

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION

RONALD McDonald HOUSE
PLNHLC2011-00503
901 East South Temple
February 2, 2011



Planning and Zoning Division
Department of Community and
Economic Development

Applicant:

Ronald McDonald House, Casey McDonough, representative

Staff

Ray Milliner
ray.milliner@slcgov.com
(801)535-7645

Zone:

RMF-35 (Residential Multi-Family)

Master Plan Designation:

Avenues, Medium Density 8-28 units per acre

Council District:

District 3 – Stan Penfold

Lot Size:

Approximately .19 Acres

Current Use:

vacant

Applicable Land Use Regulations:

- 21A.34.020 H

Notification:

- Notice mailed on November 17, 2011
- Agenda posted on the Planning Division and Utah Public Meeting Notice websites November 17, 2011
- Property posted on November 17, 2011

Attachments:

- A. Proposed Elevations
- B. Public Comment

Request

The Ronald McDonald House, represented by CRSA Architects, is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness Involving New Construction of a building with a fifteen (15) foot height exception.

Recommendation

Based on direction from the Historic Landmark Commission on January 5, 2012, staff recommends that the Historic Landmark Commission review the petition, and grant the request for design review and a 15 foot height exception on the building at 901 East South Temple pursuant to the conditions of approval, analysis and findings in this staff report.

Conditions of Approval

1. The maximum height of the building shall be 50 feet above established grade.
2. The primary exterior building material shall be brick. Stucco or other types of synthetic material are not allowed as a primary building material.
3. Types and styles of materials shall be reviewed by staff for final approval prior to installation on the building.
4. Any changes, modifications, or deviations from the approved design shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Director prior to their construction.
5. The architect and/or applicant shall be responsible for coordinating the approved architectural drawings/documents with the approved construction drawings/documents. The overall aesthetics of the approved architectural drawings/documents shall take precedence. Any discrepancies found among these documents that would cause a change in appearance to the approved architectural drawings/documents shall be reviewed and approved prior to construction.
6. With the exception of the 15' (Fifteen foot) height exception, the building shall be in accordance with all adopted codes and ordinances; including, but not necessarily limited to: the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance (including Section 21A.34.020); International Building, Fire and related Codes (including ADA compliance).
7. In order to create visual interest and façade variation, the windows shall be recessed from the front wall by at least 4 inches.

VICINITY MAP



Background

On August 18, 2011, the applicant submitted a petition for the following:

1. A certificate of appropriateness involving the alteration of a noncontributing structure to remodel the existing Ronald McDonald house.
2. A certificate of appropriateness involving new construction for a new building located on the adjacent property to the west.
3. A request that the Historic Landmark Commission grant a 10 foot height exception for the new building.

The property, located at 901 East South Temple at the corner of M Street and South Temple and is zoned RMF-35. The principal use of the property is to provide temporary housing for families with children who are in the hospital.

The petition was reviewed by the Historic Landmark Commission on October 20, 2011 as a work session, as a public hearing on December 1, 2011 and again as a work session on January 6, 2012. At each meeting, the Commission was asked to provide feedback on the design of the building as well as the proposed height increase. Noting that the standard for granting the height exception is higher than that of approval for a compliant building, the Commission directed that approval would come with a finding that the design and architecture is that of a monumental building with a significant entrance onto South Temple. Following each meeting, the applicant reworked the design based on input from the Commission.

At the January 6, 2012 work session, the Commission reviewed three variations of the design and indicated that they preferred “design C” and were it bolstered with a more significant front entry they would entertain a motion for approval of that design.

The applicant has reworked the plan based on that input and is here tonight asking that the Commission approve the design.

Proposal

The applicant is proposing to build a 4 story building on the corner of M street and South Temple. The new building would be attached to the existing Ronald McDonald House by a two story bridge. The south west corner of the building would have a chapel / meditation component on the 4th floor with an exterior deck area. Vehicular access to the property would be from M Street. Parking would be on a surface lot located behind the both buildings. The building is designed to accommodate a future addition on the rear if necessary. The principal use will be small residential units, with a theater, meeting room, and various activity rooms located on the main floor. The new building would have 24 guest rooms and the existing building would be remodeled to have 28 rooms for a total of 52 rooms. The new building would also have 15 unfinished guest rooms on the fourth floor that would bring the total number of rooms up to 67.

