

**MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**STAFF REPORT** **#17**

**CASE NUMBER:** S.U.P. 08-228    **L.U.C.B. MEETING:** October 9, 2008

**LOCATION:** Southwest corner of Jefferson Avenue and Main Street

**OWNER OF RECORD / APPLICANT:** Summit Management Corporation

**REPRESENTATIVE:** Allison T. Gilbert

**REQUEST:** A Courtyard by Marriot Hotel containing 131 guest rooms

**AREA:** 0.4365 Acre

**EXISTING LAND USE & ZONING:** Parking Lot/Central Business District (CBD)

**SURROUNDING USES AND ZONING:**

**North:** Restaurant uses and residential uses such as the Lowenstein Tower and Claridge House located in the CBD Zoning District

**East:** Renovations currently occurring on the Lowenstein Building and Lincoln American Tower in the CBD Zoning District

**South:** An existing Sleep Inn Hotel and Springhill Suites by Marriot Hotel located in the CBD Zoning District

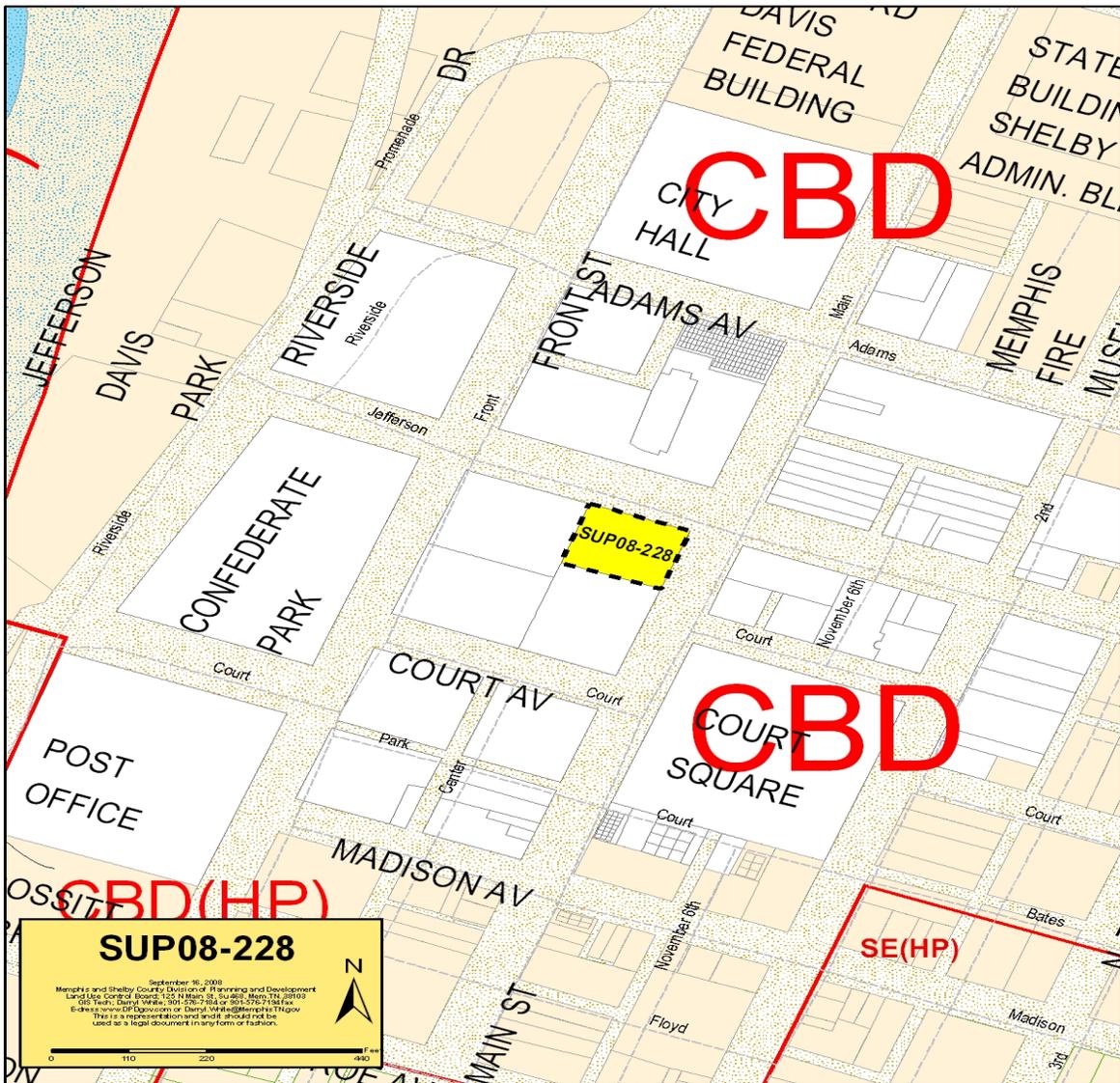
**West:** A surface parking lot and the Morgan Keegan Tower located in the CBD Zoning District

**OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATION:**

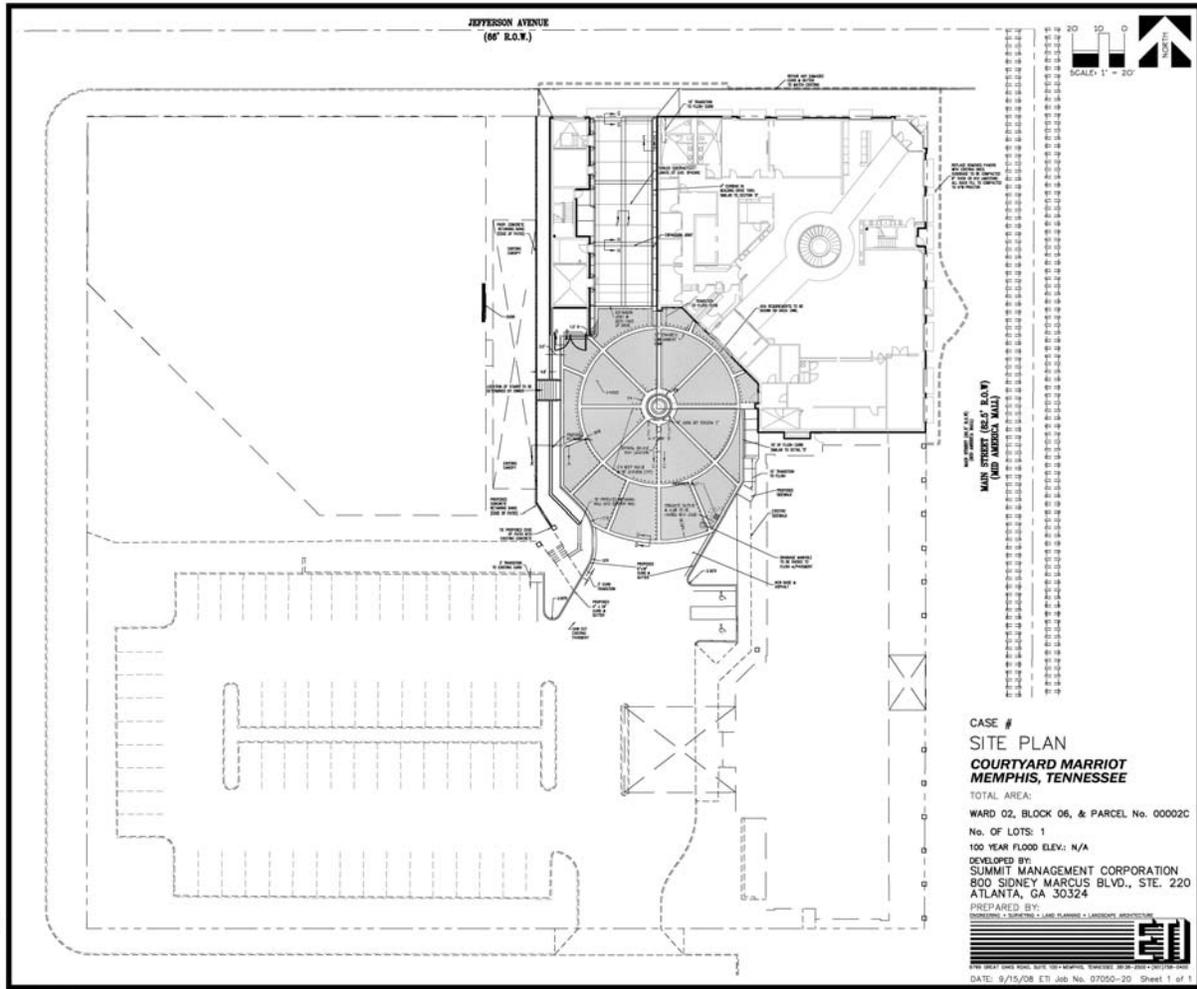
*Approval With One Condition*

## **CONCLUSIONS**

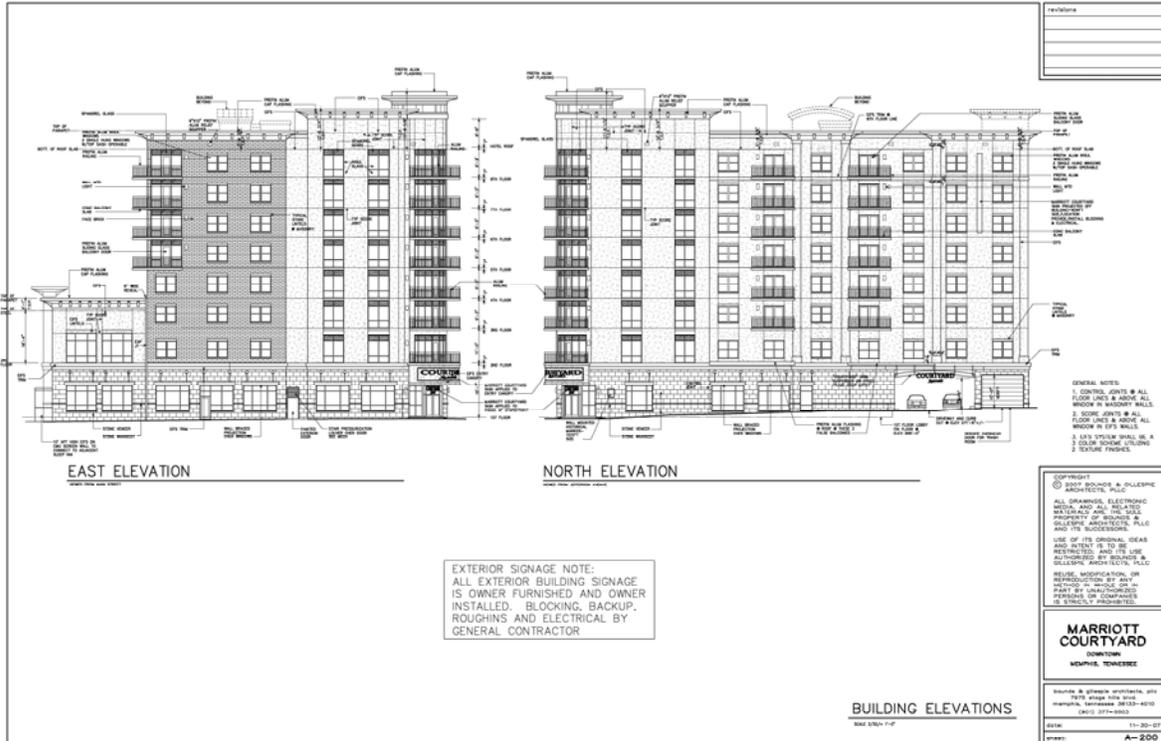
1. Since 1995, special use permit approval has been required for the construction of any new hotel to ensure that hourly and non-hourly rate hotels are located, designed, and operated according to specific criteria adopted as part of the Zoning Regulations.
2. The proposed Courtyard by Marriot Hotel is a non-hourly rate facility that will provide needed guest room space in the Downtown Memphis area.
3. The proposed site plan and building elevations are consistent with the two adjoining hotels (Springhill Suites by Marriot and the Sleep Inn) south of the proposed site.
4. While a surface parking lot is being displaced by the construction, there remain many existing parking facility options within a block of the site. Of the 131 rooms proposed, the applicant has stated that a parking demand for a downtown facility such as this is approximately 60 to 65 spaces. There is no minimum parking requirement for businesses in the Central Business District.
5. The Center City Commission has reviewed and approved the hotel.
6. The Office of Planning and Development supports the request and encourages such uses in the downtown area that provide both day and night activity areas such as those a lodging facility provides.



