

PACK SQUARE CONSERVANCY

November 7, 2007

RE: Pack Square Conservancy Design Review of Parkside Condominium Project

Findings and Recommendations from PSC Design Review Committee to the Pack Square Conservancy Board of Trustees

Over the past few months, the Conservancy has met with the developer of Parkside Condominiums as part of the design review process outlined by the trustees and in concert with the Conservancy's agreement with the City of Asheville and Buncombe County. The Pack Square Design Guidelines were approved by all three bodies in 2003.

After an initial presentation to the board of trustees (the Board), followed by informal and more detailed presentation by the developer to the Conservancy's design review committee (DRC), the DRC is providing the following recommendations and findings.

- I. **Recommendations: Compliance with Design Guidelines:** The DRC findings and recommendations are as follows:
 1. **Parkside Building Height:** The Pack Square Design Guidelines state: "The height of the Site B building should not exceed the height of the first vertical setback of the Buncombe County Court House. A penthouse setback is permitted above the first setback line." The proposed building height, even after a recent reduction in height, still exceeds the design guideline for height (by 21 – 35 feet). **Recommendation: That the Board determine that the design of the Parkside Condominiums project fails to comply with the Pack Square Design Guidelines by exceeding the height limitation.**
 2. **View Corridor:** The Pack Square Design Guidelines state: "New development must maintain a clear view corridor from the Vance Monument to Buncombe County Court House, City Hall and the mountains beyond." City Hall is the central architectural icon of the city. Pack Square Park is a signature space and will serve as the central defining space of the core city. The placement of the proposed building obstructs the view of City Hall on the bottom right (south) side and significantly obstructs the view of the mountains to the right of City Hall.

Recommendation: That the Board determine that the design of the Parkside Condominiums project fails to comply with the Pack Square Design Guidelines by encroaching upon the view corridor from the Vance Monument to City Hall and to the mountains beyond.

II. **DRC's need for additional information/clarification**

The DRC has received sufficient information to enable it to make the foregoing recommendations. However, there are other aspects of the Parkside Condominiums project for which the DRC needs additional information/clarification from the developer before the DRC will be able to make recommendations regarding those aspects of the design. The additional information/clarification include:

- Renderings/plans/clarification of East building façade, including building access or amenities as would be seen from city hall
- Presentation/rendering of actual building footprint/dimensions on most updated version of Pack Square Park site plan
- Additional clarification of building materials/samples
- Lighting Plan for building
- Landscape plan: plan for working w/ PSC to create
- Determination of street formation in front of building; traffic study, stated parking/loading intent
- Sound/noise considerations
- Plans for West side of building respecting Spruce Street as key pedestrian connector to Eagle/Market
- Building frontage: usage, delineation between retail/residential, entrances, awnings
- Balconies: more complete information on architectural detail/style

III. **Additional Recommendation**

While not part of the review of this design of the Parkside Condominiums project, the DRC nevertheless has one additional related recommendation: **that the Board consider encouraging the City of Asheville to “swap” land with the developer to facilitate moving the Parkside Condominium project to the south, and thereby provide an appropriate edge on the park, provide an appropriate view corridor of City Hall and the mountains, and maintain Pack Square Park for the people of our community.**

The Design Review Committee offers two separate motions to address these matters:

MOTION I

That the Board determine: (1) that, as a result of height and view corridor considerations, the ParkSide Condominium project, as currently designed, fails to comply with the Pack Square Design Guidelines; and (2) that additional information/clarification will be needed from the developer before the project's compliance with other aspects of the Design Guidelines can be determined.

MOTION II

That the Board formally encourage the City of Asheville to pursue an exchange of land with the ParkSide Condominium developer that would result in the ParkSide Condominium project being moved to the south in accordance with the boundary in the guidelines, thereby providing an appropriate edge to Pack Square Park, providing an appropriate view corridor of City Hall and the mountains beyond, and maintaining the Park for the people of our community.