

---

**LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**ITEM NO. 8: DR-9-151-11**  
**STAFF REPORT**

---

**A. SUMMARY**

**DR-9-151-11** 900 New Hampshire St; New Construction; Certified Local Government Review, Certificate of Appropriateness Review, and Downtown Urban Conservation Overlay District Review. The property is in the environs of Lawrence's Downtown Historic District and the North Rhode Island Historic District, National Register of Historic Places and within the Downtown Urban Conservation Overlay District. It is also in the environs of the Shalor Eldridge Residence (945 Rhode Island), Register of Historic Kansas Places and the Social Service League (905-907 Rhode Island), Lawrence Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Micah Kimball of Treanor Architects for 9<sup>th</sup> & New Hampshire LLC, property owner of record.

**B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is requesting to construct a new, 6-story, multi-use, 134,775 square foot building. It will contain a mix of hotel, apartment and commercial uses. The lot is currently vacant and is zoned CD.



Northeast view of 900 New Hampshire St.



Southeast view of 900 New Hampshire St.

**C. STANDARD FOR REVIEW**

**Certified Local Government**

For Certified Local Government Review of projects within the environs of listed properties, the Historic Resources Commission has typically used the Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs to evaluate the proposed project. Therefore, the following standards apply to the proposed project:

*1. The character of a historic property's environs should be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of distinctive buildings, structures, landscape features, spatial relationships, etc. that characterize the environs should be avoided.*

*2. The environs of a property should be used as it has historically been used or allow the inclusion of new uses that require minimal change to the environs' distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.*

*6. New additions, exterior alterations, infill construction, or related new construction should not destroy character-defining features or spatial relationships that characterize the environs of a property. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.*

### **Certificate of Appropriateness**

For Certificate of Appropriateness Review, Section 22-505 of the Code of the City of Lawrence indicates that the least stringent standard of evaluation be applied to properties within the environs of listed properties:

*4. The least stringent evaluation is applied to noncontributory properties and the environs area of a landmark or historic district. There shall be a presumption that a certificate of appropriateness shall be approved in this category unless the proposed construction or demolition would significantly encroach on, damage, or destroy the landmark or historic district. If the Commission denies a certificate of appropriateness in this category, and the owner(s) appeals to the City Commission, the burden to affirm the denial shall be upon the commission, the City or other interested persons.*

For projects requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Historic Resources Commission must use the general standards and design criteria listed in Section 22-505 of the Code of the City of Lawrence. Therefore, the following standards apply to the proposed project:

*1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, site or object and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose;*

*9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alteration and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environs.*

The environs definition of the Social Service League adopted by the City Commission in 2000 is divided into two separate areas. 900 New Hampshire Street is located in Area 2 and should be reviewed in the following manner.

*Area 2: Because the area no longer reflects the residential character of the historic environs the area should reflect the development patterns established for the commercial areas of downtown.*

The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, the Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect on

Project on Environs, and the Criteria set forth in 22-205. Design elements that are important are scale, massing, site placement, height, directional expression, percentage of building coverage to site, setback, roof shapes, rhythm of openings and sense of entry. Maintaining views to the listed property and maintaining the rhythm and pattern in the environs are the primary focus of review.

### General Standards

For projects that require a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Historic Resources Commission is required to use the general standards and the design criteria listed in the Conservation of Historic Resources Code, Chapter 22 of the City of Lawrence Code.

Typically, the design criteria in section 22-506 are used in the review of projects. The following is the design criteria that apply to the project.

### *NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS*

1883. *The design for new construction shall be sensitive to and take into account the special characteristics that the district is established to protect. Such consideration may include, but should not be limited to, building scale, height, orientation, site coverage, spatial separation from other buildings, façade and window patterns, entrance and porch size and general design, materials, textures, color, architectural details, roof forms, emphasis on horizontal or vertical elements, walls, fences, landscaping, and other features deemed appropriate by the Commission.*

(b) *New buildings need not duplicate older styles of architecture but must be compatible with the architecture within the district. Styles of architecture will be controlled only to insure that their exterior design, materials, and color are in harmony with neighboring structures.*

*façade The following specific design criteria shall be used to review all applications for certificates of appropriateness for new construction or additions to existing buildings:*

### **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*
9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

### **Downtown Design Guidelines**

The City Commission and the Historic Resources Commission have adopted a set of *Downtown Design Guidelines* (2009) to review projects within the Downtown Urban Conservation Overlay District. The guidelines that relate to this project are:

## **PART TWO – PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS, AND CRITERIA**

### **4. General Urban Design Principles**

- 4.1 Promote pedestrian-oriented urban forms.
  - 4.2 Maximize connectivity and access.
  - 4.3 Encourage adaptive reuse and support the preservation of historically significant buildings.
  - 4.4 Encourage creativity, architectural diversity, and exceptional design.
  - 4.5 Encourage the integration of public art into public and private development.
  - 4.6 Emphasize strong, mixed-use core activity development along Massachusetts Street and east/west streets.
  - 4.7 Maintain existing Downtown vehicular, streetscape, and pedestrian traffic patterns.
  - 4.8 Promote safety and appeal through appropriate boundaries and transitions.
- 

