



**LEESBURG BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT**

SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING AND WORK SESSION FOR COURTHOUSE SQUARE PROJECT: 8 AUGUST 2012

BAR Case No. TLHP-2012-0040 Courthouse Square: Commercial Mixed-use Building on Loudoun Times Mirror property. Report #1 was June 4, 2012, Report #2 was June 27, 2012, Report #3 was July 11, 2012 and Report #4 was July 25, 2012.

This is Report #5 – first overall review of all submissions

Reviewer: Kim K. Del Rance, LEED AP
Address: **9 E Market Street and interior of block enclosed by Market, Church, Loudoun and King Street**
Zoning: B-1, H-1 Overlay District
Applicant/Owner: Leesburg Value Fund I, LLC

Description of Proposal:

Leesburg Value Fund I, LLC (Owner) requests construction of a new 113,650 square foot mixed office use, retail and restaurant building with associated parking structure. Part of the proposed square –foot area will include an addition on to the Loudoun Times Mirror building at 9 E Market St. The parking structure will contain 336 parking spaces on five levels in support of the 113,650 square feet of by-right commercial, office and retail uses in downtown Leesburg. The maximum height of the building will reach approximately 63 feet with the HVAC and mechanical equipment located on the roof approximately 12 feet tall.

Site Description:

The site is comprised of four separate lots (PIN 231-38-6044, 231-38-6661, 231-38-5350, and 231-38-5459) measuring a combined total of approximately 1.7 acres. A portion of the property (9 Market Street, PIN 231-38-5459) contains the Loudoun Times Mirror building; an approximate 5,500 square foot building with an 18,296 square foot cinder block addition on the rear built in 1975. This portion of the site faces north and contains frontage on E. Market Street. The remainder of the site is currently paved and utilized for surface parking. It has frontage on Church Street and Loudoun Street SE and is surrounded by commercial uses fronting on King, Loudoun and Market Streets, the Loudoun County Government Center, and the Loudoun County Courts Complex. The property is zoned B-1, Community (Downtown) Business with H-1, Old and Historic Overlay District.

Context:

The subject property is situated on an original block of the Nicolas Minor subdivision established in 1759. Throughout the history of Leesburg, this block has been one of the primary commercial blocks in Leesburg. The existing architecture on the King Street, Market Street and Loudoun Street frontages reflect the architectural history of Leesburg from the ca 1758 McCabe Tavern/Paterson House and ca 1800 Lynch-Tebbs House on Loudoun Street to the ca 1810, remodeled in 1909 and 1971 20 S. King Street to the 1901, remodeled in 1920 – 1925 Loudoun National Bank Building at the corner of King and Market to the 1923 US Post Office at 15 Market Street and the 1916 Loudoun Times Mirror Building at 9 Market Street.

The Loudoun Times Mirror building is a contributing resource in the Old & Historic District. Built in 1916 as an automobile showroom it has withstood various use changes without altering the architectural integrity in its nearly 100 year history in its prominent location directly opposite from the courthouse complex on one of the most significant blocks in Leesburg's downtown.

Site Development/Zoning Issues:

On May 2011, the Town Council adopted TLOA-2011-0001 which increased the maximum building height in certain portions of the B-1 Zoning District to 65 feet so long as specific conditions were met. The proposal meets the Zoning Ordinance qualifications for the maximum height in this portion of the B-1 District; however, the final determination of building form, including height, will be made by the BAR in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 6.3.3.E note [7].

TLSE-2011-0002 was granted conditional approval on March 27, 2012 by Resolution 2012-0041.

Progress of Proposal:

The Review Process – first final review

The Staff Report for this August 8 special meeting is the first attempt at a final review report reviewing all of the previous meetings and decisions made on various elements of the project, including the partial demolition and those requirements as well as the new construction.

