation may either protrude or recess at

least two (2) feet from adjoining wall surfaces, and at intervals of no less than sixty (60) feet across an exterior elevation. Based on the proposed elevations, the project conforms to this requirement and the overall design composition of the building is balanced with appropriate solids, voids and the application of neutral color tones and strategic color accents.

Landscaping and Buffers:

The proposed landscape/hardscape areas will utilize similar design elements as existing within the Downtown project. Although the project is built on an existing garage, the project incorporates raised planters to soften the appearance of the building along the street. The interior courtyard will include two large specimen trees, along with varieties of cacti and succulents.

Architectural Review Criteria:

PSZC Section 94.04.00(D) requires an evaluation of the proposed development to determine if it will provide a desirable environment for its occupants, be compatible with the character of adjacent and surrounding developments, and whether it is of good composition, materials, textures and colors. Conformance shall be evaluated based on the following criteria:

	Guidelines [PSZC 94.04.00(D)]	Compliance
1.	<p><i>Site layout, orientation, location of structures and relationship to one another and to open spaces and topography. Definition of pedestrian and vehicular areas; i.e., sidewalks as distinct from parking lot areas.</i></p> <p>The project proposes a new six-story building with pedestrian circulation around all sides. Pedestrian pathways will be separated from vehicular streets with curbs and landscape treatment. Pavers, landscaping and sidewalk furniture will provide an enhanced experience on the site. Sidewalks and other walkways are provided to accommodate the change in topography across the site. Pedestrian access is provided to the underground parking via stairways and elevators.</p>	Y
2.	<p><i>Harmonious relationship with existing and proposed adjoining developments and in the context of the immediate neighborhood/community, avoiding both excessive variety and monotonous repetition, but allowing similarity of style, if warranted;</i></p> <p>The proposed structure is an O-shaped configuration surrounding central courtyard with a void for a third floor pool deck. The height is lower than the hotel to the south. The proposed architecture is of a contemporary style consistent with surrounding development, but introduces design elements, colors and materials of a higher quality than the existing development in the vicinity. The selection</p>	Y

	Guidelines [PSZC 94.04.00(D)]	Compliance
	of design elements differs from those of the adjacent blocks within the Downtown Specific Plan area, yet they contribute to the overall identity of an up-scale contemporary center.	
3.	<p><i>Maximum height, area, setbacks and overall mass, as well as parts of any structure (buildings, walls, screens, towers or signs) and effective concealment of all mechanical equipment;</i></p> <p>The proposed building's overall height will be 70 feet. Exterior elevations show projections at building edges. Mass is divided with exterior building articulation. A large central void above the interior courtyard and third floor pool deck reduces overall building bulk. Rooftop mechanical will be concealed from view.</p>	Y
4.	<p><i>Building design, materials and colors to be sympathetic with desert surroundings;</i></p> <p>The building architecture is contemporary in style, with a color and material palette that includes neutral color tones. The materials include concrete, metal and glass, which are sympathetic with the desert surroundings.</p>	Y
5.	<p><i>Harmony of materials, colors and composition of those elements of a structure, including overhangs, roofs, and substructures which are visible simultaneously;</i></p> <p>Covered balconies and walkways are provided, and pedestrian circulation and solar control are integrated into the building design.</p>	Y
6.	<p><i>Consistency of composition and treatment;</i></p> <p>The overall design composition of the building is balanced with appropriate solids, voids and the application of neutral color tones and strategic color accents.</p>	Y
7.	<p><i>Location and type of planting, with regard for desert climate conditions. Preservation of specimen and landmark trees upon a site, with proper irrigation to insure maintenance of all plant materials;</i></p> <p>A landscape plan has been submitted and includes a mix of common tree and plant materials used in drought tolerant environments, as well as some identified by Table III-5, <i>Landscape Palette</i>, of the Specific Plan.</p>	Y
8.	<p><i>Signs and graphics, as understood in architectural design including materials and colors.</i></p> <p>N/A – signage is not proposed at this time and will be evaluated under a future submittal.</p>	Y

CONCLUSION:

The overall design of the building is consistent with the criteria outlined in the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan and the Architectural Review Guidelines of Section 94.04.00 of the Zoning Code. Based on this analysis, staff recommends the AAC recommend approval to the Planning Commission.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Newell", is written above a horizontal line.

