



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: May 13, 2016
To: Portland Design Commission
From: Grace Jeffreys, Development Review
503.823.7840, grace.jeffreys@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 16-121712 DA – NW 14th & Raleigh
Design Advice Request Memo - May 19, 2016, Second Hearing

Attached are exhibits for a second Design Advice Request (DAR) for the above referenced case. The design review criteria are the *Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines* and *River District Design Guidelines*. (Design Guideline matrix attached)

Proposal is for a new 12-story affordable apartment building on a ¼ block lot. 93 residential units are proposed above ground-level commercial, residential lobby, and grade-level vehicular and bicycle parking accessed off of NW Raleigh.

Development and Code Standards

The zoning is Central Employment (EX) base zone with Design (d) overlay zone, in the River Subdistrict of the Central City Plan District.

- **Transfer - FAR:** Allowable FAR is 4:1 with 5:1 FAR available through bonuses, for a total of 9:1 FAR. Because the site is located in the Pearl Development Transfer Opportunity Area, the site is eligible to receive FAR over 9:1 through a transfer from a Historic Resource.
 - *Proposed FAR is 10.52:1, with 5:1 FAR to be earned through the “Efficient family-sized unit” bonus option and 1.52 FAR earned through transfer from Historic Resource.*
- **Modification #1 - Height:** Allowable height is 100’ with additional height available if approved as a modification through design review, with no maximum height limit.
 - *Proposed height is 129’-8”, so a Modification is required for the additional 29’-8” in height.*
- **Modification #2 - Ground Floor Windows:** Required for all ground floor frontages - at least 50 percent of the length and 25 percent of the ground level wall area.
 - *Project complies if windows into the bike room apply, otherwise a Modification is required.*
- **Adjustment #1 - Loading:** One Standard “B” space, 18’ high x 9’ wide x 10’ clear is required.
 - *No loading space is proposed on-site.*
- **Design Exception #1 - Oriel Windows:** 12’ width allowed projecting over the Right-of-Way.
 - *Oriel windows proposed are 30’-3” wide on NW 14th and 40’-3” wide on NW Raleigh.*
- **Design Exception #2 - Garage Door Setback:** 20’ setback sidewalk is required for garage doors.
 - *Approximately 1’ setback proposed on NW Raleigh.*

1ST DAR Feedback:

The feedback provided at the 1st DAR is in the attached memo, but can be summarized as:

1. **Ground Floor Activation:** Reduce parking to allow for comfortably-sized active uses on frontage; move retail to corner; make lobby more generous; and meet ground floor window standards.
2. **Quality and Materials:** Concern was noted that the 22 gauge, 12” wide, un-backed metal panels with a shallow dimple were not of sufficient quality for the Central City and will not prevent oil canning; the details at joints and material transitions will be critical to ensure permanence; and detailing and materials at grills and louvers should be simplified;
3. **Design and Coherency:** More coherency and openness needed at ground floor; the base is too compressed; the material colors clash; the overall composition, materials, and detailing need further depth and coherency; and the side walls need more than just graphic treatment.

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2ND DAR Discussion Items:

The following potential areas of discussion for the May 16th DAR (Please refer to the attached Design Guidelines matrix for a summary of cited guidelines):

1. **Ground Floor Activation:** The proposal must *Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape (A8), Enhance View Opportunities (C1), and Develop Flexible Sidewalk-Level Spaces (C9)*.
 - a. **Active uses:** The commercial space has been moved to the corner and the lobby is more generous. But the amount of ground floor taken up by parking has not been reduced, pushing inactive uses such electrical room, generator, and bike parking to the frontages. Staff is concerned that the frontages do not do enough to develop “*visual and physical connections into buildings’ active interior spaces from adjacent sidewalks*” and create “*visual connections to adjacent public spaces*”. Additionally, along NW Raleigh, staff is concerned that proposal does not yet provide enough “*flexible spaces at the sidewalk-level of buildings to accommodate a variety of active uses*”.
 - b. **Ground Floor Windows:** Staff is concerned about using the glazing into a bike storage room to meet ground floor window standards. Standards require glazing to “*allow views into working area or lobbies, pedestrian entrances...*” (PZC 33.140.230).
2. **Ground Floor Design:** The proposal must *Protect the Pedestrian (B2), Provide Stopping and Viewing Places (B4), and Develop Weather Protection (B6)*.
 - a. **Mechanical Louvers:** A large ensemble of louvers is proposed along NW 14th, and staff has asked for clarification as to whether these will be for exhaust. Staff wish to ensure that the “*mechanical exhaust routing systems does not detract from the pedestrian environment*”.
 - b. **Setbacks:** The ground floor is tight to the frontage, providing little relief along sidewalks. Staff is concerned that the proposal does not yet provide “*places where people can stop, view, socialize and rest*”.
 - c. **Canopies:** No canopies are proposed, and the overhang provided at the corner is shallow and high, providing little protection for pedestrians. The main residential entry serving 93 units into a high-rise development deserves to be better acknowledged. Staff is concerned that the proposal does not yet “*mitigate the effects of rain, wind, glare, shadow, reflection, and sunlight on the pedestrian environment*”.
3. **Design and Context:** The proposal must *Use Unifying Elements (A4), Enhance, Embellish, and Identify Areas (A5), Reinforce the Identity of the Pearl District Neighborhoods (A5-1-1), and Complement the Context of Existing Buildings (C4)*.
 - a. **Ground Floor/Base:** No dimension has been provided for the height of the ground floor, but the base of the building is visually compressed. If the base was more generous (taller) and stronger (visually) element, it would better connect with the pedestrian oriented buildings in this neighborhood. Staff is concerned that this proposal does not yet “*help unify and connect*” this building to its emerging, pedestrian oriented, North Pearl neighborhood.
 - b. **Integrate Character of Area:** The height, massing, composition, materials and detailing proposed contrast with other local development. How does the proposal integrate elements “*that build on the area’s character*”? And how does the proposal identify and integrate any of the “*area’s special features or qualities*”?
 - c. **Reinforce the Identity of Area:** The proposal must “*provide a unified, monolithic tripartite composition (base/middle/top), with distinct cornice lines to acknowledge the historical building fabric*”.
 - i. Horizontally the composition contains a shallow, one-story base identified by brick piers with full height glazing and an angled overhang at the corner. The top is identified by an angled parapet above the corner element. Staff is concerned that the proposal does not yet create a “*tripartite composition*” and provide “*district cornice lines*”.
 - ii. The overall composition splits the mass of the ¼ block into multiple elements, including a differentiated corner element. The corner is further divided up by two separate oriel windows, one at the top and one in the middle. Staff is concerned that the proposal does not yet provide a “*monolithic*” composition.
 - d. **Complement the Context:** While the proposal does add to the local design vocabulary, it must also relate to its context by using local design elements. Staff is concerned that the proposal does not yet “*Complement the context of existing buildings by using...the local design vocabulary*”.