### **5. Street and Landscape Elements**

- 5.1 Existing street patterns and layout shall be maintained. Closure of existing streets or alleyways shall not be permitted.
  - 5.2 Alleyways shall be maintained for vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic.
  - 5.3 Accent paving shall be used at intersections and mid-block crossings.
  - 5.4 Street trees and pedestrian-scale lighting shall be an integral part of the streetscape.
  - 5.5 Existing landscaping features such as raised planters and street trees shall be maintained.
  - 5.6 A curbed or non-curbed landscape bed shall separate the street and the pedestrian sidewalk.
  - 5.7 Landscape strips shall be centered around required street trees.
  - 5.8 An irrigation system shall be provided for all plant materials in the landscape bed.
  - 5.9 An agreement to participate in a benefit district for streetscape improvements may be executed in lieu of immediate improvements.
- 

### **6. Block Elements**

- 6.1 Buildings should have retail and commercial uses at street level.
- 6.2 The main or primary entrance to buildings shall be oriented toward the primary street. For instance, if a building fronts Massachusetts Street, the main entrance shall face Massachusetts Street. Likewise, if a building faces 7<sup>th</sup> Street, the main entrance shall face 7<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 6.3 Corner buildings may have entrance doors that face the intersection or both streets.
- 6.4 Buildings located on corner sites are considered anchor buildings and their building form should reflect this designation. Anchor buildings should be larger in scale and massing, and more ornate than adjacent infill buildings.
- 6.5 Buildings located on corner sites shall have a primary façade and a secondary façade. For instance, the building located at 8<sup>th</sup> and Vermont Street has a primary façade along 8<sup>th</sup> Street and a secondary façade along Vermont Street.
- 6.6 Buildings that are adjacent to parking areas or structures shall have the main or primary entrance on the street-facing elevation. A secondary or minor entrance may be provided on the parking lot elevation.
- 6.7 Buildings shall reflect the existing topography by providing “stepping down” of the façade. The “stepping down” of a façade helps maintain a sense of pedestrian scale.
- 6.11 Buildings fronting Vermont and New Hampshire Streets should be constructed to zero front and side lot lines.
- 6.12 Buildings fronting numbered streets (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, etc.) shall be constructed to zero front and side lot lines. Exceptions may be made for architectural features such as recessed or projecting entries and balconies. Exceptions may be made for detached building forms which are traditionally set back from the property line.

- 6.13 Storefronts should respect the 25-foot or 50-foot development pattern ratios that prevail. Upper story facades may vary from this pattern but must unify the building as a whole.
- 6.14 Buildings shall maintain the pattern of multiple-story buildings throughout the downtown area. Existing one-story buildings should be considered for compatible redevelopment.
- 6.15 Buildings shall maintain a distinction between upper stories and the street-level façade.
- 6.16 For buildings that provide a separate upper-story entrance on the exterior façade, the street level use entrance should be the primary focus of the building façade while entrances for upper story uses shall be a secondary feature of the building façade.

---

## **7. New Construction**

- 7.1 New infill buildings should be multistory in height, up to and within appropriate limits.
- 7.2 The height of a new building must be in acceptable proportion to its width, following patterns and proportions established by existing structures; likewise, story-to-story heights must be appropriate.
- 7.3 The height of new buildings and additions shall relate to the prevailing heights of nearby buildings. New construction that greatly varies in height from adjacent buildings shall not be permitted.
- 7.5 A building's overall proportion (ratio of height to width) must be consistent with existing historic structures.
- 7.6 Storefront- and/or display-style windows must be included in all retail developments at the street level on the primary façade.
- 7.7 Corner buildings shall be a minimum of two-stories in height; taller buildings are encouraged at corner locations.
- 7.8 In cases of infill construction, the width of a building's façade should fill the entire available space.
- 7.9 Façade widths for new buildings and additions should correspond with other buildings widths in the same block. On Massachusetts Street, widths are typically built to increments of 25 feet.
- 7.10 If a site is large, the mass of a new building's façade should be broken into a number of smaller bays to maintain a rhythm similar to surrounding buildings. This is particularly true for storefront level façade elements.
- 7.11 The size and proportion of window and door openings on a new building should be similar to other buildings in the block.
- 7.12 The ratio of window area to solid wall for new construction shall be similar to other buildings in the block.
- 7.13 New construction shall be built with party-wall construction methods. Exceptions will be made for detached governmental, civic, or institutional buildings and when required by residential egress requirements.
- 7.14 The composition of an infill façade (that is, the scale, massing, and organization of its constituent parts) shall be similar to the composition of surrounding facades in the block.
- 7.15 The setback of a proposed building shall be consistent with the setback of adjacent buildings, and/or with nearby buildings fronting on the same street. Buildings must be placed with the express goal of continuing the overall building line of a streetscape.
- 7.16 Rhythms that carry throughout a block (such as the patterns, placement, sizes, and spans of windows, doors, etc.) shall be sustained and incorporated into new facades.

---

## **9. Detached Building Forms**

- 9.1 Detached building forms should have a high degree of architectural embellishment.
- 9.2 Detached building forms should be set back from the property line. The setback, typically three to five feet, serves as a green space between the building and the sidewalk.
- 9.3 The overall design of a detached building should be carried throughout all of the facades; for detached buildings, primary and secondary facades may be appropriately differentiated by

changes in material and by degrees of architectural embellishment.