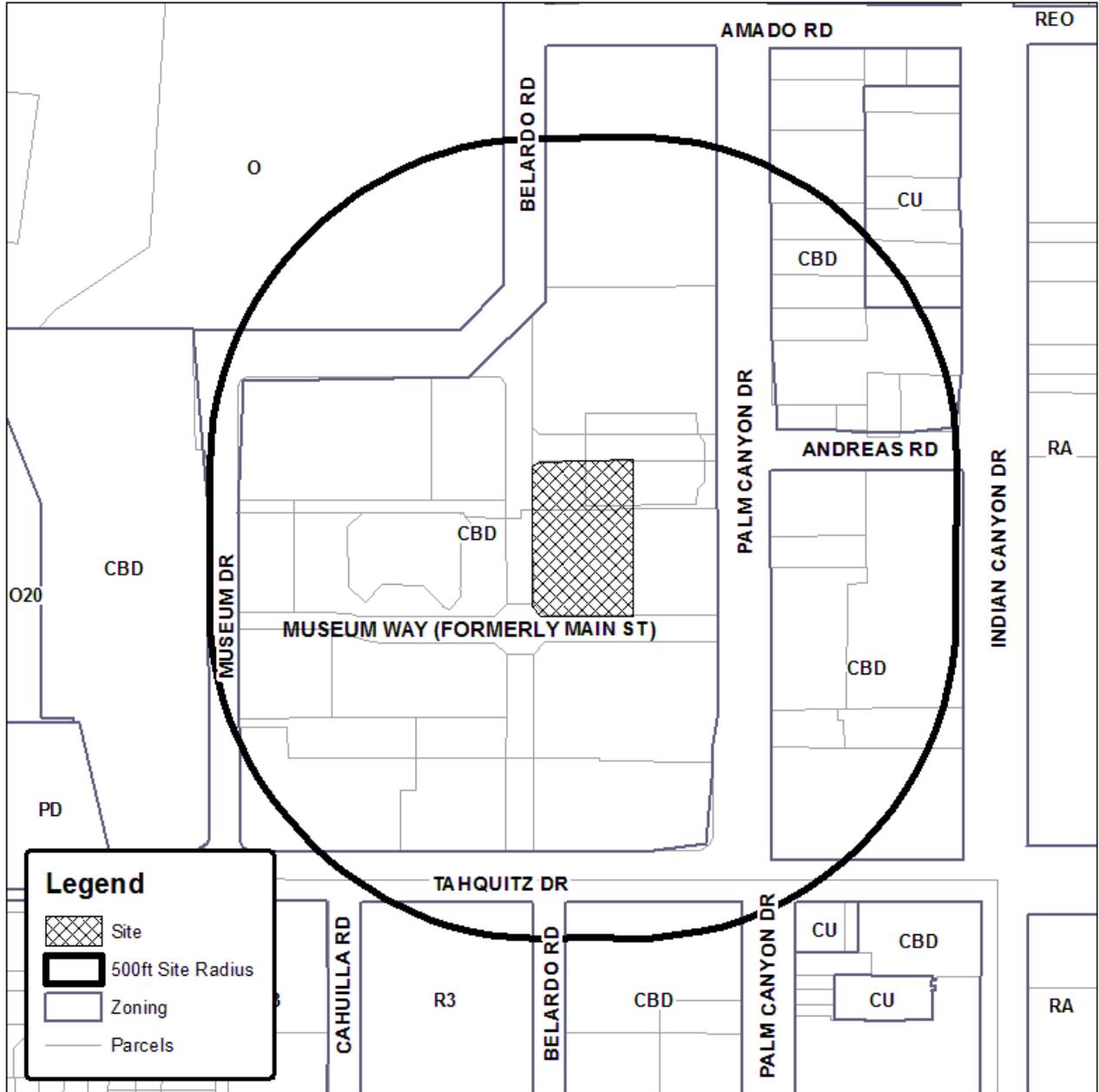
David A. Newell, AICP
Principal Planner

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Justification Letter
3. Landscape Letter from TKD Associates, Inc.
- ~~4. Project Plans~~



Department of Development Services Vicinity Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

DTPS B-3, LLC
201 N Palm Canyon Dr Ste. 200
Palm Springs, CA 92262

April 14, 2020

David Newell
Associate Planner
City of Palm Springs
3200 E Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Re: Major Architecture Application – Block B-1 Downtown Palm Springs
Revised Letter to reflect correct Company Name

Dear David:

I am submitting an Major Architecture Application for the Block B-1 building in the Downtown project. Grits strategy and vision is to build a downtown mixed use project, which will comprise of four core elements; hospitality, retail, office and residential. We believe Palm Springs Downtown is now ready for a high end multifamily condominium building to support local retail and restaurants in the downtown core.

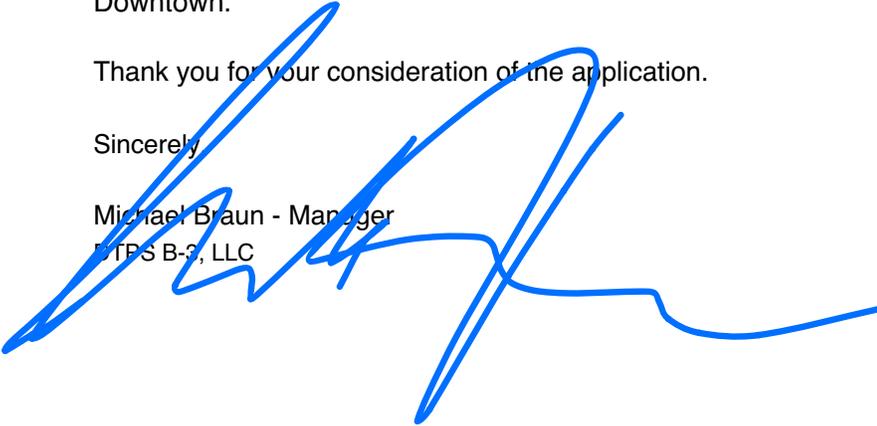
America's 77 million baby boomers are getting ready to move and they want to live in an active and cultural interesting place with a warm climate. The targeted demographic are baby boomers with high disposable income looking to downsize from their big homes and permanently relocate to Palm Springs.

