

**Hillside Trace****Urban Designer Comments 04-21-25**

Submitted by Brian Peterson, AIA, Urban Designer, Town of Chapel Hill

The following comments are in reference to the site plan (03-18-25) and the most recent building elevations and perspective drawings. A recent meeting (04-16-25) was held with the applicant team to discuss the building siting, massing, and overall articulation strategy.

1. The site design along the MLK frontage provides elements that add interest to the pedestrian experience by utilizing landscape features (street trees, built-in planters) and paving materials that create a plaza-like character to the building frontage.
2. The building massing and articulation strategy is effective in helping break down the scale of the large building. Corner brick “towers” act as bookends, projecting out from the façade, while the middle portion of the building is broken down into vertical modules which recall a “townhouse” scale, and include vertical bands of projecting balconies.
3. In addition, the building features a clear base, middle, and top articulation strategy, which further helps to enliven the elevational character.
4. The corner brick elements have the greatest degree of articulation, which is appropriate as these massings will be especially visible as one travels along the MLK frontage and views the building upon approach from either the north or south. The northern one clearly articulates the building entrance, with the effect reinforced by a ribbon-like projecting canopy and signage. The top floor of this massing has a cutout, to allow for an outdoor roof space, which helps provide a capping effect and visual interest at the top of the building.
5. The base of the building along the MLK frontage, which is where the parking structure becomes visible as site grading steps down to the north, features brick bays with an infill of metal screens and frames which helps provide a window-like articulation while allowing ventilation for the mostly below grade parking structure. The design character of this building base will be critical in ensuring a good pedestrian experience on this important street frontage.