Comments

Public Comments

At the time of this writing, staff has received one telephone call regarding the project wherein a citizen expressed concern that a four story building would have a negative impact on the smaller homes to the north of the site. Further staff has received two electronic mail messages with regard to the project that are attached as exhibit C.

The applicant has voluntarily worked with both the Greater Avenues Community Council and the East Side Community Council to present what was been proposed and the changes made since the initial review by the HLC.

Analysis and Findings

Proposed Height Exception

The applicant has petitioned the Historic Landmark Commission for a 15 foot height exception. The maximum height in the RMF-35 zone is 35 feet above established grade. The proposed building would be approximately 50 feet above established grade at its highest point and 47’-6” feet at it’s lowest. The applicant’s motivation is that the increased height would enable them to meet the future needs of the Ronald McDonald house and manage expected growth.

In order to approve the height exception, the HLC must find that the taller building (50 feet) would be more compatible with the surrounding historic buildings than a building proposed at the allowed zone height (35 feet). The burden of proof lies with the applicant, who must demonstrate that the design of the building meets this standard. The Commission has consistently provided the following basis for consideration of a height exception on the site:

- Most arterial streets in Salt Lake City end at a monumental building, that creates a defining landmark for the area (1300 East, 800 East, 200 South etc.).
- The site in question, at the end of 900 East is one that could support a monumental building provided the building had the right design and architecture.
- The architecture of the building should be of a quality expected of a monumental building.
- There must be a prominent entrance to the building facing South Temple.
- The applicant should look at ways to break-up the width of the building to approximate the streetscape of South Temple.

Analysis: The applicant has revised design C to have a more significant entry facing South Temple, reflecting the direction given by the HLC, and is requesting final review and approval. In reviewing the proposal, staff has found that the revisions to the building are an improvement, in that the design changes combine to make the building more architecturally compatible with other buildings along South Temple. The new features of the building are similar to those found on other large, significant buildings along the street. Changes to the design add emphasis to the south west corner of the building creating a significant entry with large columns supporting a second story balcony. With the exception of the corner chapel element, the structure is proposed with flat roofs, with a significant cornice along the top. Increasing the size and weight of the top cornice and the inclusion of lintels over the windows will create a visual effect of capping the height of the building.

The Commission has consistently emphasized the need for a significant entrance to the building, in this way, the building would “acknowledge” the South Temple frontage. The applicant responded by adding a porch and a different, more visible, entry to the southwest corner. Staff has reviewed the entrance, and finds that the current design features a significantly more substantial entry element that goes a long way toward creating a nexus between the building and South Temple, which, when combined with the other features of the structure, constitute a significant upgrade in the design over the previous version.

Finding: Staff finds that the proposed design meets the criteria established by the Historic Landmark Commission on October 20, 2011 requiring that the building be designed as a “monument” structure. Staff finds that the proposed design is similar in design, mass, scale and material to other structures noted by the Commission as monument structures. Staff finds that the proposed design is consistent with the direction given to the staff and the applicant at the January 6, 2012 meeting wherein direction was given to return with findings for a potential motion for approval.

ZONING ORDINANCE AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

21A.34.020 H Historic Preservation Overlay District

Standards For Certificate Of Appropriateness Involving New Construction Or Alteration Of A Noncontributing Structure: In considering an application for a certificate of appropriateness involving new construction, or alterations of noncontributing structures, the historic landmark commission, or planning director when the application involves the alteration of a noncontributing structure, shall determine whether the project substantially complies with all of the following standards that pertain to the application, is visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape as illustrated in any design standards adopted by the historic landmark commission and city council and is in the best interest of the city:

Standard 1: Scale and Form:

- a) **Height And Width:** The proposed height and width shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape;

- b) Proportion of Principal Facades: The relationship of the width to the height of the principal elevations shall be in scale with surrounding structures and streetscape;
- c) Roof Shape: The roof shape of a structure shall be visually compatible with the surrounding structures and streetscape; and
- d) Scale of a Structure: The size and mass of the structures shall be visually compatible with the size and mass of surrounding structure and streetscape.