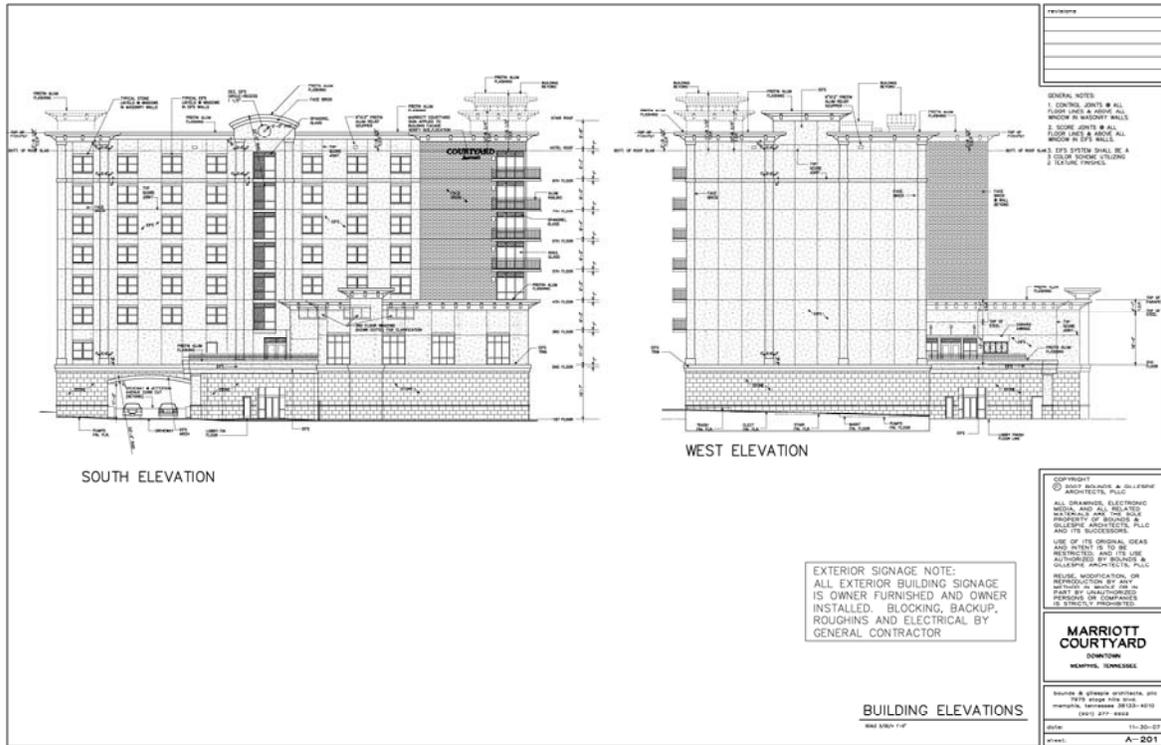
*Vicinity/Zoning/Land Use Map*



***Proposed Site Plan For a 131-room, 8-story Courtyard by Marriot Hotel. The hotel will be built over an existing parking lot.***



*Proposed East and North Building Elevations*



*Proposed South and West Building Elevations*



*Current View of the Subject Property with the Morgan Keegan Building in the background*



*Rear View of the Subject Property. The property is currently being used as a parking lot.*



*View of the site frontage along Main Street Mall. Construction plans include the removal of the Cypress Trees on site, but retention of the Oak Trees in the mall walkway.*



*This is a picture of the site edge along Jefferson Avenue. The building will have a “zero” setback, being built abutting the sidewalk.*



*Directly opposite the site on the east side of the Main Street Mall, the Lowenstein Building is undergoing an extensive renovation. The adjoining Lincoln American Tower Building is under renovation as well.*



*The Sleep Inn Hotel is directly south of the proposed hotel site.*



*Marriot's Springhill Suites Hotel is directly south of the Sleep Inn.*

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

***Existing Site/Surrounding Area Character*** – The subject property is located in the heart of downtown Memphis on approximately one-half acre. It is currently being utilized as a surface parking lot and has been so since approximately 1984 when the site was part of a redevelopment plan that included the demolition of the King Cotton Hotel and construction of the Morgan Keegan Tower adjoining the site to the west.

The site is in an area of downtown that has seen many recent improvements to the immediate area including the renovation of Court Square, renovation of two landmark buildings directly east of the site (the Lowenstein Building and Lincoln American Tower) and the construction of two adjoining hotels to the site (a Sleep Inn and Springhill Suites by Marriot). The aforementioned Morgan Keegan Tower is one of downtown's premiere office buildings housing several hundred employees. One block north of the hotel site is the city's Civic Center Plaza containing four substantial office buildings housing federal, state, county, and city offices.

The site is accessible by several means including the Main Street Mall Trolley which provides service to both Downtown and Midtown Memphis and by automobile with Jefferson Avenue forming the site's northern edge. In addition, the site is easily accessible by foot from anywhere in the downtown area.

While the new hotel will eliminate the existing surface parking lot, there is no minimum parking requirement required in Central Business District zoning. Nonetheless, parking will remain available through other existing facilities including parking garages in close proximity to the hotel that can provide valet parking options.

***Proposed Development Plan*** – The proposed Courtyard by Marriot will contain 131 guest rooms within an 8-story building. The site plan and building elevations are provided on Pages 4-6 of this staff report. While on-site parking is being eliminated, there will be vehicular access from Jefferson Avenue so patrons may drive up to check in/check out and provide their auto to or receive their auto by valet.