The current health crisis has painfully disclosed the risk of urban living in the big city. Grit Development believes in a Shift toward village living as opposed to living in that big city. The next 20 years are about the revival of the village, living in places that are smaller in scale, walkable to transportation, retail, restaurants and cultural institutions where you don't have to drive a car, but can still have a home. Adding residential units focusing on the most active adult generation age group 54 - 75 will create a vibrant mixed use neighborhood driving enduring demand for our local businesses. It will create long-term value for all 4 stake holders (1) community, (2) city, 3) local business and Grit Development. While additional hotel rooms bring many weekend visitors to Downtown, additional residents with high disposable income will add more vibrancy not only during the weekend, but every day of the year to our Downtown.

Thank you for your consideration of the application.

Sincerely,

Michael Braun - Manager
DTPS B-3, LLC





PROJECT MEMO

To: David Newell, Principal Planner
From: Tom Doczi
CC: File
Date: 5-12-20
Re: Downtown Block B Residential, Case 3.3908 MAJ, Landscape Plans

Site Landscape Concept:

The Design Goal for the Site Landscape for Block "B" is to utilize similar Hardscape, Design Elements, Plant Materials and Site Furnishings, to seamlessly integrate the proposed project into the fabric of the recently completed Downtown Master Plan and Proposed Park Plan.

