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: July 12, 2016

To: Portland Design Commission

From: Jeff Mitchem, Development Review

Re: EA 16-158677 DA – 905 NW 17th Ave
Design Advice Request Commission Memo – Hearing Date, July 21, 2016

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Attached is a drawing set for the Design Advice Request for a proposed 5 over 1 mixed-use market rate apartment building consisting of the following primary program components (approximate):

- Height – 72' to top-of-parapet
- Floor Area Ratio – 6.5:1
- 120 apartments (9 ground floor units);
- 2,800 SF of retail (oriented to corner of NW 18th Ave/Kearney St.);
- One level of below-grade parking accessed via NW 17th Ave with approximately 68 stalls and one Std B loading stall (2 Std B required);
- Residential lobby centered on NW Kearney St;
- Bike Club and Fitness Club oriented to sidewalks;
- Interior courtyard with residential frontage (6 units, stoops with no access to courtyard);
- Material palette – brick (white, red, gray), stucco, VPI vinyl windows, aluminum storefront, metal louvers (integrated PTHP grilles), metal balconies (17 units / 14% of total units).

The review criteria are the Community Design Guidelines (guideline cheat sheet included in Section IV of this memo).

II. DEVELOPMENT TEAM BIO

Architect	Kurt Schultz | SERA Architects – Portland, OR
Owner/Developer	Brenner Daniels | Holland Development – Vancouver, WA
Project Valuation	$22,000,000

III. DAR TOPICS

Staff advises you consider the following among your discussion items on July 21, 2016:

1. **Massing, Scale and Façade Composition**
   A. The proposed massing arrangement – a 5-building representation accented by stucco-clad balcony recesses – seems overly modulated for a ½-block development. *Staff advises exploring a simpler volumetric expression based on ¼-block components.*
   B. The scale and composition of façade elements relative to inspirational imagery (classically composed and detailed) is unclear. Expressed as a bi-partite composition, the building's base and top depart from classical proportion with differing fenestration volumes (two-floor window pick-up) and confusing material shifts (brick-stucco-metal). *Staff advises replicating a singular fenestration proportion (single-floor volume?) framed by a singular material (brick) and composed within simplified massing blocks (per 1.A.)*

C. The scale of the full-height pilasters appears heavy and overly impactful at ground-level. *Staff advises a lighter expression of ground-level wall elements in favor of increased glazing (brick cube on a glass plinth) OR over-story window proportion expressed in storefront system (brick blocks punched with full-height windows).*

2. **Design Character**
   A. The combination of features described in 1 A-C above results in a typologically conflicted overall design composition – an office/residential hybrid. The building appears to be composed of conflicting parts and lacking a singular compelling residential character. *Staff advises isolating a singular typology fully resolved in all primary cladding systems to create a traditional residential expression.*
   B. The façades appear comprised of a confusing assemblage of cladding systems – the double-height window volumes (metal framing around white stucco bands and metal louvers) compete with brick for primacy; the brick pilasters of differing widths lack logical order from elevation to elevation; and, the metal parapet coping appears incongruent as a brick building detail. *Staff advises the Applicant seek better unity in skin systems via material/color commonality (metal lover, stucco, window mullion, brick), more logical/consistent glazing volumes, darker fenestration details, etc.*
3. **Ground Floor – Program and Entries**
   A. The lobby does not have enough presence as expressed in elevation. *Staff advises exploring a more celebrated entry expression – perhaps a wider bay opening allowing views through lounge (and centralized elevators) into central courtyard.*
   B. The exterior facing ground floor residential units appear isolated and not conducive to active sidewalks. *Staff advises the Applicant explore programmatic fit for micro-retail or live-work in place of the street-facing units.*
   C. The DAR Drawing Set does not identify the location of ground-level mechanical (transformer, generator, gas meter). *Staff advises these elements be located underground and/or away from skin.*
4. **Upper Floors – Balconies and Amenity Space**;
   A. As a well-resolved traditional residential building, balconies should be fundamental to the parti. *Staff feels that balconies on 17 units (14% of total units) are insufficient and that additional balconies should be added on all elevations.*
   B. The glazing quantity appears significant. *Staff advises the Applicant conduct energy calculations early to ensure that glazing is not reduced after Land Use Review.*
   C. The roof plan does not indicate mechanical. *Staff advises that preliminary MEP demands be resolved and included with Land Use Review submittal.*
5. **Materials – Primary vs Secondary**
   A. Generally, the material composition appears unnecessarily complicated and lacking in coherency. *Staff advises the Applicant study a more fully resolved masonry building with less metal/stucco/white vinyl accent.*
   B. The white metal louvers, white vinyl windows, white stucco spandrel and balcony recesses and white brick accents detracts from the overall quality of the building. *Staff advises the Applicant study replacing the stucco spandrel panels with brick and better integrating the windows and louvers.*
   C. Staff reminds the Applicant that the LUR Application should include ample details, manufactures cutsheets, specifications and mock-ups for all proposed materials and skin systems.

III. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. **Base / Overlay Zone**. Central Employment (33.140) and Northwest Plan District Development standards (33.562):

- Ground Floor Windows – (33.140.230). Required for all project frontages: windows must be at least 50 percent of the length and 25 percent of the ground level wall area. Ground level wall areas include all exterior wall areas up to 9 feet above the finished grade and sill heights no greater than 4' above sidewalk grade. *The east elevation fronting NW 17th Ave requires a Modification to this standard.*
- Max Height – (Map 562-4, 33.562.230). Base zone allowable height is 75'; with allowable bonuses max height is 120'. *The project is proposed at 72' to top-of-parapet.*
- Max FAR – (Map 510-2, 33.562.230.B). Allowable FAR is 4:1; with allowable bonuses (for affordable housing and underground parking) up to 3:1 FAR, for a total of 7:1 FAR maximum would be allowed. *As proposed, the project FAR is approximately 6.5:1 (including the underground parking bonus.)*
- Minimum Active Floor Area – (Map 562-7, 33.562.270). This standard is required for the project site. At least 50% of the floor area must be in one or more of the active uses listed in this section – household living, retail, office, manufacturing, industrial services, community service, schools, colleges, medical centers, religious institutions, daycare. *As proposed, the project appears to comply.*
- Mechanical Equipment – (33.562.260). If mechanical equipment is more than nine feet above the grade of the adjacent sidewalk, the equipment must be completely screened from the sidewalk by walls, fences, or landscaping. *Though the DAR Drawing Set does not identify mechanical, Staff advises the Applicant demonstrate compliance with the standard during LUR.*

2. **Parking Standards**: (33.562.280 & 33.266) Minimum parking requirement – .33 stall/unit (40 stalls). Maximum parking allowed – 1 stall/unit. +/- 68 parking stalls are proposed to serve 120 residential units and 4,300 sf of retail.
   - Loading – The *DAR Drawing Set indicates a single Std B stall is proposed below grade. No section is provided indicating that the 10' vertical clear is accommodated however.*
     - Number of Loading Spaces - An *Adjustment* will need to be requested to reduce the number of required loading spaces from 2 Std B stalls to 1 Std B stall. (33.266.310).
     - Size of Loading Spaces - A *Modification* may need to be requested to reduce the vertical clearance of the required loading spaces. (33.266.310) Std B size: 18'Lx9'Wx10'H.
   - Bicycle Parking – *The Dar Drawing Set indicates ground floor area dedicated to long-term bike storage and a bike lounge. No indication is given as to quantity of proposed spaces however. As proposed the project's 120 apartments would demand 136 long-term spaces. The project would be eligible to pay into the bike fund for short-term space.*

IV. APPROVAL CRITERIA CHEAT SHEET

Community Design Guidelines Cheat Sheet. This proposal must adequately address the *Community Design Guidelines*, Please see the following preliminary guidelines consistency analysis for the project as currently proposed.