Analysis: The height and width of the building have been one of the more significant issues discussed by the HLC throughout the review process. It has been noted that the width of the building creates a wall like effect that is not consistent with other buildings along the street. To mitigate this effect, the applicant has done the following:

- Created façade breaks along the front wall that break the building into smaller components. This detail will have the effect of creating shadows and adding visual interest that will mitigate the flat monotony of a blank wall.
- Recessed windows. This effect will be similar to the façade breaks, in that it will create shadow and visual interest along the façade wall (see condition of approval #7).
- Creation of a “tower” element on the south west corner. Because this section has much more architectural detail than the rest of the building, the eye will naturally be drawn toward that section and away from the less detailed areas.

Although the proposed building would be taller than that which is allowed in the RMF-35 zone, it is visually compatible with larger apartment style structures on the South Temple streetscape. The Maryland Condominiums located approximately 500 feet to the west are 50 feet in height, while the Commodore Apartments located to the east are 51 feet in height.

In addition to the new building, the applicant is proposing to renovate the existing Ronald McDonald House, which would be attached to the new via a covered walkway. Changes to the existing building will be reviewed as a separate application, and certificate of appropriateness. The walkway, at ground level, would have a pitched roof, and mostly glazing along the facades. It would be subordinate to both buildings, setback from both the front and rear facades, and be much lower in height than either building.

Finding: Staff finds that the scale and form of the building, including the connection walkway, are consistent in height, width, proportion and shape with the surrounding streetscape and architecture. Staff further finds that granting the height exception will not have a negative impact on neighboring properties due to the similarity of the building design to other structures in the immediate neighborhood.

Standard 2: Composition of Principal Facades:

- a) Proportion of Openings: The relationship of the width to the height of windows and doors of the structure shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape;
- b) Rhythm of Solids To Voids In Facades: The relationship of solids to voids in the facade of the structure shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape;
- c) Rhythm of Entrance Porch And Other Projections: The relationship of entrances and other projections to sidewalks shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape; and
- d) Relationship of Materials: The relationship of the color and texture of materials (other than paint color) of the facade shall be visually compatible with the predominant materials used in surrounding structures and streetscape.

Analysis: The Commission has emphasized the need to have a prominent entry to the building along the front façade (facing South Temple). The applicant responded by bolstering up the front entry on the southwest corner with an arched doorway, and a second story balcony supported by two large columns. This porch has the effect of orienting the building toward the street, and cementing its relationship with the sidewalk. Staff analysis indicates that the entry is significant and creates a nexus between the building and South Temple, which, when combined with the other changes to the structure, constitute a significant upgrade in the design over previous versions.

Another change that significantly upgraded the building design is the inclusion of heavy lintels above each of the windows, and the requirement that they be recessed from the front façade by at least 4 inches. This enhancement bolsters the rhythm of solids to voids along each of the facades as it makes the building more visually interesting and compatible with similar architecture in the surrounding area.

Finding: Staff finds that the composition of the proposed façade is compatible with other apartment style buildings along the South Temple streetscape. Staff further finds that the use of materials and the breaking up of the front façade into components, the addition of heavy lintels above the windows, the creation of a significant entry to the building with a balcony supported by columns, contributes to a compatible relationship between the building and the surrounding streetscape.

Standard 3: Relationship to Street:

- a) Walls of Continuity: Facades and site structures, such as walls, fences and landscape masses, shall, when it is characteristic of the area, form continuity along a street to ensure visual compatibility with the structures, public ways and places to which such elements are visually related;
- b) Rhythm of Spacing And Structures On Streets: The relationship of a structure or object to the open space between it and adjoining structures or objects shall be visually compatible with the structures, objects, public ways and places to which it is visually related;
- c) Directional Expression of Principal Elevation: A structure shall be visually compatible with the structures, public ways and places to which it is visually related in its orientation toward the street; and
- d) Streetscape; Pedestrian Improvements: Streetscape and pedestrian improvements and any change in its appearance shall be compatible to the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district.

