

101 E. Rosemary

Design Discussion: 5-26-22 (*meeting with development team*)

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The main purpose of the meeting was to review updated drawings indicating changes made to the ground floor uses at the corner of the building and along the E. Rosemary Street frontage. Discussion also focused on the dimensions and character of the façade along E. Rosemary at the pedestrian level.

1. The design team looked at rotating the entire building plan and mass so that the courtyard faced out onto Columbia Street. This was problematic for a number of reasons. This arrangement placed a good many residential units to the back, facing the parking garage across the service drive. Because of the building layout and the sloping condition of the site, the floor of the courtyard would be elevated above the sidewalk, presenting a wall condition, and not be accessible from the walk. In addition, the U-shaped building mass, due to its centralizing and axial focus, makes it difficult to accentuate the corner-focused massing concept, which has served as an organizing principal throughout the design process of the building thus far.
2. The level 1 floor plan features some reorganization of spaces at the corner and along E. Rosemary. The cycle center has been moved away from the exterior corner and is now located facing the rear courtyard. The coffee lounge/commercial space is now located at the building corner, and the leasing/amenity space is relocated to the east, along the E. Rosemary St. frontage. These changes should improve potential street activation by placing the most active uses at the corner.
3. Discussed the coffee lounge/commercial space. The space is about 1800 square feet. A restaurant or food service use would likely require a kitchen or some food prep area, which might be a challenge to accommodate in the size of the space. Food service of a simpler nature, where items could be brought in, might be a consideration. Discussed precedents from other locations in which a vendor creates an active environment featuring beer, coffee, and light snacks in a space that although technically an amenity space for the building, is fully open and welcoming to the public. The applicant will continue to look at various possibilities regarding the use and activation of this space.
4. Leasing/Amenity space: This space is envisioned as the front door for the building. Residents will be coming and going through this area on a daily basis, providing some foot traffic which could contribute to the activation along E. Rosemary Street. Designing the leasing/amenity space more like a "living room" type space as well as an office could help contribute to a welcoming image along E. Rosemary.
5. Building Frontage: The structural columns have been moved back several feet from their former locations next to the sidewalk. This allows more pedestrian space along the frontage than previously (9' from the curbside sidewalk edge to the building edge; 7'-9" from the curbside sidewalk edge to the column edge; and a total width from back of curb to the building edge of 14') which is a welcome improvement from the previous design. Alcoves between the columns provide additional space and potential locations for sidewalk tables and chairs. In addition a notch is taken out of the building mass at the corner allowing additional space for pedestrian amenities and circulation. Sidewalk level perspective views have been prepared which show an appropriate urban character for this frontage. Suggested the applicant consider providing the most transparent facades possible along this frontage: consider, if feasible, roll up glass doors, swinging doors or other means to open the lounge space to the sidewalk, further increasing the sense of expansion at the pedestrian frontage.