

Communication to the Planning Commission



Salt Lake City Planning Division

To: Salt Lake City Planning Commission

From:  Joel Paterson, Planning Programs Supervisor

Date: January 18, 2007

Re: January 24, 2007 Planning Commission Agenda
Petitions 410-06-38: City Creek Center request to allow additional building height at mid-block locations in the D-1 Central Business District

Overview

On January 24, 2007, the Planning Commission is will hold an Issues Only public hearing to consider a request by Property Reserve, Inc. (PRI) to allow additional building height at mid-block locations for four mixed-use buildings as part of the City Creek Center development proposal. During this Issues Only hearing, the Planning Commission is requested to take comment, review options, raise issues, provide direction to staff and hold the public hearing open until February 14, 2007. No immediate action by the Planning Commission is requested or expected.

Proposal

The proposed buildings are described as follows:

South Temple:

Tower 4

Proposed Building Height: approximately 185 feet
Proposed number of residential units: approximately 35

Tower 6

Proposed Building Height: approximately 125
Proposed number of residential units: approximately 33

Tower 7

Proposed Building Height: approximately 125
Proposed number of residential units: approximately 28

100 South

Tower 2

Proposed Building Height: approximately 415 feet
Proposed number of residential units: approximately 223

Zoning Standards

Zoning Ordinance section 21A.30.020.F imposes special controls over mid-block areas in the D-1 District. Mid-block areas are defined as areas located one hundred sixty-five feet or more from the corner of a block. The purpose of the mid-block areas is to establish coordinated levels of development intensity and to promote better pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The building height standard states:

21A.30.020.F

3. Height Regulations: *No building shall be more than one hundred feet (100') in height; provided, that taller buildings may be authorized as a conditional use subject to the requirements of part V, chapter 21A.54 of this title, and design review.*

Under this provision, the Planning Commission may approve additional building height at a mid-block location subject to review under the Conditional Use standards which are included in this memorandum as Attachment 1. This standard also allows the Planning Commission to review and approve the design of the proposed buildings

Master Plan Consideration

The Downtown Master Plan, adopted in 1995, and the Urban Design Element, adopted in 1990, are the primary planning documents guiding new development in the Central Business District.

The **Downtown Plan**, has a stated purpose of articulating the vision of Downtown by formulating public policies, identifying needed public facilities and involving the necessary public commitment to achieve the vision, goals and objectives. The Downtown Master Plan includes the following goals that are relevant to this proposal:

Plan to develop a critical mass of political commitment, implementation strategies, public capital investment, private investment and people to establish Downtown as the growth center of the region (page 6).

Establish Downtown as a well-planned, desirable and diverse activity center serving the needs of a sizable 24-hour population (page 8).

Preserve and reuse our existing physical environment while providing for orderly transition of certain land uses and creating a new expectation of uncompromising quality for future Downtown developments (page 10).

The **Urban Design Element** was with the stated purpose of articulating the City's urban design policies. Relevant policy concepts identified in the Urban Design Element include:

Maintain the City's Central Business District as the visually dominate center of the City form (page 8).

Emphasize the important role of all development in establishing the City's urban form (page 11).

Preserve prominent view corridors and city vistas. Prominent land forms, buildings, and monuments should remain clearly visible as city landmarks. Special attention should be given to the design of buildings adjacent to prominent view corridors (page 22).

Maintain a pedestrian-oriented environment at the ground floor of all buildings (page 49).

Reinforce desired land use patterns by providing links among individual developments and the surrounding areas and improving pedestrian circulation (page 87).

Attachments:

1. Zoning Ordinance section 21A.54.080 Standards for Conditional Uses
2. Excerpts from the Urban Design Element
3. Site Plan and elevations

ATTACHMENT 1
ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 21A.54.080
STANDARDS FOR CONDITIONAL USES

21A.54.080 Standards For Conditional Uses:

The Planning Commission shall only approve, approve with conditions, or deny a conditional use based upon written findings of fact with regard to each of the standards set forth below and, where applicable, any special standards for conditional uses set forth in a specific zoning district:

