

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

November 18, 2015

Agenda Item No: 16

HDRC CASE NO: 2015-320
ADDRESS: 1515 MISSION RD
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB: 20 LOT: 22, 22B, 22C, 22D & 37 NCB: 24 P-100A NO LABEL# NO SERIAL# CR#2012-25965//2013-RESURVEY PER DEED 15737/22212 EX 10/5/2012
ZONING: IDZ H RIO-4
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 3
DISTRICT: Mission Historic District
APPLICANT: White Conlee Builders, Ltd
OWNER: White Conlee Builders, Ltd
TYPE OF WORK: Conceptual approval of facade arrangement
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting conceptual approval of the building elevations and façade arrangement of the proposed MELA development. The applicant has proposed to construct five apartment structures that will be three and four stories in height, a clubhouse, a commercial pet daycare and miscellaneous residential structures.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

UDC Section. 35-674. Building Design Principles

(a) Architectural Character. A basic objective for architectural design in the river improvement overlay districts is to encourage the reuse of existing buildings and construction of new, innovative designs that enhance the area, and help to establish distinct identities for each of the zone districts. At the same time, these new buildings should reinforce established building traditions and respect the contexts of neighborhoods.

When a new building is constructed, it shall be designed in a manner that reinforces the basic character-defining features of the area. Such features include the way in which a building is located on its site, the manner in which it faces the street and its orientation to the river. When these design variables are arranged in a new building to be similar to those seen traditionally, visual compatibility results.

(b) Mass and Scale. A building shall appear to have a "human scale." In general, this scale can be accomplished by using familiar forms and elements interpreted in human dimensions. Exterior wall designs shall help pedestrians establish a sense of scale with relation to each building. Articulating the number of floors in a building can help to establish a building's scale, for example, and prevent larger buildings from dwarfing the pedestrian.

(1) Express facade components in ways that will help to establish building scale.

A. Treatment of architectural facades shall contain a discernible pattern of mass to void, or windows and doors to solid mass. Openings shall appear in a regular pattern, or be clustered to form a cohesive design. Architectural elements such as columns, lintels, sills, canopies, windows and doors should align with other architectural features on the adjacent facades.

(2) Align horizontal building elements with others in the block face to establish building scale.

A. Align at least one (1) horizontal building element with another horizontal building element on the same block face. It will be considered to be within alignment if it is within three (3) feet, measured vertically, of the existing architectural element.

(3) Express the distinction between upper and lower floors.

A. Develop the first floor as primarily transparent. The building facade facing a major street shall have at least fifty (50) percent of the street level facade area devoted to display windows and/or windows affording some view into the interior areas. Multi-family residential buildings with no retail or office space are exempt from this requirement.

(4) Where a building facade faces the street or river and exceeds the maximum facade length allowed in Table 674-1 divide the facade of building into modules that express traditional dimensions.

A. The maximum length of an individual wall plane that faces a street or the river shall be as shown in Table 674-1.

Table 674-1

Description	RIO-1	RIO-2	RIO-3	RIO-4	RIO-5	RIO-6
Maximum Facade Length	50 ft.	50 ft.	30 ft.	75 ft.	75 ft.	50 ft.

B. If a building wall plane facing the street or river and exceeds the length allowed in Table 674-1, employ at least two (2) of the following techniques to reduce the perceived mass:

- Change materials with each building module to reduce its perceived mass; or
- Change the height with each building module of a wall plane. The change in height shall be at least ten (10) percent of the vertical height; or
- Change the roof form of each building module to help express the different modules of the building mass; or
- Change the arrangement of windows and other facade articulation features, such as, columns, pilasters or strap work, which divides large planes into smaller components.

(5) Organize the Mass of a Building to Provide Solar Access to the River.

A. One (1) method of doing so is to step the building down toward the river to meet the solar access requirements of subsection 35-673(a).

B. Another method is to set the building back from the river a distance sufficient to meet the solar access requirements of subsection 35-673(a).