The review of this application has been approached as follows:

– June 4, 2012

- 1. General assessment of the massing at the Loudoun Times Mirror Building and initial mass and scale comments on the proposal**

– June 27, 2012

- 2. General assessment of the site plan features:**
 - Accessibility – Pedestrian and Drive locations
 - Parking areas
 - Other concerns as needed
- 3. General assessment of the massing at the new construction:**
 - Building height
 - Roof forms
 - Directional emphasis
 - Building components

– July 11, 2012

- 4. Detailed assessment of the massing at the new construction:**
 - Building height
 - Roof forms
 - Cornices and Trim
 - Directional emphasis
 - Building components
 - Fenestration pattern
 - Materials

– July 25, 2012

5. Detailed assessment of elements:

- Doors, Windows and parking garage openings
- Materials
- Architectural details
- Lighting
- Mechanical Equipment
- Landscaping
- Other concerns as needed

– August 8, 2012

Final review and discussion for Loudoun Times Mirror addition:

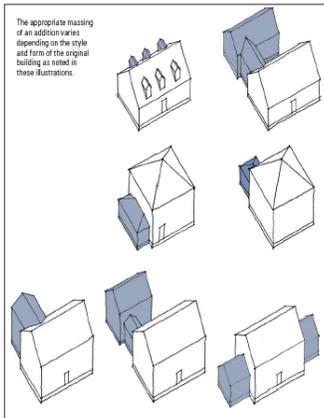
1. Changes since the July 25 meeting
 2. Overall review of scale, materials and details
- *Final Staff recommendation on Demolition case TLHP-2012-0042 in separate report

Final review and discussion for new construction:

1. Accessibility – Pedestrian and Drive locations
2. Parking areas
3. Building height and massing
4. Roof forms
5. Directional emphasis
6. Building components
7. Cornices and Trim
8. Fenestration pattern
9. Doors, Windows and parking garage openings
10. Materials
11. Architectural details
12. Lighting
13. Mechanical Equipment
14. Landscaping and screening
15. Other concerns as needed
16. Final decision on entire project
17. * **Town plan chapter 5, Objective 1, states:**

“Encourage private commercial development to incorporate art into prominent projects”.





STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE DISCUSSION AND APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES:

Loudoun Times Mirror Building (LTM): The Additive Massing element of the Modifications to Existing Buildings guidelines stipulate that additions that are appropriate are subordinate to the historic original building. Overwhelming the original building in scale is not appropriate.

Regarding the changes since the July 25, 2012 meeting and final decision there are 3 comments:

1. The second floor addition above the LTM drawings indicate the second floor being pushed forward one foot ahead the window line instead of one foot behind as had previously had been discussed and agreed to. If the pushing back is not possible, then returning to what was proposed is more appropriate than pushing forward. Once that is done this façade will read as more subordinate to the LTM building.
2. The neutralized color red that is less saturated than the brick with sand color mortar allows the addition to read as lighter than the LTM as an addition that respects the historic building it is attached to. The current drawings do not indicate this neutral color although it had been agreed to at the July 25, 2012 meeting.
3. The scale of the cementitious wall panels may be too large to be directly above the low one story Loudoun Times Mirror building for the change from a 2-1/2" high brick to an 18" high panel width. Examples of other heights may show a better balance of scale. Although this is clearly not a residential building, the Town of Leesburg has a residential scale that can carry over to commercial buildings. Many commercial buildings in Leesburg use residential scaled materials such as wood siding and bricks. As seen in this Nichiha (the proposed panel) sales photo to the right the large panel is of such a scale that the brick appears to be anchored by the panels, not the reverse. The stacking or running bond pattern is not the concern, only the scale of the seams and reveals. Reducing the panel height by one half would not signal a residential building as commercial buildings in Leesburg have wooden siding smaller than 9 inches similar in scale to residential siding, but do not appear residential. If this siding were vertical it would be comparable to board and batten, but not as a horizontal application.



