

# D/DRC Case

823 Lady Street  
City Center Design/Development District  
TMS: 09013-13-17

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**DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT**  
**EVALUATION SHEET**  
Case #1

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**ADDRESS:** 823 Lady Street

**APPLICANT:** Ajay Champaneri, developer

**TAX MAP REFERENCE:** 09013-13-17

**USE OF PROPERTY:** undeveloped parcel

**REVIEW DISTRICT:** City Center Design/Development District

**NATURE OF REQUEST:** Request for Certificate of Design Approval for new construction of Aloft hotel.

**FINDINGS/COMMENTS:**

**5.3.1 Building Heights**

*As a general rule and consistent with current zoning provisions, buildings within most of City Center should be no more than five stories... It is however, critical that in applying these Guidelines- as well as other development regulations- that the City be consistent in considering the height of proposed structures as they relate to the adjacent development context.*

The building is five stories, with an additional basement level on the western end where the grade drops.

**5.3.2 Façade Proportion and Rhythm**

*Whenever an infill building is proposed that is much “wider” than the existing characteristic facades on the street, the infill facades should be broken down into a series of appropriately proportioned “structural bays” or components typically segmented by a series of columns or masonry piers that frame window, door, and bulkhead components.*

The contemporary design of the building is strongly horizontal and does not lend itself to traditional structural bays; however, the articulation of the street wall and storefront features, which have a strong impact on the pedestrian realm, will be addressed in a later section.

The Commission had some concerns about the massing during the informational presentation last week. To address this, the architect has removed the horizontal cast stone accent band from between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors and also from between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. He has added extruded, darker brick accent panels around the second and third floor windows to add vertical articulation, both to the east and south facades. The termination of the darker panel above the third floor seems abrupt and random. Staff recommends that this detail continue up to the cast stone band on above the 5<sup>th</sup> floor windows, and also be added to the west façade for a consistent design concept that relates to the corner tower.

### **5.3.3 Proportion of Openings**

*Maintain the predominant difference between upper story openings and street level storefront openings (windows and doors). Usually, there is a much greater window area (70 percent) at the storefront level for pedestrians to have a better view of the merchandise displayed behind as opposed to upper stories, which have smaller window openings (40 percent).*

The proportion of openings on the upper floors, while slightly less than 40%, works well with the design of the building, with pairs of punched windows at the rooms and glass and metal panels transitioning to the corner element. Integrating the vents into the punched openings below the windows (rather than having separate vent openings) reads as larger window openings and is the preferable configuration.

The percentage of storefront at the street level is very high at the corner and along the lobby. The architect has added some accents to the blank portion of wall on Lincoln Street to address concerns about the blank wall.

### **5.3.5 Wall Articulation**

*Large, unbroken façade surfaces should be avoided, especially at the storefront level. This can be achieved in a number of ways including: (a) dividing the façade into a series of display windows with smaller panes of glass; (b) constructing the façade with small human scale materials such as brick or decorative tile along bulkheads; (c) providing traditional recessed entries; (d) careful sizing, placement, and overall design of signage; and (e) providing consistent door and window reveals.*

Along Lady Street, the storefront is continuous until the grade starts to drop in front of the basement. While windows do not make sense here, this expanse of wall below the outdoor dining area needs something to maintain the interest of the pedestrian along this sidewalk. Windows were added along the western end of the Lady Street elevation at the restaurant at the request of staff, which helps with the overall percentage of window openings. Staff recommends some long, rectangular planters below the outdoor dining terrace to soften and add interest to this long, blank expanse of wall.

### **5.3.6 Roofs and Upper Story Details**

*Roofs may be flat or sloped. The visible portion of sloped roofs should be sheathed with a roofing material complementary to the architectural style of the building and other surrounding buildings.*

*Cornice lines of new buildings (horizontal rhythm element) should complement buildings on adjacent properties to maintain continuity.*

*Radical roof pitches that create overly prominent or out-of-character buildings are strongly discouraged. Shallow gables or fenestrated parapets may be allowed if in character with surrounding buildings.*

The flat roof and corner tower element with a wide overhang reinforces the strong horizontal design of the building, and is consistent with the surrounding context.