---

#### **10. Building Materials**

- 10.1 Original building materials, whether located on primary, secondary, or rear facades, shall be retained to every extent possible. If the original material has been overlaid by such coverings as aluminum or stucco, these alterations should be removed and the original material maintained, repaired or replaced with similar materials.
- 10.2 Building materials shall be traditional building materials consistent with the existing traditional building stock. Brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco, etc., shall be the primary façade materials for buildings fronting along Massachusetts Street.
- 10.3 While traditional building materials such as brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco, etc., are the preferred building materials for buildings fronting New Hampshire, Vermont Street, or numbered streets, consideration will be given to other materials.
- 10.4 Materials should be compatible between storefronts or street-level facades, and upper levels.
- 10.6 While permanent materials should be considered for party-wall construction, other materials which meet associated building and fire code requirements will be considered.
- 10.7 Masonry walls, except in rare instances, shall not be clad with stucco, artificial stone, parging, or EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems). This includes publicly visible party-walls constructed of brick or rubble limestone.
- 10.8 Existing unpainted masonry walls, except in rare instances, shall not be painted. This includes publicly visible party-walls.

---

#### **11. Commercial Storefronts and Street Level Facades**

- 11.5 Solid, non-traditional 'security-style' doors shall not be used in primary storefronts.
- 11.6 Storefronts shall be designed to reflect the traditional pattern of containment. The storefront shall be bounded by the enframing storefront cornice and piers on the side and the sidewalk on the bottom.
- 11.8 Storefronts may be recessed or extended slightly (typically, 3 to 9 inches) to emphasize the feeling of containment and provide architectural variety.
- 11.9 Storefronts should provide for a recessed entry.
- 11.10 Storefronts shall be pedestrian oriented and consist primarily of transparent glass. Most storefronts in Downtown Lawrence contain 65% to 80% glass. Storefront designs shall reflect this glass to other building material ratio.
- 11.11 Storefront designs should reflect the traditional three-part horizontal layer by providing for a transom area, display windows, and a bulkhead.
- 11.12 Storefront materials typically consist of wood, metal, steel, or brick. Renovations and/or new construction should reflect these materials. Use of unpainted rough cedar is an example of an inappropriate storefront material.

---

#### **12. Upper Story Façades**

- 12.8 Upper-story façade elements should reflect existing window to wall surface ratios (typically 20% to 40% glass-to-wall).
- 12.9 Upper-story windows shall have only minimal tinting and should appear transparent from street level. Dark or reflective tinting is not allowed on upper story windows.
- 12.10 Metal screens or bars shall not cover upper-story window openings.
- 12.11 Upper windows on non-visible party-walls may be filled in with compatible material only if the treatment is reversible.

---

#### **13. Secondary and Rear Facades**

- 13.1 Secondary facades for corner buildings (i.e., facades that do not face the primary north/south

- street) shall contain secondary display windows and/or secondary storefronts.
- 13.2 Secondary facades shall contain upper story windows.
  - 13.3 Secondary facades should be balanced in design and shall provide a distinction between lower and upper sections of the building.
  - 13.4 Secondary facades should not directly compete with the primary façade.
  - 13.5 While rear facades on older structures are more symmetrical in their design, more recent buildings may provide a more utilitarian design approach. In most cases, rear entrances and openings should occupy a relatively small part of the rear façade and exhibit more of a utilitarian character.
  - 13.6 Rear facades should be maintained and developed to support the overall appearance of Downtown Lawrence.
  - 13.7 Rear entrances on buildings that face public-parking areas are encouraged.
  - 13.8 Rear facades should provide sufficient architectural features, such as window and door openings, to articulate the building façade.
  - 13.9 Rear facades should not compete with the primary façade of the structure.
  - 13.10 Pedestrian-level window and door openings may be covered with security features such as screens or bars. However, every effort should be made to maintain the visual appearance on rear facades which face surface parking areas.
  - 13.11 Maintain the pattern created by upper-story windows and their alignment on rear facades that face surface-parking areas.
  - 13.12 Existing windows on rear facades should not be eliminated or decreased in size or shape.
  - 13.13 While not encouraged, upper windows on rear facades that do not face parking areas may be closed in a reversible manner with compatible material.

---

#### **14. Office, Institutional, Religious, Utility, and Other Non-Retail Buildings**

- 14.1 Non-retail buildings fronting Massachusetts Street shall contain storefronts or a storefront appearance at the street level. Storefronts shall be pedestrian oriented, include fundamental storefront elements such as recessed entry and/or division into bays, and consist primarily of transparent glass. Most storefronts in Downtown Lawrence contain 65% to 80% glass. Storefront designs shall reflect this prevailing, glass-to-other-building-material ratio.
- 14.2 Non-retail buildings fronting numbered-streets, Vermont Street, or New Hampshire Street shall be pedestrian oriented. A ratio of 40% to 60% window area to wall surface shall be provided on street level facades at these locations.
- 14.3 The existing form of non-retail category buildings such as churches, industrial facilities, warehouses, etc. shall not be obscured or so transformed as to render the original form unrecognizable.

---

#### **15. Architectural Details, Ornamentation, and Cornices**

- 15.7 New construction should provide for a variety of form, shape, and detailing in individual cornice lines.

---

#### **16. Rooflines and Parapets**

- 16.2 Mechanical equipment should not be visible from the pedestrian level and should be screened through the use of parapet walls or projecting cornices.

