

STAFF REPORT

Case Number: 18-SU-01
Request: Specific Use Permit Amendment
Address: 1570 Mira Lago Boulevard
Lot Size: Approximately 2.45 Acres
Petitioner: Dasit Bhakta / Hampton Inn & Suites

Background:

The applicant is requesting an amendment to the existing Specific Use Permit (Ordinance 3389) approved by the City Council on September 6, 2016. This Ordinance granted an SUP for a hotel use within Planned Development District No. 81 (PD-81).

The applicant is requesting a revision to the SUP for the approved building elevations to reflect a change in architectural style that the applicant is wishing to pursue at this time. Minor changes to the site plan are also proposed. This SUP amendment also includes a special exception to the Architectural Standard, Roof Design requirements of PD-81.

Existing Conditions:

This 2.45 acre site is located within the Mira Lago peninsula, in one of the core tracts defined by the existing Mira Lago Boulevard and Lago Vista East Boulevard and future Mira Vista Boulevard to the east and Lago Real Boulevard to the south. To the north, across Mira Lago Boulevard is the site of the recently approved Mira Lago Hospitality hotels (Candlewood and Holiday Inn Express) and Omni Hotel. To the east across Lago Vista Boulevard, is the Laguna Vista Apartment Complex. To the west is the site of the recently approved La Quinta Hotel. The adjacent property to the south is undeveloped.

The entire Lago Vista peninsula (consisting of approximately 66 acres) is zoned Planned Development No. 81 (PD-81). This PD allows for a wide variety of retail, office and high density residential development. PD-81 is divided into two basic subdistricts, the “**Employment Core**” subdistrict and the “**Mixed Use Residential**” subdistrict. This site is located within the “Employment Core” subdistrict, which currently allows hotels to be developed after obtaining a Specific Use Permit.

Site Design:

The applicant is proposing two buildings on the site: one, 4-story hotel and one, 2-level parking structure. The hotel is proposed to be located along Mira Lago Boulevard and will have a main lobby with two entries: the main entry with the drop-off area is located on the south side of the building and a pedestrian entry is located on the north side facing Mira Lago Boulevard. The parking structure is proposed on the southwest corner of the lot, and the remaining southeastern portion of the site along Lago Vista East Boulevard is proposed to be used as a landscape open space until it will be developed into a conference center at a future date. A corresponding site plan application will be submitted for any future development on the remaining portion of the site.

The proposed hotel will consist of approximately 72,837 square feet, containing 116 rooms. A lobby with reception desk, meeting area with a small business center, breakfast area, fitness room, and indoor pool with outdoor seating areas will be located on the first floor. The outdoor seating areas are located on the northeast and southeast corners of the building and will be screened from public view with landscaping. The outdoor areas are accessible only from the indoor pool area.

A limited number of surface parking spaces (27) are proposed along the southern side of the building, however most of the guest parking will be located within the parking garage. The parking garage will be accessible on two sides, and the stairs and elevator area will be directly connected to the hotel reception area through a walkway.

Summary of proposed changes to the Site Plan:

The applicant is proposing several minor changes to the site plan including:

- The drop-off porte cochere configuration is slightly changed to accommodate the fire lane around the building.
- The approved site plan contained 26 surface parking spaces, the proposed site plan contains 27 surface parking spaces.
- The approved site plan had the dumpster located in the open space area so that is more visible from Lago Vista East Boulevard. The proposed Site Plan shows the dumpster located further back from the street view, adjacent to the garage.
- The approved floor plan for the hotel included 117 rooms, while the proposed floor plan for the hotel includes 116 rooms.
- The proposed floor plan for the hotel includes a small pool equipment room located at the northwest corner of the hotel that separates the outdoor patio from the internal driveway to the west.

Staff believes that the proposed changes to the site plan are acceptable and consistent with the previously approved SUP request.

Building Elevations:

The building elevations included with the approved SUP reflected a “Classic Contemporary” architecture style supported by supported by continuous elements like massive columns, accentuated roof cornice and first floor base. The proposed architectural style included in this SUP amendment is more “Simple Modern” with an accent on clean large surfaces breaking down the façade, larger windows and more subtle accents.

The proposed façade treatment is generally consistent with the intent of the Architectural Standards established by PD-81, *“to develop an architectural character, to reflect a friendly pedestrian-scaled environment, to break down the building massing and form to prevent any long flat plain facades and provide visual relief within the design of the buildings which ties into the overall character of the Mira Lago Peninsula”*. The architectural elements and the general massing of the proposed building will complement the “Contemporary Mediterranean” style of the existing buildings that PD-81 requires.

The proposed elevations for the hotel comply with the standards of PD-81, specifically:

- Façade broken up into smaller areas through the use of varying facade setbacks, arcades, and architectural features such as plazas, columns, canopies,

- The building bases articulated with material changes, fenestration changes, provision of an arcade, or expression of building entrance,
- The use of defined windows with windowsill and head details, which utilize projecting elements or materials of a contrasting color and material and highlights the window treatment.

The proposed building elevations are consistent with the above requirements.

The proposed building façades include a variation of surface textures in harmonious combinations and uses awnings as accents. The sides of the building are proposed to be compatible to the front of the building. The main building entry from Mira Lago Boulevard is proposed to be accented with the use of entry courtyards or other architectural features and easily recognizable to provide ceremonial entry for pedestrians. The building base is articulated with attention to detailing, materials, colors, finishes, lighting, and arcades. The proposed building elevations are consistent with PD-81 requirements.

