

Narrative for Hill Top House Hotel Landscape Enhancement Plan With Fire Marshal Comments

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The following narrative describes the enhancements to the Hill Top Hotel Master Concept Plan that was reviewed by the Planning Commission May 15 – July 31, 2018.

As part of our ongoing process and in line with our efforts to respond to Planning Commission's recommendations, the contracted Landscape Architect, Richard Arentz, performed a thorough site visit. He submitted an enhanced landscape concept plan for the Hill Top that addressed creation of a unique sense of arrival and cohesiveness of the Hill Top Campus. His vision encompassed the design of a private access road that created a special experience for the visitors as well as an increase in centralized green space accompanied by a decrease in on grade parking. This design adjusts the flow of cars while decreasing the above ground parking structure.

The entrance is to be a tree-lined one-way lane which runs east behind the armory houses and then begins to climb north passing the Lodge to the view shed of the confluence. At that point the lane blends into the existing East Ridge Street and cars will proceed west to the hotel lobby drop off. The access lane was permitted by John Holben, the Jefferson county Fire Marshal, by "Authority has Jurisdiction" (AHJ) to be a 15' lane with a grass strip and sidewalk running beside the lane. The junction of the private access road with E Ridge Street will have a road width change to 24' along E Ridge.

With the new access lane, a gatehouse stationed on the left of the access lane before the subgrade garage entrance will be designed. At the gatehouse, drivers will be directed how to proceed according to the description of their visit. This gate house will be architecturally designed to blend in with the other structures.

The decrease in on grade parking will be bolstered by adding lifts to the subgrade parking creating double-stacked parking spaces. All parking will be valet. The total parking will satisfy the Overlay Ordinance parking requirement of 168 spaces.

A pedestrian crossing will be marked to guide pedestrians that are walking west on E Ridge across the north section of Columbia St. to the sidewalk that runs parallel to Columbia St. There will not be a sidewalk on the east side of Columbia St. for safety reasons related to the loading area.

A slip exit, a turnaround after the gatehouse, is for visitors that approach the gate but choose not to valet park. They will be instructed at the gate to use this slip exit and proceed south on Columbia Street to exit the Hill Top campus.

With the decrease in on grade parking, a new open-space green event lawn has been created. The addition of this event lawn increases the total open space of the campus to 69% (+6%). There will be landscaped trees and shrubs framing the new event lawn with a sidewalk that meanders between the on-grade parking and the event lawn connecting pedestrians from E Ridge to the access lane by the armory houses. This event lawn will be sloped downward from the hotel entrance to the armory house row. It provides the arriving guest their first glimpse of the charming hotel structure showcasing the turret.

The buffering landscape has been increased in two areas. First, at the entrance between Columbia St. and the access lane, landscaping has been increased to screen the lower level of the Outfitters building and set the tone for a native vegetated campus. The second area, west of Columbia St., is a tight buffer consisting of evergreens, leafed trees and shrubs to screen the loading dock area.

A pedestrian trail may be constructed which connects pedestrians from the lookout area south to Washington St. If built, this will be a natural meandering path consisting of walkways and steps integrated into the existing trees. At Washington St., there will either be a headwall or bridge for pedestrians to walk over the natural drainage area.

The access loop lane will start at a slight incline (~4%) following the existing natural slope behind the armory houses. The lane will then level as it intersects with E Ridge St. in front of the hotel structure.

All parking within the Hill Top campus will be valet. This decision was based on the need to control the vehicular flow on E Ridge St. and have trained operators of the subgrade parking lifts. If the visitors are hotel guests or restaurant reservation holders, they will be instructed to proceed from the gatehouse to the main entrance of the hotel where they will have their bags unloaded and a valet will park their car. If a visitor is interested in parking while they enjoy the lookout and explore the hotel, they will have a valet meet them at the entrance to the subgrade garage. They can then walk the access loop sidewalk or the path across the new event lawn to E Ridge and the lookout.

Fire emergency vehicles will follow the historic access path and turn left off Washington St. onto Jackson St. then right onto E Ridge St. This is the quickest and most level access

to the Hill Top campus. Depending on where the fire is located, the emergency vehicle will proceed to one of the two fire hydrants to quickly access town water. E Ridge will be a two-way road that is the designated access for emergency vehicles to tie into two fire hydrants, one located by the hotel side of E Ridge and Columbia Streets, and the other located at the east end of E Ridge by the Lodge. East Ridge will have a straight access from Jackson St. and there will not be parking allowed anywhere on E Ridge St. within the promontory boundary. The preliminary water flow pressures are more than sufficient for the requirement of the fire marshal. When the emergency vehicles are finished, they will do a typical 3-point turn advancing the nose of vehicle east on E Ridge, backing up onto access lane then moving forward westbound on E Ridge, leaving the campus the same way they came. Any armory house fire will be fought off the access road. Both Columbia St., and the access lane could accommodate additional emergency vehicles if needed.

This narrative provides details of the design elements which were added as part of the enhanced landscape plan which have increased the aesthetics of the Hill Top campus with the addition of many trees, increased open space and a more cohesive connected campus.