GUIDELINE	MEETS	COULD DO BETTER	DOES NOT MEET
P1. Community Plan Area Character. Enhance the sense of place and identity of community plan areas by incorporating site and building design features that respond to the area's unique characteristics and neighborhood traditions.		Unclear in submittal. Describe how project responds.	

P2. Historic and Conservation Districts. Enhance the identity of historic and conservation districts by incorporating site and building design features that reinforce the area's historic significance. Near historic and conservation districts, use such features to reinforce and complement the historic areas.		NA	
P3. Gateways. Develop or strengthen the transitional role of gateways identified in adopted community and neighborhood plans.		NA	
E1. Pedestrian Network. Create an efficient, pleasant and safe network of sidewalks and paths for pedestrians that link destination points and nearby residential areas while visually and physically buffering pedestrians from vehicle areas.		Strong activation of western frontage (NW 18th Ave/Kearney St). Less activation on south (bikes & residential) & east frontage (residential).	
E2. Stopping Places. New large-scale projects should provide comfortable places along pedestrian circulation routes where people may stop, visit, meet, and rest.		None proposed.	
E3. The Sidewalk Level of Buildings. Create a sense of enclosure and visual interest to buildings along sidewalks and pedestrian areas by incorporating small scale building design features, creating effective gathering places, and differentiating street level facades.		Recessed storefronts could incorporate seating.	
E4. Corners that Build Active Intersections. Create intersections that are active, unified, and have a clear identity through careful scaling detail and location of		The SE corner lacks activation due to lack of functional ground floor residential stoop	

buildings, outdoor areas, and entrances.		space.	
E5. Light, Wind, and Rain. Enhance the comfort of pedestrians by locating and designing buildings and outdoor areas to control the adverse effects of sun, shadow, glare, reflection, wind, and rain.		More continuous canopies should be provided along all frontages instead of intermittent storefront coverage where no entrances exist.	
D1. Outdoor Areas. When sites are not fully built on, place buildings to create sizable, usable outdoor areas. Design these areas to be accessible, pleasant, and safe. Connect outdoor areas to the circulation system used by pedestrians.		Access from units to the courtyard space is unclear in DAR submittal. Should be better resolved in LUR submittal.	More generous stoops – seating + pass-through.
D2. Main Entrances. Make the main entrances to houses and buildings prominent, interesting, pedestrian accessible, and transit-oriented.		Lobby could be better expressed.	
D3. Landscape Features. Enhance site and building design through appropriate placement, scale, and variety of landscape features.		Functionality of courtyard space is unclear in DAR submittal. Should be better resolved in LUR submittal.	
D4. Parking Areas and Garages. Integrate parking in a manner that is attractive and complementary to the site and its surroundings. Locate parking in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on the community and its pedestrians. Design parking garage exteriors to visually respect and integrate with adjacent buildings and environment.		Single garage door – high speed coiling – should be better detailed in LUR submittal. The white brick surrounding the garage door is awkward.	
D5. Crime Prevention. Use site design and building orientation to reduce the	Ample glazing is provided and		

likelihood of crime through the design and placement of windows, entries, active ground level uses, and outdoor areas.	interior entries to ground level residential units are provided.		
D6. Architectural Integrity. Respect the original character of buildings when making modifications that affect the exterior. Make additions compatible in scale, color, details, material proportion, and character with the existing building.		NA	
D7. Blending into the Neighborhood. Reduce the impact of new development on established neighborhoods by incorporating elements of nearby, quality buildings such as building details, massing, proportions, and materials.		Better reference local architectural language.	
D8. Interest, Quality, and Composition. All parts of a building should be interesting to view, of long lasting quality, and designed to form a cohesive composition.			Overly complicated massing and form. Too many materials/colors/patterns results in weak overall coherency.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.