

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



To: Bogdan Vitas, City Manager
Through: Donald Leland Craig, AICP, Planning Director
From: Kevin Bond, AICP, LEED Green Associate, Planner II
Meeting Date: June 3, 2014

RE: **Major Development Plan and Conditional Use – 1300 White Street (RE # 00040100-000000, AK # 1040827)** – A request for major development plan and conditional use approvals for the adaptive reuse of a former school into new city government offices with related cultural and civic activities on property located within the Historic Public and Semipublic Services (HPS) Zoning District pursuant to Sections 108-91.A.2., 108-517, 122-62 and 122-958 of the Land Development Regulations of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Key West, Florida

ACTION STATEMENT:

Request: Major development plan and conditional use approvals for the proposed adaptive reuse of the historic Glynn Archer School into the new 37,051-square-foot Key West City Hall with related cultural and civic activities in the new Commission Chambers.

Applicant: Bender & Associates Architects, P.A.

Property Owner: City of Key West

Location: 1300 White Street (RE # 00040100-000000, AK # 1040827)

Zoning: Historic Public and Semipublic Services (HPS)





BACKGROUND:

The City of Key West acquired the former Glynn R. Archer Elementary School property located at 1300 White Street from the Monroe County School Board in August 2013 with the intention of renovating the historic building to become its new City Hall, including administrative offices for many City departments and Commission Chambers. The City would consolidate and relocate City departments from elsewhere in the City, including all offices from the current City Hall in Habana Plaza located at 3100 Flagler Avenue. In order to allow the proposed development, several development approvals would be necessary.

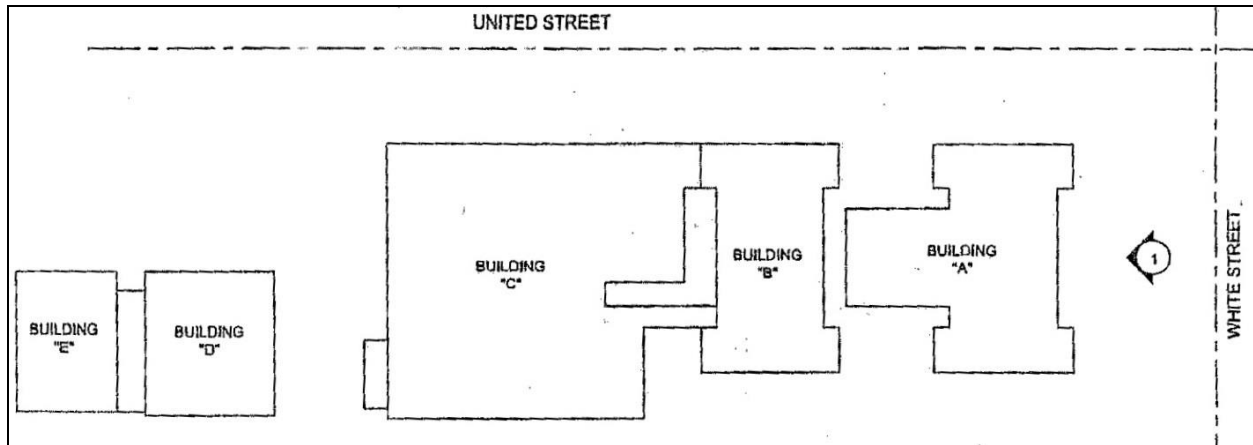
- Major Development Plan review is required due to the reconstruction of more than 2,500 square feet of gross floor area, pursuant to Section 108-91.A.2.(b) of the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) of the Code of Ordinances (the “Code”) of the City of Key West (the “City”).
- Conditional use review is required for cultural and civic activities within the HPS Zoning District, pursuant to City Code Section 122-958(2).
- The City is also requesting waivers to landscaping requirements, pursuant to City Code Section 108-517.

Concurrent with the Major Development Plan/Conditional Use application, the City also applied for a height variance for a new mechanical structure and a new elevated hallway/breezeway, a variance for the reduction of nonconforming impervious surface ratio and a petition for vacation of City property to abandon a portion of former Whalton Street right-of-way. Those applications are being reviewed separately.