---

#### **18. Signs and Signage**

- 18.1 All signs shall conform to the Sign Code provisions in Article 7 of the Code of the City of

- Lawrence.
- 18.2 The primary focus of signs in Downtown Lawrence shall be pedestrian-oriented in size, scale, and placement, and shall not be designed primarily to attract the notice of vehicular traffic.
  - 18.3 'Permanent' sign types that are allowed are: awning, hanging, projecting, wall, and window signs. Freestanding signs will not be considered except in cases where a detached building is set back from the street.
  - 18.4 Temporary (i.e., sidewalk, easel-mounted or freestanding) signage is permitted as long as it is in compliance with other City codes, and does not obscure significant streetscape vistas or architectural features.
  - 18.5 In no case shall a temporary sign substitute as a permanent sign.
  - 18.6 Wall signs must be flush-mounted on flat surfaces and done in such a way that does not destroy or conceal architectural features or details.
  - 18.7 Signs identifying the name of a building, the date of construction, or other historical information should be composed of materials similar to the building, or of bronze or brass. These building identification signs should be affixed flat against the building and should not obscure architectural details; they may be incorporated into the overall façade design or mounted below a storefront cornice.
  - 18.8 Signs should be subordinate to the building's façade. The size and scale of the sign shall be in proportion to the size and scale of the street level façade
  - 18.9 Storefront signs should not extend past the storefront upper cornice line. Storefront signs are typically located in the transom area and shall not extend into the storefront opening.
  - 18.12 Wall-mounted signs on friezes, lintels, spandrels, and fascias over storefront windows must be of an appropriate size and fit within these surfaces. A rule of thumb is to allow twenty (20) square inches of sign area for every one foot of linear façade width.
  - 18.13 A hanging sign installed under an awning or canopy should be a maximum of 50% of the awning or canopy's width and should be perpendicular to the building's façade.
  - 18.19 Sign brackets and hardware should be compatible with the building and installed in a workman-like manner.
  - 18.20 The light for a sign should be an indirect source, such as shielded, external lamps.
  - 18.21 Whether they are wall-mounted, suspended, affixed to awnings, or projecting, signs must be placed in locations that do not obscure any historic architectural features of the building or obstruct any views or vistas of historic downtown.
  - 18.22 Signs illuminated from within are generally not appropriate. Lighting for externally illuminated signs must be simple and unobtrusive and must not obscure the content of the sign or the building façade.

---

## **19. Lighting**

- 19.1 New exterior lighting should be compatible with the historic nature of the structure, the property, and the district. Compatibility of exterior lighting and lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, material, use, size, scale, color, and brightness.
- 19.2 Lighting fixtures should be installed to be as unobtrusive as possible; they should be installed such that they will not damage or conceal any historic architectural features.
- 19.3 Lighting levels should provide adequate safety, but not detract from or overly emphasize the structure or property.
- 19.4 Landscape lighting should be located and directed such that there is no infringement on adjacent properties.
- 19.5 Exterior lighting in parking lots must be directed into the parking area itself, and not onto adjacent properties.

---

## **20. Parking**

- 20.2 Surface-parking lots fronting New Hampshire and Vermont Streets shall be contained within the interior of the block.
- 20.3 Parking structures fronting New Hampshire and Vermont Streets should be contained within the interior of the block. Exceptions will be made for parking structures that have commercial, retail or office uses on the ground floor.
- 20.4 Existing corner surface-parking areas fronting New Hampshire and Vermont Streets should be targeted for appropriate infill.
- 20.5 Primary access to surface parking areas shall be taken from New Hampshire or Vermont Streets. The alleyway may be used for secondary access to the parking area.
- 20.6 While there is no established setback for surface parking areas, there should be a clear separation between vehicular parking areas and pedestrian areas. Pedestrian-scale landscaping, fencing, and/or walls shall be provided to separate the parking area from the pedestrian sidewalk.
- 20.7 Pedestrian-scale lighting shall be provided in surface parking areas.
- 20.8 The materials and design of screening for parking areas should be compatible with the adjacent structures and the district.
- 20.9 While some interior landscaping shall be provided, surface-parking areas shall not be required to meet landscaping provisions set forth in 20-14A04.6 (a) of the City of Lawrence Zoning Code.
- 20.10 Surface-parking areas shall meet the provisions set forth in 20-1205 and 20-1217 of the City of Lawrence Zoning Code.
- 20.11 Primary access to parking structures shall be taken from New Hampshire or Vermont Streets. The alleyway may be used for secondary access to the parking structure.
- 20.12 Parking structures should be constructed to zero-lot lines.
- 20.13 Parking structures adjacent to registered historic structures, such as the English Lutheran Church or the Lucy Hobbs Taylor Building, shall respect the historic property by providing a transition between the proposed structure and the historic property in the form of additional setback, green space and/or reductions in building height.
- 20.14 The inclusion of retail, commercial or office uses is encouraged at the ground floor of parking structures.
- 20.15 The primary façade of a parking structure should be designed to be compatible with neighboring buildings.
- 20.16 Parking structure facades should contain building materials consistent with the existing traditional building stock: brick, stone, terra cotta, etc.
- 20.17 Parking structures facades shall contain sufficient detail to break up the overall massing of the structure.
- 20.18 Parking structures shall meet the provisions set forth in 20-1205 and 20-1217 of the City of Lawrence Zoning Code.
- 20.19 Saw-tooth parking shall be maintained along Massachusetts Street. Otherwise, on-street parking shall be parallel in orientation. Special consideration will be given for existing angle parking in the 600 block of Vermont Street.