*Roof mounted mechanical or utility equipment should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the structure in terms of materials, color, shape, and size. Equipment should be screened by solid building elements (e.g., parapet wall) instead of after-the-fact add-on screening (e.g. wood or metal slats)*

Roof-mounted utility equipment is not shown at this point in the design process; details of roof any roof-mounted equipment and related screening shall be submitted for review when it becomes available.

#### **5.4.1 Setbacks**

*The maximum setback for any new structure should be the average of the existing setback in the block and adjacent blocks where the project is to be constructed. In situations where the average is not established, the setback will be ten feet.*

The building sits at the property line on both street frontages.

#### **5.4.2 Street Orientation**

*Storefronts should be designed to orient to the major street frontage. While side or rear entries may be desirable, the predominant major building entry should be oriented toward the major street.*

The entrances are properly located along the street edge. There are two entries, the one on Lady slightly above grade with steps, and the one on Lincoln at grade providing ADA access. Both entries address the street with lighted canopies and signage.

*Buildings on corners should include storefront design features for at least 50 percent of the wall area on the side street elevation.*

Lincoln would be considered the side street; there is close to 50% storefront. The suggestion to add a window here was not feasible due to fire-rated stair-well. Brick accents and a small amount of landscaping have been added to this blank section of wall.

#### **5.5 Open Spaces in Private Development**

*City Center's streets, with their street trees and pedestrian amenities, are the districts primary open space. The narrow setbacks are intended to prevent development of the broad landscaped open spaces typical of suburban campus-like settings. Any unbuilt zones along the setback line (i.e. plazas, entrance courts) shall be small, intense areas that re placed and designed so that they will be occupied at various time of the day.*

*To invite public use and ensure user security, plazas or other public open spaces should be visible from streets and sidewalks, and should be surrounded by actively programmed building spaces such as shops, restaurants, residential units or offices.*

*The design of plazas and open spaces in private development should conform to the guidelines for public open spaces, and the landscaping guidelines in the following section.*

The east portion of the parcel is being transformed from a driveway to an outdoor patio and pedestrian alley that leads to the parking garage on the adjacent parcel. The design of this alley is critical to provide a safe, attractive, highly finished urban space for pedestrians to use, as this will likely be the primary route from the parking garage to the Vista. The applicant has retained a landscape architect to design the space.

Staff recommends that more shade be incorporated. Since there are underground utilities, the recommendation is to provide an arbor structure or green screen to provide at least shade along the western edge of the walkway and patio, if not along the southern edge of the patio as well.

Staff also recommends that lighting to match the Vista streetscape lighting be provided for safety and continuity as a public access-way.

### **5.7.1 Storefront Composition, Accessories, and Detail**

*The main entry leading to a lobby, stair, or central corridor, should be emphasized at the street to announce a point of arrival in one or more of the following ways... covered by means of a portico (formal porch) projecting from or set into the building face (refer to zoning guidelines for allowable projections); punctuated by means of a change in roofline, a tower, or a break in the surface of the subject wall... Buildings situated at the corner of a public street should provide a prominent corner entrance to street level shops or lobby space, in a manner consistent with Main Entries, as described above.*

The building is well articulated at the corner by the taller tower element. At the storefront level, both entrances are marked with the Aloft Hotel signature canopy.

*Commercial storefront entries are typically recessed and/or sheltered by a covered arcade structure, canopy, or awning... Recessed entries should be retained and are strongly encouraged in new storefront construction, although overly deep entries (over 5-feet) should be avoided, as they may attract transients.*

The Lady Street entrance is recessed more than the recommended 5 feet. However, it is a few feet above street level. As well, given the use of the building, hotels have an active presence 24/7 that would add a safety element to this space.

### **Door and Window Design**

*Use of clear glass (at least 88 percent light transmission) on the first floor is recommended.*

The proposed glass is “lightly tinted.” More details shall be submitted for review and approval.

### **Awnings and Canopies**

*Awnings and canopies provide the opportunity to add color and visual relief to buildings, as well as serving a functional purpose by protecting the windows from direct sunlight...*

The awning on the southwest corner has been added since the informational presentation. It emphasizes the restaurant entrance, and uses the material of the corner tower element, tying it into the overall building design. The awning picks up at a lower level where the dark horizontal band stops along Lady Street, emphasizing the step-down of the façade along the street.

