



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0794, Version: 1

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Pass the ordinance approving a minor change to the River Main PUD to accommodate a building overhang on the upper boardwalk and lower Riverwalk on the subject property - PZC 21-1-028

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Sara Kopinski, AICP

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is zoned B4 (Central Business District) with a conditional use for the River Main PUD. The property is currently vacant and consists of approximately 0.26 acres at the northwest corner of Main Street and Water Street. A five-story, mixed-use building measuring 69 feet in height with a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.88 is planned for the site.

- On March 7, 2017 the City Council passed Ordinance 17-030, approving a conditional use for a planned unit development and a preliminary/final planned unit development plat for River Main.
- On February 19, 2020 the City Council passed Ordinance 20-014 approving a major change to the River Main PUD to allow the River Main building to exceed the maximum permitted height of 60 feet and the maximum FAR of 2.5.

At this time, the petitioner requests approval of a minor change to the River Main PUD to accommodate a building overhang on the upper boardwalk and lower Riverwalk at the subject property. The proposed building continues to comply with the height and FAR deviations previously requested, and no additional deviations are anticipated with the proposal.

DISCUSSION:

Minor Change to the River Main PUD

The subject property extends into the DuPage River, and both the upper boardwalk and lower Riverwalk which extend through the middle of the River Main site are located on private property but have a pedestrian easement over them. As the project progressed and staff reviewed more detailed plans for the building, it was discovered that some of the proposed building hangs over a portion of the lower Riverwalk walkway. Because elevation drawings do not always depict depth and articulation, this detail was not evident during staff's review of the drawings that were submitted during the previous entitlement processes.

The upper stories of the River Main building overhang both the upper boardwalk and lower

Riverwalk. While staff has previously approved building overhangs on the upper boardwalk, the overhang on the lower Riverwalk is unique to the River Main project. No zoning deviations are necessary to accommodate the building overhangs since they occur within the required setbacks on the subject property; however, encroachment into the lower Riverwalk easement warrants City Council's consideration of a minor change to the PUD.

The petitioner has provided renderings to illustrate the proposed overhang from different vantage points, as well as provided markings on the Riverwalk showing the limits of the overhang. The proposed overhang has a curvilinear design and the point with the largest encroachment extends approximately 6.22 feet over the lower Riverwalk easement as shown on the attached Easement Encroachment Exhibit.

Building Elevations

The proposed building elevations are consistent with those previously approved by the City Council. Design elements that add articulation are incorporated on each elevation and include changing materials, decorative cornices, a steel canopy, and expansive windows. Staff finds that the window space provided on each story of the building creates a facade transparency that enhances the aesthetic appeal of building, provides visual interest and fosters a sense of security and vibrancy for pedestrians, which are all goals established in the City's Building Design Guidelines.

To minimize the perceived impacts of the building overhang on the upper boardwalk and lower Riverwalk, the petitioner proposes a soffit LED lighting system which will eliminate the possibility of tunnel shadows for the full range of natural lighting conditions. The underside of the overhang is also approximately 22 feet above the grade of the lower Riverwalk sidewalk, thereby minimizing the impact to those walking along this sidewalk. Renderings depicting this are included in the attachments. The petitioner also indicates the following:

- The design efforts have focused on enhancing the Water Street Development & River Walk experience for all.
- The design provides River Main occupants with over 270 degrees of downtown and Riverwalk views, and does not obstruct river walk views from any other point on the Water Street development.
- The River Main development will not interfere with the nonexclusive easement granted for the river walk to the City.

Riverwalk Commission Input

The Riverwalk Commission discussed the River Main proposal at its June 9, 2021 meeting and provided the following feedback for City Council's consideration:

1. Concern was raised about the relationship between the proposed lighting under the building overhang and the shepherd crook lights on the Riverwalk. The Riverwalk Commission requests that the developer work with the Commission before and after construction to ensure the proposed lighting compliments the existing lighting the shepherd crook lights provide. (The proposed building lighting is LED while the Riverwalk shepherd crooks are high pressure sodium.)
2. The Riverwalk Commission noted it would be preferable if the encroachment on the west portion of the building overhang could be reduced.
3. The Riverwalk Commission expressed concerns about the potential interaction of Riverwalk

pedestrians and building patrons if the petitioner is considering windows that open in the design of the River Main. Specifically, concerns about falling or dropped objects were noted.

Findings of Fact

The petitioner's responses to the Standards for Amending a PUD can be found in the attachments. Upon review, staff agrees with the petitioner's Findings and recommends their adoption by City Council.

Key Takeaways

- The petitioner requests approval of a minor change to the River Main PUD to accommodate a building overhang on the upper boardwalk and lower Riverwalk at the subject property.
- The Riverwalk Commission discussed the River Main proposal at its June 9, 2021 meeting and provided feedback for City Council's consideration, in addition to requesting the developer continue to work with them on lighting and building design details.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A