The proposed project is built above the existing underground parking structure. Due to the limited soil cover, the proposed Courtyard and Perimeter Landscape areas will be raised and bermed to provide adequate soil depth for plant material while creating a 3 dimensional effect.

The Courtyard includes seating areas and (2) large specimen trees. Varieties of cacti and succulents will be used in the bermed planting areas.

Plant Material in Geometric Patterns will be used to compliment the Architectural Style of the Building.

Pavers, with various sizes and patterns, will be used to define public and private areas. Hardscape in the Courtyard Walkway will utilize 2'x2', with smaller pavers and artificial turf in Private Patios.

Low Level Landscape Lighting is used for safety, Building accents, specimen plants and trees.

Attachment 2

Applicant Description of Changes

Block B-1: Redesign Memo

We have gathered all committee member notes as well as our own, and these have all been addressed in our response presented here. All our efforts have been toward addressing these comments, and to the goal of an overall design **simplification and coherence**. We have also taken every opportunity to strengthen community-making – both within the building, and within the surrounding context.

1. Simplified and streamlined the architecture:

- Completely re-imagined and reduced the massing:
 - a. Eliminated solar shade structure at Sundeck
 - b. Simplified skybridges at the “gap”
 - c. Created saw-tooth-shaped patios at internal walkways and on Market Street incorporating seating areas and landscape
 - d. Removed windows in favor of all-door scheme
 - e. Removed beveled massing pieces at West, South and in Courtyard
- Reduced the number of materials:
 - a. The material and color palette has been reduced
- Incorporated more “mid-century modern” gestures and colors:
 - a. New West-facing movable screens designed with desert and mid-century colors to provide the kinetic aspect of an always-changing creative sculpture

2. Adjusted the all elevations to reflect the unique environmental exposure of each:

- Each elevation is designed for individual sun exposure, views and community context:
 - a. West façade features vertical movable sunscreen panels to protect against low sun; these panels are proposed as painted perforated corrugated metal, feature a variety of colors that will “mix” as people move them to provide the kinetic aspect of an always-changing creative sculpture
 - b. South façade features deep horizontal overhangs to protect against sun; this allows a more open interaction between this façade and the street
 - c. East façade features saw-tooth-shaped patios and terraces incorporating seating areas and landscape along Market Street

3. Improved the external circulation:

- Created saw-tooth-shaped patios incorporating seating areas and landscape at unit entries:
 - a. New screens at front-door patios, combining climbing vines and corrugated perforated metal panels. The screens provide a sense of entry, soften the horizontality of the balconies, and provide depth and layering to the façade
 - b. The balconies and screens together create an active and kinetic façade that breaks repetitiveness and allows for more landscape on the building

4. Relocated second elevator to allow access to parking garage level:

- This will be more expensive, but will allow access to and from the parking garage
- The elevator retains its initial function as pedestrian and move-in elevator.

5. Improved the West face of stair and elevator tower:

- This location will feature an appropriate piece of art or bas-relief sculpture, selected by the Palm Springs Public Arts Commission.

Attachment 3

Letter on Exterior Art

April 14, 2020

To: Michael Braun, Grit Development

From: Ann Sheffer, Chair, PS Public Arts Commission

Re: Art Placement on Parcel B1 Residential Development

I have researched your request to have locations for artwork approved as part of your Design Review process, in the context of the Public Arts Ordinance.

This proposal meets all of the requirements for 'art-in-lieu-of-fees' and actually improves on the timetable by committing to art during the design process, rather than after the project is complete. I've attached the "Developer Agreement" that would be applicable to this project.

The Public Arts Commission is committed to making art an integral part of architectural design, and will be happy to work with you when the time comes to commission artwork for the two locations that you have proposed.

