

Convention Center Completion Program Review/Collaborative Workshop

November 15, 2012



From :
Design Review Board
Chris Batten, Vice-Chair

c/o Julie Neff, Secretary
Planning Department
Economic Development
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

To :
Spokane Public Facilities District
c/o Kevin J. Twohig, CEO

Consultant:
Jim Kolva, Jim Kolva Associates

CC :
Scott Chesney, Planning Director
Tami Palmquist, Planner

At the November 14, 2012 Program Review/Collaborative Workshop, a quorum of the Design Review Board unanimously passed the following motion:

The DRB recommends that the applicant incorporate the Planning Department recommendations provided on Nov. 14, 2012 (Staff Report dated November 6, 2012).



Chris Batten, Vice-Chair, Design Review Board

Note: Supplementary information, audio tape and meeting summary are on file with City of Spokane Design Review Board.

Convention Center Expansion

1 – Program Review/Collaborative Workshop

Staff Report

November 6, 2012



Julie Neff, Urban Designer
Planning & Development Department
City of Spokane

A p p l i c a n t
Spokane Public Facilities District
c/o Kevin J. Twohig, CEO

Consultant:
Jim Kolva, Jim Kolva Associates

Authority

Chapter 04.13 Design Review Board

A. Purpose. The design review board is hereby established to:

1. improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the City early in the design and siting of new development subject to design review under the Spokane Municipal Code;
2. ensure that projects subject to design review under the Spokane Municipal Code are consistent with adopted design guidelines and help implement the City's Comprehensive Plan.
3. advocate for the aesthetic quality of Spokane's public realm;
4. encourage design and site planning that responds to context, enhances pedestrian characteristics, considers sustainable design practices, and helps make Spokane a desirable place to live, work and visit.
5. provide flexibility in the application of development standards as allowed through development standard departures; and
6. ensure that public facilities and projects within the City's right of way:
 - a. wisely allocate the City's resources,
 - b. serve as models of design quality

Under SMC section [Section 17G.040.020](#), development applications for new buildings greater than 25,000 SF in the downtown central area, public projects, and shoreline conditional use permits are subject to design review. Recommendations from the Design Review Board will be forwarded to the Planning Director.

Proposal

Convention Center exhibit and meeting room expansion along the Spokane River. See submittal materials for additional information.

Location & Context

The proposal will expand the existing Convention Center structure toward the shoreline of the Spokane River. The zoning designation is Downtown General (DTG), and the new structure would fall within the 200' shoreline jurisdiction. The nearest streets are Division and Spokane Falls Blvd.

Character Assets

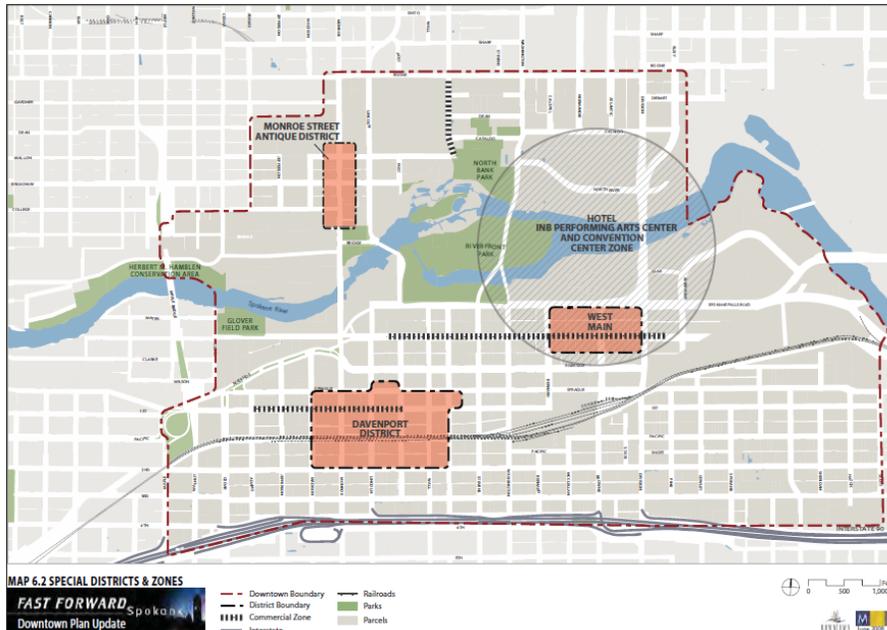
Spokane River

Centennial Trail

The Centennial Trail runs between the shoreline and proposed expansion.