(c) Height. Building heights vary along the river corridor, from one-story houses to high-rise hotels and apartments. This diversity of building heights is expected to continue. However, within each zone, a general similarity in building heights should be encouraged in order to help establish a sense of visual continuity. In addition, building heights shall be configured such that a comfortable human scale is established along the edges of properties and views to the river and other significant landmarks are provided while allowing the appropriate density for an area.

(1) The maximum building height shall be as defined in Table 674-2.

A. Solar access standards subsection 35-673(a), and massing standards subsection 35-674(b) also will affect building heights.

Table 674-2

Description	RIO-1	RIO-2	RIO-3	RIO-4	RIO-5	RIO-6
Maximum # of Stories	5	10	None	7	5	4
Maximum Height in Feet	60 ft.	120 ft.	None	84 ft.	60 ft.	50 ft.

(3) On the street-side, the building facade shall appear similar in height to those of other buildings found traditionally in the area.

If fifty (50) percent of the building facades within a block face are predominantly lower than the maximum height allowed, the new building facade on the street-side shall align with the average height of those lower buildings within the block face, or with a particular building that falls within the fifty (50) percent range. However, the remainder of the building may obtain its maximum height by stepping back fifteen (15) feet from the building face.

(4) Designation of a development node provides for the ability to increase the building height by fifty (50) percent from the requirements set out in article VI.

(d) Materials and Finishes. Masonry materials are well established as primary features along the river corridor and their use should be continued. Stucco that is detailed to provide a texture and pattern, which conveys a human scale, is also part of the tradition. In general, materials and finishes that provide a sense of human scale, reduce the perceived mass of a building and appear to blend with the natural setting of the river shall be used, especially on major structures.

(1) Use indigenous materials and traditional building materials for primary wall surfaces. A minimum of seventy-five (75) percent of walls (excluding window fenestrations) shall be composed of the following:

- A. Modular masonry materials including brick, stone, and rusticated masonry block, tile, terra-cotta, structural clay tile and cast stone. Concrete masonry units (CMU) are not allowed.
- B. Other new materials that convey the texture, scale, and finish similar to traditional building materials.
- C. Stucco and painted concrete when detailed to express visual interest and convey a sense of scale.
- D. Painted or stained wood in a lap or shingle pattern.

(2) The following materials are not permitted as primary building materials and may be used as a secondary material

only:

- A. Large expanses of high gloss or shiny metal panels.
- B. Mirror glass panels. Glass curtain wall buildings are allowed in RIO-3 as long as the river and street levels comply with 35-674(d)(1) above.

(3) Paint or Finish Colors.

- A. Use natural colors of indigenous building materials for properties that abut the Riverwalk area.
- B. Use matte finishes instead of high glossy finishes on wall surfaces. Wood trim and metal trim may be painted with gloss enamel.
- C. Bright colors may highlight entrances or architectural features.

(e) Facade Composition. Traditionally, many commercial and multi-family buildings in the core of San Antonio have had facade designs that are organized into three (3) distinct segments: First, a "base" exists, which establishes a scale at the street level; second a "mid-section," or shaft is used, which may include several floors. Finally a "cap" finishes the composition. The cap may take the form of an ornamental roof form or decorative molding and may also include the top floors of the building. This organization helps to give a sense of scale to a building and its use should be encouraged. In order to maintain the sense of scale, buildings should have the same setback as surrounding buildings so as to maintain the street-wall pattern, if clearly established.

In contrast, the traditional treatment of facades along the riverside has been more modest. This treatment is largely a result of the fact that the riverside was a utilitarian edge and was not oriented to the public. Today, even though orienting buildings to the river is a high priority objective, it is appropriate that these river-oriented facades be simpler in character than those facing the street.

(1) Street Facade. Buildings that are taller than the street-wall (sixty (60) feet) shall be articulated at the stop of the street wall or stepped back in order to maintain the rhythm of the street wall. Buildings should be composed to include a base, a middle and a cap.