Proposed locations:

Mural:

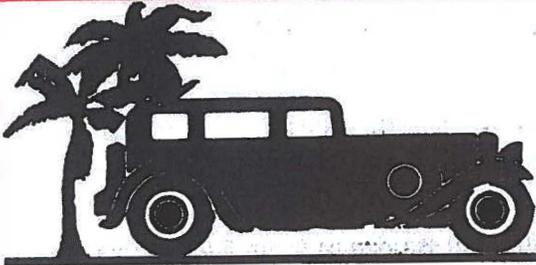


Sculpture:



Attachment 4

Public Comment Letters



**KEITH
McCORMICK'S**

PALM SPRINGS EXOTIC CAR AUCTIONS

244 N. Indian Canyon Drive

Palm Springs, CA 92262

(760) 320-3290

(760) 320-2850

Fax (760) 323-7031

September 29th 2020.

Web Site - <http://www.classic-carauction.com>

E-mail: keith@classic-carauction.com

jason@classic-carauction.com

City of Palm Springs. David Newell

RECEIVED

Director of Planning Services

OCT 1 2020

3200 E.Tahquitz Canyon Way

PLANNING SERVICES

Palm Springs Ca 92262.

DEPARTMENT

Ref New Condominium Project Block B downtown.

To whom it may concern.

I am writing today to express my support for the latest set of plans showing the design of this up market development that will be built in the heart of town. I love the overall concept .I am a year round resident of Palm Springs since 1981 living in the Vista Las Palma neighborhood and am so excited about this that I have requested one of the top Penthouse suites from Grit Development.

Residential units of this caliber will bring a strong financial support to downtown .My wife and I being very active social people relish the fact that we could walk to all our favorite bars ,Restaurants,Coffee shops and local shopping without needing to get a car out. I personally could walk to my place of work .

Please give an approval to the plans submitted so this can move ahead in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely


Mr. & Mrs. Keith McCormick

David Newell

From: Schmieder, Dean <Dean.Schmieder@uhc.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 1:07 PM
To: David Newell
Subject: New Residential Condominium Project - Block B Downtown



To whom it may concern,

I am writing to lend my support of the proposed Downtown Palm Springs Condominium project. My wife and I sold our second home in Palm Springs and are now looking to purchase one of the new Condominiums to relocate fulltime to Palm Springs in 2023. We love the redeveloped downtown Palm Springs. It's been one of our favorite getaways and we cannot wait to live in Downtown. The developer was so nice to share the redesign of the building. We feel it addresses the initial concerns, when commissioners commented it's more of a LA design and not necessary Palm Springs

Respectfully,
Dean Schmieder

This e-mail, including attachments, may include confidential and/or proprietary information, and may be used only by the person or entity to which it is addressed. If the reader of this e-mail is not the intended recipient or his or her authorized agent, the reader is hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this e-mail is prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify the sender by replying to this message and delete this e-mail immediately.

David Newell

From: Amy Settlemier <Amy@bigge.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 11:04 AM
To: David Newell
Subject: - Letter of Support for condo project.



Re-Virgin Lot - New 65 unit Residential Condominium Project Block B

Dear Council Members-

I am writing to support the proposed Downtown Palm Springs Condominium project replacing the planned Virgin Hotel. I grew up in PS and my mother currently lives there as well. This project is a great prospect for her to move into to be closer to town and current for a new resident location from her current home in Indian canyon. We would be interested in purchasing one of these units for her retirement

I have been travelling to visit my mom in Palm Springs for over 30 years and have seen consistent growth with many developments being built throughout. Grit Development's project has brought great economic growth and stability for the city and community helping to create a vibrant and sustainable downtown. I believe the Development of these residential units will help drive and support local businesses along Palm Canyon Drive and surrounding area as well as provide jobs to many who are unemployed right now due to COVID-19.