INB Performing Arts Center and Convention Center District and West Main District

Fast Forward Spokane identifies five special districts (pg. 138) including the “INB Performing Arts Center and Convention Center.” The objective of designating special districts is to create distinctive activity areas within Downtown. The West Main District is the closest special district and the intent is that it will be a major destination for food and drinks.



Spokane Falls Boulevard

This street provides a connection between the Convention Center/INB and Downtown Core.

Division Street Gateway

<http://www.divisionstgateway.com>

This project is currently in the planning stages. A primary objective of the project is to strengthen the east-west bike/pedestrian connections across Division between the University District and the Central Business District with an emphasis on Main Avenue.

Regulatory Analysis

Please see the Pre-Development Notes dated September 6, 2012 attached at the back of this report. Applicants should contact Current Planning Staff with any questions about code requirements.

Select code standards that may be especially relevant to the Design Review Board workshop have been copied below. Please check the links to each code for specific requirements.

17C. 124 DOWNTOWN ZONES

[Section 17C.124.030](#) Characteristics of Downtown Zones

Downtown General (DTG).

The downtown general zoning category is a mixed-use use category applied within a large area of the downtown. This is a high-density, mixed-use area in which community-serving retail uses are encouraged, especially at street level; and residential and office uses are encouraged, especially as part of a mixed-use building. A very wide range of uses are allowed. New auto-oriented or intensive industrial uses are discouraged or not allowed.

[Section 17C.124.035](#) Characteristics of Downtown Complete Street Designations

Type II – Community Connector (Spokane Falls Boulevard)

Type II streets move traffic and pedestrians into and around downtown. These streets provide some of the major pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods and districts.

Type III - City-Regional Connector (Division).

Type III streets move auto traffic through downtown and provide connections to the rest of the City and region. These attractive, landscaped arterials are to be improved with street trees, sufficient sidewalks for pedestrian circulation and pedestrian buffer areas, and safe pedestrian crossings.

Section 17C.124.500 Design Standards Implementation

The applicant may meet the design standards (17C.124.510-580) as written or request a departure. This would include gaining a recommendation from the Design Review Board that the proposed alternative is equal or better than would be required to meet the code design standard and still meets the purpose of the standard.

Please refer to the section number for specific requirements of each design standard.

Section 17C.124.510 Windows – Building Design

In the downtown the facade and window standards are required in order to:

1. provide a pleasant, rich, and diverse pedestrian-friendly experience by connecting activities occurring within a structure to adjacent sidewalk areas;
2. encourage observation or viewing opportunities by restricting fortress-like facades at street level; and
3. avoid a monotonous pedestrian environment.

Section 17C.124.520 Base/Middle/Top – Building Design

To reduce the apparent bulk of the buildings by providing a sense of “base” and “top.”

Section 17C.124.530 Articulation – Building Design

To reduce the massiveness of larger buildings.

Section 17C.124.540 Prominent Entrance – Building Design

To ensure that building entrances are easily identifiable and clearly visible from roads and sidewalks. The purpose is also to have weather protection at building entrances.

Section 17C.124.550 Ground Level Details – Building Design

To ensure that buildings along any street display the greatest amount of visual interest and reinforce the character of the streetscape.

Section 17C.124.560 Roof Expression – Building Design

To ensure that rooflines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building.

Section 17C.124.570 Treating Blank Walls – Building Design

To mitigate blank walls by providing visual interest.

Section 17C.124.580 Plazas and Other Open Spaces

To provide a pedestrian-friendly environment by creating a variety of usable and interesting open spaces within private development.

