

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2009**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt, Chatterjee, Jones, McTurner, Wallace and Young present. Absent: Kreider.

### **MINUTES**

The Board unanimously approved the minutes of February 23, 2009, as revised (motion by Chatterjee, second by Jones).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1326-1330 VINE STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Interim Urban Conservator Adrienne Cowden presented a staff report on a plan revision for 1326-1330 Vine Street in the Over-the-Rhine Historic District. Ms. Cowden reminded the Board it had conditionally approved a Certificate of Appropriateness as well as the necessary Zoning Variances and Special Exceptions to rehabilitate 1332, 1336, 1338, and 1342 Vine Street, to demolish additions at 1332, 1338 and 1342 Vine Street and the rear building at 1332 Vine Street, and to construct a new mixed-use building at 1326-1330 Vine Street on June 9, 2008. She said Glaserworks was returning to the Board with a plan revision for a rooftop deck with a screen wall, a railing and associated stair towers.

Ms. Cowden said that a roof deck was part of the original proposal shown to the Board during a preliminary design review on August 20, 2007 but this element was not part of the plans approved by the Board on June 9, 2008. Since that time, the developer has determined that a rooftop deck was necessary to ensure the project's success. Ms. Cowden indicated that the guidelines for new construction do not specifically address rooftop decks and she had therefore applied the guidelines for decks under site improvements.

Ms. Cowden informed the Board that architect Jeff Raser from Glaserworks and Bobbie Maly from Model Group were available to answer questions.

Mr. Raser confirmed for Ms. Wallace that the projecting sign depicted on 1338 Vine was an existing element. The sign would potentially be refaced for a first floor commercial tenant.

Ms. Wallace inquired if the primary function of the screen wall was to reduce noise from the HVAC condenser units or to screen them from view. Mr. Raser responded that the wall will minimally reduce sound and that it was principally intended to screen the condenser units.

In response to questions from Mr. Jones, Mr. Raser indicated that the elevator was a necessary amenity and it was a hydraulic system that needed a 4' to 5' overrun.

Mr. Jones expressed concern with the overall mass of the proposed rooftop construction and its lack of integration with the building design. While it could not be seen from portion of the public right-of-way, it would be visible from other vantage points. He said the stair towers appeared to extend 10' +/- above the roofline and asked if this height could be lowered. Mr. Raser responded that his client was willing to reduce the height of the stair towers to the minimum necessary for clearance.

Mr. Senhauser and Mr. Young agreed with Mr. Jones' comments. Mr. Young commented that the rooftop construction will read like a cooling tower. Mr. Senhauser said the rooftop construction was an aggressive form when considered as a piece. He suggested that these elements would likely have been more integrated into the design if the rooftop deck had been retained as part of the building

plans. Mr. Senhauser noted that the rooftops and rooflines of buildings in Over-the-Rhine were an important aspect of the larger historic district. For this reason, rooftop modifications and additions needed to be carefully considered. Mr. Senhauser said the height of the towers and screen wall should be reduced as much as possible. In terms of design, the rooftop construction should be toned down as much as possible so that it was not a feature or it should be articulated to match the overall building design. The Board generally agreed with this assessment.

Mr. Senhauser asked why the wall did not extend in a straight line between the two stair towers. Mr. Raser postulated that the screen wall had a “dogleg” offset to accommodate a doorway and to strengthen the wall.

Mr. Raser said the original 2007 design included rooftop decks but these areas were private rather than communal spaces. The 2008 redesign removed these decks and focused on incorporating as many private balconies as possible. Since that time the developer determined that the benefits of providing outdoor space for everyone outweighed the additional costs. Mr. Raser indicated that the design was intended to be minimalist and to fade away. He reiterated that Model Group was willing to reduce the height of the stair towers.

Based on the Board’s discussion, Mr. Senhauser said that the application could be approved with or without conditions, tabled or denied. Mr. Maly indicated he would prefer not revising the plans, stating that it would result in delays and added architectural fees. Mr. Jones responded that tabling the application would provide him with the opportunity to revise the proposal and to receive an approval without conditions.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Jones, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to table consideration of the proposed plan revisions to permit the applicant time to modify the design to address the massing and visual impact of the proposed rooftop deck, stair and elevator towers and screen wall.

### **NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION, HOTEL METROPOLE, 609 WALNUT STREET, CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

Senior City Planner Caroline Kellam presented a report on a National Register nomination for the Hotel Metropole located at 609 Walnut Street in Downtown Cincinnati. She said that although a notable local firm, Joseph Steinkamp & Brother, designed the original portion of the hotel, the nomination did not argue that the building merited nomination under Criterion C as a fine example of their work. Instead, the nomination asserted the eligibility of the Hotel Metropole under Criterion A for its association with early 20<sup>th</sup> century hotel development in Cincinnati; Ms. Kellam indicated that there was sufficient documentation to list the building under this criterion.

Ms. Spraul-Schmidt noted that the nomination would benefit from select editing, a more in-depth discussion describing how the hotel fit within the broader context of Cincinnati’s development and the addition of a summary conclusion. She recommended that Zane L. Miller’s *Boss Cox’s Cincinnati: Urban Politics in the Progressive Era* and Richard C. Wade’s, *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830* should be added to the bibliography. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt also indicated that citations throughout the body of the nomination and the bibliography should be checked for accuracy.

Mr. Jones suggested the nomination should include a description of the building’s current condition. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt commented that the building’s later 20<sup>th</sup> century uses during the 20<sup>th</sup> century should be addressed in Section 8 of the nomination.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Chatterjee, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the nomination for the Hotel Metropole located at 609 Walnut Street does sufficiently demonstrate that the property meets the requirement of Criterion A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Direct staff to forward the Board's finding regarding this nomination to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office prior to the April 17, 2009 meeting of the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

**ADJOURN**

As there were no other items to be considered by the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

---

Adrienne Cowden  
Interim Urban Conservator

---

John C. Senhauser, Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_