



Architectural Review Board Special Meeting - Staff Report

November 29, 2023

6:00 PM

Summary of Actions that can be taken on applications:

The following are the possibilities for a motion for Design Approval and issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Architectural Review Board (all motions to be made in the positive):

1. To approve as submitted
2. To approve with conditions
3. To table the application
4. To continue the application to a date certain

The following are the possibilities for a recommendation to the Board of Zoning and Planning from ARB (1223.07 (c)). A Board member should make one of the following motions and there is no need for findings of fact.

1. To recommend to the BZAP for the approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness
2. To recommend to the BZAP for the approval Certificate of Appropriateness with conditions or modifications identified by the Board.
3. To recommend to the BZAP that a Certificate of Appropriateness not be issued. (Recommendations do not need to be in the positive)
4. To recommend to the BZAP a remand back to the ARB for final determination of Certificate of Appropriateness. (No approval or disapproval)

Other possibilities: Recommended that these should be avoided and that either scenario can be accommodated in one of the above 4 motions:

- To table the applicant only upon the applicants requests.
- No action taken (no recommendation) - application proceeds to BZAP

From the City of Bexley's codified ordinance 1223.04 (Changes To Existing Structures Not Involving Demolition: Ord. 29-16. Passed 11-15-16.)

(a)	The Board, in deciding whether to issue a certificate of appropriateness, shall determine that the proposed structure or modification would be compatible with existing structures within the portion of the District in which the subject property is located.
(b)	The Board may, as a condition of the certificate of appropriateness for the project, require a plan for the preservation (and replacement in the case of damage or destruction) of existing trees and other significant landscape features.
(c)	In conducting its review, the Board shall examine and consider, but not necessarily be limited to, the following elements:
	i. Architectural design, new or existing
	ii. Exterior materials, texture and color
	iii. Exterior details
	iv. Height and building mass
	v. Preservation of existing trees and significant landscape features.

1) **Application Number: BZAP - 23-23**

Address: 2200 E Main

Applicant: Ryan Pearson

Owner: Continental Real Estate Cos.

Request: The applicant is seeking preliminary review and a recommendation to BZAP to allow demo and redevelopment of the vacant Trinity Lutheran apartment structures at 2160, 2188, & 2186 E Main Street (Parcel No.: 020-000836, 020-000217 & 020-000350), Also a Special Permit and Conditional Use for new 5-story building with housing alternatives and variance for a new 6-story mixed use building to provide additional housing, restaurant, retail and offices.

Process: This project is a very significant development and opportunity for the City of Bexley. It is the goal of the City to be open and transparent and encourage public comment and participation. That said, there is a process that the project has gone through that has been very deliberately thought through to produce that best outcome for all. For the purposes of this specific process (the physical completion of the project), which includes site design, massing, variance, vehicular use, architecture... the project will be before the Architecture Review Board and Tree and Public Garden Commission for recommendations to the Board of Zoning and Planning. The BZAP is the ultimate decision making body for the request(s) of the applicant. Issues such as tax abatements, TIFs, school impact are discussed and decided in other City bodies such as City Council, the CIC (Community Improvement Corporation) and the School Board.

Background:

A few elements of design will, by their nature, be discussed at all of 3 of the Boards and Commissions. These would include how the project interacts and activates public spaces and how it is interacts with all its neighboring properties. The BZAP discussion included these issues from a site planning perspective. The ARB will discuss these issues with respect to the architecture and design of the building.

The first (City led) public presentation of this project was at the Board of Zoning and Planning on August 24th, 2023. As background for this ARB hearing here is a summary which includes the discussion items at BZAP:

- This hearing was for preliminary review and the first opportunity for comments and feedback from the Board and the public.
- BZAP discussion and purview includes site development, general massing, zoning code adherence, adherence to Main Street Design standards (different than the ARB Design Standards), a request for a Special Permit for 5 stories (they can have 3 stories by right), vehicular patterns and parking...
- What was not for discussion at BZAP was the architecture. Although inevitably the design and material choice, style, form, etc...did come up, design review is in the purview of the ARB.
- The applicant is seeking a Special permit to allow 5 stories. While this is the decision of BZAP, there are items in 1254.14 (MAIN STREET DISTRICT SPECIAL PERMITS) that

will weigh heavily on the recommendation of the ARB. For reference below - the considerations that are important for ARB are in bold:

1254.14 MAIN STREET DISTRICT SPECIAL PERMITS.

Special permits to allow the maximum height of a structure as provided in Section [1254.10](#) of up to 5 stories or up to 7 stories west of Sheridan Avenue and south of Main Street, may be granted based upon any of the following considerations:

(a) The extent to which the proposed property and site design conform to the intent of the Main Street Design Guidelines.

