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Plaza Design MCP Council Chambers Design Review Narrative

Introduction

This project is in the heart of downtown Mesa, northeast corner of Main and Center Streets. The new City Council Chambers and Community Facility replaces the existing two-story building attached to the Mesa City Plaza Building (MCP).

The City of Mesa has long strived to consolidate their municipal operations and create a city hall complex with the existing assets in place. With light rail access and direct connection to Main Street this project strives to reinforce the surrounding private and public developments. The Mesa Arts Center, as well as the newly constructed ASU Sidney Poitier New American Film School and plaza anchor the public side. Housing and mixed-use developments along Main Street represent the private.

Proposed Project

General

The proposed project consists of a two-story atrium space with public entry from Main Street. The ground floor is organized with meeting and study session spaces, as well as related support functions and a connection to MCP's 2nd floor. The ground floor is organized with meeting space, study session function and related support functions with connection to MCP 1st floor. The second floor is the "jewel" consisting of city council chamber and related support functions in a two-story atrium setting with connection to the 2nd floor MCP building.

Site

The facility is oriented towards Main Street and conceptualized as an inviting and transparent space with relationship to the heart of Mesa. The interior space will be light filled during the day and will have a night presence unlike any other building along Main Street. The building is positioned to the edge of the streets and intended to connect to the existing pedestrian fabric and further enhanced by redeveloping the south park area. The "plinth" of the building is raised with integrated planter features, grand steps, and ADA access. All these features intend to further enhance the base of the building with landscaping while providing vehicle security protection.



Building Form

The key organizing concept is the idea of a building within a building. Placement of the chambers on the second floor, and within the atrium space, provides an important connection to MCP's 2nd floor. The placement of the chambers on the second floor and within the atrium space provides an important connection to MCP 2nd floor for council access and provides a layered protection system for council functions. The chamber space has clearstory natural lighting that projects above the sloped roof and further enhances the "jewel" in the desert concept. The chamber view on the 2nd floor looks out across the atrium space and to the Mesa Arts Center.

The ground floor is organized with public meeting spaces and the heavily used study session space. The study session space is the workhorse for public meetings and related functions. Its position on the ground floor is intended to activate the building and tie it to the surrounding pedestrian connections.

The building roof form with deep cantilever overhangs for sun and weather protection harkens something familiar in Mesa's heritage yet is unique to this site. The use of terracotta wall panels with earth tones reflects something familiar but different and contrasts with the curtainwall glass system. The base of the building with integrated battered concrete wall systems layers a common material that is used uniquely to further enhance the pedestrian experience.

Building Materials

The primary building materials are exposed concrete planter walls, earth tone terracotta walls panels, curtainwall glass systems, metal soffit systems and a standing seam metal roof. The concrete planter walls have an organic shape and form and are intended to be an exposed board/batten pattern unpainted or otherwise treated. The concrete complements the existing MCP building. The terracotta wall panels are a 12" x 60" horizontal format in a stacked pattern. Three proposed tones are integrated to provide a variegated random pattern harkening the local Lehi Brick. Interesting to note Terracotta is a very vintage building material that has been in use for hundreds of years. The curtain wall glass system supports the dual pane 1" thick glass in a dark bronze anodized finish. The curtain wall system is further enhanced by a "brise soleil" vertical and horizontal fin integrated with the curtain wall system finished in a contrasting anodized champagne color. Exposed soffit systems, which is a predominant feature for the deep overhangs, are prefinished metal. The standing seam roof is finished in a simulated copper finish to compliment MCP building and further reinforce a historical tie to the states copper industry.

Presence at Night

It was important to study the building in a night setting related to interior transparency and reinforce the "jewel in the desert" concept. We direct you to the night renderings to better understand the impact. We



have also integrated color changing LED lighting in certain areas to allow recognition of special events whether City, State or Federal, or for just plain fun!

Landscape Design

A full landscape design has not been provided. Based on schedule constraints and other factors the landscape and site design will be provided under separate submittal. Key concepts under development include a) connecting to the existing park improvements related to the ASU project; b) incorporating the “heritage” wall plaques in as sensory education space; c) create an outdoor event space related to the 1st floor council chambers; d) create terraced areas with artistic shade structures; e) possible water feature; f) organic outdoor seating; g) integrated lighting design. A precise landscape material palette will be provided with the full submittal.

Sincerely,

Vincent P. Di Bella

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Principal Architect