

Design Alternatives Staff Evaluation

Project Name: **Aura Blue Hill**

The applicant has included Proposed Design Alternatives in their Written Narrative. The Staff Evaluation below provides more context around Design Alternatives, including relevant aspects of the [Blue Hill Design Guidelines](#) for the CDC's consideration. The identified Guidelines are opportunities for the applicant to "provide an equivalent or better result that meets the purpose and intent" of the Form-Based Code, in some cases going above and beyond what is necessary for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Design Alternative-1:

Allow the substitution of alternate street tree species and placement where overhead power lines, utility locations, and/or fire access limits placement. Select trees with 12-14 foot mature height in these areas along Fordham Blvd, Legion Road Ext, and Ephesus Church Rd.

Typical Code Requirement: 3.11.2.5 - Canopy street trees planted at 40 ft average spacing

Form-Based Code reference for evaluating Design Alternative: 3.11.2.5

Relevant Design Guidelines:

| Guideline | | Page | Design Alternative Sought |
|------------------------------|---|------|--|
| PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY | | | |
| Public Streetscape Character | | | |
| 2.10 | Adjusting the spacing of street trees may be considered. the net number of trees or amount of planting areas that would have been installed should be maintained. | 30 | Street trees along frontages with conflicts - utilities, fire access, etc. |
| 2.11 | Adjusting the alignment distance of street trees along a curb may be considered. Trees may be placed farther away from the curb or along the inside edge of the sidewalk. | 30 | |
| 2.12 | Adjusting the scale of planting may be considered. A lower scale tree species, or shrubbery, may be used. | 30 | |

Design Alternative-2:

Increase the upper floor plate area of the fourth story on both buildings to have floor area exceeding 100% of the ground story floor area, up to 100% of the third story floor area.

Typical Code Requirement: 3.11.2.4.3.C – Fourth story floor plate at maximum 80% of ground story floor plate.

Form-Based Code reference for evaluating Design Alternative: 3.11.2.7.T.4

Relevant Design Guidelines:

| Guideline | | Page | Design Alternative Sought |
|--|--|------|---|
| BUILDING DESIGN | | | |
| Building Mass and Scale | | | |
| 4.11 | Provide variation in building heights. | 89 | Mass Variation standards (upper story floor plate, step backs, modules) |
| 4.13 | Establish a sense of human scale in the design of a new building. | 90 | |
| 4.18 | Vary cornice lines to create visual interest. | 92 | |
| 4.19 | Create a sense of visual interest by using a variety of roof heights along the street. | 93 | |
| Architectural Features (Design Elements) | | | |
| 4.27 (b) | Design the main entrance to be clearly identifiable. Use variation in building mass and height to highlight a main entrance. | 101 | Mass Variation standards |

Blue Hill Design Guidelines: General Guidance for Design Alternatives

Project Name: **Aura Blue Hill**

The Design Guidelines listed below represent good design practice, but are not requirements under the framework of the Form-Based Code (the guidance may only be suitable in certain contexts, may limit the opportunity to achieve other community benefits, and/or there may not be a legal basis for requiring it).

When an applicant is seeking a Design Alternative, the CDC may encourage them to meet guidelines on this list so that the project still satisfies the intent of the Blue Hill District, even with variation(s) to Code standards.

| Guideline | Page | Applicable Code Ref.* | Criteria for Applicability | Notes |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|---|
| PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY | | | | |
| The Public Realm | | | | |
| 2.2 | Promote “greenness” throughout the Blue Hill District. | 24 | 3.11.4.2 | Widely applicable |
| View from the Public Right-of-Way | | | | |
| 2.3 | Enhance views from the public right-of-way to natural features and landmarks. | 26 | | Landmarks or prominent natural features nearby |
| 2.4 | Define the corner of a property at a key intersection with a distinctive design element. | 26 | 3.11.2.7.I.3 | Corner lots with use of Iconic features/ Primary entrance/ Public art |
| Public Streetscape Character | | | | |
| 2.6 | Use landscape materials to enhance the “green” experience in the public right-of-way. | 28 | 3.11.4.2.D | Widely applicable |
| 2.8 | Integrate an “urban” approach to landscaping. | 29 | 3.11.4.2 | Widely applicable |
| 2.9 (a) | “Fingers” of green should be developed to connect internal pathways to greenways throughout the Blue Hill District. | 29 | 3.11.4.2 | Greenways or multi-use paths nearby |