---

## **21. Safety and Accessibility Features**

- 21.1 Review proposed new uses for existing historic buildings to determine if meeting related building code and accessibility requirements is feasible without compromising the historic character of the building and the site.
- 21.2 Meet health and safety code and accessibility requirements in ways that do not diminish the historic character, features, materials, and details of the building.
- 21.3 Where possible, locate fire exits, stairs, landings, and decks on rear or inconspicuous side

- elevations where they will not be visible from the street.
- 21.4 It is not appropriate to introduce new fire doors if they would diminish the original design of the building or damage historic materials and features. Keep new fire doors as compatible as possible with existing doors in proportion, location, size, and detail.
  - 21.5 When introducing reversible features to assist people with disabilities, take care that historic materials or features are not damaged.
  - 21.6 If possible, comply with accessibility requirements through portable or temporary, rather than permanent, ramps.

---

## **22. Utilities and Energy Retrofit**

- 22.1 Retain and preserve the inherent energy-conservation features of a historic building, such as operable windows, transoms, awnings, and shutters.
- 22.2 Generally, it is not appropriate to replace operable windows or transoms with fixed glass.
- 22.3 Locate roof ventilators, hardware, antennas, and solar collectors inconspicuously on roofs where they will not be visible from the street.
- 22.4 Install mechanical equipment, including heating and air conditioning units, in areas and spaces requiring the least amount of alteration to the appearance and the materials of the building such as roofs. Screen the equipment from view.
- 22.5 Locate exposed exterior pipes, raceways, wires, meters, conduit, and fuel tanks on rear elevations or along an inconspicuous side of the building. Screen them from view.
- 22.6 Locate window air-conditioning units on rear or inconspicuous elevations whenever possible.
- 22.7 It is not appropriate to install large antennas and satellite dishes on primary elevations. Small, digital satellite dishes must not be visible from a public street and must be screened from view.

---

## **6. Site Plan Submittal Requirements**

In addition to the requirements identified in Chapter 20-1305 of the Code of the City of Lawrence, the following items shall be included.

- 6.1 The site plan shall show the relationship to the interior establishment and Sidewalk Dining/Hospitality area.
- 6.2 The site plan shall state the square footage of the interior establishment and Sidewalk Dining/Hospitality area.
- 6.3 The site plan shall state the occupancy of the interior establishment and Sidewalk Dining/Hospitality area.
- 6.4 The site plan shall show the composition of railings and barriers proposed for the delineation of the Sidewalk Dining/Hospitality area. The plans shall detail the style, design, and color of the proposed railings or barriers.
- 6.5 The site plan shall provide a detail of the sidewalk attachment method.
- 6.6 The site plan shall provide information regarding the type and style of awning (if applicable) and the type, design, and materials of the proposed chairs and tables.
- 6.7 The site plan shall contain such other conditions and restrictions on the use of the Sidewalk Dining/Hospitality area.

## **D. STAFF ANALYSIS**

### **Overview**

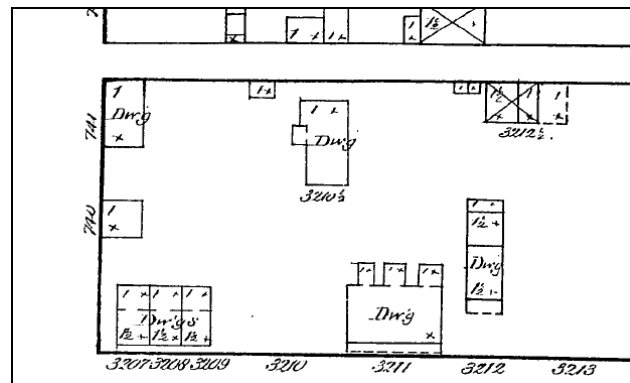
The application states "The project is a 6 story mixed use building above a 3 tiered parking garage. The project will consist of a white box finish for the first floor retail and restaurant spaces, with 36 fully finished apartments on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors, and an 80 room fully finished

TownePlace by Marriot hotel lobby and room levels on 4<sup>th</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> floors including an indoor pool on the top floor with a roof top terrace." The apartment section includes 1 studio, 11 one bedroom units and 6 two bedroom units. The hotel includes 59 studios, 6 one bedroom suites and 12 two bedroom suites.

Using infill projects to create density near the commercial district is a great opportunity but considerations must be made for the impact on the nearby historic districts. In Chapter 6 of Horizon 2020 it advocates for keeping the downtown business district the focus of Lawrence. It mentions that the general building pattern of the area is mixed-use, multi-story and pedestrian oriented. In the section titled "Mixed-Use Redevelopment Center", it calls for buildings much like the one proposed on land that hasn't been used for its original purpose for an extended period of time. Neighborhood integration is repeatedly mentioned and suggested through alleyways, landscaping, mass and scale. It is in the long range plan of downtown Lawrence to use infill projects as a means of increasing density. In that respect, this project is a viable proposition.

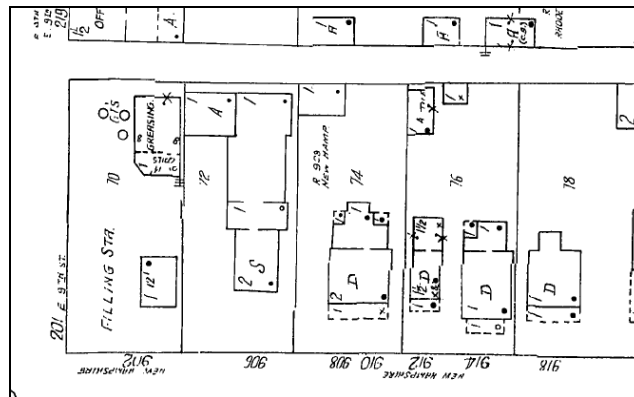
### History

The southeast corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and New Hampshire was part of the original town plat. The corner is included on the earliest Sanborn map from 1883. At that time there was a series of one and a half story dwellings located on the site. On the 1949 Sanborn map, the corner has a filling station, a store and one and two story dwellings.



