



Minneapolis-based BKV Group has updated the design for a six-story, 246-unit apartment project at 1400 Park Av Minneapolis to have a more "historic" façade than the one the Planning Commission approved in April. Weidner Apartment Homes and local developer Dan Hunt are seeking new approvals for the project to reflect those changes. (Submitted City of Minneapolis)

## A new, historic look for Weidner apartment project

By: Hank Long August 26, 2016 4:20 pm 0

A six-story, 246-unit Weidner Apartment Homes-led project is back before the Minneapolis Planning Commission as the prolific multifamily investor seeks changes to give its "1400 Park" building a more "historic" appearance.

In April the Planning Commission signed off on a site plan, rezoning request and several variances for the project at 1400 Park Ave. S. in downtown Minneapolis, five blocks southwest of U.S. Bank Stadium.

Since then Washington-based Weidner and local developer Dan Hunt have worked with Minneapolis-based BKV Group to make design changes to the building façade that are "dramatically different" from the previous iteration, said Hunt, a partner on the project.

Weidner intends to break ground on the project — at the southwest quadrant of Park Avenue and East 14th Street — during the first quarter of 2017, with an early 2019 completion date, Hunt said.

The new design incorporates several shades of red and cream brick, mansard rooftops at the corners, and several covered porch entries on the walk-up units for the project, according to a project narrative. The changes allow the apartment complex to better match the historic character of other buildings in the neighborhood, said.

"BKV did a great job on the [initial] building design, but when we went through the approvals, Weidner had some questions after they took a harder look at it," Hunt said. "They thought 'that's a great design, but it



This rendering shows the Weidner Apartment Homes' "1400 Park" building in downtown Minneapolis. (Submitted rendering: City of Minneapolis)

preference is have it be a little more traditional,” he added.

While the new site plan request doesn't change the layout of the units and amenities, the updated plans call for a slightly taller building (which now includes some tower elements) and some changes to the exterior of the building, said Lisa Steiner, a Minneapolis senior planner.

BKV contacted the city planning department in June about the proposed changes to the project, she added.

The city planning staff has recommended approval for all of the changes, with the exception of a request from the developer for a variance that would allow it to build a fence on the southwest perimeter of the site at 5 feet. City ordinance limits front yard fence heights to 4 feet.

In July, the development team presented the changes to Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc. The neighborhood organization endorsed the changes on Aug. 10, according to a letter submitted to the city from executive director Lynn Regnier.

Elliot Park residents “have been very supportive of the project all along,” Hunt said. “I think it’s fair to say that of the day they liked this [new] design even more than” the one that was approved in the spring.

The complex will offer mostly one- and two-bedroom apartments ranging from 715 to 1,500 square feet. Studios and nine penthouse suites also are part of the mix, according to a project narrative. About 2,500 square feet of ground-floor commercial space is planned.

Common-area amenities include an 18,500-square-foot rooftop and interior courtyard with turf grass and “rooftop” elements built above the parking garage. The courtyard will also feature a pool, spa, patio, a bar and seating area, and seating areas.

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