Overall comments regarding the addition:

- Scale – The overall scale of the addition will be subordinate to the historic Loudoun Times Mirror building once the comments above are addressed.
- Materials – Restoring the original façade elements of the Loudoun Times Mirror (LTM) building to those taken from historic photos of when the building was built as the first Automobile (Dodge) dealership in Leesburg in 1916 is appropriate and encouraged. Details such as wood windows and trim as well as original glazing and muntin configurations are appropriate. Building an addition above the building is recessed from the street to keep the addition subordinate to the LTM. Other

strategies and techniques are utilized to ensure the subordination of the addition.

- The choice of lighter materials for the upper floor addition allows the low one story building to retain its massiveness with the brick. Once the gypsum siding panel width is addressed the choice of neutralizing a color that blends but recedes slightly from the historic building will keep the addition subordinate yet remain an addition of its time that does not copy history, but rather respects it.

- Details of the addition, such as cable railings which allow transparent views beyond them, steel windows which carry the same proportions as the wood window openings below them, a third floor that reads lantern-like and somewhat simple and slightly industrial is appropriate as an addition to a historic auto dealership building from 1916 as which the Loudoun Times Mirror was built.

The rest of the building details, such as windows and doors will be addressed below with the new construction.

Staff Assessment of the new construction:

The following are broad comments about the changes to the mass and scale of the Courthouse Square proposal since July 25, 2012 and the final decision.

1. Accessibility – Pedestrian and Drive locations

Church Street: The main entrance to the parking garage is located near the bottom of the hill leading down one way from Market Street. Drivers will also be able to turn north onto Church Street from Loudoun Street, increasing the vehicular traffic along that street. The vehicular entry is across from the entry to the Loudoun County Parking garage and close to a small residence next to the county parking garage. The scope of the BAR does not include the impacts of the traffic on the neighboring buildings and sites, however, the impact of the increased pedestrian traffic from the garage has been addressed appropriately by the placement of pedestrian access and covered walkway along Church Street to the corner of Loudoun Street.

Loudoun Street: The main entry to the offices located above the new parking structure is located back from the street and incorporates a small courtyard behind the smaller scale buildings along Loudoun Street, which gives the interior of the block a sense of separateness from the historic streetscape. This may or may not be appropriate; however, the fact that the extreme height difference between the historic and the new is set back from the street, the impact of the building height is lessened. The fact that the view of the vertical glass entry of the new construction is only viewable when directly between the two historic buildings in front lessens its impact of scale change, but the steel canopy with recommended cables brings the entry scale back down to a pedestrian scale that is appropriate for Leesburg. Emphasizing the canopy edge by using a darker finish than the light aluminum colors will add some depth and emphasize this human-scaled element.

The pedestrian access to the corner building at Loudoun and Church Street is the appropriate scale and brings an importance to the corner that is a historic treatment of block corners.

King Street: The only access from King Street is along the alley leading around the parking structure out to Church Street. Lack of adequate lighting may be an issue at the west side of the parking garage where only two fixtures are shown twice as far apart as the rest of the building.

Market Street: The restoration of the Loudoun Times Mirror building creates a new entrance from Market Street to a new elevated pedestrian walkway that links to the new construction. The walkway is appropriate in scale and detailing with cues of historic bridgework.

2. Parking Areas

All parking is either in the new garage, located under cover on the King Street façade located behind the historic buildings or behind the Birkett building on Loudoun Street, so parking is not an issue.

3. Building Height and massing – discussed in context of massing, directional emphasis, fenestration pattern and Details

- The BAR has the ultimate authority in determining the building height in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 6.3.3.E. note [7]

Massing issues have been addressed on all elevations and overall the breaking up of this large mass into various segmented masses reduces the overall scale of the building to fit into the scale of Leesburg. The board has agreed upon each elevation as meeting the massing element of the guidelines *in general* throughout this review process.