- B. Roof forms shall be used to conceal all mechanical equipment and to add architectural interest to the structure.
- C. Roof surfaces should include strategies to reduce heat island effects such as use of green roofs, photo voltaic panels, and/or the use of roof materials with high solar reflectivity.

(2) Fenestration. Windows help provide a human scale and so shall be proportioned accordingly.

- A. Windows shall be recessed at least two (2) inches within solid walls (not part of a curtain wall system).
- B. Windows should relate in design and scale to the spaces behind them.
- C. Windows shall be used in hierarchy to articulate important places on the facade and grouped to establish rhythms.
- D. Curtain wall systems shall be designed with modulating features such as projecting horizontal and/or vertical mullions.

(3) Entrances. Entrances shall be easy to find, be a special feature of the building, and be appropriately scaled.

- A. Entrances shall be the most prominent on the street side and less prominent on the river side.
- B. Entrances shall be placed so as to be highly visible.
- C. The scale of the entrance is determined by the prominence of the function and or the amount of use.
- D. Entrances shall have a change in material and/or wall plane.
- E. Entrances should not use excessive storefront systems.

(4) Riverside facade. The riverside facade of a building shall have simpler detailing and composition than the street facade.

- A. Architectural details such as cornices, sills, lintels, door surrounds, water tables and other similar details should use simple curves and handcrafted detailing.
- B. Stone detailing shall be rough hewn, and chiseled faced. Smooth faced stone is not permitted as the primary building material, but can be used as accent pieces.
- C. Facades on the riverside shall be asymmetrical, pedestrian scale, and give the appearance of the back of a building. That is, in traditional building along the river, the backs of building were designed with simpler details, and appear less formal than the street facades.

(f) Staircases.

(1) Staircases to the River Level Shall be Uniquely Designed.

- A. Stairs shall not replicate other stairs in a single project.
- B. Stairs shall be constructed of handcrafted materials. The applicant shall use traditional building materials.
- C. Stairs shall not exceed ten (10) feet in width.

(g) Awnings, Canopies and Arcades. (See Figure 674-2) The tradition of sheltering sidewalks with awnings, canopies and arcades on commercial and multi-family buildings is well established in San Antonio and is a practice that should be

continued. They offer shade from the hot summer sun and shelter from rainstorms, thereby facilitating pedestrian activity. They also establish a sense of scale for a building, especially at the ground level. Awnings and canopies are appropriate locations for signage. Awnings with signage shall comply with any master signage plan on file with the historic preservation officer for the property. Awnings and canopies installed at street level within the public right-of-way require licensing with the city's capital improvements management services (CIMS) department. Canopies, balconies and awnings installed at river level within the public right-of-way require licensing with the city's downtown operations department.

(1) If awnings, arcades and canopies are to be used they should accentuate the character-defining features of a building.

A. The awning, arcade or canopy shall be located in relationship to the openings of a building. That is, if there are a series of awnings or canopies, they shall be located at the window or door openings. However awnings, canopies and arcades may extend the length of building to provide shade at the first floor for the pedestrian.

B. Awnings, arcades and canopies shall be mounted to highlight architectural features such as moldings that may be found above the storefront.

C. They should match the shape of the opening.

D. Simple shed shapes are appropriate for rectangular openings.

E. Odd shapes and bubble awnings are prohibited except where the shape of an opening requires a bubble awning, or historic precedent shows they have been previously used on the building.

F. Canopies, awnings and arcades shall not conflict with the building's proportions or with the shape of the openings that the awning or canopy covers.

G. Historic canopies shall be repaired or replaced with in-kind materials.

(2) Materials and Color.

A. Awnings and canopies may be constructed of metal, wood or fabric. Certain vinyl is allowed if it has the appearance of natural fiber as approved by the HDRC.

