

Developers Address CentrePointe Architectural Changes

We have made significant design modifications to the Centrepointe development since the initial project announcement. After having heard from many local groups and individuals who had their own thoughts about how the project should be designed, we considered all suggestions. Some have since been incorporated in whole or in part while others could not be for various reasons.

In analyzing their recommendations, we considered numerous alternatives. A twin tower scenario was evaluated, but it didn't afford the height that our condominium prospects desired, plus it ended up looking like a duplicate of the Radisson/WTC project.

At the advice of several council members, we reduced the tower's height down from 40 stories to 35 stories and moved its base deeper into the block so as to place the tower fully within the podium with no part of it meeting grade at street level. This change proved meaningful in that it made the complex much more street friendly and the tower much less imposing.

At the suggestion of the Fayette Alliance and others, we analyzed making the motor court entrance off of Main Street rather than Vine. The problem with this was in part that it violated the courthouse overlay recommendation of uninterrupted blocks along the sidewalks of Main, "a people street". In addition, the slope of the block towards Vine required the entrance to the below ground parking decks to then be off Limestone Street which the City's traffic officials discouraged.

At the recommendation of the preservationists, we charged the Architects to create a new façade that related more strongly in scale to those on the north side of Main Street. They also suggested that we incorporate the horizontal elements so that ours would align with the cornice of the McAdams and Morford building currently housing Harvey's bar and we did. We also incorporated other appropriate existing façade treatments into our brick detailing to also reference them to other neighboring buildings. In that process, we made the new Main Street façade more complimentary to its adjoining neighbors and historic surroundings while making the Vine Street façade more contemporary and appropriate to its context.

In that process, we moved the tower portion of the project further away from Main to minimize its impact and scale. This enabled us to expand the hotel lobby and have it front Main Street as well. We found that having the hotel lobby on Main greatly enhances the pedestrian experience due to the activity and animation found in hotel lobby and restaurant spaces at all hours. At the request of other concerned parties, we eliminated the small vehicular pull off on Main Street so as to enhance the pedestrian experience. This allowed the buildings to meet the street edge in compliance with the overlay recommendations.

We likewise modified the long facades of Limestone and Upper streets by changing the plane and alternating façade treatments to also add character and visual interest. This effort is to give the appearance of multiple low-rise buildings along this stretch rather than just one. The entire exercise kept in mind that our project does significantly interplay in a positive way with Phoenix Park and Park Place apartments.

We also elected to modify the shape of the typical guest room floor to minimize their end dimension and visibility. This scale modification minimizes the hotel floors' impact of the views from the Phoenix Apartments, from the Financial Center and from the street corners and distant locations.

As an accommodation to the historic interests, our latest efforts include an attempt to incorporate the façade of the current Rosenberg Jewelers building into the Upper Street section of the block. The incorporation of this façade will require a redesign of the entire podium facade concept to create a logical place for it within the building exterior. In addition, we are attempting to incorporate a live music venue into this section of the block about the size of "The Dame" via an entrance off of Upper Street across from McCarthy's in a unique and urban venue. These efforts are ongoing.

As a private development team, please note that our overriding goal is to make this project "better." We appreciate the interests, concerns and suggestions of many local citizens and groups and feel that the input that we have received and the resulting changes that we have made enhance the overall appeal of this project. We are excited about the economic boost that the 900 new jobs and all the materials and "spin-off" that this project will bring to our community and the dramatic statement that LEED certified ("green building") will make about our community, especially in light the recent report by the Brookings Institution that Lexington's carbon footprint is the worst of the largest 100 cities in the United States.

We hope that this explanation establishes that we have taken serious looks and made deep analysis into this project while preserving the building "program" elements that we feel are required to make this a successful block and with the confidence that it will serve as a catalyst for the neighboring blocks imminent revitalization. The development of this block is vital to the remainder of the core of downtown. It will likely be the last significant full block development in our downtown – ever – as there are no other feasible places to construct a project of this scope in the core.

It will dramatically alter our skyline and give Lexington an urban feel. It will serve as a catalyst for the revitalization of the Bellini's block, for the hoped for revitalization of the Old Court House, will enhance the farmers market and further support the downtown entertainment district. We look forward to completing this project for the betterment of our community for many years to come.

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For CentrepoinTE, LLC