### **5.7.2 Exterior Walls/ Materials**

*The following materials are considered appropriate for City Center. The number of different wall materials used in any one building should, however, be kept to a minimum (ideally, two or less).*

*Building walls: clear glass, ... stucco/exterior plaster (smooth trowled), new or used face brick, cut stone, rusticated block (cast stone)...*

*The following materials are considered inappropriate in City Center and are discouraged: imitation masonry, reflective or opaque glass (at the street level), vinyl, aluminum, or other metal siding, unfinished wood..., plastic panels, vertical siding...*

This building has three primary materials, and an accent material. The bulk of the building is brick, which is considered appropriate and widely used. The architect has introduced a second color of brick on the vertical panels surrounding the window pairs on the upper floors. Staff has recommended this concept be explored with the same color brick. The revised plans include a continuous base of cast stone along Lady Street and also on the west elevation, which

eliminates the stucco; an improvement. The aluminum panels are above the street level and make a statement on the corner of the building; they are also visually tied to the canopies and signage.

The cement board panels are used as an accent on Lincoln Street and on the rear elevation. The cast concrete detailing is a recommended material and works well as an accent in the large expanse of brick, tying in the base color through the upper façade and again emphasizing the strong horizontal lines of the design.

### **5.8.3 (Upper Façade) Windows**

*Upper story window should create a sense of scale and add articulation and visual interest to the upper façade.*

The upper story windows are properly scaled for the building. The architect has provided details/sections of the window configuration that indicate a 5” reveal, giving relief to the punched openings. This is an important detail on a modern façade that has few architectural details. Additionally, the extruded vertical panels have been added to the upper façade to add to the vertical articulation.

### **5.10 Parking Facility, Location, Landscaping, and Screening**

*Generally, the parking required for each block should be contained within the block. Where parcels within a block are developed by different owners, the parking requirements of each development should be accommodated within its own parcel unless a cooperative parking plan is submitted at the time of the earliest development.*

The parking is provided in the Washington Street garage, which shares the rear property line with this parcel. Again, the approach to the parking garage must be carefully designed and submitted for approval as it is developed.

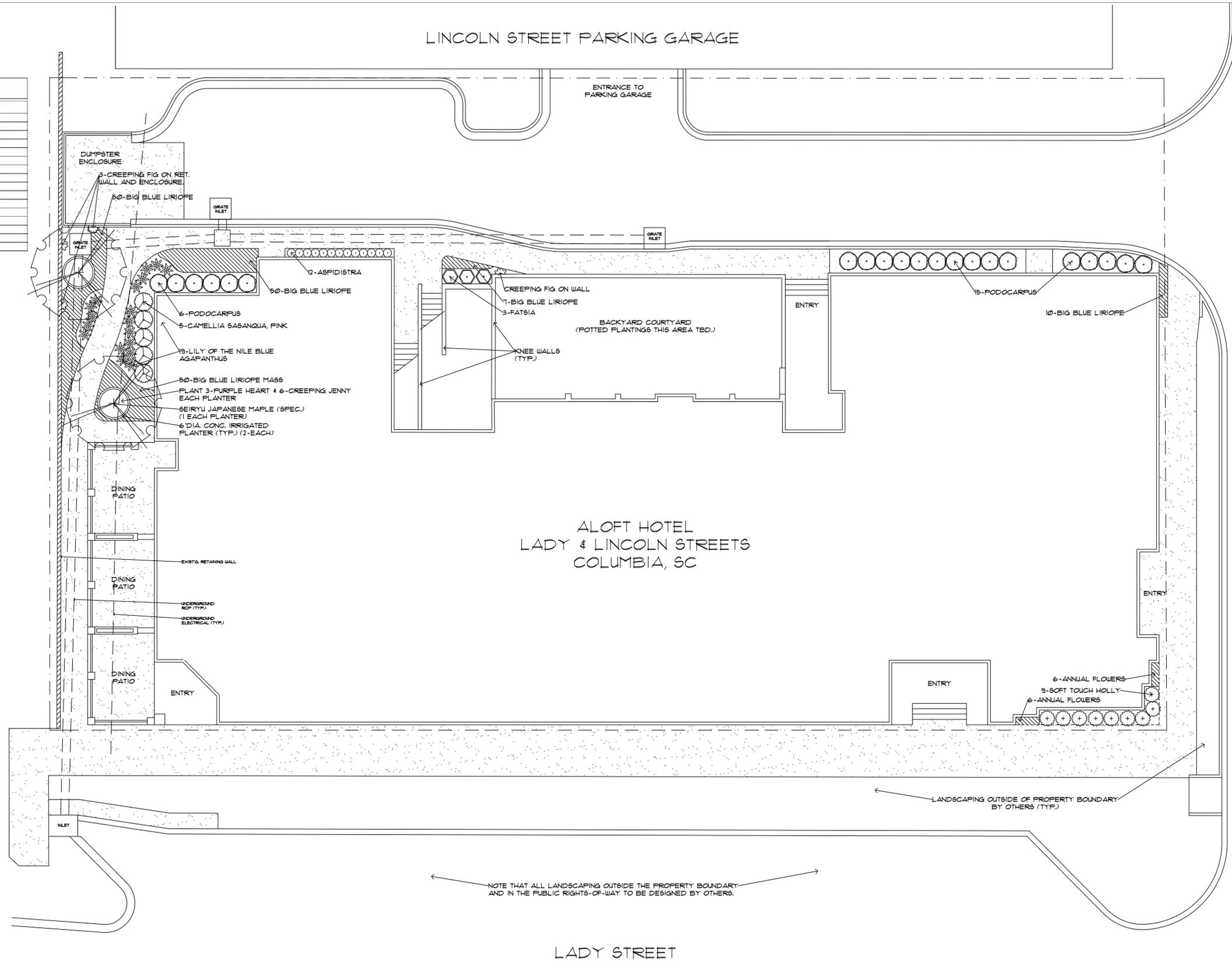
### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends approval of the design, conditional upon the following items:

- The vertical panels be extended to the accent band above the fifth floor, and continued in the same pattern on the western façade.
- Planters or a mural be added to the Lady Street façade beneath the outdoor dining area to provide interest to a blank brick wall.
- An arbor or green-screen be added to the patio/alleyway to provide shade and to soften the hardscape
- Lighting to match the Lady Street streetscape be added to the pedestrian walkway to the garage.

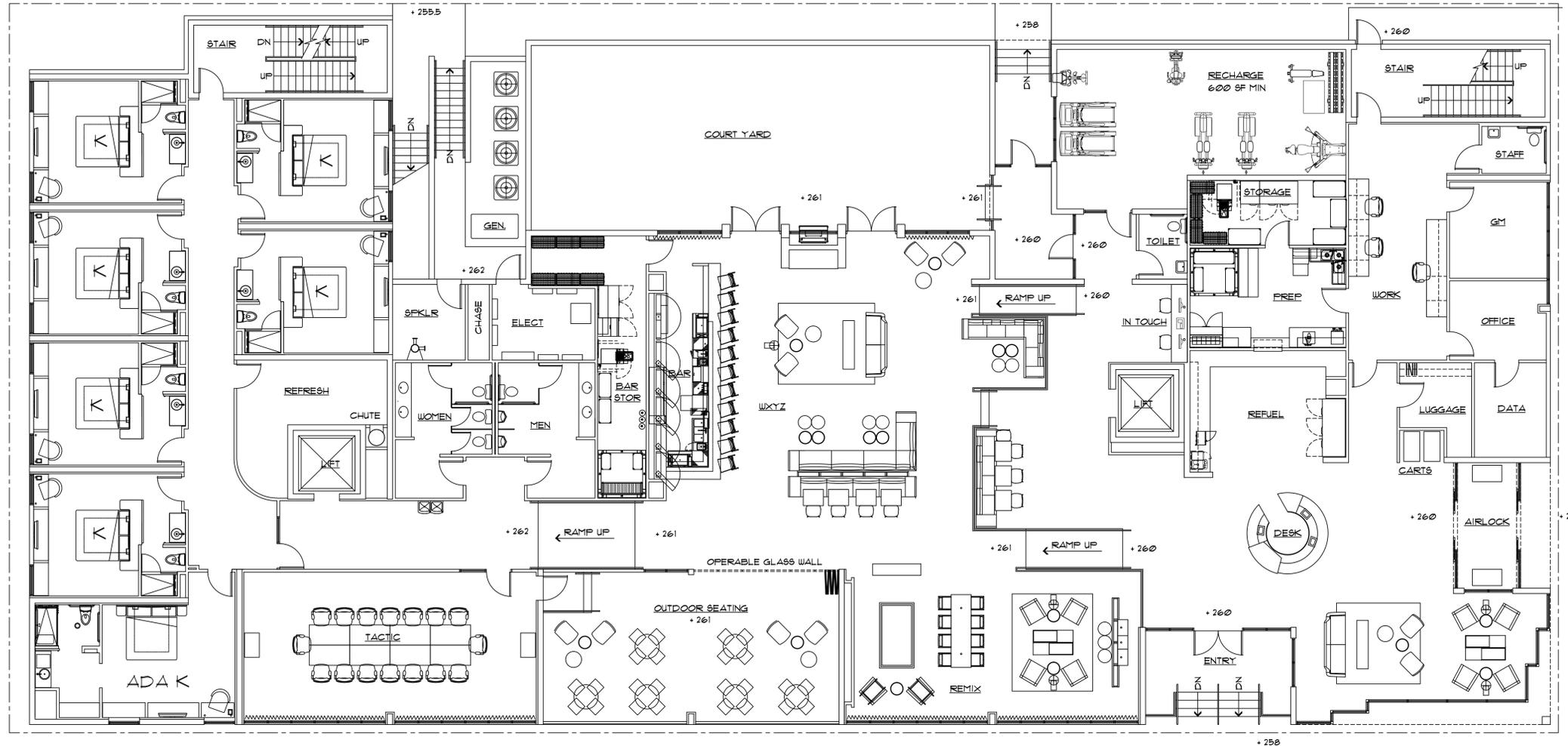
QUAN.	COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	SIZE	SPACING	COMMENT
2	SEIRYU JAPANESE MAPLE	ACER PALMATUM 'SEIRYU'	6'-8"H	1 EA, PLTR.	CONTAINER GROWN SPECIMENS FOR PLANTERS
5	CAMELLIA SASANQUA, PINK	CAMELLIA SASANQUA, PINK VARIETY	3GAL/30"HEAD	3"/C	FOUNDATION PLANTING
21	PODOCARPUS	PODOCARPUS MACROPHYLLUS 'MAKI'	3GAL/24"HEAD	3"/C	FOUNDATION PLANTING
3	FATSIA	FATSIA JAPONICA	3GAL/36"HEAD	3"/C	FOUNDATION PLANTING
9	SOFT TOUCH HOLLY	ILEX CRENATA 'SOFT TOUCH'	3GAL/24"HEAD	3"/C	FOUNDATION PLANTING