The hotel will be 4 stories with an overall height of approximately 59 feet and a flat roof configuration. A projecting cornice is proposed at the roof plane intersections with the façade. The proposed parapet on the building will screen the roofing system and equipment from public view. The previous approved building elevations reflected a 61-foot tall building and flat roof configuration with a parapet.

The applicant is proposing at least 75% of the façade to be brick and stone. A small percent of stucco will be used on the accent elements.

The parking structure will be 2 levels high and will be constructed using precast concrete panels.

Each room will have its own individual HVAC system and will be incorporated into the window design. All other HVAC equipment will be located on the roof.

Summary of proposed changes to the Building Elevations:

- The approved architectural style of the exterior of the hotel was generally classified as “Classic Contemporary” supported by continuous elements like massive columns, accentuated roof cornice and first floor base. The proposed architectural style included in this SUP amendment is more “Simple Modern” with an accent on clean large surfaces breaking down the façade, larger windows and more subtle accents.
- The approved height of the hotel is 61 feet. The proposed height of the hotel is maximum 59 feet.

Staff believes the proposed changes to the building elevations are acceptable. While the overall architectural style has changed to simple modern, the applicant is proposing a building design that is consistent with the PD-81 architectural design standards.

Landscaping and Open Space:

No changes to the approved landscape plan are included with the SUP amendment request.

The applicant has proposed to provide approximately 32% of the site as natural or landscaped open space; PD-81 requires 10%. The applicant has agreed to minimally landscape the open space area at the southeast corner of the site at this time. 79 new trees are proposed to be installed throughout the site, including a combination of Oak, Holly and Crape Myrtle.

The proposed streetscape along Mira Lago Boulevard and Lago Vista Boulevard will include 6-foot wide sidewalks with canopy trees to provide ample shade. The applicant is also proposing to install 7 seating areas with benches and trash receptacles and street light poles along Mira Lago Boulevard and Lago Vista East Boulevard. This streetscape will be comparable with the existing streetscape elements located in front of the existing developments within PD-81 (Laguna Vista, Evergreen and Portofino Apartments).

Parking:

Based on the proposed use, PD-81 requires at least 123 on-site parking spaces. 25% of these spaces can be surface parking.

The applicant is proposing 146 on-site parking spaces, of which 122 of these parking spaces are located within the proposed 2-level parking structure. Only 27 surface parking spaces are proposed (17% of total) within the site. As noted previously in this report, the approved site plan reflects 26 surface parking spaces. Currently there are 20 parallel parking spaces along Mira Lago Boulevard and Lago Vista Boulevard.

Signage:

No changes to the approved Signage are included with the SUP amendment request.

The applicant is proposing to install wall signs on three façades (north, south and east). The wall signs will be up to 4 feet in height and maximum 138 square feet. PD-81 requires all wall signs to be less than 10 feet high and less than 150 square feet. The proposed signage complies with PD-81 requirements.

Special Exceptions:

Approved Special Exception for Development Standards

PD-81 requires all buildings fronting a street to be setback no further than 10 feet from a property line. The site plan proposes a minimum 10-foot setback along Mira Lago Boulevard to accommodate the articulation of the proposed façade and the outdoor seating area for a more walkable urban community.

This Special Exception was approved with Ordinance 3389 in September 2016.

Proposed Special Exception for Architectural Standard, Roof Design:

PD-81 stipulates that “Roofs of all buildings are required to have sloping roof forms, except buildings that are over 60 feet in height.” The proposed building will have a flat roof configuration and accent elements that will be maximum 59 feet in height. The average height of the building is approximately 52 feet.

Staff supports the special exception to allow for the flat roof configuration considering the overall height of the building is close to the PD-81 requirement, thus meeting the intent of the zoning to accommodate taller buildings with flat roofs. Furthermore, the approved building elevations reflected a flat roof building also, therefore the proposed building elevations are consistent with the approved SUP.

Market Study:

No changes to the initial Market Study are included with this SUP amendment request.

The applicant submitted a Market Study for the proposed Hampton Inn & Suites in Farmers Branch completed by DP Consulting, Professionals in Hotel Development. In their analysis of the area and the specific location of this site in greater the Dallas hotel market, the researchers make an informed estimation for occupancy, average daily rate and room revenue for 2018-2020.

For the proposed hotel, DP Consulting's Analysis indicated a strong overall occupancy rate and highlights the following main ideas:

- There is a new sub-market being formed at Luna / I-635 area that will be directly competitive with the area along TX-114 in Las Colinas.
- The proposed Hampton Inn will replace an older Hampton Inn located at I-35 and Walnut Hill.
- The estimated user groups for the Hampton Inn are the Individual Business Travelers and Leisure Travelers that will be typical users of the brand and are looking for a location with good surroundings.

Based on these assessments, DP Consulting recommends the hotel as the highest and best use for the subject site.

Comprehensive Plan:

The West Side Plan designated the Mira Lago peninsula as a Neighborhood Center. A Neighborhood Center is defined as an area that could support both office, retail and residential development. The proposed SUP amendment is consistent with the West Side Plan.

Public Response:

Twelve (12) notification letters were mailed to the surrounding landowners on February 15, 2018. Two (2) zoning notification signs were also posted on the site on that day. As of February 22, 2018 no written opposition to this request has been received by the City.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend approval of the Specific Use Permit amendment including the requested special exception.