B. Awning color shall coordinate with the building. Natural and earth tone colors are encouraged. Fluorescent colors are not allowed. When used for signage it is appropriate to choose a dark color for the canopy and use light lettering for signage.

(3) Incorporating lighting into the design of a canopy is appropriate.

A. Lights that illuminate the pedestrian way beneath the awning are appropriate.

B. Lights that illuminate the storefront are appropriate.

C. Internally illuminated awnings that glow are prohibited.

FINDINGS:

- a. Conceptual approval is the review of general design ideas and principles (such as scale and setback). Specific design details reviewed at this stage are not binding and may only be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval.
- b. This address falls within the buffer zone of the World Heritage sites. The applicant is responsible for complying with all regulations and meeting any design standards associated with the inscription.
- c. The request for both conceptual approval of site design, building placement and façade arrangement was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on July 7, 2015, where committee members noted that overall the proposed development would be welcomed to the area.
- d. On August 19, 2015, a request for conceptual approval of site design, building placement and façade arrangement was reviewed by the Historic and Design Review Commission. At that hearing, concern was voiced by citizens as well as the commission and the request was referred to the Design Review Committee to resolve inconsistencies with the Unified Development Code as well as the Historic Design Guidelines.
- e. This request was reviewed a second time by the Design Review Committee on August 25, 2015. At that time the applicant's request included only conceptual approval of site design and building placement. Committee members noted that the updated site plan provided information regarding a San Antonio Water Service easement, suggested the applicant maximize golf course views, noted that the development presented a non-urban design, that the design should include urban gestures, that a figure ground diagram should be developed and that the previously presented façade arrangement was not appropriate given the proximity of this property to the San Antonio River, San Antonio Missions National Park and location within the Mission Historic District.
- f. The request for conceptual approval of site design and building placement reviewed by the Design Review Committee on September 16, 2015, where committee members noted that the applicant had addressed staff's stipulations and concerns, that a reasonable representation of site constraints had been shown and that the applicant should meet with

the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association.

- g. The applicant received conceptual approval of site and building layout for the proposed MELA development at 1515 Mission on October 7, 2015. This conceptual approval was the review of general design ideas and principles of the site design and building placement as it relates to Phase I. Neither the previously conceptually approved site design nor current request for façade arrangement apply to Phase II.
- h. This request for conceptual approval of the façade arrangement was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on October 27, 2015. At that meeting, committee members noted that the site and environment were not urban and that modifications to building placement will not present the site in an urban setting, that the lowering of the roofs of the outside towers would be appropriate, that the clubhouse elevations were “over done”, that there is no need to incorporate classical details, particularly arches and that the proposed large windows are appropriate.
- i. According to the UDC Section 35-674(b), a building shall appear to have a “human scale”, which can be achieved by the expression of façade components, the aligning of horizontal building elements with others in the block face, the distinction between upper and lower floors and the division of the façade into modules that express traditional dimensions. The applicant has proposed multiple components that achieve this which include stone cladding, multiple projecting balconies, appropriately sized window openings and balcony railings and human scaled façade panels. This is consistent with the UDC.
- j. The materials that have been proposed by the applicant include a stone veneer, stucco and barrel tile roofing. These materials are consistent with the UDC Section 35-674(d). At this time the applicant has not noted exterior window or door materials. The applicant is responsible for complying with the UDC regarding window and door materials.
- k. According to the UDC Section 35-674(e), building facades located in the River Improvement Overlay must be organized into three distinct segments; a base, mid-section and cap. Through a change in façade materials, the use of moldings at the roofline, the use a parapet wall and the application of the barrel tile roofing the applicant has clearly separated the façade into three segments. This is consistent with the UDC.
- l. In addition to the applicant’s vertical façade separation, the applicant has proposed a number of architectural elements that have separated the façade into various segments as it is read horizontally. These instances include changes in materials, the inclusion of projecting balconies and horizontally oriented moldings. Staff finds this appropriate, however, staff encourages the applicant to continue to introduce elements that reduce the overall perceived visual length of each building’s elevation.
- m. In regards to window fenestration, the UDC Section 35-674 (2) states that windows help provide a human scale to a façade and therefore should be recessed at least two (2) inches within solid walls, they should relate in design and scale to the spaces behind them, they shall be used in hierarchy to articulate important places on the façade and grouped to establish rhythms and that curtain wall systems should be designed with modulating features such as projecting horizontal and/or vertical mullions. Generally the applicant’s proposal is consistent with the UDC. The applicant is responsible for recessing each window at least two (2) inches within each wall to create additional façade depth.
- n. The UDC Section 35-674(3) states that entrances shall be easy to find, be a special feature of the building and be appropriately scaled. Staff finds that the applicant’s proposed entrances are consistent with the UDC.
- o. While the primary use of this development will be residential, there is a commercial component as well as a club house that will also serve as a community center. The club house, noted as the Mission Road Club in the provided architectural documents will feature materials consistent with those found on the residential structures; stucco, stone and barrel tile roofing and will be distinguishable from the residential structures through mass, square footage and façade arrangement. At the corner of the south and east elevations, the applicant has proposed an architectural focal point featuring a tower and large arched entrance. Staff finds the tower proposal appropriate, however, staff finds the enlarged arched opening inappropriate. Staff finds that a square opening, consistent with those found throughout both facades would be more appropriate.
- p. As shown in the application documents, the applicant has proposed the use of canopies and awnings in various locations throughout the project. The UDC Section 34-675 (g) (1),(2) and (3) give the design standards for awnings, canopies and arcades in the River Improvement Overlay. The applicant is responsible for complying with this section of the UDC.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends conceptual approval based on findings a through p with the following stipulations:

- i. That the applicant to continue to introduce elements that reduce the overall perceived visual length of each building's elevation as noted in finding l.
- ii. That the applicant eliminate the large arched openings on the proposed Mission Road Club as noted in finding o.

CASE MANAGER:

Edward Hall



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**FUTURE
DEVELOPMENT
SITE**



3D Impulse Inc



Mission Road Club Side Elevation



Mission Road Club Front Elevation



Mission Road Side Elevation



Mission Road Building Front Elevation

MELA Apartments

San Antonio, Texas

Schematic Building Elevation

SCALE: NTS
10.27.2015





CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**

**Historic and Design Review Commission
Design Review Committee
Report & Recommendation**

DATE: 10/27/2015 HDRC Case# _____

ADDRESS: 1515 MISSION RD Meeting Location: 1901 SALAMON - TRAINING ROOM

APPLICANT: WHITE CONLEE BUILDERS / BRENNER AND ASSOCIATES
MIGUEL SALDANA

DRC Members present: BETTY FELDMAN

Staff present: EDWARD HALL, LAUREN SAGE

Others present: SCOTT WEENS, RICK BRENNER

REQUEST: FACADE ARRANGEMENT / DESIGN FOR 1515 MISSION - MELA

COMMENTS/CONCERNS: BF: ENVIRONMENT IS NOT URBAN - MONIFYING
BUILDING PLACEMENT WILL NOT PRESENT THE SITE IN AN URBAN
SETTING. SHOW IN PRESENTATION EXISTING PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC
AND PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC. REGARDING ELEVATIONS,
POTENTIALLY LOWER THE ROOFS OF OUTSIDE TOWERS. FACADE ARRANGEMENT
IS MUCH BETTER THAN PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED. CLUB HOUSE ELEVATIONS
ARE "TOO MUCH" / "OVER DONE", THERE'S NO NEED TO INCORPORATE
CLASSICAL DETAILS IN THIS PROJECT, PARTICULARLY ARCHES. LARGE
WINDOWS ARE APPROPRIATE, BUT ARCHES AREN'T.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE ☒ DISAPPROVE ☐
APPROVE WITH COMMENTS/STIPULATIONS:


Committee Chair Signature (or representative)

10/28/2015
Date