19	LILY-OF-THE-NILE, BLUE	AGAPANTHUS AFRICANUS, BLUE VAR.	3GAL	MASS	ACCENT MASSES
12	ASPIDISTRA	ASPIDISTRA ELATIOR	1GAL	12"/O/C	FOUNDATION PLANTING
4	CREEPING FIG	FICUS PUMILIA	4" POT		CLIMBING WALL COVER, REMOVE WINTER KILL
167	BIG BLUE LIRIOPE	LIRIOPE MUSCARI 'BIG BLUE'	1GAL	MASS	TURF-LIKE MASSES
12	CREEPING JENNY	LYSIMACHIA NUMMULARIA 'AUREA'	4" POT	6 EA. PLTR.	TRAILING ACCENT FOR PLANTERS
6	PURPLE HEART	SETCREASEA PALLIDA	4" POT	3 EA. PLTR.	TRAILING ACCENT FOR PLANTERS
12	ANNUAL FLOWERS		1GAL	MASS	2 MASSES @ BLDG. CORNER AS SHOWN

- NOTES:
- ALL LANDSCAPE BEDS AND PLANTERS ARE TO BE IRRIGATED.
  - PLANTERS ALONG WALK TO BE 6" DIA. MIN. 4" H. MIN. TO ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE SOIL/ROOT VOLUME.
  - TREES IN PLANTERS TO BE CONTAINER-GROWN SPECIMENS WITH CANOPIES TO ALLOW PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT BENEATH.
  - PLANTERS TO BE CONCRETE BUT MOVEABLE TO ALLOW UTILITY ACCESS IF NEEDED.
  - DINING PATIOS AND COURTYARD PLANTER PLANTINGS TO BE DETERMINED.



