

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

**FROM:** Dennis Lisk, Associate Planner

**SUBJECT:** LAND-2013-01128 – Overlake Village Avalon Bay Mixed Use Residential Block 4 - Pre-App Meeting #3

**LOCATION:** 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE and NE 27<sup>th</sup> Street

**DATE:** January 16, 2014

### **Project Context**

This is the third Pre-Application meeting for this project. The project site is the west side of the former Group Health Overlake hospital property, for which a Master Plan was approved in late 2011. Since that time, Capstone Partners purchased the property from Group Health and has embarked upon the redevelopment of the property as the master developer of the site. The proposed building is one of two mixed-use residential buildings submitted by Avalon Bay and will be among the first projects to implement the Master Plan.

In general, the surrounding area includes a mix of uses with a large office park to the west, a variety of retail uses and the King County transit-oriented housing to the south. To the north and east is the balance of the Capstone Master Plan site, which is planned to redevelop with a hotel, office and mixed-use residential. The proposed building will be located along 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, which is planned to be the main retail street within Overlake Village. Because of its presence along 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and the fact that it will help lead off the redevelopment of this property, this building will help to set the standard for future development in the transformation of Overlake Village into the city's second urban center.

### **Project Description**

The proposed development would result in a six-story mixed-use residential building which would occupy Block 4 of the Capstone Master Plan area. Approximately 220 units are proposed for the C-shaped building, along with ground-floor retail or pedestrian-oriented active uses along the frontage of 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. A large interior courtyard is oriented in an east-west direction, opening out onto the future 153<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE and future park to the east. Parking for the building would be provided in multiple levels of subterranean or structured parking, which would be accessed via driveways off of NE 27<sup>th</sup> and NE 28<sup>th</sup> Streets.

For this third pre-application meeting, the applicant has now fleshed out the design concept for the building with detailed building elevations showing materials and colors, as well as a

landscape plan for the interior courtyard. The applicant has also updated the color perspectives of the building to reflect the chosen colors and materials.

### **Design Considerations**

As the Board begins to delve more deeply into the specifics of the building design, the following are some matters to take into consideration:

- Activating the Retail Street Front – Creating a vibrant street front along 152nd Ave. NE will be crucial to the success of this project. The applicant has begun to add details to the design that show how the ground floor retail will engage the street front. It appears that storefront window glazing will be the dominant building material used along the 152<sup>nd</sup> ground floor, enough to comply with RZC 21.62.030(G)(2)(a), which requires 60 percent of the length of the storefront area facing the street to consist of non-reflective, transparent glazing. Staff would also like to see how the applicant will include more fine-grained detail along the 152<sup>nd</sup> ground floor level in order to comply with RZC 21.62.030(G)(2)(c), which requires that at least three of the following design elements must be provided:
  - Unique or handcrafted signage
  - Artwork on the façade
  - Street furniture
  - Unique or handcrafted planter boxes or other features that are intended to incorporate landscaping
  - Distinctive façade kick plate treatment
  - Other design details approved by the Board to add visual interest, such as distinctive treatment of windows or doors, or distinctive exterior light fixtures.
- Building Materials – The use of high-quality, durable, and permanent building materials is called for by the Overlake Design Standards (RZC 21.62.030(F)(2)(a)). The design standard emphasizes that superior exterior cladding materials, such as stone, masonry, copper, brick and similar materials be used for the first and second floors of building facades that are visible from streets, parks, or other public spaces. As mentioned previously a substantial amount of glazing is proposed along the 152<sup>nd</sup> ground floor frontage, but it is unclear what other materials are proposed.

Also included within the design standard is a prohibition on the use of fiber cement materials for large portions of a building. The applicant's building elevations show a substantial amount of fiber cement panel proposed for this building. Staff has advised the applicant that fiber cement materials could be allowed through the Administrative Design Flexibility (ADF) process. This will require the applicant to demonstrate that deviating from the Building Materials design standard meet three criteria:

- The deviation will better meet the intent of the goals and policies of the zone;
- The deviation will result in superior design in terms of architecture, building materials, site design, landscaping, and open space;
- The deviation will provide benefit in terms of desired use and activity.

As proposed, the current design proposal does not yet meet the criteria to allow ADF to be granted. Staff's main area of concern is with the top of the building, which does not appear to be as strongly-defined as the rest of the building. Different materials and techniques which may be available to give the top of the building a stronger presence than what is currently depicted should be further explored. In addition, staff is unclear about the non-glazing cladding materials that will be utilized for the ground floor. The use of fiber cement panel along the ground floor would not be acceptable, as that does not meet the intent of the Building Materials design standard. Staff would like to know the Board's thoughts on these matters and would like suggestions for how the proposal could be improved to meet the ADF criteria.

- Common Open Space – A landscape plan has been provided for the interior court yard open space area, as well as a rooftop garden and deck. In general, the plan appears to comply with the common open space design standards in RZC 21.62.030(J). Staff's only concern will be the extent of shading within this interior courtyard, given the lack of southern exposure during the day.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

In summary, Staff has the following recommendations for the proposed building:

- The proposal needs to include at least three design elements along the 152<sup>nd</sup> frontage in order to add more fine-grained architectural details to the retail street front.
- The applicant will need to specifically address the three criteria applicable to the Administrative Design Flexibility in order to make the case for the use of fiber cement materials and overall superior design of the building.
- The top of the building should be strengthened through the use of different building materials and/or architectural features.
- The applicant needs to provide additional information about the type of building materials proposed along the 152<sup>nd</sup> ground floor frontage to see if those materials comply with the design standards' emphasis on the use of strong cladding materials like brick, stone, and masonry for the first and second floors of buildings.