- A. The proposed development is one of the conditional uses specifically listed in this Title;
- B. The proposed development is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of this Title and is compatible with and implements the planning goals and objectives of the City, including applicable City master plans;
- C. Streets or other means of access to the proposed development are suitable and adequate to carry anticipated traffic and will not materially degrade the service level on the adjacent streets;
- D. The internal circulation system of the proposed development is properly designed;
- E. Existing or proposed utility services are adequate for the proposed development and are designed in a manner that will not have an adverse impact on adjacent land uses or resources;
- F. Appropriate buffering is provided to protect adjacent land uses from light, noise and visual impacts;
- G. Architecture and building materials are consistent with the development and compatible with the adjacent neighborhood;
- H. Landscaping is appropriate for the scale of the development;
- I. The proposed development preserves historical, architectural and environmental features of the property;
- J. Operating and delivery hours are compatible with adjacent land uses;
- K. The proposed conditional use or, in the case of a planned development, the permitted and conditional uses contained therein, are compatible with the neighborhood surrounding the proposed development and will not have a material net cumulative adverse impact on the neighborhood or the City as a whole;
- L. The proposed development complies with all other applicable codes and ordinances. (Ord. 35-99 § 95, 1999; Ord. 26-95 § 2(27-8), 1995)

**ATTACHMENT 2
EXCERPTS FROM THE
URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT**

DEVELOPMENT HEIGHT, SCALE AND COLOR

Insuring that all areas of development do contribute to the city's urban design goals is an important objective of city officials and many residents. Individual buildings and their associated districts should create a positive form and image. Salt Lake City's image is important in terms of the city's economy, livability, and esthetic well being.

POLICY CONCEPT

- o Emphasize the important role of all development in establishing the city's urban form.

Developer, architectural designer, and city official must become more aware of how directly their decisions influence the fabric and character of the city. Building heights, forms, uses, open space, etc., are a function of a district's relationship to the rest of the city. Great care must be taken to insure that these features are compatible with their district setting and desired image. The larger the building or the greater the building intensity, the more important the issues of light, air, adjacency of auxiliary services, and development character become. It is easy to see what's wrong with an area after damage has been done. Such areas are often hostile and difficult to use. The symptoms of theseills often appear as a lack of association between building sharing common space. Major views are often destroyed or the features along a street such as a plaza are really used.

- o Preserve and improve the visual form of the city through an appropriate building height profile and color scheme.

The historic urban form of Salt Lake City's Commercial Core relies on taller buildings-historically approximately 14 stories-at the corners of 10 acre blocks with lower buildings around them. Building heights should diminish away from the Core. This provides framed yet expansive views of the mountains, foothills and valley around us, and keeps light and air on our streets. The relatively low heights of Salt Lake City's downtown buildings give downtown a human scale feeling. Even our

largest buildings do not compete with our mountain vistas and backdrop.

Height, scale and color of buildings are as important to city form as land use patterns. Building heights in the Commercial Core and Fringe should be a function of use, topography, and city scale. A building height allowance of 1.5 times the street right-of-way or 198 feet is allowed under the existing downtown "C-4" zoning. This is an inappropriate development density regulating tool for the policies contained in this plan.

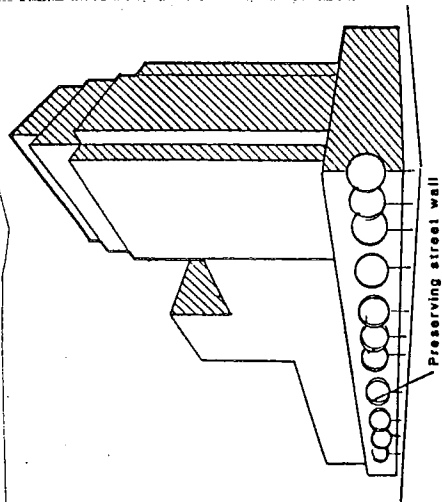
The cityscape building height profile should be manipulated to lessen the visual problem of "benching" (buildings terminating at a particular height elevation). Land use patterns, building bulk and land use intensity regulations should be used to create a more dramatic city skyline based on the city's traditional urban form. Land use and zoning techniques should be responsive to prominent buildings, topography, and district character.

The color of buildings in the Commercial Core and Fringe should complement the district without competing for dominance against neighboring buildings or the mountain backdrop.