1883

From these maps, spanning almost 70 years, it is evident that the site has historically been used for small business and residential uses, keeping New Hampshire Street in context and scale with the residential neighborhood to the east, what is now the North Rhode Island Street Residential Historic District. Prior to the construction of the Lawrence Arts Building in 2001, there were two story homes along New Hampshire. Currently the residential type structures on four lots directly abutting the alleyway behind the proposed project are zoned CS for commercial use.



1949

The North Rhode Island Street Historic Residential District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 for its significance in Architecture and community planning and development. The identified period of significance for the district is identified as c.1857 to 1935, according to the nomination. The district illustrates typical residential land use from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century as building patterns in East Lawrence followed local population, social, economic, and architectural trends described in the multiple property context for Lawrence (Lawrence Thematic National Register Nomination [http://www.lawrenceks.org/pds/historic\\_resources](http://www.lawrenceks.org/pds/historic_resources) ). The district has a cohesive streetscape that creates a strong residential boundary that contrasts dramatically to the commercial area to the west. Historically, residential structures were located on New Hampshire Street as part of this residential neighborhood. However, some of the residential structures also housed commercial enterprises. As this area of Lawrence continued to develop, the downtown commercial area pressed eastward and the clear residential neighborhood boundary began to shift and zigzag. While the 700 and 800 blocks of New Hampshire were developed early as commercial, the 900 block retained residential structures until their demolition for the Arts Center. The residential boundary for this neighborhood is now established in the 900 block at the alley between the residential type structures on Rhode Island Street and the commercial on New Hampshire Street.

The most challenging review for this project is the potential effect on the North Rhode Island Street Historic District. The review is complicated because the environs to the west of the district have continued to change over time with commercial development becoming more dominant and residential detached dwellings disappearing. The historic environs included a mix of residential detached dwellings and commercial structures and uses. At the time the district was listed in the National Register, the environs west of the district were dominated by commercial structures. The proposed new development is directly on the western boundary of the North Rhode Island Street Residential Historic District. In relation to the district, 900 New Hampshire Street will be separated from the district by an alleyway. This vacant lot is very important for the future development of downtown and the protection of the North Rhode Island Street Residential Historic District environs as it will create the transition from the commercial core to the residential district.

## Design: Height and Mass

- 7.2 The height of a new building must be in acceptable proportion to its width, following patterns and proportions established by existing structures; likewise, story-to-story heights must be appropriate.
- 7.3 The height of new buildings and additions shall relate to the prevailing heights of nearby buildings. New construction that greatly varies in height from adjacent buildings shall not be permitted.
- 7.5 A building's overall proportion (ratio of height to width) must be consistent with existing historic structures.
- 7.10 If a site is large, the mass of a new building's facade should be broken into a number of smaller bays to maintain a rhythm similar to surrounding buildings. This is particularly true for storefront level facade elements.
- 7.14 The composition of an infill facade (that is, the scale, massing, and organization of its constituent parts) shall be similar to the composition of surrounding facades in the block.

The design, as proposed, does not relate to its existing surroundings. At 6 stories (69 feet, not including parapet), it is much taller than the historic neighborhood to the east, taller than the Lawrence Arts Center Building and taller than the commercial buildings to the north. The only compatible height in the vicinity is the near-complete, 90 feet tall, multi-use building at 901 New Hampshire Street. The Downtown Design Guidelines emphasizes that proportion must be compatible with historic structures and majority of the closest structures are 2-3 story residential and commercial type structures.

For a building of this size, the guidelines recommend breaking up the façade into smaller bays to suggest a rhythm compatible to the historic surroundings. As designed, the variety in exterior materials is focused horizontally and does not offer the same effect of vertical bays. Especially on the New Hampshire elevation, staff recommends that façade be broken up and more representative of the pattern of the downtown streetscape.

- 6.15 Buildings shall maintain a distinction between upper stories and the street-level facade.
- 11.11 Storefront designs should reflect the traditional three-part horizontal layer by providing for a transom area, display windows, and a bulkhead.

In planning this project as a multi-use property, the intent is to maintain a storefront at the pedestrian level. As designed, the storefront does not meet the traditional three-part layer. There are large glass doors and side windows and a transom area is suggested but there is no bulkhead and no display type windows. The design does distinguish between the street level and upper stories but staff would recommend changing the emphasis from horizontal to vertical.

Staff's opinion is that the issues of height, size, proportion and massing do not meet the above Downtown Design Guidelines, Secretary of Interior Standard #6 and Certificate of Appropriateness Standard #9;

*6, 9. New additions, exterior alterations, infill construction, or related new construction should not destroy character-defining features or spatial relationships that characterize the environs of a property. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.*

## Materials

- 10.3 While traditional building materials such as brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco, etc., are the preferred building materials for buildings fronting New Hampshire, Vermont Street, or numbered streets, consideration will be given to other materials.
- 11.12 Storefront materials typically consist of wood, metal, steel, or brick. Renovations and/or new construction should reflect these materials.