4. **Design and Coherency:** The proposal must *Design for Coherency* (C5) and *Integrate Encroachments* (C10).
- a. **Overall Composition:** Compositional changes since first DAR include shifting the slot on NW Raleigh closer to the corner, slightly reducing the width of the oriels along NW Raleigh. Additionally, color changes have been made to different elements. Staff still considers that the multiple elements compete, the oversized oriels are too solid, the ground floor is too compressed, the materiality is too flat, and the solutions are graphic rather than architectural, and that the “*different building and design elements*” do not yet “*achieve a coherent composition*”.
 - b. **Composition Details:**
 - i. **Brick Piers:** Full height glazing has been added and some brick piers have been removed. Brick is an appropriate material for the base of the building, but staff suggests that the remaining brick piers should better relate to the overall composition of the building.
 - ii. **Oriel Windows:** Staff is concerned that the oriel projections are not glazed enough to be considered windows to meet the Code Guide requirements and do not yet meet the design guideline to *Integrate Encroachments*. The width of the oriel windows are 30’-3” wide on NW 14th and 40’-3” wide on NW Raleigh, which triggers will require a Design Exception, as the code limits the width of an oriel window to 12’. These are significantly greater than the code allows. Additionally, the Code Guide clarifies that these should be “windows”; otherwise they will be viewed as Major Encroachments. (Refer to OSSC/32/#1 *Code Guide for Window Projections into Public Right-of-Way*, attached. This code guide sets “...standards for windows which are allowed to project into public right-of-way including a schedule of all significant characteristics which must be present for a building projection to be considered a window. If a proposed building projection does not comply with this set of requirements, then review falls under the City Encroachment Policy, administered by the Portland Bureau of Transportation.” With respect to the design guideline to *Integrate Encroachments*, staff is concerned that the proposal does not yet “*Size and place encroachments in the public right-of-way to visually and physically enhance the pedestrian environment*”.
 - iii. **Side Walls:** Because the adjacent sites are vacant and this building is substantially taller than nearby buildings, especially with the requested modification to height standards, does the commission have any concerns regarding the treatment of the side walls?
 - iv. **Colors:** At the first hearing, commission was concerned that the colors of materials clashed, so staff has asked for samples to be brought to hearing.
5. **Quality and Permanence:** The proposal must “*Promote Quality and Permanence in Development*” (C2).
- a. **Metal Panels and Detailing:** The gauge (22 ga) and width (12”) of the un-backed metal panels have not changed from the first DAR, but an additional shallow “v” shape has been added. The standard edge detail between panels appears to be an exposed u-shaped trim which wraps the edges of the panels rather than a concealed support system. Staff questions whether the proposed panels and detailing are of appropriate quality for an urban building in the Central City, and are sufficiently robust for a high-rise development? Do these materials and details do enough to “*promote quality and permanence*” (Refer to Exhibit C.27)?
 - b. **Windows:** To increase the depth of the windows, a 1” wide frame element has been added which creates an apparent depth on the window side of 4”. On the west elevation, this element protrudes further, ranging from 4” to 11”. No gauge or internal support has been noted, and staff questions the robustness of this solution as well, especially in a high-rise situation. Do these window details do enough to “*promote quality and permanence*” (Refer to Exhibit C.28)?
6. **Bonus height:** Although not discussed in depth at the first DAR, staff would like commission input regarding the request for Bonus Height. The upper 29’-8” is requested through discretionary review, and a Modification will be needed. The 130’ high, high-rise height proposed is a departure from the generally 75’ high, mid-rise, 5 over 1 buildings in the area. Does the proposal do enough to the meet the modification approval criteria of “*better meeting the design guidelines*”?

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Encl: Revised Plans dated 5/9/16
1st DAR Summary from 4/7/16 hearing
Design Guidelines matrix, revised 5/13/16
OSSC/32/#1 *Code Guide for Window Projections into Public Right-of-Way*