



# DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

BUILDING | HISTORIC PRESERVATION | PLANNING & ZONING

## PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD STAFF REPORT

314 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

Meeting	File No.	Application Type
July 15, 2024	2024-081-SPF-SPR-LV4	Architectural Style
Applicant/Property Owner		Authorized Agent
Ocean Parker Delray, LLC		Jeffrey A. Costello, AICP, FRA-RA

**Request**  
 Provide a recommendation to the City Commission regarding the implementation of the Masonry Modern architectural style within the Central Business District (CBD), pursuant to LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3)(e), Appropriate Architectural Styles.

### Site Data & Information

**Location:** 314 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

**PCN:** 12-43-46-16-01-081-0170

**Property Size:** 0.15 Acres

**Land Use Designation:** Commercial Core (CC)

**Zoning District:** CBD, Railroad Corridor Sub-district

**Adjacent Zoning:**

- **North, South & East:** CBD, Railroad Corridor Sub-district
- **West:** CBD, Central Core Sub-district

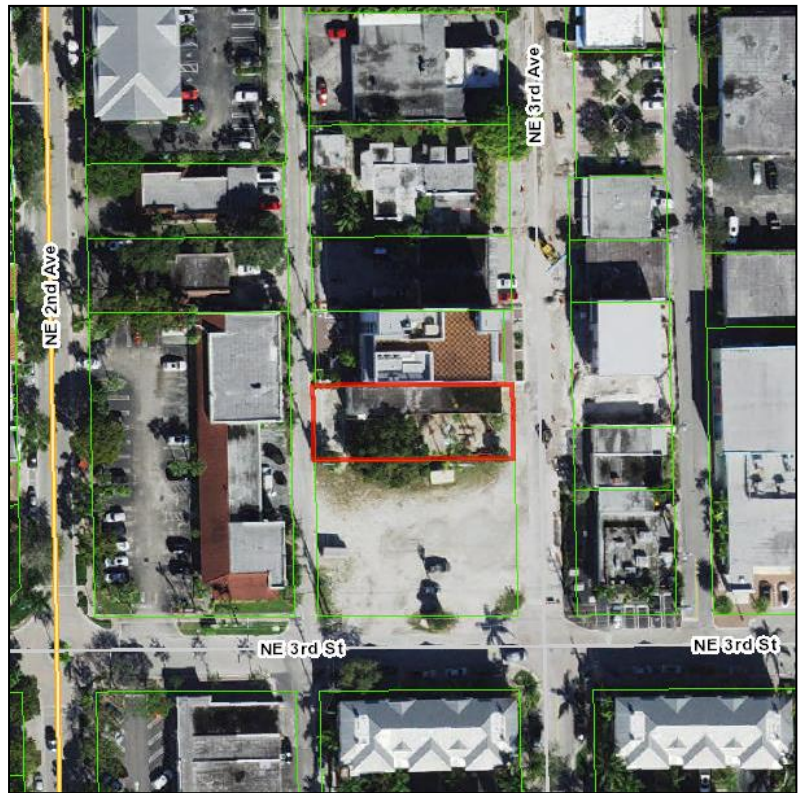
**Use:** Residential

**Floor Area Ratio:**

- **Existing:** 0.41
- **Proposed:** 1.07
- **Maximum Allowed:** 3.0

**CBD Railroad Corridor Sub-district**

- **NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue:** Secondary Street



**For Reference:** [LDR Section 4.4.13, CBD](#)



## Background

The site was originally developed in 1954 with a warehouse on the ground floor and one residential unit on the second floor, including a garage accessible via the alley. The warehouse, showcasing a simple masonry vernacular style commonly built in the 1950s, has been occupied with an art studio for several years. The property fronts NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, which has recently undergone streetscape improvements as part of a City funded public improvement project.