(b) The extent to which the proposed development represents exceptional architectural and site design.

(c) The extent to which the design helps to mitigate a substantial impact upon adjacent single family residential uses.

(d) Compatibility of architecture and site design to the surrounding uses and structures.

(e) The extent to which the development creates meaningful pedestrian and public amenity spaces.

(f) The extent to which the development provides public parking.

This project was also heard at the Tree and Public Garden Commission to look at public spaces in the context of the overall project.

This application is before the Architectural Review Board for the fourth time.

- The application was tabled at the September ARB for further design study with the offer to have a workshop in the interim.
- The application was tabled by the applicant and removed from the October ARB meeting at their request and a workshop was scheduled.
- A workshop for design critique with Board members (public but with no public comment) took place on October 17th.
- The application was heard at the November meeting with good Board feedback and the request for more views and some material and massing modifications along with an offer for a special meeting as there is no December ARB.

Considerations:

This project will be a mixed use building that has residential and commercial/retail space. It is an exciting opportunity to provide additional housing, retail and development, and to activate the public space along Main street between Gateway and Bexley Square. Many aspects of this project have undergone evaluation and discussion and many decision points. For this meeting staff strongly encourages following these discussion guidelines to make the best use of our time this evening:

For discussion at ARB...

- the architecture/style/material choices in general
- how does the building address Main Street corridor with respect to it's architecture (code pushes the building to front through the Main street design standards)
- how does the building activate spaces around building

- how does the architecture and building design interface with adjacent properties
- discussion of materials and detailing of the building -

What we are not discussing in ARB:

- Parking and traffic patterns
- Tax abatements
- Use
- Site Design
- General massing

Staff Comments:

Many changes that have been suggested continue to be implanted in the latest revisions but there are still many design studies that need to be done. The changes to date include a refinement of the south east entrance piece, a clearer definition of the public spaces, revision of the cornice line, and many other changes that came from the discussion at the public workshop.

The original form of the building was uniform in height and did not respond sensitively and uniquely to the neighbor in each direction. In the process of design development the design team responded to the concern of the Board and neighbors and softened the elevations through the use of richer materials with more traditional applications (“Bexley-like”) as well as breaking down the mass of the facades through undulations, public spaces, carving out of rooftop and using setbacks as the building goes back. Additionally using cornices on lower floors to match the neighboring property roofline gives the building better scale and contextual relevancy.

The applicant was encouraged by ARB and staff to add the 6th story at the front of the building toward main street to give it a better silhouette and overall shape. This also allowed more flexibility to carve out mass on the rear and sides to lessen the mass and soften the building on the residential side.

Many changes have been made since the original application was submitted. Progress images below show where the design began and where it is to date. At the latest review the design team was asked to add detail to the west and north elevations and bring them up to the level of design that the east and south elevations have.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff supports a recommendation to the Board of Zoning and Planning with the following conditions:

1. Final design details to be reviewed by the ARB
- 2.

Design Evolution





2 EAST ELEVATION
T = 30'



2 EAST ELEVATION
T = 30'



2 EAST ELEVATION
T = 30'

2 EAST ELEVATION
T = 30'



2 EAST ELEVATION
T = 30'



1 MAIN STREET ELEVATION

1" = 32'-0"



1 MAIN STREET ELEVATION

1" = 32'-0"



3 NORTH ELEVATION



2 NORTH ELEVATION





1 WEST ELEVATION
1" = 30'



1 WEST ELEVATION
1" = 30'



1 WEST ELEVATION
1" = 30'

2 WEST ELEVATION
1" = 30'



1 WEST ELEVATION
1" = 30'