Analysis: Because the property is at the terminus of 900 East, the Historic Landmark Commission directed the applicant to create a monument building, similar to those found at the terminus of other arterial streets in the City. By doing this, the building will become visually related and compatible with other buildings similarly located. Staff has found that the building meets the minimum criteria for a monument structure (based on criteria and direction provided by the Commission, see above), and therefore finds that the relationship between the building and the street is characteristic of the South Temple vernacular.

Because the building is located on a corner, is moved forward on the lot and is separated from the buildings behind it, the additional height will have a limited impact on adjacent buildings. There is an existing office building that is approximately 35 feet above grade immediately behind the property, followed by single family homes along 1st Avenue, ranging from 25 to 30 feet above grade. This rhythm of spacing between structures creates a logical transition between the larger buildings along South Temple toward the residential use in the Avenues.

The HLC directed the applicant to create a prominent entry way to the building as well as to look at ways to minimize the bulk of the building by making it similar architecturally to other buildings along the street. The applicant addressed this direction by placing the entry on the southwest corner. This element marks the entry to

the building as well as providing a nexus between the street and the structure. To reduce the apparent bulk of the building, the applicant has proposed the use of a large cornice on the roof that will have a capping effect on the building. As a result, staff finds that the building will be visually compatible with the public way it fronts. The design is similar to, without replicating, other larger buildings in the area. The front entry orients the building toward the South Temple right-of-way.

South Temple has been recognized by the American Planning Association as one of the Great Streets in America. This recognition is based primarily on the relationship between the street and the buildings that front it. Although there is a range of setbacks along the street (residential buildings are setback office buildings or institutional buildings not so much), very few have parking, staging or other no-frills activities that occur in front, rather these events occur in the rear. This has the effect of accentuating the architecture, and thereby enhancing the pedestrian experience.

By placing the parking in the rear, and keeping the building oriented toward South Temple, the applicant has made the building compatible with the historic character of the H historic preservation overlay district, maintaining the pedestrian feel of the street.

Finding: Staff finds that the placement of the building toward South Temple enables the transition from larger office type uses to residential along M Street. Staff finds that the use of materials will dampen the visual impact of the height when viewed from the street. Staff finds that the relationship between the pedestrian and the building will be enhanced by the placement of a more prominent entry on the building. Staff finds that these design elements combine to make the building contributory to the visual continuity and compatibility of the South Temple corridor.