4. Roof forms

Various heights of flat roofs used on this project have been reviewed in context and are appropriate. Pitched roof along Loudoun and Church Street emulates the pitch of historic roofs in Leesburg and is used at the appropriate scale and location.

5. Directional Emphasis

The improvement of the directional emphasis from a horizontal building to one that is more vertically segmented is appropriate and has been largely achieved. The majority of the building is located behind a row of historic buildings on King Street and Market Street and has been treated more as a background building so as not to upstage the historic street facades of downtown Leesburg.

6. Building Components

- This building is of its time, using modern construction methods. Many of the materials that make up the modern building components used are traditional, such as steel, brick and glass, while others can achieve a traditional look. Components submitted for review have met the guidelines intent of being appropriate for Leesburg's traditional building history in general, but the specific scale of the proposed gypsum siding on the addition to the Times Mirror Building may be out of scale with the brick and appear heavier and no longer subordinate to the historic building below.
- Curtain wall details will be discussed under doors and windows below.

7. Cornices and Trims

- The cornices or lack of cornices on the building at the corner of Loudoun and Church Street is not in keeping with the traditional detailing of Leesburg. Either a decorative cornice of brick corbelling or some other treatment should be used or an overhang to give shadow depth would be appropriate. Other cornices as shown at a small scale on the Church Street elevation drawings appear to be the appropriate scale and the cast stone used will have the finish of traditional durable materials.
- However, drawings of cornice profiles and dimensions at a *detail* scale have not yet been submitted for review. The current drawings on sheets A-5 through A-7 are too small for further review of their appropriateness at this time.

8. Fenestration Pattern

Ch. VII. N. Storefronts "...The smaller fenestration of the upper level(s) reflects its differentiated usage as office or living space above the retail first level."

- The fenestration pattern on all elevations have been agreed to be generally appropriate in scale and configuration with the scale of Leesburg. The proportion of glazing with regards to dividing light has not been addressed and many of the proposed windows have large proportions that are out of scale with historic Leesburg.

9. Doors, Windows and parking garage openings

Ch. VII. J. 1. "Traditionally designed openings are generally recessed on masonry buildings and have a raised surround on frame buildings. New construction should follow those methods as opposed to designing openings that are flush with the rest of the wall."

- Door details are have not been submitted for review. The doors on renderings are not large enough to provide sufficient detail for review.
- Window details are shown in sketch elevations and several wall sections. However, most appear to be flush with the exterior which is specifically addressed in the guidelines quoted above that they should not be designed to be flush. Further detail has been communicated by the designer that the minimum setback for windows will be two inches (2") at all floors except the top floor where the setback will be seven inches (7"). Sills and trim were not mentioned and should be addressed at each window type. Punched windows are appropriate as accents or focal points, but not as a majority window type.
- The addition above the LTM is not a masonry building; therefore the windows should have a raised surround, but should not be flush.

Ch. VII. J. 5. "Window types and glazing patterns should reflect those patterns found in the neighborhood"

- and -

"Use a size and proportion of window and door openings, or the ratio of width to height, that is similar to or compatible with those on nearby historic facades."

Without quoting the entire section, generally most of the guidelines listed in **Chapter VII. J. Doors and Windows** addresses the proportions and details of doors and windows that have not been followed on the submitted drawings. The window details, sills, sections showing recessing them or raising them from their surround where appropriate should be revisited.

- Large panes are appropriate on the ground level where storefronts are traditionally located; however, glazing areas should be divided as the location of the windows is placed higher on the building. The large expanses of glazing have been generally accepted at the broad massing and scale level; however their detailing has not been discussed and needs to be addressed with muntins, mullions, trim or other means of dividing light. See further comments below under curtain wall.
- The parking garage opening is not addressed specifically in the guidelines, but no detail for any sort of closure has been submitted. Will there be doors or gates ever used to secure the garage? If so, details need to be submitted.