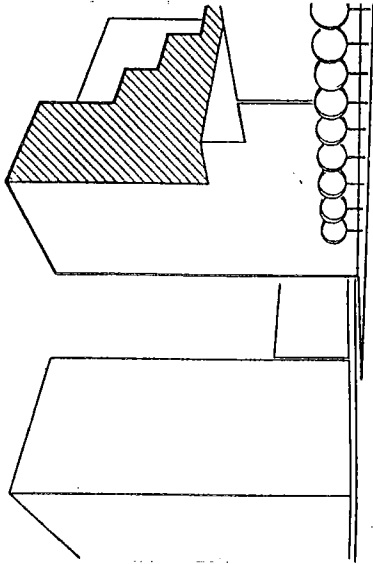
Strategies

The Planning Commission should consider the following types of tools to help promote more sculptural building lines.

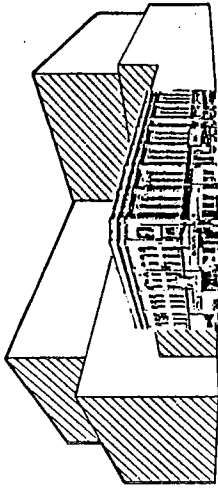
- Require a building bulk transfer of four to seven percent of the total floor area above the midpoint of the portion of the building over 65 feet to be shifted from the upper half of the building to the lower half of the building. The proposed bulk controls would apply to any portion of a building over 65 feet in height in the Commercial Core and 50 feet in all other areas of the city (see Downtown Plan).



Desirable at Main Street
(emphasizing block corner)