17E.060 SHORELINE REGULATIONS

Section 17E.060.800 Design Standards Administration

Projects must address the design standards and guidelines.

Purpose. To help ensure that development compliments the unique and fragile character of the shoreline through careful consideration and implementation of site development and building design concepts.

Applicants may meet each of the guidelines as written or request a departure.

Please refer to the section number for specific requirements of each design standard.

Section 17E.060.810 Standards and Guidelines Applying to Downtown, Campus, and Great Gorge Districts (attached)

Section 17E.060.820 Standards and Guidelines Specific to the Downtown District (attached)

City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan

http://www.spokaneplanning.org/docs/Comp_Plan_Volumes_1-2/Comp_Plan_2010_full.pdf

City of Spokane Bicycle Master Plan

http://www.spokaneplanning.org/docs/Master_Bike_Plan/Master_Bike_Plan_adopted_6-8-09.pdf

Pg. 30 - Map TR 2 shows that Spokane Falls Boulevard is designated for a bike lane. The Centennial Trail is a multi-use path.

Pg. 12 - Bicycle Terms.

Bike Lane - A portion of a highway or street identified by signs and pavement markings as reserved for bicycle use.

Multi-use Path – Off-street facility designed for certain non-motorized uses. Minimum width of 10 feet to accommodate two-way traffic.

Fast Forward Spokane Downtown Plan

http://www.spokaneplanning.org/docs/Comp_Plan_Adopted_Subarea_Plans/DT_Plan_Update_Final_Draft_web_version_smaller.pdf

City of Spokane Downtown Design Guidelines

Per [Section 17C.124.500](#) Design Standards Implementation, projects subject to design review must meet the code design standards (as outlined earlier in this report) *and* follow the downtown design guidelines.

Three overarching principles are:

1. Contextual Fit.

- The project's site planning and massing respond to the larger context of downtown and the region; and
- The building's architectural expression relates to the neighborhood context.

2. Pedestrian Friendly Streets.

- The building's street façade creates a safe and interactive pedestrian environment;
- The project's public amenities enhance the streetscape and open space; and
- The project's vehicular access and parking impacts on the pedestrian environment and non-motorized travel are minimized.

3. Sustainability.

- The project has minimized its ecological footprint to the extent possible.

Recommendation

The downtown design standards, the downtown design guidelines, and the shoreline design standards all apply to this project. However, given the unique parameters of this particular site and building, staff would suggest the presentation and discussion during the "Program Review/Collaborative Workshop" focus primarily on how the proposal will 1) fit within the larger context of downtown; and 2) address the shoreline design standards and guidelines ("Specific to Downtown" and "Applying to Downtown, Campus, and Great Gorge Districts"). These guidelines are attached to this staff report.

To address the Downtown Design Guidelines and the goal of fitting within the larger context of downtown, staff would offer the following for consideration and discussion:

- a. Wayfinding and safe/attractive/convenient pedestrian connections to destinations such as Main Avenue and the Downtown Core will further enhance the Convention Center as a well located destination connected to a variety of experiences (natural river environment, shopping districts, and campuses).

To address the shoreline design guidelines, staff would offer the following suggestions for consideration and discussion:

- b. Explore the feasibility of a green roof and/or trees along the upper terrace to help integrate the shoreline and the building. *See 17E.060.820 D.1. Character related to the setting.*
- c. Design the structure to create opportunities that will promote activity throughout the day and into the evening to help ensure natural surveillance of the shoreline and increase public safety. For example, providing opportunities for uses such as small retail, outdoor café seating, and offices would be consistent with the shoreline design standards. *See 17E.060.820 A. Shoreline Relationships – Human Activity and D. Building Design 3. Ground Floor Animation.*

N o t e

This recommendation by the Design Review Board does not alleviate any requirements that may be imposed on this project by other City Departments including the Current Planning Section of the Planning Dept.

P o l i c y B a s i s

City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan
Spokane Municipal Code
Downtown Design Guidelines
Fast Forward Spokane, Downtown Plan Update