Staff's interpretation of the above standards is that storefront level materials should consist of wood, metal, steel or brick and upper stories may be clad with the other materials listed in 10.3. With this interpretation, the project does not meet the guidelines. There are many materials included in this project. At street level, wrapping the corners, there are aluminum storefronts with glass set into limestone with a metal wrapped accent band above steel awnings. The entrance to the parking garage on 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the restaurant entrance on New Hampshire are module brick. The upper levels of the 9<sup>th</sup> Street side include lap siding, brick, 2' x 4' ceramic tile and a stairwell connector of aluminum and glass. On the larger New Hampshire façade, the materials include limestone, brick, ceramic tile and aluminum store fronts.

The use of the aluminum store fronts is a modern interpretation of a traditional feature. The use of limestone on the street level is not typical. Brick is common on the historic buildings of downtown Lawrence and staff feels this could be a more appropriate choice for the street level. Throughout the structure, the use of 2' x 4' ceramic tile is inappropriate. The scale of the tiles only emphasizes the large mass of the structure and is not found anywhere else with the Urban Conservation Overlay District (unless as an accent).

The choice of windows is another design concern. Window types B, C and D as annotated on the submitted elevations are suburban in feel. Window type A is a simple double hung one-over-one window which is often seen in the commercial district. Though necessary to provide proper ventilation, staff believes there are other window options that could accommodate those needs. Staff recommends reconsidering the variety (quantity) of materials proposed, the appropriateness of those materials for the downtown area and the use of materials to better distinguish the storefront from the upper levels.

Staff recommends working with the ARC to evaluate the correct use of the suggested materials in order to meet Secretary of Interior Standard #6;

*6b. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.*

## Signage

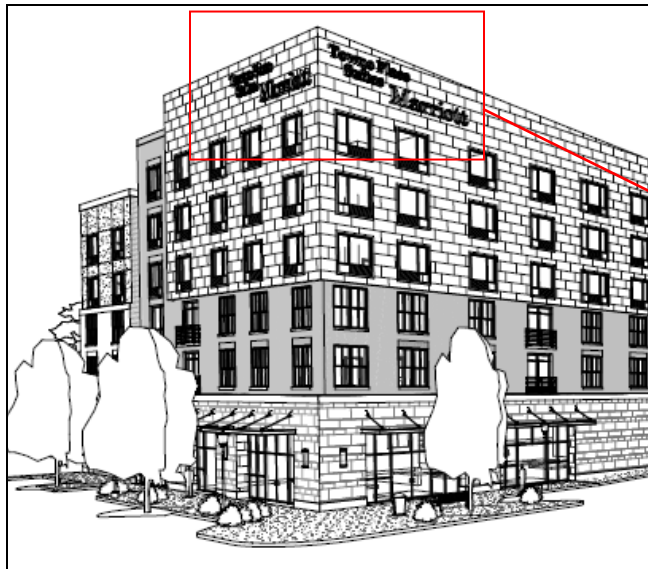
- 18.2 The primary focus of signs in Downtown Lawrence shall be pedestrian-oriented in size, scale, and placement, and shall not be designed primarily to attract the notice of vehicular traffic.
- 18.8 Signs should be subordinate to the building's facade. The size and scale of the sign shall be in proportion to the size and scale of the street level facade
- 18.9 Storefront signs should not extend past the storefront upper cornice line. Storefront signs are typically located in the transom area and shall not extend into the storefront opening.

On the submitted plans, there are two primary signs. One is on each side at the top of the northwest corner, the other next to the lobby door on the southwest side. Within the Urban Conservation Overlay District, signs should focus on being pedestrian oriented and neither of the proposed signs are. The sign on the southwest corner (see below), though at a more compatible height, is only visible for a pedestrian walking north up New Hampshire.

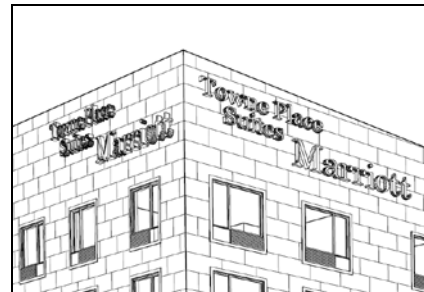


Southwest corner

The signs at the top of the northwest corner have no relationship to the pedestrian. Signage at the top of buildings is highly unusual for the downtown district unless it shows the date of construction. To relate to pedestrian scale, the sign should be shrunk in size and moved to the street level. The current placement of the sign on the upper corner adds emphasis to the height, which includes a parapet to accommodate the signage. This is one of the main concerns of staff. Moving the sign would allow for the overall height of the building to be reduced, reducing the impact on the historic district.



