

7TH CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST / COCINA47

FACT SHEET

Overview

Historic Kansas City (HKC), Friends of the Plaza (FOP), Plaza Neighborhoods, and Midtown Neighborhoods are launching an aggressive campaign to save the Plaza from new inappropriate development. The Plaza's historic nature is immediately threatened by the demolition of the 7th Church of Christ Scientist at the corner of 47th and Pennsylvania to be replaced with a 3 - 4 - story project by JH Investors.

Since 2017, HKC has worked behind the scenes to deter threats to The Seventh Church of Christ Scientist. The existing 1942 Romanesque Revival style church uniquely fits with the Plaza architecture and has no protection from demolition. This historic structure reflects and is a part of the core of Spanish architecture for which the Plaza is nationally known. That architecture is a major draw for businesses, visitors, as well as our community residents who seek a unique and pedestrian scale environment.

The church was purchased in 2020 by JH Investors, associated with DRAKE development, the developer of the Jack Henry Building adjacent to the west. The developer's intent is to demolish the church and replace it with a 3 - 4 - story structure - Cocina47 - that grossly exceeds the Plaza Bowl Overlay height limit of 45 feet. Further, the developer is not providing parking. Their view, there is plenty of parking on the Plaza.

The goal of the recently adopted Overlay District is to preserve the character and integrity of the Plaza, maintain the Plaza Bowl concept, and protect the property values and expectations of Plaza property owners, residents and visitors. The Overlay restricts heights and land uses at this location to 45 feet. The developer bought it fully knowledgeable of the Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance. HKC estimates they exceed the height by 18 or more feet. This would require a deviation, for which there are no standards for evaluation. This will be the second request for an exception to the recently adopted Plaza Bowl Overlay District and would set a very bad precedent for everything that comes after.

Raising the height on the church property is about much more than it is about the loss of this historic structure.

- City approval of this development could set in motion a domino of development in and surrounding the Plaza.
- It could lead to the collapse of overlay ordinances in Kansas City neighborhoods. FOLLOW THE PLAN.
- It is a threat to the validity of area planning in Kansas City. FOLLOW THE PLAN.
- No onsite parking is built into the developer's plan. That will compound parking problems encroaching into the surrounding residential community. Surrounding property owners have been required by the City and in accordance with the Plaza's historic building pattern to provide parking. They are not obliged to make parking available to another business interest. The Plaza already has periodic congestion problems which will only worsen and threaten future viability without ample parking.

HKC has issued a letter of opposition to the Director of City Planning and Development, the Mayor, the City Council and City Manager.

We need your help! Join HKC and FOP in the fight to Save the Plaza.

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Our Position on Cocina47 proposal on the Plaza

We have met with the developer and his architect and attorney and reviewed the most recent plans. We have indicated that height is excessive and that we would want to see floor dimensions; an 8 foot parapet; and a tower on the southeast corner modified to meet Plaza Plan and zoning requirements.

What we see presented most recently, though as yet unfiled with the City, is a structure that would rival the height and massing of the former Jack Henry building next door plus a tower on the southeast corner. Oddly, what is supposed to be a 45 foot zone property would host a structure that rises as high as Jack Henry -- which sits in a 65 foot zone -- and has a substantially higher grade elevation than the site of the Cocina47 project. Eight feet of the proposed height is an empty parapet. The tower has no purpose other than an aesthetic gesture (perhaps?). There is no parking provision on-site and suggestions that parking is arranged with neighboring owners we are told and believe are questionable. Those neighbors, of course, have invested mightily in parking, a hallmark of the Plaza historically and functionally, required by existing City regulation and utterly essential to the commercial well-being and vitality of the Plaza. See attached illustration.

What we're seeing proposed is flatly incompatible with the Midtown Plaza Area Plan and the Plaza Bowl Overlay. The departures are not minor and cannot be accommodated with minor tweaks to the Plan and zoning. There is clearly a risk of Pandora effect and no end of wrangle on the part of all involved if thoughtful standards carefully put in place are not followed. The serious violations of the Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance are summarized on the attached Table and Comments.

Clearly a compliant design should be at least 20 feet less than we're seeing. Unlike the existing Jack Henry building incorporated in that project, this is a NEW building which can readily comply. The site was acquired by the current owner with full notice of the City's requirements. Is there any point of the grade of the church site that is higher than the Jack Henry site? NO. When you look at the 47th street elevation, you should see a 20 ft difference in height, between Jack Henry and the proposed project, if not more -- in fact, the grade is rising to the west. It's that simple.