The hotel footprint will consist of a building that extends to the public walkway edge of both Jefferson Avenue and the Main Street Mall. Because of this, the existing Cypress Trees that were planted some years ago on the property as parking lot beautification will be removed. It is also likely that the existing trees between the Morgan Keegan Tower and the rear of the hotel may be removed as well to accommodate stairs and mechanical equipment needs.

The building elevations provide for three primary materials – stone for the bottom floor, brick for a portion of the east, west, and south elevations, and EIFS (synthetic stucco) for the majority of all elevations. Balconies will be added to a number of rooms.

The setback, rhythm, and spacing of the facility will be consistent with the immediate development in the area. The facility is similar in character and style with the adjoining hotels and will create a block and a half length of hotel facades along this portion of Main Street Mall from Jefferson Avenue stretching nearly to Madison Avenue.

*Conclusions* – The special use permit is recommended for approval. The hotel use is ideally sited in the heart of downtown and is easily accessible. It presents the element of a round-the-clock business in the downtown area that helps in keeping “people activity” in the downtown area in the evening and night. It is compatible with surrounding uses and provides an amenity to Downtown Memphis that will help attract and retain operations such as conventions, businesses, and tourism. It is a much higher re-use of the existing property than a surface parking lot and is a welcome addition to the downtown area.

**RECOMMENDATION: Approval of a Courtyard by Marriot Hotel subject to the following condition:**

1. The scored and warped area on the west end of the proposed curb cut shall be ten feet in length, and the existing fire hydrant shall be relocated to a point at least five feet from the edge of the curb cut slab.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Street Frontage:</b>	133 feet on Main Street Mall; 151 feet on Jefferson Avenue
<b>Planning District:</b>	Downtown/Medical Center
<b>Zoning Atlas Page:</b>	2025
<b>Zoning History:</b>	The Central Business District zoning dates back to its inception in 1955.

## DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS

The following comments were provided by agencies to which this application was referred:

### City Engineer:

The scored and warped area on the west end of the proposed curb cut shall be ten feet in length, and the existing fire hydrant shall be relocated to a point at least five feet from the edge of the curb cut slab.

### City Fire Division:

Jefferson: The exhibits are not clear. Construction appears to be an extension to the north of the hotel. Fire access shall be a concern as plans are developed. There appears to be an elevated walkway west to Morgan Keegan bldg.

### City Real Estate:

None.

### City/County Health:

The Water Quality Branch has no comments for OPD Case Number SUP 08-228.

### City Board of Education:

The subject property does not appear to be adjacent to any property which has been identified as belonging to Memphis City Schools (MCS). No identifiable impact on MCS' school-aged population nor MCS' property interests. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

### Construction Code Enforcement:

No comments received.

### **Memphis Light, Gas and Water:**

MLGW has reviewed the referenced application, and has no objection, subject to the following comments:

Please note: MLGW has existing underground electric, gas and water utilities within the scope of the outline plan.

- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to pay the cost of any work performed by MLGW to install, remove or relocate any facilities to accommodate the proposed development.
- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to identify any utility easements, whether dedicated or prescriptive (electric, gas, water, CATV, telephone, sewer, drainage, etc.), which may encumber the subject property, including underground and overhead facilities. No permanent structures will be allowed within any utility easements.
- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to comply with the **National Electric Safety Code (NESC)** and maintain minimum horizontal/vertical clearances between existing overhead electric facilities and any proposed structures.
- **Landscaping is prohibited** within any MLGW utility easement. No trees, shrubs or permanent structures will be allowed within any MLGW utility easements.
- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to contact **TN-1-CALL @ 1.800.351.1111**, before digging, and to determine the location of any underground utilities including electric, gas, water, CATV, telephone, etc
- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to submit a detailed plan to MLGW Engineering for the purposes of determining the availability and capacity of existing utility services to serve any proposed or future development(s).
- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to contact the appropriate MLGW engineering area to determine if system improvements may be required and any related cost:
  - MLGW Engineering - **Residential Development:** 528-4858
  - MLGW Engineering - **Commercial Development:** 367-3343
- **It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant** to pay the cost of any utility system improvements necessary to serve the proposed development with electric, gas or water utilities.

**Bell South:** No comments received.

**Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA):** No comments received.

**OPD-Regional Services:** No comments received.

**OPD-Plans Development:**

No comment.

**Landmarks:**

This property is within the Court Square National Register District. I hope the new structures will not overshadow the existing historic buildings, and will have good pedestrian relationships with Main Street.

**Downtown N.A.:** No comments received.