

CONCEPT PLAN COMMENTS
150 East Rosemary
COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION

January 4th, 2021

The Community Design Commission conducted a Concept Plan review for 150 East Rosemary Street at a meeting on January 4th, 2021. The project proposes approx. 250,000sf of office and research/lab space for business and institutional tenants.

**Key points made by members of the Commission about the concept plan are listed below.*

BUILDING DESIGN: Commissioners generally voiced support of a modernist approach to building design and expressed confidence in the design team's ability to develop an acceptable design that is modernist and that fits within the area's historic context.

- Multiple commissioners voiced support of creating vertical breaks in the Rosemary Street façade of the building; one option would be a strong and clearly-defined entrance mid-building at the location of the elevators.
- Two commissioners were supportive of the developer's statement regarding integrating the architectural features with the adjacent redevelopment projects. Other commissioners discussed the importance of varied architecture, therefore there was no consensus on this issue.
- One commissioner expressed concern with the potential visibility of wet lab and other mechanical equipment on the roof of the building, and felt this needed special design care.
- One commissioner suggested the building design should take into account the views of church spires downtown and the 100 block of Franklin Street, and relate to UNC campus building design.

PRIORITIZE PEDESTRIANS: The commission recommends that pedestrians be prioritized in this site plan and design, especially as it is being done simultaneously and with the same developer of the NCNB building renovation and construction of the new parking deck.

- Multiple commissioners voiced support of improving the pedestrian experience along the NCNB alley. Failure to address would result in this being the weak link for this project.
- Multiple commissioners recommended the pedestrian planning take into account the importance of the Rathskeller Alley as a north/south connection.
- Two commissioners voiced support of finding a way to create more friction for vehicular traffic on Rosemary St., to slow the speed at which cars travel. One option would be the addition of on-street parking.
- One commissioner suggested a pedestrian access plan for the three sites being developed by the applicant on Rosemary Street

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- One commissioner noted there is a potential greenway connection at the end of Cobb Terrace which could be part of an area pedestrian plan.
- One commissioner voiced strong concerns about the ground level parking entrance on Rosemary St., which would be one of three curb cuts in about 400' of street frontage; in general, curb cuts compromise pedestrian safety and experience.

BUILDING HEIGHT: Multiple commissioners voiced support of a 6-7 story structure. One commissioner voiced support of a potential 8 story structure, but noted it would have to be done brilliantly.

TOWN GREEN: The majority of commissioners voiced support of bringing the town green down to the sidewalk and street level should take priority over saving the magnolia tree. One commissioner voiced support for saving the pencil mural and the magnolia, and minimizing grading down the lot.

Multiple commissioners voiced concern regarding stormwater requirements.

PUBLIC ART: One commissioner voiced support for public art integration.

DRAFT