A Level 4 Site Plan application has been submitted to demolish the existing building and construct a mixed-use development featuring an office on the ground floor and a residential unit on the second floor. As part of this development application, the applicant is concurrently seeking approval to utilize the Masonry Modern architectural style within the CBD. The architectural style request requires approval by the City Commission, via recommendation by PZB, prior to the Level 4 Site Plan moving forward for City Commission approval. The applicant has also requested a waiver from the front setback requirement of 10 feet to 6 feet; the front setback relief also requires approval by the City Commission, via recommendation by PZB. The waiver will be reviewed as a separate agenda item.

## Description of Proposal

The development proposal is to establish a two-story mixed unit development with an office on the ground floor and a residential unit above with a rear parking garage. As an aspect of the site plan application, the applicant is seeking approval to utilize the Masonry Modern architectural style in the CBD, whereas pursuant to **LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3)(e), Appropriate Architectural Styles**, the Masonry Modern style requires approval by the City Commission via recommendation from PZB. The applicant has provided a narrative to demonstrate how the proposed design implements the selected style.



The final consideration of the architectural style will be made by the City Commission, subsequent to a recommendation by the Board. Following the final action of the architectural style by the City Commission, the complete Level 4 Site Plan will come before City Commission for final action.

Pursuant to **LDR Section 2.4.10(A)(1)(d)**, Level 4 Site Plan applications include requests that could otherwise be classified as Level 2 or 3 but have concurrent request requiring final action by the City Commission, i.e. waivers to the CBD requirements.

Pursuant to **LDR Section 2.1.5(E)(5)**, PZB shall review and make recommendations to the City Commission for Level 4 Site Plan applications, including any density or height increases, and associated relief such as waivers, variances, etc. To provide consistent review, the entire project including the architectural style, when necessary, will be reviewed by the same board as the site plan application.

## Review Analysis: Architectural Style

### **LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3)(e), Appropriate Architectural Styles**

*The use of Masonry Modern or Art Deco architectural styles requires City Commission approval, via recommendation by SPRAB or HBP, as applicable, City Commission approval is required prior to consideration of the site plan by SPRAB or HBP. Applicants shall provide an explanation, including graphics, demonstrating how the proposed building design implements the selected style.*





**Guidelines:**

Pursuant to the *Central Business District – Architectural Design Guidelines*, Masonry Modern is a style defined by its rational load bearing construction technique, a system of punched openings, simple geometries, and limited ornament. The style emphasizes the solidity of the mass with carved spaces to create entries and terraces. Stucco is the prevalent building finish, and stone and wood details are used to soften the stark modern forms of the building mass. The color palette is comprised primarily of whites and creams, with greens and blues to highlight details and darker hues to highlight the base or emphasize deep recesses of porches or loggias.

The style has an organized framework of a base, middle and top, the tripartite composition. The base, when comprised of commercial use, is emphasized with more glass and a clearly identifiable building entrance; the middle portions are typically more solid; and the top, often comprised of a flat roof, incorporates usable exterior spaces utilized for terraces. The terraces, eyebrows, arcade, louvers, vertical sunshades, or deep roof overhangs provide shade.

Windows are often recessed from the exterior face of the building, producing deep shadows, and exposing the thickness of the walls. The window proportions are typically vertical; however, the overall masonry openings can be either vertical, horizontal, or square.



**Proposed Design:**

The proposed design claims to adhere to the Masonry Modern style but falls short in several critical areas. The extensive use of custom design metal surfaces to cover the walls, while considered more appropriate for other architectural styles such as contemporary, or high-tech architecture, is fundamentally at odds with the Masonry Modern style, which emphasizes solidity, simple geometries, and the use of stucco, stone, and wood details. The use of custom design metal surfaces on the walls is a significant deviation from the expected materials in Masonry Modern architecture. The guidelines emphasize stucco as the prevalent finish, with stone and wood details to add warmth and texture. The metal surfaces not only fail to provide the desired solidity and simplicity but also create a stark, post-industrial appearance that contrasts with the style's principles. More thoughtful integration of materials and decorative elements would enhance the building's visual appeal and alignment with the guidelines.

