

TO: Urban Design Committee

FROM: Ed Zimmer

RE: Agenda of June 2, 2015

DATE: July 1, 2015

The City is requesting UDC's advice the following project:

Item #2: **Downtown Design Standards Appeal, 201 N. 13th St.**

The City has received applications for two building permits for remodeling of the existing building at 201 N. 13th St. (NW corner, 13th & P) which originally was called Cinema 2 and more recently has been the Douglas Building.



The Brown family is intending to repurpose the building to accommodate their two businesses—Brown Law Office and Fly Fitness. Both applications estimate the cost of construction at \$300,000 for a total construction valuation of \$600,000.

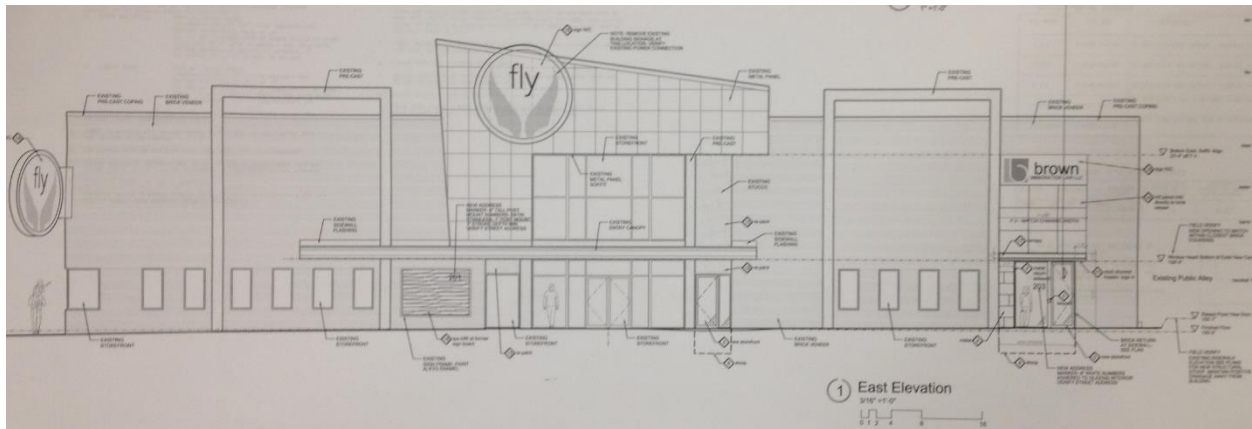
The Downtown Design Standards do not address “interior aspects of new or existing construction” but do address exterior features including remodelings. A distinction is drawn between Minor and Major Remodeling Projects, with the latter defined as “investing more than 50% of a property’s assessed valuation.” The current assessed valuation of 201 N. 13th St. is \$805,800 so the proposed remodeling equals approximately 74% of that valuation.

The broad standard for Major Remodeling Projects is that “Exterior features of the project shall meet the applicable Design Standards **that are feasible given existing site conditions.**” (Emphasis added.)

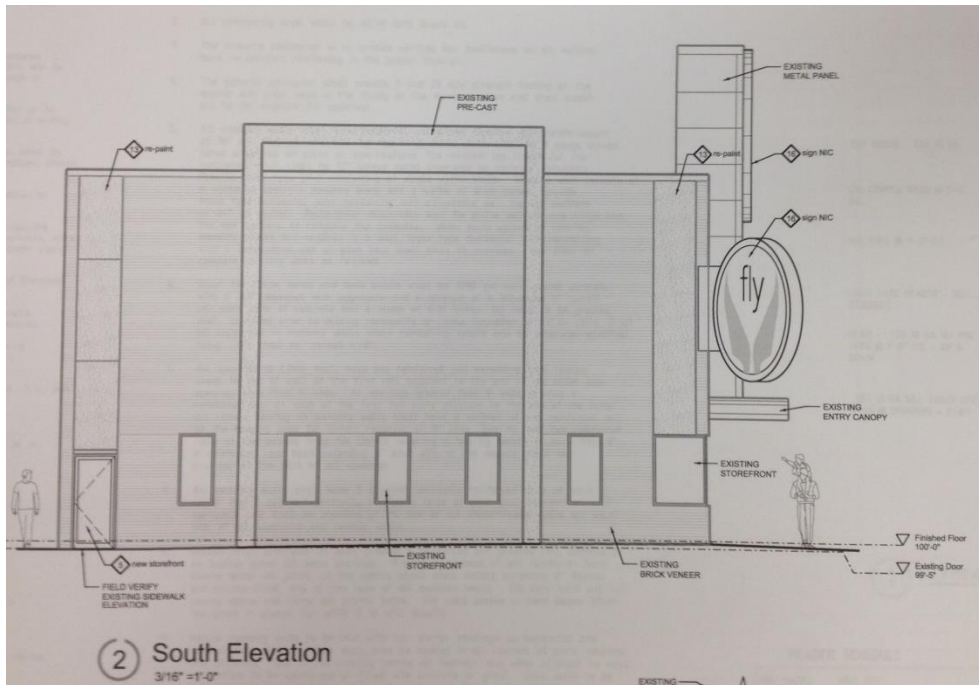
The existing building does not meet the Downtown Design Standard 4.2.d.2 for buildings between N and Q Streets (9th-19th) requiring that

The ground floor of buildings with frontages between (and including) N and Q Streets, and between 9th and 19th Streets and on North 21st Street from O to Q Streets and on Canopy Drive shall have transparent glazing in at least 70% of the area between four feet and nine feet above the sidewalk, except in the case of residential buildings.

The the east side towards 13th St. adds a new entrance storefront for the Law Office, bringing the glazed portion of that side to about 49%.



The south, P Street façade as proposed has approximately 40% of its length devoted to glazing.



David Brown (of Brown Law Office) expresses a strong interest in more and larger windows towards P Street, which opens on a work-out space of two-story height. However, he indicates that the project is already estimated at 20% above their planned budget and added costs would make the project unfeasible.

The Downtown Design Standards include four paths to approval of a project. The Planning Dept. can approve any project that strictly conforms to the Standards, typically after a review delegated to the project planner. The Planning Director can approve projects that do not strictly adhere to the standards but meet their general intent, with notification to neighboring owners (within 200 feet). The Urban Design Committee has even broader authority to interpret the standards and their intent, and approve projects. Finally, any decision can be appealed to City Council, within specified time periods.

In this case the determination focuses on what is “feasible given existing site conditions” and the Urban Design Committee is the appropriate design board to make that determination. Economics are certainly an element of feasibility, and information on that aspect of the project will be presented at the meeting.

Item #3: Election of officers

It is customary for UDC to elect (or re-elect) officers every summer.

Item #4: Miscellaneous

Enclosed is an email received from a resident concerning a central bus transfer station for StarTran.