Existing Conditions and Additional Background:

Since the 1920s, the property has been a school originally opened as Key West High School, then became Key West Memorial Junior High School and later Glynn R. Archer Elementary

School. As the student population grew, buildings were added and adapted to changing needs. Before the conveyance to the City, the School Board property contained five buildings:



- Building A: The original, historic two-story Key West High School building that fronts on White Street and the one-story auditorium built in 1923 in neoclassical architectural style.
- Building B: A historic two-story addition built in 1927 to the original high school building on the opposite side of the auditorium designed to mirror Building A's architectural style.
- Building C: A one-story, non-contributing addition built in 1961 attached to the rear of Building B that contained a cafeteria, library, classrooms and a courtyard. This modern addition partially obscured the historic façade of Building B, and has been demolished.
- Building D: The historic gymnasium for the high school built in 1927 in Mediterranean revival architectural style.
- Building E: A non-contributing modern building formerly known as the arts building.

Buildings A, B and D are contributing structures within the Key West historic district. Buildings C and E are non-contributing structures. The City now owns Buildings A, B and C. The School Board retained Buildings D and E, and are not part of the proposed development.

Proposed Development:

The City proposes to adaptively reuse historic Buildings A and B into new city government offices with related cultural and civic activities, and demolish non-historic Building C in order to provide a 124-space parking area. A new two-story mechanical structure and a new two-story breezeway/hallway structure would be added between Buildings A and B. New walkways, landscaping and sidewalks would be incorporated throughout the site. The existing butterfly garden would be relocated from the corner of White and United Streets to the corner of Grinnell and United Streets and enhanced as a pocket park. The site would provide for an enclosed garbage and recycling collection area and an enclosed backup generator. Five on-street parking spaces would be added to the west side of White Street. A passenger drop off area (and potential bus stop) and a loading zone would be added to United Street adjacent to Buildings A and B.

The project would be one of the first LEED-certified green buildings owned by the City and is planned to achieve Gold certification level, the second highest of four levels, under the 2009 LEED BD+C (Building Design and Construction) rating system for New Construction and

Major Renovations. The project would incorporate green building and sustainable site design features including construction waste management and recycling, bicycle storage and changing rooms, electric vehicle charging stations, restoration of historic cisterns to reuse rainwater for landscape irrigation, on-site renewable energy generated by solar panels over one row of parking spaces that would power the parking lot lighting, native drought-resistant landscaping, low-flow plumbing fixtures and additional energy efficient building systems.

Building A would contain offices for the Mayor and City Commissioners, City Clerk, City Attorney, City Manager and the School Board superintendent, which was required as part of the City/School Board conveyance agreement. Building B would contain offices for Building, Licensing, Code Compliance, Planning, Revenue, Parking, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology and Engineering. Commission Chambers would be located in the former school auditorium. Total proposed floor area would be 37,051 square feet, including the new breezeway/hallway and mechanical building.

Accessible Route Requirement:

As part of the City's requirement to provide an ADA-compliant accessible route to all government facilities extending at least 800 feet from the facility, approximately 2,275 linear feet of both on-site and off-site streetscape enhancements would be made. As part of the City Hall project, on-site improvements along White, United, Seminary and Grinnell Streets include new ADA-accessible sidewalks, curb ramps, lighting and landscaping on the City Hall side of the roads. A new bus stop for the Lower Keys Shuttle may also be incorporated into the passenger drop off area on United Street, adjacent to Building B and the Commission Chambers. As part of a separate City project, off-site improvements are planned along United Street between White and Leon Streets and along White Street between United and Seminary Streets, including ADA-accessible sidewalks, curb cuts and on-street parking. All planned improvements are intended to bring the streets and sidewalks into full ADA compliance.

City Actions:

Development Review Committee:	January 23, 2014
Preliminary Tree Commission:	February 11, 2014
Planning Board:	March 20, 2014
Final Tree Commission:	April 8, 2014
HARC:	April 24, 2014
City Commission/Board of Adjustment:	June 3, 2014
DEO:	Up to 45 days, following local appeal period

PLANNING STAFF ANALYSIS:

Development Plan Review

City Code Section 108-91.A.2.(b) requires the reconstruction of nonresidential floor area equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet within the historic district to be reviewed as a Major Development Plan. Planning staff and the Planning Board, as required by Chapter 108 of the City LDRs, has reviewed the request for compliance with the City's LDRs and Comprehensive Plan as detailed in the attached Planning Board staff report. On March 20, 2014, the Planning Board reviewed the request and staff recommendations, pursuant to City Code Section 108-

196(a), and passed Resolution No. 2014-18 advising approval with conditions to the City Commission.

City Code Section 108-198 states that the City Commission shall approve with or without conditions or disapprove the development plan based on specific development review criteria contained in the LDRs and based on the intent of the LDR's and Comprehensive Plan. The City Commission may attach to its approval of a development plan any reasonable conditions, limitations or requirements that are found necessary, in its judgment, to effectuate the purpose of this article and carry out the spirit and purpose of the comprehensive plan and the LDR's. Any condition shall be made a written record and affixed to the development plan as approved. If the City Commission disapproves a development plan, the reasons shall be stated in writing.