We have heard that the church group that sold the property to the current owner has retained a right to occupancy requiring space with a 22 foot vertical dimension. While, again, that shouldn't negate City requirements, it has been cited for a need for more height for the building generally. However, we have information that the church does not need more than 16 feet for their space. We are told the church's' priority is to get this project underway.

What we are provided and told is submitted to the City Planning & Development Department is not in compliance with adopted city policy. We are also very willing to have further discussion with the developer in search of solutions that will both preserve the Plaza Bowl and integrity of Plaza planning while also optimize commercial and experiential enhancements on this site -- notwithstanding potential loss of the historic church building which itself is greatly against the grain of Plaza planning.

Area stakeholders have invested millions of dollars based upon approved zoning and adopted plans. To vary height upward by 20 feet is a big deal and a rather breathtaking ask, to say the least.

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What You Can Do:

- 1) Contact the Mayor and your 4th District representatives and those on the *Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee*. Send a letter or email message to:

Mayor Quinton Lucas

MayorQ@kcmo.org

816-513-3500

4th District Councilman Eric Bunch

Eric.Bunch@kcmo.org

816-513-6517

4th District at Large Councilwoman Katheryn Shields

katheryn.shields@kcmo.org

816-513-6515

Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee

Lee Barnes, Chair

Keema.McCoy@kcmo.org

816-513-6519

Andrea Bough

Katrina.Foster@kcmo.org

816-513-6523

Dan Fowler

amy.justis@kcmo.org

(816) 513-6509

Brandon Ellington

Brandon.Ellington@kcmo.org

816-513-6511

Teresa Loar

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- 2) Support this effort by become a member of HKC: <https://www.historickansascity.org/memberships/>
- 3) Join HKC or FOP on Facebook to show your support and stay informed on upcoming rallies, protests and future Plan Commission hearings:
<https://www.facebook.com/HistoricKC/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Plaza-146891005330939/>

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Plaza Bowl Overlay Background

- The Country Club Plaza was the first outdoor shopping center of its kind and was completed in 1923. It was developed by J.C. Nichols and designed by architect Edward Buehler Delk in the Spanish style.
- The Country Club Plaza is central to the identity of Kansas City and is a major tourist attraction. It supports a vibrant, 24-hour community and its charm, appeal, and popularity can be attributed to its historic nature and pedestrian friendly atmosphere.
- Adoption of the Plaza Bowl Overlay District was a top priority of the Midtown Plaza Area Plan, resulting from 3 years of community engagement. The Overlay District ensures that the future expansion and operation of this resource would continue in a quality manner, respectful of the current design of the plaza. It enables future developers and current owners to reasonably rely upon and predict what heights and uses will be allowed for future buildings. It caps the height at this location at 45 feet and restricts unwanted uses.
- Current property owners already have substantial investments in the Plaza area. The purpose of the overlay district was to defuse sometimes contentious and protracted processes that take away from a coherent and orderly development of the concentric rings around the base of the Country Club Plaza.
- No one is adverse to development. We want reasonable development consistent with City adopted policy, the Midtown Plaza Area Plan.



SOUTH ELEVATION

~213'

~178'

~130'

~32'

~12'

- 186'
- 169'-8"
- 156'-4"
- 143'-0"
- 130'-8"
- 117'-4"
- 104'-0"
- 90'-8"
- 77'-4"
- 64'-0"
- 50'-8"
- 33'-4"
- 17'-8"
- ~0'

76'-0"

63'-4"

38'-8"

22'-8"

0'