The General Manager of the Rowan Hotel was so nice to show us the revised plans for the project during a recent visit to Palm Springs - it is a win-win for this wonderful community and meets the growing demand for mini cities like Palm Springs

Warmest Regards, thank you -

Amy Settlemier

510-520-9326

Michael Braun

<image001.jpg>

Palm Springs, California

760-641-4046

michael@gritps.com

www.Gritpalmsprings.com

FOLLOW US

www.instagram.com/downtownpalmsprings/

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David Newell

From: Jayne Williams <jayneewilliams@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 7:39 AM
To: David Newell
Subject: Palm Springs Condo project



City of Palm Springs
Director of Planning Services
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Re: Virgin Lot - New 65 unit Residential Condominium Project Block B

David Newell,

I am writing to support the proposed Downtown Palm Springs Condominium project replacing the planned Virgin Hotel.

I have been traveling to Palm Springs for over 20 years and have seen consistent growth with many developments being built throughout. I have been looking for a condo to buy for my family. I love the Grit Development's project and believe it has brought a lot to the downtown area. I am so impressed with what has been done so far with the Rowan Hotel!

I believe the Development of these residential units will help drive and support local businesses along Palm Canyon Drive and surrounding area as well as provide jobs to many who are unemployed right now due to COVID-19.

The General Manager of the Rowan Hotel was so nice to show us the revised plans for the project during a recent visit to Palm Springs -this would be a great project for Palm Springs and would help make the downtown a nice place to visit and live.

Warmest Regards, Jayne Williams

Jayne Williams
8x8 Office Furniture & Design LLC
Cell: 415-407-1900

Flinn Fagg

Subject: FW: Proposed DT 62-unit condo project

From: Stan Boles [mailto:stanboles@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2020 2:59 PM
To: jakway1ps@aol.com
Cc: Flinn Fagg <Flinn.Fagg@palmspringsca.gov>
Subject: Proposed DT 62-unit condo project



September 19, 2020

Dear Chairman of the Architectural Advisory Committee and Members,

As a retired architect and a member of the Palm Springs Architectural Alliance, I am extremely concerned with the future of the built environment of our city. The site for the proposed 62-unit residential building adjacent to the Rowan Hotel is pivotal for the future architectural development of Palm Springs— adjacent to the new downtown park, facing the entry to The Palm Springs Art Museum, possessing sweeping views of Mt. San Jacinto and located in the pedestrian center of our city.

This important site has the civic responsibility to extend the architectural heritage of Palm Springs and express its important context in a unique way. It should not copy and continue the inappropriate design aesthetic of the Rowan Hotel, the West Elm building, etc. These new buildings are overly complex assemblies of hackneyed commercial motifs that belong in suburban Dallas or Phoenix but not in the heart of Palm Springs.

Instead, the architecture of the new building should respond to the unique characteristics of its site and recall the heritage of Palm Springs Modernism:

- * Simplicity of form and exterior materials palette.
- * Innovative use of new materials and building technologies.
- * Carefully designed transparency to capture the long-range mountain vistas, and short-range garden views.
- * Ground floor plan design that would allow easy pedestrian flow between interior spaces into surrounding landscaped gardens and walkways.
- * Concern for sustainability by incorporating building orientation, solar conditions, natural ventilation, etc. into the exterior shell design resulting in each façade having a unique architectural expression.

- * Creation of a vibrant pedestrian environment at the street level with access to flexible floorspace that could offer areas for pop-up commercial and retail, museum display, education and teaching, park event support, etc., all of which could add to the energy and vitality of downtown Palm Springs and the new city park.

This great site in the heart of our city demands a great architectural solution. I urge the committee to continue with the review process until design excellence is achieved.

Sincerely,

Stanley G. Boles F.A.I.A. (retired)

David Newell

-----Original Message-----

From: Erik Williams <geegee3@icloud.com>

To: Tom Jakway

Sent: Tue, Sep 15, 2020 4:05 pm

Subject: 62-unit downtown project

September 15, 2020

Dear Tom and Members of the Architectural Advisory Committee,

Last week when you and your committee reviewed the proposed 62-unit residential building on the property adjacent to the Rowan Hotel, there were several insightful comments made about the design.