While the design adheres to the tripartite composition in theory, the execution is not ideal. The base lacks sufficient transparency and prominence, and the middle section, intended to be more solid, is compromised by the inappropriate metal surfaces, which disrupt the visual cohesion and simplicity typical of Masonry Modern. However, the top section does utilize the opportunities for usable exterior spaces and shading elements.



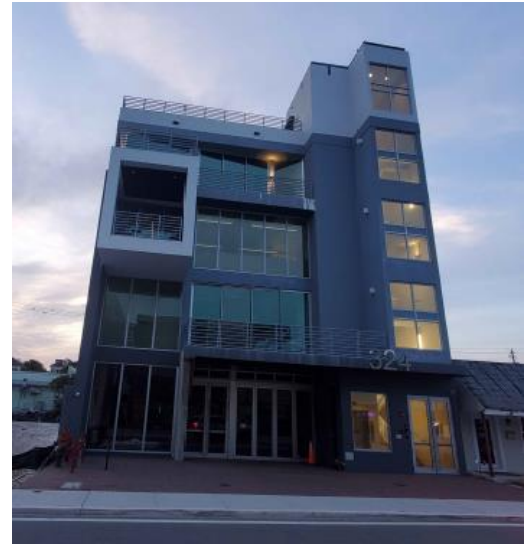
The design's approach to openings, featuring punched openings and recessed windows, is consistent with Masonry Modern principles. However, the placement and proportions of the windows lack coherence and visual harmony. The windows are not sufficiently recessed to produce the deep shadows characteristic of the style, and their simplistic geometry fails to add the necessary visual depth and interest.



**Analysis:**

The proposed Masonry Modern design, while compliant with some aspects of the style, falls short of fully integrating the characteristics required by the Land Development Regulations and the Central Business District Architectural Style Guidelines. The extensive use of custom design metal surfaces on the walls does not align with the desired style, as it diverges significantly from the materials and aesthetic principles of Masonry Modern. Simplicity and functionality are evident, but the lack of details, varied textures, and thoughtful integration of materials results in a design that feels incomplete and more high-tech or post-industrial rather than Masonry Modern.

The adjacent structures to the north and east are considered Masonry Modern (right: property abutting the north façade) (below: property across NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue). The automated parking garage east of the property utilizes an alternative façade design and incorporates metal panels attached to the structure. Masonry Modern is a common style in this area and the style would be harmonious with the surrounding environment, however, the proposed design will require significant revisions to meet the Masonry Modern style including removing the metal cladding and introducing more suitable materials like stucco, stone, and wood. Enhancing the design with additional stone and wood details, varied textures, recessed windows, and more intricate elements will create a more compelling and true representation of the Masonry Modern style. Alternatively, a different architectural approach that better fits the regional and site-specific context should be considered to achieve a more convincing and true representation of the intended style.



Pursuant **LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3)(c)**, elevations introducing a new style may be utilized with City Commission approval, via recommendation by the applicable Board.

**Board Considerations**

The Board should consider the following when evaluating the proposed style:

- Is the Masonry Modern style appropriate for both the regional and site-specific context, such that it fits well within the general downtown Delray Beach urban fabric?
- Is the proposed design a well-executed example of a Masonry Modern, such that the design elements from the Masonry Modern style – including material, form, and proportion - are clearly represented, or should an alternate style be proposed?

**Options for Board Action**

- Recommendation of **approval** to allow the use of a Masonry Modern architectural style, pursuant to **LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3)(e), Appropriate Architectural Styles**, for the property located at 314 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, by finding that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets criteria set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- Recommendation of **denial** to allow the use of a Masonry Modern architectural style, pursuant to **LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3)(e), Appropriate Architectural Styles**, for the property located at 314 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, by finding that the request is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and does not meet criteria set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- Move to **continue with direction**.