



# Austin Design Commission

October 27, 2014

To: City of Austin Staff  
From: Austin Design Commission  
Re: Review of the 5th & Brazos Hotel for substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines  
Meeting date: October 27, 2014  
Applicant: bKL Architecture LLC.

The applicant is seeking a density bonus. Per ordinance, the applicant is required to provide streetscape improvements along all public street frontages consistent with the Great Streets Standards, and the applicant shall commit to a minimum of 2 star green building rating. The Mayor and Council and the Planning & Development Review Director is to determine appropriate bonus area and in light of community benefits to be provided.

**Positive attributes of the project include:**

1. Below grade parking.
2. Electrical vault at back along alley.
3. Minimized curb cuts.
4. No building projections are proposed in the ROW.
5. Building has glazing and areas for active uses along the majority of street frontages.
6. Balcony at level 2 can add to the street life.
7. Material variety used to break up scale.
8. Roof decks add to the building live and create attractive areas that may be seen from other buildings.

**Suggestions/concerns raised include:**

1. Driveway should have a character to help pedestrians realize that there is a change of function of what they are walking on – for safety concerns.
2. In conjunction with the bicycle room for employees, showers and lockers should be included for them in order to encourage this means of transportation.
3. If possible add a tree at the corner where the driveway is adjacent to the alley.
4. Back of house area for the ballroom – add some windows instead of blank wall. Helps with ambient light and less reliance on electricity. Can be high windows if needed.
5. Water reclamation and use such as condensate and rain water encouraged.

The Design Commission recommends that the project, as presented, is in substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines.

Respectfully,

Dean Almy, Chair  
City of Austin Design Commission

Dean Almy,  
Chair

Evan Taniguchi,  
Vice Chair

Hope Hasbrouck,  
Secretary

Juan Cotera

James Shieh

Bart Whatley

Jeannie Wiginton

Jorge E. Rousselin  
Staff Liaison