I agree that the proposed project, in the heart of downtown, needs to rise to a higher standard than what was shown.

For the past twenty plus years the appreciation of our architectural legacy, its ability to draw significant tourist dollars, and the community's understanding of how great architecture

contributes to the uniqueness of Palm Springs, is now woven into our town's DNA.

While we celebrate our architectural history, we also need new architecture that reflects this place and our unique environment.

Rather than a generic design that could be located anywhere, this building needs to relate to its context. Across from the downtown park,

one block from the museum, and facing the dramatic escarpment of Mount San Jacinto, surely the design should reflect its location.

The obvious connection with the museum, (as presumably many of the building's residents will take advantage of its proximity),

seems a golden opportunity to incorporate an artist's work into the design. For example, the artist Jim Isermann, has designed balcony grills,

tile features, and more, to provide stunning design features on numerous buildings.

Merchants and restaurateurs are eager for visitors and locals alike to get out of their cars and walk around the downtown.

Why not make the first floor of this proposed building more active and interesting for pedestrians by adding a retail component?

People visiting the park will be grateful for a cool lemonade!

We have very few chances to encourage and promote great design downtown and I urge you to steadfastly insist on it with this project.

Sincerely yours,

Sidney Williams

Palm Springs Architectural Alliance

The Palm Springs Architectural Alliance

September 14, 2020

Dear Chairman of the Architectural Advisory Council and members,

As a co-founder of Palm Springs Architectural Alliance, I am very interested in the course of development of the former Virgin Hotel site.

My interest is in making sure that we pursue excellence in design, form and function of this downtown site.

Once it is built, that's it, for the foreseeable future. There are just not that many places left to build downtown. We need to make sure this design is not an "off the shelf design" from a large firm. It must relate to our surroundings, its proximity to both the new park and celebrate our museum, and offer pedestrian experiences that are positive, not mundane or industrial in feeling.

We want people to walk around and feel the vibrancy of the residential and commercial space. Making the street level pop up event, local artist shows and flexible retail space would go far to advancing that pedestrian experience. Covid 19 will not be with us forever, and if we fail to include flexible, street-level commercial space now, we will regret it later.

The proposed design certainly fits in with the other buildings already built, but I am not sure that's a good thing. Most of the new buildings do not relate well to the site, the mountain view or our climate. In my opinion, making this one look like them is to be avoided.

The elevations of this project must be exciting, different and consider the sun, mountains, museum and park, and climate. Our city needs this building to be great, not just good enough. Including local artists, not just for painted murals, and local architects to advise on design would be wonderful step towards creating community good will.

This large project offers a chance to do things the right way...involve PSAA and the community in helping to create a building worth visiting just to see great architecture.

Sincerely,

Debra Hovel and Richard Hovel
PSAA Co-Founders

David Newell

From: CHRIS MENRAD <cmenrad@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 2:21 PM
To: David Newell
Subject: Architectural advisory meeting/Sep. 8, 2020

E

Dear David,

I wanted to comment regarding item 5 for today's Architectural Advisory Meeting. I feel that the committee needs to take a closer look at the architecture. The style and design of the building. It is, in a word, very uninspiring as well as disappointing. It says nothing about Palm Springs, or that we are even in Palm Springs. This building could be put up anywhere in the country and probably already has. We need to take a new direction when it come to approving these buildings. While there are codes and rules that developers need to follow at a basic level, there should also be a review for architectural excellence. For too long, and under formerly compromised city councils, the designs had been to just accepted, with slight changes, to very detrimental and long term effect. But Palm Springs has a brand and that brand is modern architecture of integrity. We have a tremendous amount of heritage tourism here. Our past is loaded with great buildings, but our future does not seem to be. I work in real estate and one of the frequent questions I get asked by clients is "who let that happen to downtown!", or "what on earth were they thinking?" I would like the architectural advisory committee to take a very critical look at this building. Where is the beauty in it? How will it age and add to our built environment in an important way. What can be done to encourage developers to reach out to architects to make something that not only they, but the entire city can be proud of today and well into the future.