ALOFT HOTEL  
PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE PLAN & PLANT SCHEDULE





1  
 A1.1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1' - 0"  
 HEATED AREA: 13,404 SQUARE FEET

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ARCHITECT

DESIGN • PLANNING • ARCHITECTURE

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No.	Revisions	Date

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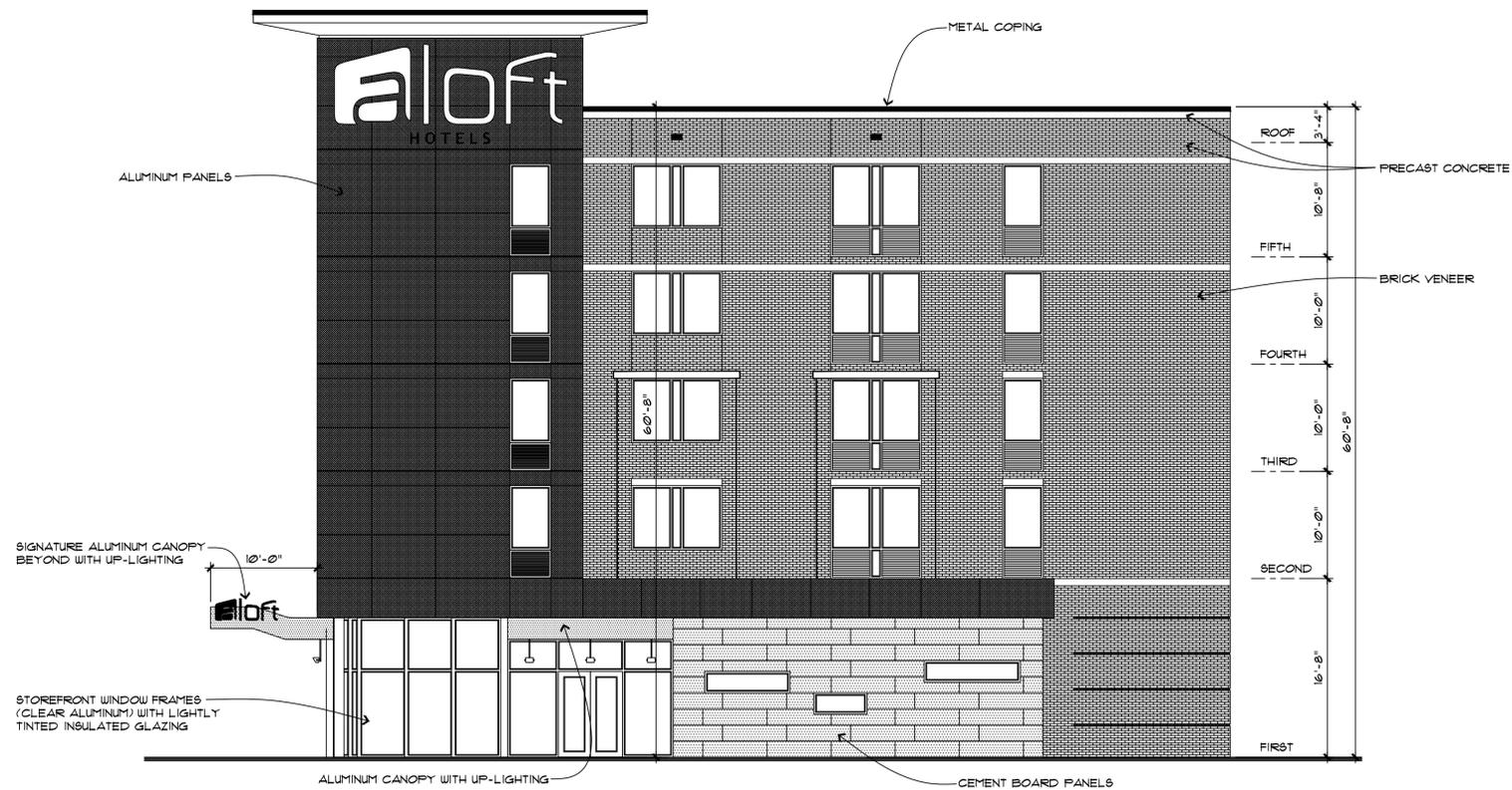
Project Title ALOFT HOTEL  
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