HIM

LOCKTON

cocina47

BLVD

CRAVE

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

Historic Kansas City Foundation

		Plaza Bowl Overlay District							
		<i>Cocina 47 Project - Heights Analysis. Based on Developer's Jan. 5, 2022 Plan Set</i>							
Note	Item	47th Street Frontage				Pennsylvania Ave. Frontage			
		SE Corner	Cum.	SW Corner	Cum.	NE Corner	Cum.	NW Cor.	Cum.
	Proposed								
	Ground Elevations > 100'	-	-	-		-		-	
1	First floor	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7
	Mezzanine (10' included in 22.7')	-		-		-		-	
1	Second floor	16.0	38.7	16.0	38.7	16.0	38.7	16.0	38.7
	Third Floor	16.6	55.3	16.6	55.3	16.6	55.3	16.6	55.3
2	Parapet	8.0	63.3	8.0	63.3	8.0	63.3	8.0	63.3
3	Tower	12.7	76.0	-		-		-	
	Total - All Levels	76.0		63.3		63.3		63.3	
	Allowed								
	Ground Elevation > 100'	-		2.00		10.0		9.0	
	Overlay District Maximum Height	45.0		45.0		45.0		45.0	
	Totals	45.0		47.0		55.0		54.0	
	Over (Under)	31.0		16.3		8.3		9.3	
		Too High		Too High		Too High		Too High	
4	Parking	The building has no parking. The Zoning Ordinance requires 10 spaces for every 10,000 sf.							

*Using the Midtown-Plaza "Bowl Concept Measurement Method," Midtown-Plaza Area Plan, p. 49, Approved by the Council, January 7, 2017, Ordinance No. 150899, Committee Substitute, As Amended, and as applied by City Staff for related Jack Henry Building Redevelopment Plan, approved by City Council, February 20, 2020, Ordinance No. 200088, As Amended. See City Plan Commission Staff Report, p.3, CPC Case No. CD-CPC-2019-00218, January 7, 2020.

Comments

Height. The building grossly exceeds the 45' height limit under the Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance by over 18 feet (40%) and over 30 feet (67%) for the tower as summarized in the table. The Developer tries to distract from this excessive violation by measuring the building's volume, a method not recognized under the Overlay District Ordinance or the Zoning Ordinance. The Developer claims the excessive 22.7' first floor height (20.7' accounting for floor structure) is required under contract with a church for a sanctuary in the building. Church representatives disagree. They want a high ceiling, but state they are flexible & can reduce this.

Slides 65' Zone into 45" Zone. The Developer's South Elevation rendering showing both the proposed Cocina 47 building (45' maximum height site) and its adjacent Jack Henry building (65' maximum height site) may explain the Developer's motive for the excessive heights. Under the Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance, the Jack Henry building has a maximum height of 65' and the adjacent Cocina 47 site has a maximum height of 45'. The 20' difference should be immediately apparent in the rendering. It is not. The Developer shows them both as 65' buildings to pair them architecturally and perhaps operationally (the Cocina 47's 2nd and 3rd floors extend west 22' over an alley, several feet shy of the Jack Henry building). The real reason for the excessively high Cocina 47 ceilings and parapet may be to "lift" the Cocina 47 building out of the 45' building envelope up into the 65' building envelope in violation of the clear Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance.

1. **Floors.** 16' ceilings are excessively high and can be reduced. The Developer claims high-end restaurants now require 17' ceilings. No. Historic Kansas City has leaned high-end restaurants look for 14' ceilings.

2. **Parapet.** Parapets are subject to the Plaza Bowl Overlay District's 45' maximum height at this location. Parapets, ornamental towers, etc. are excepted from height limits under Zoning Ordinance measurement method, *unless* "where permitted, [they] shall be erected to a height in accordance with existing or hereafter adopted ordinances of the city," *e.g.*, Midtown-Plaza Area Plan and the Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance. An 8' roof parapet is excessive. The Developer states the height is necessary to hide rooftop mechanical equipment. Mechanical equipment can be screened with a stepped-back solid screen not visible from the street, not an 8' parapet around the entire roof.

3. **Tower.** Towers are subject to the Plaza Bowl Overlay District's 45' maximum. Parapets, ornamental towers, etc. are subject to the Overlay Ordinance height limit as "where permitted, [they] shall be erected to a height in accordance with existing or hereafter adopted ordinances of the city," *e.g.*, Midtown-Plaza Area Plan and the Plaza Bowl Overlay District Ordinance.

4. **Parking.** The building has *no parking*. The Zoning Ordinance requires ten spaces for every 1,000 sq. ft. of restaurant space. The Developer has three levels of rooftop parking on its adjacent Jack Henry building. Most of this parking is needed for existing and future users. The Developer claims there is plenty of parking available on the Plaza. Historic Kansas City has checked with Macerich and Taubman Centers, the owners of the most parking on the Plaza. It has no interest in providing parking. In fact, they aggressively deter poaching on their properties.