

To: Downtown Design Advisory Board (DDAB)
From: Bridget Rassbach, Urban Design Architect
Meeting: 5/24/2022
RE: Staff Report for Site Design and Massing Review

- Mixed-use Development at 12th and Elati Street
1215 N. Elati Street, Denver, CO 80204
Project # 2022PM0000081
 - D-GT
 - New construction, General Form

I. Board Authority and Role of Design Review

This project is located within the D-AS Zone District and is therefore subject to **Design Review for Arapahoe Square** and the **Denver Zoning Code** in addition to the requirements of other agencies. Projects submitted shall conform to all the requirements of the **Arapahoe Square Design Standards and Guidelines**, even if they are not specifically referenced in the review notes.

The **Arapahoe Square Design Standards and Guidelines** (AS DSG or DSG) are applicable for this location. The *Standards and Guidelines* establishes a process for promoting the neighborhood vision by setting clear expectations for the level of design quality that is envisioned for improvements for Arapahoe Square.

Through its provisions, the Design Advisory Board is directed to consider Design Review Submittals of the proposed project (per the Design Review Process chapter and checklists), to receive the staff findings, the applicant presentations, and to hear public comment to make a motion for *recommendation for Approval, Approval with Conditions, or Denial to the zoning administrator of the project's design at each submittal to the Downtown Design Advisory Board.*

II. Scope of the Project

The proposed project is a 23-story (250' high) retail and residential building in the D-GT Zone District. It is being developed under the **General Building Form**. This form does require that parking have 65% active use at street facing facades. The project proposes the construction of ground floor lobby and retail with wrapped parking/residential amenity to level 5 and then with residential and amenity spaces above.

III. Site Design and Massing Review

The applicant, 12th and Elati, project number 2022PM0000081, at **1215 N. Elati Street**, is submitting the project to the DDAB for Site Design and Massing Review. They have submitted and have received comments for their Concept Review for the development process and are preparing for a second concept submittal.

IV. Design Review

Design Review submittals and reviews to be completed after Site Design and Massing Review is approved and after approval to submit for a Site Development Plan (SDP).

V. Staff Findings

- A. Facade above level 1 is very long. Locating a portion of the open space near the center or at least not at the ends only would allow a natural break in the facade.

1.B To break up long facades into components that add interest to massing and facade wall and promote Human Scale

- B. E Open space is located at the ends of the structure and do not contribute to breaking the massing / long facade down

1.I To break down long building frontages

1.24 Open Space, such as forecourts, plazas, and gardens, should be used to enhance prominent building entrances.

- C. Level 1, although with varied setbacks, appears to be one mass due to the line of columns/ arcade created. The remaining podium levels create an undifferentiated wall that does not compliment the street experience, adjacent lower scale structures, or coordinate with the tower levels above, As noted above, open space located closer to mid zone lot would break down the facade

2.A To ensure Building Massing supports a comfortable Street Level experience

2.B To encourage building modules that break down long undifferentiated frontages

2.C To use Building Massing to purposefully reinforce building uses or adjacent distinctive features

2.D To promote building sizes and proportions that contribute to visual permeability within and across the neighborhood

2.F To coordinate Building Massing across the Lower Story Facade and Upper Story Facade/Tower Facade

2.02 Buildings with over approximately 150 feet of Primary Street frontage shall incorporate coordinated Building Massing techniques on the Lower Story Facade.

2.09 Buildings with more than approximately 200 feet of Primary Street frontage should be designed to further reduce visual mass and scale.

2.10 Building Massing should integrate creative designs to create architectural interest and reduce the overall scale of the building mass from the Street Level.

- D. Project will need to provide more information at Design Development on how it is responding to adjacent low scale structures at north and south.

2.16 Building Massing should respond to the adjacent context especially at lower-scaled buildings and public spaces.

2.20 Streetwall height should vary throughout the street and within each block to support architectural variety.

2.21 Streetwall height should consider the adjacent existing neighboring context. At street corners, this includes the context on both streets.

2.26 Development adjacent to a lower-scale Historic Resource or Character Building shall provide a height transition to respect and reinforce established height.

2.J To coordinate a scale relationship between the Streetwall of adjacent properties

2.M To provide a scale transition between taller buildings and adjacent lower-scale neighborhoods or buildings

- E. Wrapped parking use must be a truly Active Use, not just bike storage or other storage.

VI. Submittal and Compliance Checklist

Refer to the attached checklist. Green-highlighted checked topics are areas that appear to comply or are not applicable to project; Orange-highlighted checked topics are issues for further design discussion; Red-highlighted checked topics (if there are any) appear to not comply and require intensive board input.

VI. DDAB Project Commentary

Refer to the attached board review form for initial board comment.

VII. Staff Recommendation

Staff respectfully requests the Advisory Boards thoughts on this Massing proposal. Staff has provided two possible outcomes below.

For a board motion that includes:

- *I move to recommend the Mixed-use Development at 12th and Elati Street, 1215 N. Elati Street, Denver, CO 80204, Project # 2022PM0000081, **resubmit for Site Design and Massing Review** to the Zoning Administrator and to study and address the following topics of concern:*
 1. *Response to adjacent character buildings and appropriate scale / transition to lower scale structures.*
 2. *Wrapped parking must be developed to provide understanding of this as an Active Use.*
 3. *Massing of podium levels must be studied further to break down the long façade that is not consistent with the neighborhood pattern.*

- *I move to recommend the Mixed-use Development at 12th and Elati Street, 1215 N. Elati Street, Denver, CO 80204, Project # 2022PM0000081, **proceed to Design Review** to the Zoning Administrator and to study and address the following topics of concern:*
 1. *Response to adjacent character buildings and appropriate scale/ transition to lower scale structures.*
 2. *Wrapped parking must be developed to provide understanding of this as an Active Use.*
 3. *Massing of podium levels must be studied further to break down the long façade that is not consistent with the neighborhood pattern.*