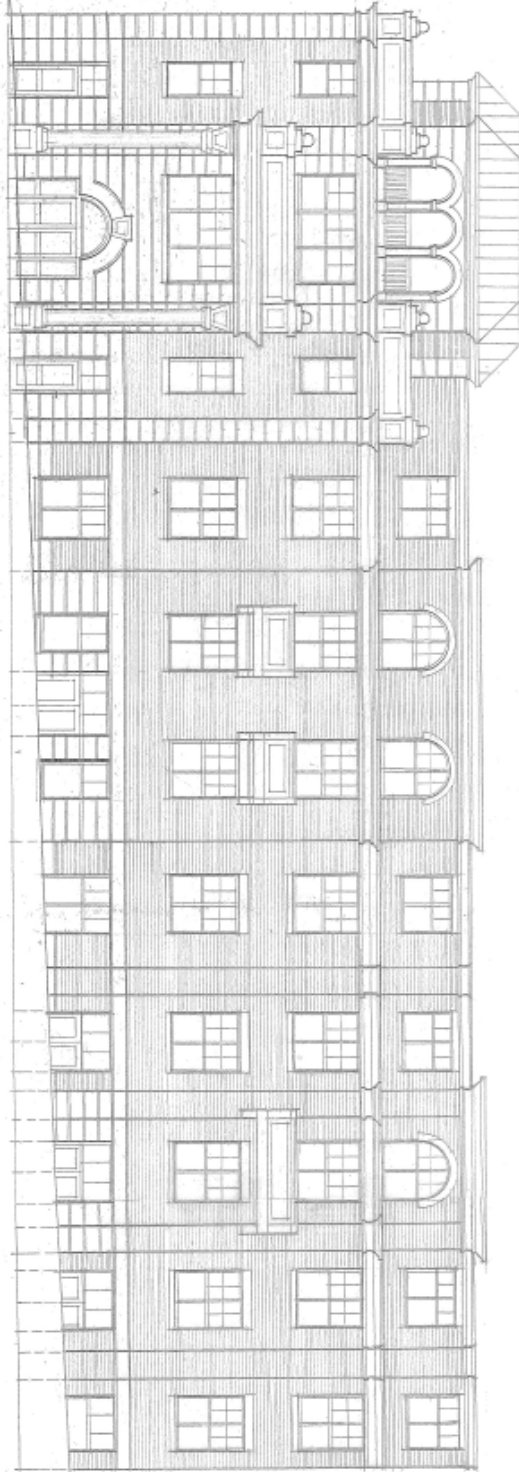
Standard 4: Subdivision of Lots: The planning director shall review subdivision plats proposed for property within an H historic preservation overlay district or of a landmark site and may require changes to ensure the proposed subdivision will be compatible with the historic character of the district and/or site(s).

Analysis: This standard is not applicable as no subdivision amendments are proposed.

Finding: Staff finds that this standard is not applicable.

Attachment A
Proposed Elevations

11/1/05





WEST



TOWER

Attachment B
Public Comment

January 24, 2012

Stan Penfold, City Council District 3 Representative
Ray Milliner, Salt Lake City Planning Staff
Members of the Historic Landmark Commission
Salt Lake City Corporation
421 South State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear City Officials,

I am writing in support of the height adjustment for the addition to the Ronald McDonald House at 901 East South Temple.

I was one of the founders of the Ronald McDonald House. During the 80s, we worked to open a facility with 16 bedrooms for parents of hospitalized children. We never would have dreamed that during the 90s the need would increase and we would expand to a facility with 25 bedrooms. Now we are dreaming of further expansion to a facility with 52 bedrooms. During the past 20 years, the needs of the families we serve have changed. We no longer serve just the parents. Because more and more treatment is now outpatient, we provide a home away from home for the patient, parents and siblings from all over the Intermountain area.

I think back to the area when we purchased the original property at 935 E. South Temple. It was a rundown medical clinic that we replaced with the original house. Later we purchased the eyesore (flop house) building in the middle of the block. We demolished that building for the first expansion. And finally we have removed the gas station on the corner for this current expansion. The changes have already improved the look and the character of the area. The expanded Ronald McDonald House will become a recognizable landmark on historic South Temple. It will be visible to travelers along South Temple and those heading north on 900 East. We want a building that will make a powerful positive statement.

On February 2, the Historic Landmark Commission will be asked to approve a height adjustment for the expansion. The agenda describes an additional 15 feet for a four story building. The adjustment is necessary because of the grade change along South Temple. The current structure is three stories with a basement. There will be no basement in the addition and because of the dramatic grade change, the first level will be on grade with the basement of the current building. Visually, the two structures, joined by a bridge walkway, will have the same roof line.

The Ronald McDonald House has become a beloved member of the South Temple, Avenues and East Central neighborhoods. This expansion will enhance that standing and their ability to accomplish their mission. The approval of the height adjustment will make that possible.

Thank you for your consideration,

Gwen Springmeyer
1289 4th Avenue
Salt Lake City, UT 84103
801 673-1944

Ray Milliner
Historic Planning Commission
451 S. State Street Room 406
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear Mr. Milliner and the Historic Planning Commission:

Re: Addition to Ronald McDonald House

I have lived in the Avenues for over 40 years. I love the special character and history of this part of the Salt Lake Valley.

