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MEMORANDUM

Date: March 10, 2016
To: Portland Design Commission
From: Staci Monroe, City Planner – Design/Historic Review Team
503-823-0624, staci.monroe@portlandoregon.gov
Re: March 17, 2016 Agenda Item – 2nd Design Advice Request
EA 15-247852 DA – NW 14th & Glisan

Please find *revised* exhibits attached for a 2nd Design Advice Request (DAR) for a potential 15-story development in the River sub district of Central City. As the Commission may recall from the 1st DAR on January 7th, the site includes two properties:

- Half block on the south side of Glisan bounded by 14th and 15th where the new residential tower is proposed (175' tall building via bonus height, 8.97 FAR, 244 units, 6,414 SF retail); and
- Surface parking lot on the north side of Glisan at 15th where several options for redevelopment are being explored.

The feedback provided by the Commission at the 1st DAR is in the attached memo, but can be summarized as: bonus height needs to be earned, well spent and more responsive to adjacent historic district; massing and composition needs to be revisited (response to forms at west end, proportions, penthouse); brick material at base was disjointed and pre-cast potentially acceptable depending on details and tactile qualities; more active ground level on east and west frontages; and surface parking lot to remain was a non-starter and some FAR should be left on the property to accommodate a building.

2nd DAR DISCUSSION ITEMS – The following potential areas of discussion for the March 17th DAR are in response to the recent revisions:

1. **Bonus height** – The upper 30' is still requested through discretionary review. The Commission stated the height was a departure from the buildings along the western edge; however, it could work if it were a great piece of architecture, gave something back, and provided a more meaningful step-down to the adjacent historic district. The overall composition is less disjointed. The eastern portion remains at the same height as the previous design but with additional steps in the wall plane to better distinguish the lower volume. Is the extruded glassy top with the penthouse and more distinctive eastern mass enough to the meet the bonus height approval criteria of “better meeting the design guidelines” and “ensuring height is compatible and steps down to historic district”?
2. **Overall massing and composition** – The architectural language and datums from the buildings along the west edge were the influence on the revised design with the more massive and consistent base that gradually transitions to a glassier top. However, the various stepping of the tower on all elevations is much more complex and complicated than the context. Use of color is playful and evident in the neighboring pearl district where red and orange accents punctuate the skyline. Perhaps a more subtle or no color would complement the more reserved and timeless nature of the traditional buildings in the adjacent historic district and western edge.
3. **Exterior materials** – Fiber reinforced concrete panel, stucco rainscreen and window wall with metal panel are being considered. The masonry type finish of the concrete panel and the stucco would be more compatible with the building materials along the western edge of the plan district and the historic district immediately east of the site.
4. **Ground level** – The trash room was shifted off of 14th with the retail expanded along this commercial frontage. Although eliminating the loading from the project was supported by some of the Commission to improve the ground floor, it remains on 15th as it is desired by the

applicant. The ground level uses along 15th and at the northwest corner remain similar to the previous design (fitness, loading, garage), which the Commission noted was not the most welcoming gesture into the Central City. A Modification to reduce length of ground floor windows from 50% to 46% along 15th is still requested.

5. **Parking lot improvements** – Three options were explored (parking plaza, building & parklet), however, the two options that include plaza space rather than a building are being considered by the applicant. A plaza option without parking and with an associated use to activate it, like a bike share facility or food trucks, would create a more desirable space at this pedestrian gateway. However, a building at this location would be more a permanent solution and perhaps more appropriate given the adjacency of the I-405 freeway and on-ramp.

The Pearl District Neighborhood Association (PDNA) has submitted a letter based on the revisions to the project. They state their initial concern with the surface parking lot being left in perpetuity has been alleviated with the plaza and food truck option in the packet, which they strongly support. The traffic concerns associated with the trash originally proposed on 14th has been resolved with the trash area shifted to 15th. Lastly, PDNA supports the redesign of the new building stating it better reflects the architectural language at edge of the neighborhood and better integrates the base into the overall composition.

For this proposal, the design review criteria are the *Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines and River District Design Guidelines* and *Section 33.510.210.E.4, Bonus height approval criteria* (attached). Please contact me at 503.823.0624 with any questions or concerns.

Attachments: Revised Plans dated 3/17/16
1st DAR Summary from 1/7/16 hearing
Letter from Pearl District Neighborhood Association (PDNA)
Applicable Design Guidelines & approval criteria