



**City of Portland, Oregon**  
**Bureau of Development Services**  
**Land Use Services**  
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** April 21, 2016  
**To:** Jenny Jenkins, ANKROM MOISAN ARCHITECTS  
**From:** Benjamin Nielsen, City Planner, Land Use Services  
[Benjamin.nielsen@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Benjamin.nielsen@portlandoregon.gov), (503) 823-7812  
**Re:** 15-269535 DA – Bridge Housing / Riverplace Parcel 3  
Design Advice Request Summary Memo for April 7, 2016 Hearing -

Thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to hold a Design Advice Request regarding your project. I hope you find it informative and valuable as you continue with your project development. Attached is a summary of the comments provided by the Design Commission at the April 7, 2016 Design Advice Request. This summary was generated from notes taken at the public meeting and a subsequent review of the public meeting recordings. To review those recordings, please visit: <http://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/8294471>.

These Design Commission comments are intended to guide you in further design exploration of your project. These comments may also inform City staff when giving guidance over the course of future related land use reviews. It should be understood that these comments address the project as presented on April 7, 2016. As the project design evolves, the comments, too, may evolve or may no longer be pertinent.

Design Advice Requests are not intended to substitute for other Code-required land use or legislative procedures. Please keep in mind that the formal Type III land use review process [which includes a pre-application, a land use review application, public notification, a Staff Report and a public hearing] must be followed once the Design Advice Request meetings are complete, if formal approval for specific elements of your project is desired.

Please continue to coordinate with me as you prepare your formal land use application, or if you desire another Design Advice Request meeting with the Commission.

*Encl:*  
Summary Memo

*Cc:* Design Commission  
Respondents

This memo summarizes **Design Commission** design direction provided on April 7, 2016.

Commissioners in attendance on April 7, 2016: David Wark (Chair), Tad Savinar (Vice Chair), Andrew Clarke, Julie Livingston, Jessica Molinar, Don Vallaster

### **South Side of the Buildings**

The Commissioners were in agreement that the south side of both buildings needs to be treated as another very visible “front” to the buildings. More and larger windows—with access to southern light and views to the south—and possibly balconies should be added to this façade.

Some comments from the hearing that reinforce this idea:

- End walls on the south need to have more and bigger windows. Both buildings need to pull around the corner. Visually, it’s a big part of the building. Also access to south light.
- EMF isn’t really regulated at the federal, state, or local level, so it’s hard to determine what’s safe—especially for kids. That being said, the buswork from substation lands pretty low. EMF issues may only extend up to the bus height, so the residential units above that height might not have a problem.
- South elevation of tower has more solid wall than grid. Let the residents decide if they want to look at the substation. There’s an interesting view—of the substation, the Marquam Bridge, and other views beyond. It’s about letting light and views into the building, not determining what should be censored. South exposure would feel awfully good.
- The buildings are so visible from so many different perspectives, yet they still have a back side in the proposed design. Adding windows to the south side will help to mitigate the sense that there’s a back side to the development.
- Views to the south are outstanding. The project still needs to be designed in the round—that is, with four fronts. It’s a complete object. There’s no back side.
- Adding balconies on the south side could help to add some dimension, shadow, and detailing that could really help that side.

### **Private Street**

The Commissioners appreciated the design move towards designing this area more as a street rather than the earlier courtyard concept.

- Commissioners are still concerned about the number of cars that will be moving through this area, and active uses and pedestrian space on the sidewalk still need to extend further south along the west building façade.
- There should be only one entry into the retail/upper deck parking area. If there needs to be a parking loop, it should be on the inside of the garage. The northern garage door should be removed.
  - Two examples of this in the city are the garages at Storables in the Pearl District and the Gap and World Market garage off of NW 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- One Commissioner would really like to see you explore moving the community room or expanding community uses in the west building along the private street. If the community room on the west building was moved over to private street side, then users could spill out onto the private street. Invite residents out into the site—it could become a sweet little intimate spot.
- Two Commissioners still would like to see the residential parking garage accessed only from SW Moody Ave, though both they and the rest of the Commission concede that it may be necessary, based on your traffic study, to provide a garage from the private street as well, though there may be significant queuing issues and auto conflicts on the private street as a result of providing this access.

### **Other Site Design Comments:**

- The entries into west building and east building at the private street intersection seem really tight. Provide more room there, especially for the retail and the steps. A Modification to the Maximum Buildings Setbacks standard is supportable. Make these spaces gracious enough to feel right, and make it work.
- Regarding the sculptural lighting elements at the south end of the private street: the gesture is correct. It’s not about the light fixture, but this part of the site needs something that has some verticality to it.