Drawing Title  
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Consultant

Seal	Date JANUARY 27, 2015
	Drawn By OTTO
	Drawing No. A1.1

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



2 LINCOLN STREET / RIGHT EXTERIOR ELEVATION  
 A2.1 SCALE: 1/8" = 1' - 0"



1 LADY STREET / FRONT EXTERIOR ELEVATION  
 A2.1 SCALE: 1/8" = 1' - 0"

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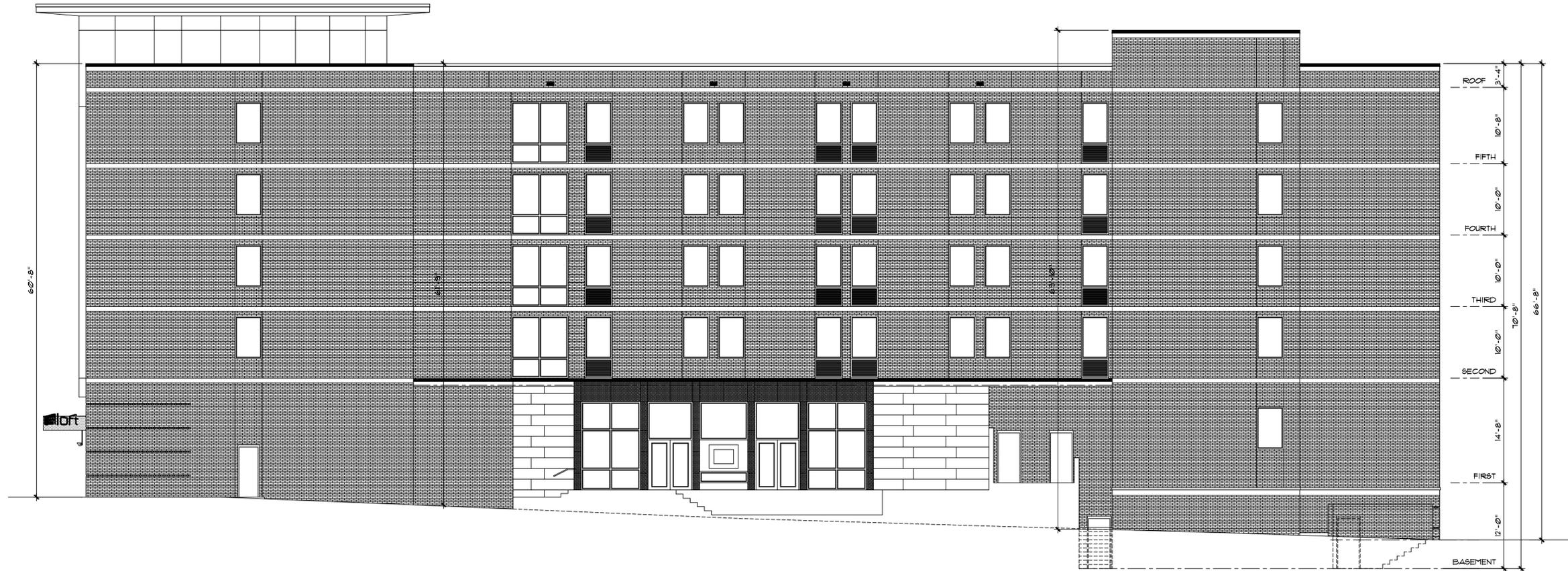
Project Title  
 ALOFT HOTEL  
 COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

Drawing Title  
 EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

Consultant

Seal	Date FEBRUARY 23, 2015
	Drawn By OTTO
	Drawing No. A2.1

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



1 PARKING GARAGE / REAR EXTERIOR ELEVATION  
 A2.2 SCALE : 1/8" = 1' - 0"



2 WEST / LEFT EXTERIOR ELEVATION  
 A2.2 SCALE : 1/8" = 1' - 0"

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Project Title  
 ALOFT HOTEL  
 COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

Drawing Title  
 EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

Consultant

Seal  
 Date  
 FEBRUARY 23, 2015  
 Drawn By  
 OTTO  
 Drawing No.

A2.2

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