10. Materials

In general the materials submitted are traditional or convey a traditional appearance. Specific

materials may be addressed in the section they are used, such as doors and windows, cornices and trims, etc.

- The material of the cementitious wall panels on the addition to the LTM building may be appropriate, however, scale issues of the reveals and seams in the proposed wall panels is addressed above and should be revisited.

11. Architectural Details

- There is a vertical seam now showing on the west elevation of the sided addition to the LTM which had not been shown in previous drawings. This new seam or expansion joint gives a horizontal strength that was missing before and takes away from the verticality that had successfully been achieved in previous drawings. The absence of this seam in this location is more appropriate to keeping the addition subordinate.

The sunscreens are not traditional but their function is utilitarian and their scale is appropriate and does not dominate the facades.

The glass and steel canopy has had cables added for visual support which also ties in with the cable railings that will be used around the entire project in various locations, such as the rooftop addition to the LTM and above the Church Street elevation near Loudoun Street, which is appropriate.

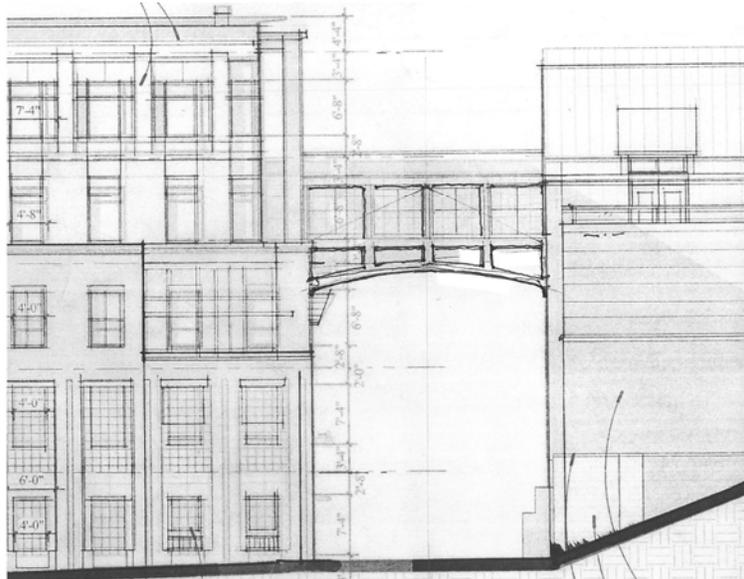
- The curtain wall used to wrap the corner from Loudoun to King and near the main entry has been found to not be considered an extensive use of a non-traditional material since it is limited to an area located behind the main facades of Loudoun Street and is limited in area. However, their glazing area proportions should follow the fenestration pattern of reducing the individual lites or glazed areas as it rises up higher on the building. Dividing with mullions seams or muntins should be used to break down the scale to a greater degree than is shown.



Monumental forms

These examples taken from the applicant's initial proposal show how what could be large expanses of glass can become divided into human scale that is traditionally appropriate for Leesburg

The same issue arises with the large glazed areas at the top floors of the building, where further divisions will break down the scale without reducing the amount of glazing that was already agreed upon helps the building lighten up towards the sky instead of the large cornice originally proposed. Seen below, if the vertical mullions from the third floor are continued all the way up through the top floors, this may be one approach, but there are many approaches that could be taken to further divide the glazing.



- The bridge glazing first shown on the above sketch appeared to have been divided, but perhaps this was an attempt at showing transparency and in fact we are seeing the large pattern from the other side of the walkway. If so, the glazing pattern is out of scale with the pedestrian who will be crossing it. Using an example from the applicant's initial proposal one strategy can be seen how to reduce this scale issue below with multi panes.



12. Lighting

Ch.IV.C.6. "Maintain a consistent hue or perceived color when using multiple lights in a project."