| Guideline | | Page | Applicable Code Ref.* | Criteria for Applicability | Notes |
|-----------------------|---|------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Public Art | | | | | |
| 2.19 | Incorporating public art in a project is encouraged. | 33 | | Widely applicable | |
| 2.20 | Locate public art strategically. | 33 | | Widely applicable | |
| 2.21 | Design considerations for public art. | 33 | | Widely applicable | |
| SITE DESIGN | | | | | |
| Outdoor Amenity Space | | | | | |
| 3.17 | Locate an outdoor amenity space to provide a focal point on a site. | 52 | 3.11.2.7.F.4.i | Widely applicable | |
| 3.18 (b-d) | Orient an outdoor amenity space to link with other cultural resources, natural features or greenways and to extend existing view corridors. Orient an outdoor amenity space to views of active spaces or architectural landmarks to provide visual interest. Consider locating outdoor amenity spaces along active pedestrian circulation paths such as a greenway, as opposed to the interior of a property. | 52 | 3.11.2.7.F.4.i | Widely applicable | |
| 3.24 | Promote a “green” experience in all outdoor amenity spaces. | 54 | 3.11.1.2.A | Widely applicable | |
| 3.27 | Design outdoor amenity space to incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) principles for stormwater management. | 55 | 3.11.4.2.B | Widely applicable | |
| Structured Parking | | | | | |
| 3.39 | Design a parking structure to promote sustainability. | 63 | 3.11.1.2.A | Parking deck included | |
| 3.40 | Design a parking structure to be adaptable for future non-vehicular uses. | 63 | | Parking deck included | |
| Landscape Design | | | | | |
| 3.41 (a) | Include existing vegetation as part of a landscape design scheme when feasible. | 64 | 3.11.1.2.A | Widely applicable | |

| Guideline | | Page | Applicable Code Ref.* | Criteria for Applicability | Notes |
|--|--|------|------------------------|---|-------|
| Working with Topography | | | | | |
| 3.48 (b)(c) | Design a site to integrate with existing topography. Use a series of landscaped terraces or stepped walls where a taller cut or change in grade is necessary. Incorporate an existing topographic landform as a natural or open space amenity. | 66 | 3.11.2.3; 3.11.2.4 | Widely applicable for challenging grades | |
| 3.51 (b) | Design a building to step with the existing topography of a site. “Terrace” a building into a hillside to minimize site disturbance and create private outdoor spaces and site features. | 66 | 3.11.4.2.E.2 | Widely applicable for buildings with challenging grades | |
| 3.53 | Step outdoor amenity spaces to follow changes in topography. | 67 | 3.11.2.7.F | Widely applicable | |
| Sensitive Site Design Transitions | | | | | |
| 3.69 (b)(d) | Avoid orienting the rear of a building toward an adjacent residential neighborhood. Do not locate a mechanical or service area directly adjacent to a residential neighborhood. | 77 | 3.11.4.2.E; 3.11.4.2.H | Site adjacent to lower-density residential – across Ephesus Church Rd | |
| BUILDING DESIGN | | | | | |
| Energy Efficiency and Building Performance | | | | | |
| 4.3 | Utilize sustainable building design solutions throughout the Blue Hill District. | 85 | 3.11.1.2.A | Widely applicable | |
| 4.4 | Design with energy efficiency and use of renewable energy as top priorities. | 85 | 3.11.1.2.A | Widely applicable | |
| 4.5 | Locate a new building, or an addition, to take advantage of micro-climatic opportunities for energy conservation. | 86 | 3.11.2.7.L | Widely applicable | |
| 4.7 | Maximize solar access for all properties. | 86 | 3.11.2.7.L | Widely applicable | |
| Environmental Performance in Building Elements | | | | | |
| 4.8 | Use sustainable building materials whenever possible. | 87 | 3.11.2.7.R | Widely applicable | |
| 4.9 | Incorporate building elements that allow for natural environmental control. | 87 | 3.11.1.2.A | Widely applicable | |

| Guideline | | Page | Applicable Code Ref.* | Criteria for Applicability | Notes |
|--|---|------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Architectural Features (Design Elements) | | | | | |
| 4.22 (a) | Design a building facade to enhance community image. Incorporate design features that add depth and detail, such as deep roof eaves and changes in the facade plane that create patterns of light and shadow. | 97 | 3.11.2.6 | Widely applicable | |
| 4.27 (b) | Design the main entrance to be clearly identifiable. Use variation in building mass and height to highlight a main entrance. | 101 | 3.11.2.7.T | Widely applicable | |
| 4.30 | Use an iconic design feature to foster a unique sense of place. | 102 | 3.11.2.7.L | Widely applicable | |

| General Notes | |
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