Thank you very much.

Chris Menrad
1070 Apache Road
Palm Springs, CA. 92264

AAC meeting of September 8 - Agenda Item No. 5

rjuliansf@aol.com <rjuliansf@aol.com>

Fri 9/4/2020 1:51 PM

To: David Newell <David.Newell@palmspringsca.gov>; CityClerk <CityClerk@palmspringsca.gov>



Mr. Newell and Commissioners,

I read the Staff Report on this unattractive building with interest and feel the need to point out one issue which was overlooked in the Staff Report. That issue is parking.

The drawings provided by the project sponsor show a need for 108 parking spaces for the 62 proposed condominiums. Yet there is no parking shown on the plans. Is it the intention of the developer to use existing parking owned by the City of Palm Springs in the underground parking garage to satisfy the parking needs of this project? And if so, since this parking is owned by the City, how can title be transferred to condo owners without recompense to the City? I hope you will be prepared to discuss this at the Commission meeting.

Robert Julian Stone
4328 Indigo Street
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Flinn Fagg

From: Tim O'Bayley <tim@obayley.net>
Sent: Friday, September 4, 2020 12:50 PM
To: Flinn Fagg
Cc: Anthony Mejia
Subject: Case 3.3908 MAJ - Sept. 8, 2020

E

Dear Mr. Fagg and members of the Architectural Advisory Committee.

I'm writing in support of Grit Development's proposed change (to the former site of the proposed Virgin Hotel) to build residential units on Block B-1 in the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan.

I believe that residential units are far more desirable in this location, and will provide good economic balance and vibrancy to our downtown. Much like many of the great cities of Europe, what we now call 'mixed use' has been part of the fabric of these cities and villages for many years. The proposed building is in compliance with the Specific Plan in terms of massing and density and will complement the existing and planned structures nearby.

My only concern is that I would like to see more shade for the pedestrian / public areas of 'the new downtown.' Hopefully that can be accomplished without too much additional expense.

Cheers,

Tim O'Bayley
2250 N. Leonard Road, Palm Springs CA 92262
Mobile: 760-799-3845

Flinn Fagg

From: mike guerra <attyatlawca@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 4, 2020 9:29 AM
To: David Newell
Cc: Flinn Fagg
Subject: Architectural Advisory Committee September 8, 2020 Meeting Agenda Item 5, Proposed Downtown Project Condo Complex

E

September 4, 2020

Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC)
c/o David Newell, AICP, Principal Planner

Re: AAC - Agenda Item 5, Proposed Downtown Condominium Complex

Dear AAC:

Joan Forrer (Joni) and I are full-time resident of the Tennis Club Neighborhood living on Arenas Rd., a short distance from the proposed condominium complex.

Joni and I fully support the project as proposed. The well written staff report covers all the relevant issues comprehensively, but in a concise manner.

The proposed project would enhance the downtown project generally by bringing a residential component to the downtown development. Further, when compared to the Virgin Hotel proposal, the condominium complex proposal will significantly reduce mass, height and overall density and be more consistent with the adopted design of the Downtown Park and the original purpose of the downtown project. As the developer, Michael Braun comments in his proposal letter, the condo complex will support the concept of having a village feeling for downtown [verses another large hotel (the Virgin Hotel) at the location].

Joni and I believe having a residential component will add a softness to the area. The design of the condo complex is consistent with the design of the existing Kimpton and will compliment that building and the Hyatt to the north.

We urge the AAC to approve the condominium project proposal.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Forrer
Mike Guerra, Esq.
457 W Arenas Rd.
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Attachment 5

Revised Plans