



City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Land Use Services

FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Paul L. Scarlett, Director
Phone: (503) 823-7300
Fax: (503) 823-5630
TTY: (503) 823-6868
www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 29, 2016
To: Portland Historic Landmarks Commission
From: Hillary Adam, Land Use Services
503-823-3581
Re: 15-197297 DA – Grand Belmont
Design Advice Request Memo March 7, 2016

Attached is a drawing set for the Design Advice Request of a new mixed-use building at 514 SE Belmont. Two prior Design Advice Requests were held on August 24, 2015 and September 28, 2015. The attached packet includes the DAR #1 concept, DAR #2 concept and two new designs, described as DAR #3 – Bar and DAR #3 – Tower. Each proposal achieves the maximum FAR with bonuses (12:1) and includes 193 to 214 residential units above ground floor commercial space with above-grade parking at levels 2 and 3; however DAR #3 – Bar was previously shown to staff with all parking below grade.

The proposals can be distinguished as follows:

- A)** DAR #1 is 15 floors at a height of 158’; **B)** DAR #2 is 14 floors at 147’;
- C)** DAR #3 – Bar is 14 floors at 150’; and **D)** DAR #3 – Tower is 23 floors at 240’.

The review criteria are the [Design Guidelines of the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone](#) and the [Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines](#) (copies of the guidelines were included with the previous memo).

Areas for discussion on March 7, 2016:

- **Massing.** The Commission has already provided comments on the massing in schemes DAR #1 and DAR #2; therefore staff prefers that attention be focused on both DAR #3 options. At the prior DARs, the Commission suggested a different parti wherein the corner of Grand and Belmont was expressed as a point tower with a lower bar to the south. DAR #3 – Bar shows the applicant’s first attempt at this with an articulated corner below the height of the Weatherly Building and a bar to the south which is one floor shorter. DAR #3 – Tower shows a much shorter bar to the south, which could perhaps be increased in height to add another level of residential units to better activate that portion of the building and better complement its neighbor to the south. The tower, however, is much taller than the Weatherly Building, which has stood as the only skyscraper within the district for almost 90 years. Please refer to East Portland/Grand Ave guideline A6-1k *Scale and Proportion* and Central City guideline C4 *Complement the Context of Existing Buildings* when providing your comments.
- **Above-Grade Parking.** The Commission has previously expressed concerns regarding above-grade parking as it adds to the mass and scale of the building and is an incompatible use above main street retail as well as along a streetcar and bus route. The Commission expressed concerns with the fenestration detailing of these two floors of parking which would be essentially dead with regard to activity, whereas apartments or offices would be more active. Please refer to Central City guidelines A8 *Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape*, B2 *Protect the Pedestrian*, C1 *Enhance View Opportunities*, C4 *Complement the Context of Existing Buildings*, and C5 *Design for Coherency* when providing your comments.

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- **Architectural Detailing.** The applicant has indicated that they do not intend to significantly reduce the floor area ratio from the proposed 12:1, which is the maximum that is noted as potentially attainable in the Central City Plan District through the use of bonuses and/or transfers. As such, staff notes that the applicant is likely to return to the Landmarks Commission for a Type III Historic Resource Review which, if not supported by the Commission, could be ultimately approved by City Council on appeal. As such, staff requests that the Commission offer comments as to how the proposed building could be refined to be more compatible other than the scale in the event that that the proposal is denied and approved on appeal. There are several guidelines that may be referenced regarding the compatibility of architectural detailing, including the majority of the East Portland/Grand Avenue guidelines as well as Central City guidelines C2 *Promote Quality and Permanence*, C4 *Complement the Context of Existing Buildings*, and C5 *Design for Coherency*.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.