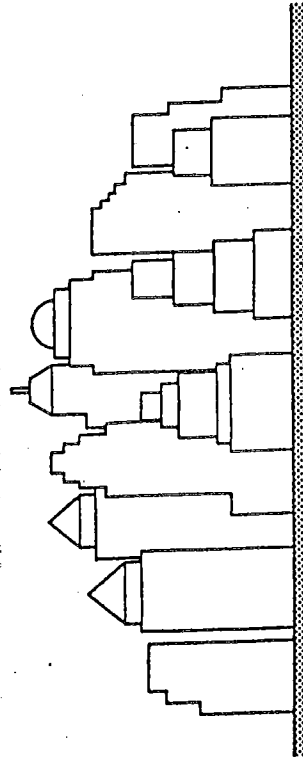


Desirable at State Street

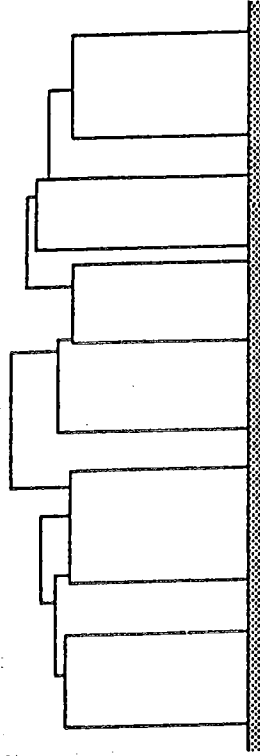


Development comparable with building conservation

Desirable at Brooks Arcade



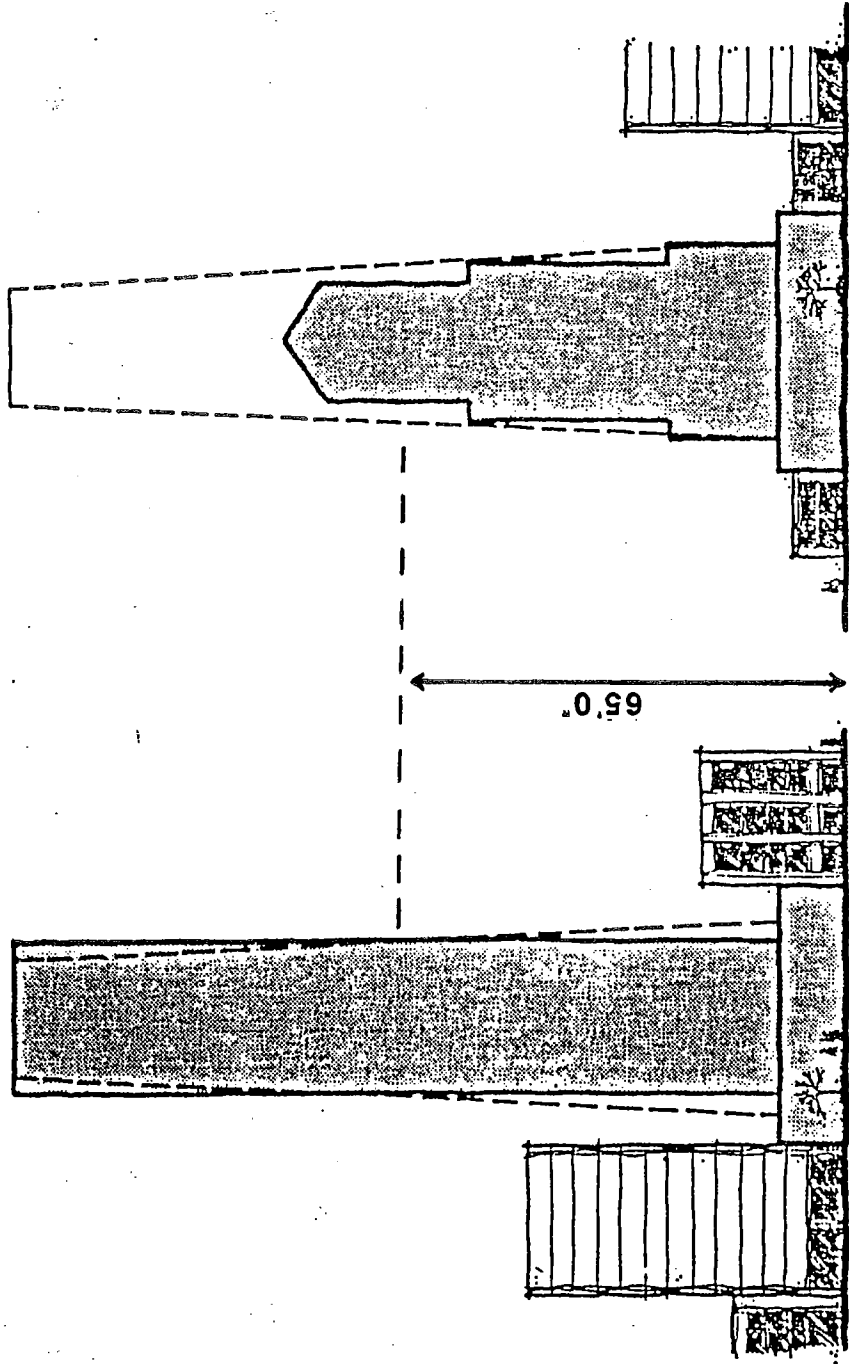
Bulk and height controls can be used to direct
the urban form of the City.



The "benching" of core buildings should be avoided.

DESIRABLE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS (for the commercial core)

Figure 4



RECTANGULAR TOWER

STEPPED MASSING

A building bulk transfer of four to seven percent of total floor area is highly recommended for building in the "core".

Figure 5

- Establish a maximum building width. A likely scenario might call for no building to exceed 250 feet wide above the 65 foot level in the Commercial Core and Fringe, and 200 feet for buildings in other areas of the city. Variances could be granted when it is shown that the development meets urban design objectives.
- Couple the previous ideas into a floor area ratio zoning regulation. Eliminate building height increases in the Commercial Core. Establish the maximum building height as 198 feet or the historical building height of 14 stories (168 feet). Allow buildings to exceed the height limit when the developer shows that the building(s) can effectively address the district development character issues.
- Establish a development review process to address urban form and other planning and urban design issues. Development review districts should be established in the Commercial Core and possibly in the Fringe and community-oriented centers (see Implementation Section).
- Allow no more than six to twelve stories of building height in the Fringe area. The recommended boundaries of the Fringe mid-rise development area are: North Temple to 900 South, 400 West to 500 East.
- Limit the height of neighborhood retail, residential, and industrial uses to the height and scale of the respective neighborhood. Generally building heights should be limited to three stories.
- Limit building heights of community-oriented commercial office and retail buildings in the Perimeter area to a maximum building height of five to eight stories. These areas would include the Sugar House business area, the Brickyard Mall, the International Center, and future centers outside the Commercial Core and Fringe.

ATTACHMENT 3
SITE PLAN AND ELEVATIONS