Northwest Corner, 9<sup>th</sup> and New Hampshire

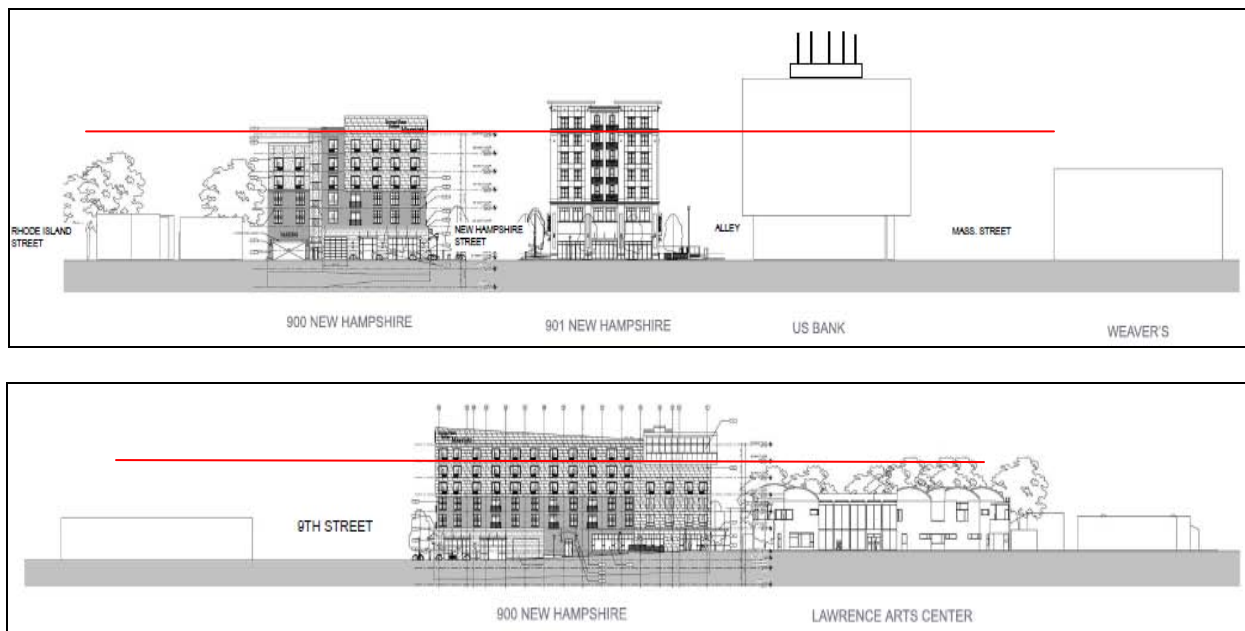


As proposed, the signage does not meet the Downtown Design Guidelines or support the pedestrian emphasis called for in the downtown business district.

## Compatibility

- 7.1 New infill buildings should be multistory in height, up to and within appropriate limits.
- 7.2 The height of a new building must be in acceptable proportion to its width, following patterns and proportions established by existing structures; likewise, story-to-story heights must be appropriate.
- 7.3 The height of new buildings and additions shall relate to the prevailing heights of nearby buildings. New construction that greatly varies in height from adjacent buildings shall not be permitted.

As seen from the scaled elevations below, 900 New Hampshire is much taller than its historic surroundings (approximately 69' with a 10' parapet). The guidelines emphasize consistency in the way new infill relates to the size of buildings around it whether they are historic or not. While this proposed project does relate to 901 New Hampshire and the US Bank building at 900 Massachusetts, those are modern buildings. The purpose of the guidelines is to maintain the overall character of the historic district and ensure responsibly designed development. How the project relates to one corner vs the entirety of two adjacent historic districts is important. The difference in height to the residential type structures that directly share an alleyway is of significant concern. The mixed use and high density are very desirable for the location but staff is of the opinion that a compromise in design can be reached.



The proposed project directly affects the spatial relationships of Lawrence's Downtown Historic District and the North Rhode Island Residential Historic District and does not ease the transition from commercial to residential, not meeting Standards #1 or #2;

*1. The character of a historic property's environs should be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of distinctive buildings, structures, landscape features, spatial relationships, etc. that characterize the environs should be avoided.*

*2. The environs of a property should be used as it has historically been used or allow the inclusion of new uses that require minimal change to the environs' distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.*

### **Summary of Findings**

1. The use is appropriate for this site. The long range plans for Downtown Lawrence call for infill mixed-use development. Staff would like to see retail spaces occupied by businesses usable by the immediate neighborhood.
2. The following items should be reconsidered by the applicant, with an option to work with the Architectural Review Committee:
  - Height: needs to be a more appropriate transitional height
  - Massing: division of mass through vertical emphasis
  - Signs: pedestrian oriented
  - Materials: ceramic tile not appropriate
  - Storefront: clearly defined storefront with compatible materials

### **E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

In accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs and the Downtown Design Guidelines, the standard of evaluation, staff recommends the Commission defer the proposed project and have the applicant work with the Architectural Review Committee to revise the proposal.

As proposed staff makes the determination that the proposed project does encroach upon, damage, or destroy the environs of one or more listed historic properties and does not meet these Secretary of Interior Standards:

*1. The character of a historic property's environs should be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of distinctive buildings, structures, landscape features, spatial relationships, etc. that characterize the environs should be avoided.*

*2. The environs of a property should be used as it has historically been used or allow the inclusion of new uses that require minimal change to the environs' distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.*

*6. New additions, exterior alterations, infill construction, or related new construction should not destroy character-defining features or spatial relationships that characterize the environs of a property. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.*

In accordance with Chapter 22 of the Code of the City of Lawrence and the *Downtown Design Guidelines*, the standards of evaluation, staff recommends the Commission defer the proposed project and have the applicant work with the Architectural Review Committee to revise the proposal.

As proposed staff makes the determination that the proposed project does encroach upon, damage, or destroy the environs of one or more listed historic properties and does not meet the intent of the *Downtown Design Guidelines* specifically the guidelines outlined in this report and these standards:

*1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, site or object and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose;*

*9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alteration and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environs.*

The HRC may:

1. Defer as recommended and the applicant could work with the Architectural Review Committee to revise the design based on staff's comments and resubmit the design for review before the full Historic Resources Commission;
2. Deny the project, with the option to send to ARC;
3. Approve the project, with the option to send to ARC.