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Summer ground-breaking targeted for '500 Walnut'

A SUMMER GROUND-BREAKING IS expected for the Walnut, the nine-unit condominium project approved in April by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission.

The three-story project will be built on the now-vacant northeast corner of East and Walnut streets.

A more exact timetable can be set once the revised architectural plans are completed, said Bill Carlstedt, principal with Citimark Management Co.

He explained that project architect Mark Beebe, of James T. Kienle & Associates, is

reworking the floor plans for new configuration after the project was downsized from 12 units to nine in response to neighborhood opposition.

Carlstedt describes the project as "a luxury garden-style condominium development with secure underground parking." The project is also distinguished by the fact that there is direct elevator access into each of the nine units, with no hallways.

Each unit will also feature a wood-burning fireplace and exterior porch. Secure underground parking will feature two spaces for each unit. ■

□ Coverage of the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission hearing regarding 500 Walnut starts on the next page.

The nine-unit condominium project known as 500 Walnut will stand at the northeast corner of East and Walnut streets. The luxury development features underground parking and direct elevator service into each residence.

Illustration by James T. Kienle & Associates



500 Walnut gets nod from IHPC

PLANS FOR THE LUXURY “500 WALNUT” project at the northeast corner of Walnut and East streets has been approved by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission.

The project – a scaled-down version of plans presented at the IHPC’s February meeting – features nine condominiums with two enclosed parking spaces per unit.

The project, by Citimark Management Co., was approved at the IHPC’s April 4 hearing, with support from the Chatham Arch Neighborhood Association.

Commissioners especially noted the fact that the redesign resulted in the building being set back an additional six feet, as well as an improved parking ratio. In the previous design, there were 12 units and 20 parking spaces, less than two per unit.

The proposal, however, was still not without its critics. Chatham Arch resident Clayton Miller renewed his opposition based on the structure’s size in relationship with the lot.

“The building ignores the two historic structures that are immediately adjacent,” Miller said. He asked the commission to consider that the condo structure is not sensitive to the residential nature of the neighborhood, but is instead more consistent to the Massachusetts Avenue commercial district to the south.

Miller challenged IHPC staff’s position that the project was located on a “large site,” where larger structures are allowed. He said the site actually better fits into the “isolated lot” category, where guidelines are more stringent about

the “context” of the surrounding structures.

The concerns of neighboring property owner Wayne Radford were also discussed, although Radford could not attend the April 4 hearing. Radford’s prime concern was that the large structure would cast too great a shadow on the historic house, but commissioners were satisfied by an architect’s “shadow study” which indicated that the new structure would cast less shadow on Radford’s house than Radford’s house casts on its neighbor to the north.

George Geib and Susan Williams, commissioners who voiced concerns over the project at the Feb. 7 meeting, said the changes satisfied their worries. Both voted for the project.

The approval included several variances for setback, floor area ratio, open space ratio, minimum livability space ratio and minimum major livability space ratio. The structure will feature a 31-foot, 5-inch setback from East Street and an 11-foot setback from Walnut Street. The north setback is one-foot to an open staircase and five feet to the building; the east setback is five feet.

Speaking for the Chatham Arch Neighborhood Association, Mark Porteous said the Urban Design Committee endorsed the project by an 8-1 vote, while the vote of the general membership was 37-4 with two absences.

IHPC President James Kienle recused himself from the hearing because his firm is serving as architect for the project. Mark Beebe is the project architect.