- Since it is unclear what color or hue the LED, metal halide and the other lighting will have at this point it is recommended that this be investigated now and potential replacements be identified. The lighting fixtures submitted are appropriate in scale, detail and dimension. Placement is shown on the ground level and in the landscape.
- No exterior lighting is shown on the LTM, the addition to the LTM or any of the exterior decks on the project, including walkways and balconies outside the office spaces. The potential for adding necessary lighting there later requires at least a fixture be submitted that might be used elsewhere.
- No lighting is shown near the dumpster enclosure except across the alley, which is down lighting and will not light the dumpster area. There is an area next to the dumpsters that will be dark and this is near the garage entry with a pedestrian entry nearby.
- Bollard lighting has not been submitted, but is identified on the lighting plan, this will need to be submitted for review.

Ch. IV.C.8. "Avoid the use of floodlights in general, unless necessary for general security. When used, they should be cast downward and away from neighboring properties and should be on motion-activated sensors."

- The accent/flood lights listed are shown in an upward position on the cut sheet submitted. Their exact placement and direction of light and having them on motion sensors should be noted.
- A photometric plan would be helpful to ensure any lighting on upper floors, including inside the garage, will not trespass or their lighting elements be visible to pedestrians or traffic.

13. Mechanical

Mechanical screening is shown on the rooftop and heights are given and the material and color have been submitted and may be appropriate.

- Judging from the section drawings the mechanical may not be visible from the street. However, sight line drawings from points on the street to the rooftop to show the visibility or lack thereof of the mechanical systems on the roof should be submitted to ensure they will not be seen.

14. Landscaping and screening

- There is no landscaping shown for the area behind the dumpsters which is at the top of the retaining wall being built. Will this be groundcover or some hard surface? Landscaping requirements may have been reduced due to the setbacks preventing spaces for trees and greenery, however, there are opportunities for greenery on the walkways around the building at the "ground" level of office space. It was said that the concept behind the column façade on Market Street was to treat that element as sitting on a ground plane.
- Landscaping in planters along the space that creates a walkway to and from that columned "porch" would be appropriate and soften the transition from the historic smaller scale buildings to the larger scale new construction.
- Tree planters would be appropriate in scale to the columned porch as well. If the columned porch is to balance the courthouse, the courthouse has a lawn that the new construction is missing; using planters this deficiency could be alleviated.

Ch.IV.D.2. "For new construction, integrate screening of site appurtenances into the overall site design of the site and building" – and – 3. "Place utility lines underground wherever possible.

- No lighting is shown at the dumpster enclosure except across the alley (see lighting note above), if it is to be added it should be added now with underground utilities, unless it will be solar powered.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Ch.1A. "The Old and Historic District (OHD), listed on both the *Virginia Landmarks Register* and *National Register of Historic Places*, was originally focused on the 1758 Nicolas Minor Plan and the 1878 Gray's New Map of Leesburg."

Ch 1.B. "The purpose of the Old and Historic District (OHD) Design Guidelines is to ensure that the historic architectural character of individual buildings—and the historic district as a whole—is retained as change occurs over time. The guidelines are not intended to prevent development, but rather to *guide* it so that any changes, including rehabilitation of existing structures and the construction of new buildings, respect the traditional character of the OHD."

Due to amount of detail still needed for a complete and thorough review as required by the Old and Historic District Guidelines, there are several options available to the board as follows:

1. Ask the applicant to request to extend the 75 day deadline to September 5, 2012 for a decision
2. Deny the application until the unresolved issues have been resolved

The BAR shall note that the 75 day review deadline is August 17, 2012. This deadline can be extended at the request of the Applicant if it is determined additional time is needed for the thorough review of the application.

DRAFT MOTIONS -

Should the applicant agree to extend the deadline until September 5, 2012:

I move that TLHP-2012-0040 be recessed until a meeting held on or before September 5, 2012.

-or-

I move that TLHP-2012-0040 be denied until at such time the extensive unresolved issues listed above and be resolved with time for a thorough review.