Conditional Use Review

Pursuant to City Code Section 122-62(a), a conditional use shall be permitted upon a finding by the Planning Board that the proposed use, application and, if applicable, development plan comply with the criteria specified in this section, including specific conditions established by the Planning Board and/or the City Commission during review of the respective application in order to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and LDRs. If the proposed conditional use is a major development pursuant to City Code Sections 108-165 and 108-166, the Planning Board's decision is advisory only and the City Commission shall render the final determination pursuant to City Code Section 122-63. A conditional use shall be denied if the City determines that the proposed use does not meet the criteria provided in this section and, further, that the proposed conditional use is adverse to the public's interest.

Planning staff and the Planning Board have reviewed the request for compliance with the specific criteria for approval pursuant to City Code Section 122-62(c), as detailed in the attached Planning Board staff report. On March 20, 2014, the Planning Board reviewed the request and staff recommendations, pursuant to City Code Section 108-196(a), and passed Resolution No. 2014-18 advising approval with conditions to the City Commission.

Landscape Waiver Review

A landscape plan is required as part of development plan review, pursuant to City Code Section 108-411. The Applicant submitted a thorough landscape plan, but is requesting waivers to all required landscaping, pursuant to City Code Section 108-517. Given that the property was developed prior to the adoption of the LDRs and is a contributing structure within the historic district, staff recommended approval of the requested landscape waivers. On March 20, 2014, the Planning Board reviewed the request and staff recommendations, pursuant to City Code Section 108-196(a), and passed Resolution No. 2014-18 advising approval with conditions to the City Commission.

Options / Advantages / Disadvantages:

Option 1. Approve the request with conditions (listed below) as advised by the Planning Board in Resolution No. 2014-18:

Consistency with the City's Strategic Plan, Vision and Mission: Granting the request would be consistent with the Strategic Plan. Specifically:

- Economy Goals #2: Commercial and residential (re)development this is appropriate to a small city and enhances the sociability of neighborhoods.
- Economy Goal #4: Invest in the development of our workforce.
- Environment Goal #2: The City's built environment reflects and supports Key West values, architectural history and mixed uses.
- Environment Goal #4: The City leads by example utilizing sustainable practices in City Operations.
- Infrastructure Goal #2: Safe and secure neighborhoods and business districts.
- Infrastructure Goal #4: Long term sustainability of the City's hard assets.

Financial Impact: The City would collect building permit fees during subsequent phases of development. The City has budgeted \$15.5 million for construction of the new City Hall. This is inclusive of all building and site development. With the construction and occupancy of the new City Hall, the City will discontinue the leasing of private offices for City Hall, and consolidate operations. This will save rent monies, which do not create infrastructure for the City. The City will, as a result, have flexibility in how it uses other buildings presently housing staff in scattered locations. The new efficient, LEED-certified building will create cost savings for energy budgets. The construction of the building will create new jobs during the year and a half of construction.

Option 2. Deny the request based on findings that the proposed development does not comply with the criteria established by the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Regulations.

Consistency with the City's Strategic Plan, Vision and Mission: Denial of the requested easement would not be inconsistent with the Strategic Plan.

Financial Impact: The City would lose the monies invested in the design, at almost \$750,000, and the demolition at \$250,000. The uncertainty created by this option would lead to additional expenditures for rent of private office space.

RECOMMENDATION: Option 1.

Staff and the Planning Board, based on the criteria established by the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Regulations, recommends **Option 1** to the City Commission approving the request with conditions as listed below.

General conditions:

1. This approval shall not become effective until the concurrent applications for height variance and petition for vacation of City property are approved and effective.
2. All sidewalks and walkways shall have a minimum 36-inch width and clearance from objects and landscaping. Five feet is preferred wherever possible.
3. All landscaping shall comply with clear sight requirements pursuant to City Code Section 108-452 and 122-1406.

Conditions prior to issuance of a building permit:

4. Approval of a Public Art Plan shall be obtained from the AIPP Board, pursuant to City Code Section 2-487, and may include payment of an in-lieu fee.

Conditions prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy:

5. On-site artwork shall be installed and inspected by the City pursuant to Code Section 2-487.
6. All on-site and off-site improvements shall be completed in order to provide the required ADA-accessible route extending 800 linear feet out and leading to the parking area.