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Idaho Wheat Commission Building
Design Review Narrative

Agency

The Wheat Commission is a Quasi-government agency with taxing authority that currently owns and occupies the building at the SE corner of State Street and 9th Street. This proposal is to demolish the existing building and build a new 3 story structure. The new building will be large enough to incorporate the other State Commissions into one space. These other commissions include the Potato, Dairy, Wine and other agricultural interests. These commissions negotiate trade deals around the world bringing millions of trade dollars into the State of Idaho.

State Project

This is a State project that requires delegation and will be administered concurrently with the Division of Public Works. Since the funding is self-generated by the Wheat Commission the project must also be reviewed and approved by the City of Boise. This includes, Planning & Zoning and a plan review in addition to a plan review by Idaho's Building Safety.

Existing

The existing one story building has been remodeled several times in the past and is too old and dis-functional to serve the Commissions growing needs. The existing surface parking is out of compliance, does not meet ADA criteria and the parking overhangs the 9th street sidewalk. The drive access off State Street is just feet away from the intersection curb ramp. The one way drive access exits onto the alley and then onto 9th street. There are no historical aspects to the building. The building abuts the existing alley property line, the east property line and the north property line.

An essential part of the project is the continuation of the use of the drive access to State Street. Without this drive access the project would not move forward. We have moved the existing approach further to the east and continue the existing drive pattern to exit onto the alley. The exiting to and from State Street will be a right in- right out only. We have worked with ACHD who has approved this concept in their final staff report. We have also met with Boise City planning managers and Mark Levine who have concurred with ACHD's analysis.

Parking

Parking in this area is at a premium. To meet the parking requirements, we have shown enclosed parking using both surface spaces and an automatic stacking system. The stacking system is 3 stories with one being below grade. It is a Wohn design and these systems are used extensively in larger cities including Portland, Oregon and Salt Lake City. There are YouTube videos you can reference to see how they work. The parking entrance and exit will have quick roll down garage

doors. This will provide security and minimize and additional traffic onto State Street after business hours.

Gateway Street - Public Orientation

State Street is a designated Gateway Street and a Landscape street in this zoning area. 9th Street is a designated Storefront Street. In response to these design requirements we have composed the design to meet the design criteria and pedestrian interaction intentions. The Site sits on a street corner just west of the State Capitol building and has views of the foothills towards the north. In reflection to this, the small site, parking circulation and building code requirements the building was designed accordingly.

State Street – Gateway and Landscape Street designation

The buildings exposure along State Street is the primary entrance and orientation towards the State of Idaho campus. Landscape beds have been placed along this elevation where possible and a series of decorative wall trellis placed behind the planting areas. Sidewalk canopies are located over the parking garage and the main lobby entrance.

At the street corner the building has been angled with a wall element designated for public art or a logo reflecting the Idaho Commissions. A circular column of cast stone is shown at the corner for both structural and aesthetic reasons.

The buildings modulation places the main entrance near the north property line. A unique entry with stone surround feature presents a pedestrian encouraging access. We are requesting a departure from the full landscape setback given the C5 density, the existing building footprint, small corner site and parking requirements.

Along both street frontages wall sconces and down lighting will be used to illuminate the sidewalks and entrances. The down lighting will be located within the sidewalk canopies.

9th Street – Storefront Street

The building orientation along 9th street has a commercial lease entrance and the exiting doors from the stair towers. A series of street canopies provide weather protection and scales the building down to a pedestrian scale. The NW canopy wraps around the diagonal corner tying in both elevations. The glazing percentage is at 60% with the remaining frontage modulated. Landscape beds are also provided to coordinate with the northern plantings and provide a transition from the sidewalk to the building façade.

To create visual interest the window system and glazing pattern changes from the ground level to the second and third levels. A standard mullion system is used on the first floor and then changes to a butt glazed curtain wall system. Spandrel glazing is used at the office area interstitial floor levels and open glazing at the exposed stairway. A bronze glazing is proposed at all the windows to coordinate with natural stone color.

The parapets are modulated for interest and to provide additional screening of the roof top mechanical units.

Building Layout

The ground level of the building will be used for parking, the main entrance lobby, exiting stairways, building service with the remainder as leased commercial. The exact occupancy will be determined by market conditions.

The second floor will be solely office used by the various State Commissions. The third floor will be office with an outdoor roof deck. The roof deck will have pavers and located to take advantage of views of the foothills to the north and the state grounds to the east.

The second and third floors progressively step back from the property lines. This allows an increasing use of glazing (code limitations) and scales the building vertically.

Given the parking circulation, narrow site and building code requirements the stairways and elevator are located off the alley and along 9th street. The dumpster and the fire riser room are located off the alley access. We have met with ACHD and Boise Public Works regarding the storm water retention. The rain water will be collected into a vault under the parking area and slowly discharged into the pervious soil.

Building Materials.

The building will be constructed of concrete and metal framing. The exterior wall surface will be a sandstone veneer. The sandstone is a light tan in color and will be installed as a tight dry stack with a one third stepped pattern. The sandstone was selected as an elegant long lasting material and in recognition to the sandstone used in the State Capital and many of the State buildings.

The glazing will be tinted bronze with clear anodized metal frames. The curtain walls along 9th street will be a butt-glazed system.

The cantilevered canopies over State Street and 9th street will be a clear anodized aluminum to match the window mullions. Alply, Alucabond or a similar system will be used. The soffits will be aluminum flat panel. A darker aluminum color will be used in the soffits for contrast and to de-emphasize the soffits.

A series of medium brown sandstone bands will be used in the elevations. This is intended to break up the overall wall massing and to provide additional horizontal emphasis.

The diagonal wall element at the entry will be of a contrasting stone color or material. We are still developing the art or logo concept here and will work closely with the P&Z team on this detail.

The cornice banding will be of a heavy design in keeping with design guide line intentions.

Conclusion

We are aware of the significance of this building in regards to its location to the State of Idaho campus and a link to downtown Boise at the corner of two major streets. We are presenting a nicely designed building with quality materials. We have included design elements to meet Boise design guidelines and also meet the Owners program and the conditions of a difficult small site. We will continue to work closely with the City and State departments as to any concerns or suggestions they may have.