



MEETING MINUTES LOWRY DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Zoom

**Thursday, September 4th, 2025
8:30 a.m.**

- **Call to Order** **8:30 am**

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 am. Carla McConnell, Bill Wenk, Robin Ault, Jessie Johnson, and Kevin Yoshida were in attendance.

- **Approve Meeting Minutes from August 7th, 2025** **8:30-8:35 am**

The meeting minutes from August 7th, 2025 were approved unanimously. The committee also voted to confirm the conditional approval of the addition to 8092 E 6th Place.

- **79 N. Rampart Way – Valor Townhomes** **8:35 – 9:35 am**
 - **Winston Wall, Nick Young, Dave Wall, Aaron Schump**
 - **Variance Requests**
 - **Design Development #1 Review (Continued) – 45 mins**

HEIGHT VARIANCE REQUEST

The design team presented their variance request for height citing that the height required would impose extreme or undue hardship on the Applicant. The Design Guidelines for the context of the project, limits height to three stories and forty feet. The intent is to create a four-story building, of which the fourth story will be minimal and consist mainly of access to a stairwell to the rooftop.

Kevin clarified that, per Denver Zoning (both current and former definitions), building height would be measured from grade to the top of the stairwell enclosure. The current proposed

building structure exceeds the Design Guidelines by between 5.2 feet and 6.1 feet, depending on the building (from grade to top of stair enclosure).

Jessie suggested that the variance justification would not be extreme or undue hardship and rather be that the proposed variance, although not meeting the requirements, can be proven to directly and substantially advance the stated intent of the Design Guidelines.

Robin spoke in favor of the variance.

Bill agreed with Jessie on the visibility from the street of the rooftop dog houses and stated that, from a practical standpoint, he likes the design and would be inclined to support it. Kevin disagreed that, although the massing on the doghouse is stepped back that some walls are contiguous with lower story walls.

Jessie brought up site context again, citing specifically that the proposed structure is near the Hangars and office buildings, so the proposed height variance is consistent with the context of its surroundings.

Kevin clarified that a motion should state specifically that chimneys are not an encroachment and that 6.1 feet over the Design Guidelines is the highest measurement of the top of the stair enclosure.

Carla clarified that the proposed pergolas were open. Carla also asked if, in the future, an owner would want to enclose the pergola, what would be the guidelines around that? Jessie pointed out that, in the Building Height Design Guidelines, active rooftops are precluded from the height limitation.

Kevin clarified that, if measuring building height from grade to the top of the parapet, a variance would likely not be needed because that height is less than 40 feet. Kevin asked the committee if they consider the stairwell roof access is part of an active rooftop and not counted as part of the building height, as an interpretation of the height guideline excluding "active" roof decks.

The committee discussed whether a variance is required.

Carla made the motion that the committee approve the requested variance which allows the maximum high point to be the top of chimney at 47.5 feet with other elements below that with the justification that the proposed variance, although not meeting the requirements, can be shown to directly and substantially advance the stated intent of the Design Guidelines. Jessie seconded the motion, but with the edit that the maximum high point would be to the top of the stair enclosure and would not exceed 46.1 feet. The motion passed the committee four votes to one vote.

MASONRY VARIANCE REQUEST

The Design Guidelines state that the Heritage Context overlay has a requirement for 50% masonry. The brick calculations per building range from 31% to 37% with an analysis of the masonry percentage for the entire site is 39%.

Carla asked for the justification for the variance. The design team clarified that the variance justification is that “the proposed variance, although not meeting the requirements, can be proven to directly and substantially advance the stated intent of these guidelines.”

Kevin pointed out that the actual average masonry percentage is 33.2%, not 39%, based on the applicant's data. The design team confirmed that the actual total masonry percentage is 33%.

Kevin pointed out that Heritage Context requires 50% blonde brick, specifically. Kevin asked the applicant if not using blonde brick is part of the variance being submitted. The applicant said that the blonde brick portion of the variance was not included.

The applicant asked if the brick submitted in the color palette met the definition of blonde brick. Carla tabled the question of brick color as not being part of this variance request.

Robin clarified the variance request on the floor – a variance from 50% masonry requirement per Heritage Context with the justification that the proposed variance, although not meeting the requirements, can be proven to directly and substantially advance the stated intent of these guidelines. Robin asked why an additional 17% masonry cannot be found.

Bill agreed with Robin’s analysis. Both endorse the design of the buildings but noted that other developments have not required a masonry variance.

Jessie noted that she likes the look of the buildings with the masonry variance but would like additional exploration of options for getting to the 50% masonry requirement. Without seeing what 50% masonry looks like; it is difficult to vote on the variance request.

Kevin stated that he does not see a way to support the requested masonry variance. Kevin sees two paths forward – one is to deny the variance; the other would be a continuance to assemble more information. Kevin is of the mind to make a motion to deny the variance.

Carla is also in favor of denying the variance motion masonry. Carla, based on review of the elevations, saw ways to increase the masonry and still featured the diversity of materials and massing that make the project a good one.

Robin emphasized that the architectural design is strong, but that approval of a variance on masonry sets a precedent for future developments and may invalidate the Design Guidelines for future projects.

Kevin moved to deny the variance request to reduce the masonry percentage from 50% to 31 to 37% based on the variance justification not being proven. Jessie seconded the motion. The motion to deny the variance request passed unanimously.

The applicant asked if retaining walls and site walls be factored into the masonry calculation or only the buildings themselves. Kevin said that the masonry calculation should include only the materials on the building.

Citing that the denial of the masonry variance will change the nature of the design plans, Kevin proposed continuing the Design Development #1 review. Kevin requested updated materials for the next Design Development review.

The committee requested physical samples of the color palette for viewing at the LCMA office. The design team will provide those physical samples.

- **Adjourn**

9:44 am

The committee adjourned the meeting at 9:44 am.