### **Ground Floors**

- The ground floor at the west building is working pretty well, notwithstanding the issues described above relating to its frontage along the private street.
- A lot of work has been done to resolve ground floor at east building, too, though there is still a real disconnect between expression of solid wall and opening in the ground wall versus the upper stories in the market rate building. Take one more pass around that building, really studying how the windows are laying out and the structure is coming down. Be really consistent with the architectural language. Take another couple of steps to really clarify the base. It would work better if it “floats” as a podium more with more glazing and with the heavier brick and window punches above.
- Regarding the art wall—heads up—there’s very narrow passageway to define it as public art. The Commission encourages you to go through RACC, since they will allow it to meet the definition of public art.

### **Materials & Composition**

- The Commission was very supportive of the proposed materials for the western building.
  - One Commissioner called the choice of Alucobond “really excellent.”
- The Commission was also supportive of the move away from the gradient brick on the eastern building. One consistent color is the right move, and the base can have its own darker color.
- Several Commissioners stated that the affordable housing building is still much more resolved in the design of its elevations, detailing, and material quality than the market rate building. The market rate building is catching up, but still needs to be brought up to the same standard.
- Regarding the proposed perforated screening around the ground floor at the south and west sides of the west building, it can’t just be a metal screen with no vegetation—that won’t do the job. A combination of evergreen, deciduous, and flowering vines may help make it work.
- Commissioners had a disagreement of the materiality for the bike parking structure on the west building. All agreed that standing seam metal should not be used there—it would end up looking like a utility shed.
  - One stated a couple times that it should be more like a pristine jewel box, possibly clad in the Alucobond or something else very smooth so that the eye goes to the details, activity, and colors of the bikes and not to the skin of the building. It needs to be really clean with all the richness inside.
  - Another Commissioner thought that the perforated panel could be pulled up here over the glazing, while still allowing views from the bike path into the bike room.
  - Yet another thinks it could function as an object unrelated to the west building, possibly being part of the concrete plinth or incorporating other metal pieces. Though this Commissioner still supports it being “pristine.”
- To reiterate a previous comment, the Commissioners were in agreement that all sides of the buildings need to be considered as “front” sides.
- One Commissioner reiterated his support for more balconies on the market rate building—“Balconies balconies balconies!” – including on the south side.

### **Massing**

- The Commission seemed to come around to supporting a full length west wing on the east building, though one Commissioner stated that, were the project coming in for a Type III review, he would want to see that wing pulled back to align with the wing on the west building.

### **Editorial Commentary:**

Two Commissioners expressed displeasure that the emergency ordinance to allow affordable housing projects was being used to allow what is essentially a full-block, market rate building in the Central City to go through the Type IIX design review process, rather than the typical Type III process.

- One stated that this ordinance was based more on “political expediency” versus a “well thought-out policy.”

### **Exhibit List**

- A. Applicant's Submittals
  - 1. Original Drawing Set
  - 2. Revised Draft Drawing Set
  - 3. Revised Drawing Set for 2/18/2016 Hearing
  - 4. Drawing Set for 4/7/2016 Hearing, dated 3/28/2016
  - 5. Supplemental Drawings, received 3/31/2016
- B. Zoning Map
- C. Drawings
  - 1-37. Drawing Set for 4/7/2016 Hearing, dated 3/28/2016
- D. Notification
  - 1. Posting instructions sent to applicant
  - 2. Posting notice as sent to applicant
  - 6. Applicant's statement certifying posting
  - 7. General information on DAR process included with e-mailed posting/notice
- E. Service Bureau Comments
  - 1. Bureau of Environmental Services
  - 2. Portland Bureau of Transportation
- F. Public Testimony
  - 1. Daryl Grenz, email regarding need for more parking spaces, received 2/18/2016
  - 2. Public Testimony Sign-up Sheet for 2/18/2016 hearing
- G. Other
  - 1. Application form
  - 2. Staff Presentation to the Design Commission on 2/18/2016
  - 3. Applicant's Presentation to the Design Commission on 2/18/2016
  - 4. Staff Memo to the Design Commission, dated 2/18/2016
  - 5. Summary Memo from Hearing 1, dated 2/22/2016
  - 6. Staff Memo to the Design Commission, dated 3/31/2016
  - 7. Staff Presentation to the Design Commission on 4/7/2016
  - 8. Applicant's Presentation to the Design Commission on 4/7/2016