Ronald McDonald House provides a unique service to parents of seriously ill children. As I'm sure you are aware, the House is in close proximity to the three area hospitals (and many other hospitals as well) that provide much of the care for seriously ill children for a very large service area (Utah, Nevada, Idaho and Montana as well as children from many other states and some foreign countries). The location at N Street and South Temple has proven to be an excellent and convenient location for the parents and families who stay at the house while their child/children are being treated at one of the area hospitals.

As a resident of the Avenues, I care deeply about the preservation of the historic district of the Avenues. I think the design of the addition to Ronald McDonald House will fit in well with the historic buildings along South Temple as well as the commercial enterprises that are located along South Temple. I believe the proposed structure will greatly improve the look of the lot at M street and South Temple.

As a long term resident of the Avenues, I urge you to approve the plans for this project.

Sincerely,

Betty Anderson
612 10th Avenue
Salt Lake City, UT 84103



*Greater Avenues
Community Council*
www.slc-avenues.org

Greater Avenues Community Council
John Johnson, 2012 Chair
712 E 10th Avenue
Salt Lake City, UT 84103

January 6, 2012

Stan Penfold, City Council District 3 Representative
Ray Milliner, Salt Lake City Planning Staff
Members of the Historic Landmark Commission
Salt Lake City Corporation
421 S. State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear City Officials,

The Greater Avenues Community Council is writing with concerns about the proposed expansion of Ronald McDonald House along South Temple at M Street. We understand there is a design review meeting tonight where members of the Historic Landmarks Commission are working with designers for the proposed expansion.

As the project is reviewed by HLC members, we would like those Commission members to be aware of the following:

Ronald McDonald House came to the GACC and presented a design for the expansion of the Ronald McDonald House on September 7, 2011. At that time, their design was shown as a three-story design at 35-feet, with some parapets and one small architectural feature extending several feet above the 35-foot limit for the property's RMF-35 zoning.

There was general consensus and no distinct objections to the proposed design or minor height variances at the September 7th GACC general community meeting.

The City's Staff Report to the HLC at <http://www.slcclassic.com/boards/HLC/Reports/2012/PLNHLC2011-00466.pdf>, dated January 5, 2012 shows three new designs, all of which are FOUR-story and appear to be 50-feet in height across the entire structure.

Since this new design is substantially different from what was presented to the GACC in September, the GACC Board presented these three new designs at the GACC general community meeting held January 4, 2012. Following the presentation, there was concern expressed by a number of Avenues residents that a 15-foot increase in height and the resulting massing is inappropriate for this location, and that all three designs are more institutional and less visually appealing than the September 2011 design.

Additional concerns are that there is no similar structure along South Temple that encompasses an entire block, that masses so imposingly on South Temple and on an adjoining North/South street (M Street in this case), and that is so institutional in design. Also, the history of this particular location has a more open feel and the historic nature of the location – part of a Historic District - would be permanently changed by allowing such a large structure.

We would like members of the HLC to take these concerns into consideration as you work with Ronald McDonald House on the design. We understand that HLC has the full authority to approve height exceptions without a map amendment, without a change to the master plan, and without notification to community councils.

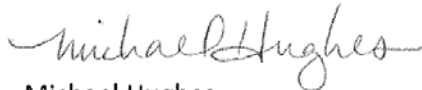
We understand the Commission's idea that this location be a "monument building" where northbound 900 East terminates at South Temple; however we are not aware of any established guidelines defining a monument building. Without such guidelines, it is our opinion that the design should conform to existing zoning with reasonable exceptions to height as was presented in September. Additionally, the three new designs, do not, in our opinion, result in a design of such character as to be considered a monument.

We understand that the presentation to the GACC in September was a courtesy, not required, however we believe a structure of such size and change to the character of this location warrants further public review. We suggest an Open House or some other forum where additional citizen input could be obtained not just from GACC residents, but Central City, East Central, Downtown, and other areas that contribute to the traffic at this location.

Thank you for these considerations.

Sincerely,

Greater Avenues Community Council



Michael Hughes
GACC Treasurer