



City of Portland Design Commission

Design Advice Request

DISCUSSION MEMO

Date: 1/31/2019
To: Portland Design Commission
From: Tanya Paglia, Design Review
503-823-4989 | tanya.paglia@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 18-281485 DA – The Landing at Macadam
Design Advice Request Memo – February 7, 2019

Attached is a drawing set for the Design Advice Request meeting scheduled on Thursday, February 7, 2019. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Please note: This memo is in response to a drawing set dated 1/10/2019. You received a drawing set that differs from the 1/10 set. Staff received your set on 1/31 and was unable to update this memo, therefore some issues identified herein may be resolved in your set. Staff feels the need to clarify for you that this DAR memo and the submitted drawing set leave many unanswered questions. We encouraged the applicant to take a later DAR date so that some basics could be resolved for a more efficient hearing. Because of due diligence constraints the applicant was unwilling. I also want to acknowledge that the DAR proceeding is likely to be cumbersome as drawings were submitted way too late for staff and you if you get drawings on 2/7 to address. Again, a later DAR date would have been best for Design Commission and staff. Thank you for your patience as project information rolls out late for your first foray into a Central City Master Plan (CCMP).

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Project Summary: DAR for a proposed Central City Master Plan for a four-block site in the South Waterfront Subdistrict of the Central City Plan District known as Blocks 41, 42, 44 and 45. The 9.83 acre site is bounded by SW Lane St, SW Lowell St, SW Bond St and the future greenway. The proposal includes four separate structures with a mixed-use program comprised of multi-family housing, commercial uses and parking as well as greenway improvements and infrastructure. The buildings will range from 6 to 17 stories and together include 1,140 residential units, 28,389 SF of ground floor retail and 994 parking spaces.

Review scope: This is a targeted DAR focusing on the Central City Master Plan proposed. Separate DARs for the design of the individual buildings may follow at a later date, but feedback on site organization, circulation, programming and massing is requested at this DAR.

Site history: Some of you may be familiar with these four blocks; the Design Commission approved four buildings on these four blocks in August 2017 under LU 16-283375 (Blocks 41 & 44) and LU 16-283373 (Blocks 42 & 45).

II. DEVELOPMENT TEAM BIO

Architect Jeancarlo Saenz | Hensley Lamkin Rachel, Inc

Owner's Representative Kim Lan | Alamo Manhattan Properties, LLC

Project Valuation \$193,130,000

III. FUTURE APPROVAL CRITERIA

- *Central City Master Plan Review approval criteria are found in zoning code section 33.510.255.H (and please note that the Master Plan Criteria include all Central City Fundamental Guidelines as well as any applicable design guidelines specific to the site). See the Appendix for detailed information on these criteria.*
- Design Review approval criteria:
 - *Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines*
 - *South Waterfront Design Guidelines*
 - *South Waterfront Greenway Design Guidelines – Section III*
 - *Modifications Considered Through Design Review – Section 33.825.040*

IV. SITE INFORMATION

1. **Policy.** The following summarizes key policy context as it applies to the subject site.

- a. **Plans** – 2035 Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2018); South Waterfront Plan (adopted 2002); South Waterfront Greenway Development Plan (adopted 2004).
- b. **Development Standards** – It's early in the design process, but the proposal appears to have height issues (see section V, item 4 below).

Anticipated modifications include a Modifications to height and loading.

- c. **Related Reviews**

Greenway Review. If the Greenway development standards of 33.510.253.E.5 are not met the application will be subject to a Type III Greenway Review requiring approval by the Design Commission (approval criteria are 33.851.300). Greenway improvements are required regardless of whether a Greenway review is triggered.

Land Division Review. A Land Division Review (LU 17-160442) approved the subdivision of the approximately 9.83 acre site to create 4 lots, public streets and 2 greenway tracts.

V. RECOMMENDED DAR DISCUSSION TOPICS

Staff advise you consider the following among your discussion items on February 7, 2019:

1. **Central City Master Plan Purpose**

- As the Central City Master Plan purpose statement (see Appendix) notes, the goal of a Master Plan is to take a holistic approach to site layout and to set a higher bar than working with each building piecemeal at the block level. Elements that should be at the forefront of the development strategy include a focus on site circulation that emphasizes multimodal transportation connectivity, creation of a vibrant public realm with active ground floor uses and connectivity to open space, and distributing building bulk and height in a way that protects public views and preserves light and air and is oriented to active and passive public gathering spaces, including public open spaces, transit stations, and the Willamette River.

With the current design, Staff finds that the bar for a Central City Master Plan has not yet been met. More attention needs to be paid to location of open areas and site circulation. In

addition, current ground floor programming and massing have a number of approvability issues (outlined below). Given the very preliminary nature of the proposal, Staff and Commission guidance is critical so that significant changes can be made to the project fundamentals.

2. Open Space

- Connectivity. More thought should be given to neighborhood connectivity to open space. The Master Plan should provide a broader look at locations of existing open space throughout the neighborhood as well as the ground floor uses and transportation nodes in the area and open space should be placed in areas where it synergizes with these elements.
- Activation. Any new open space will need to be activated. Adjacent ground floor spaces should not be residential or be vehicle area such as parking garage entries. Open space located along SW River Parkway or SW Bond Ave would be activated and be closer to the streetcar than the plaza shown in the drawings. Or, perhaps a significant and meaningful open space with truly public uses flanking the plaza could be connected to the public Greenway.
- Placement and Amount.
 - H.7 of the approval criteria for Master Plans requires that internal open areas are “accessible within, and *distributed throughout*, the master plan area and have connections to the surrounding neighborhood and to any adjacent open space. Internal open areas enhance visual permeability through the site, especially on sites near the Willamette River. The size and location of each open area must be adequate to accommodate the intended use of the space.”

The proposal appears to only provide open space in the form of a plaza located within the alignment of SW Abernathy (which is already required to be open, pedestrian space) between Block 44 and 41, which is a designated Greenway accessway. This area needs to serve its primary purpose of providing Greenway access. A plaza has a different purpose and is not simply a pass through space but a place to be or gather. Plus, vehicle access points flank the proposed plaza.
 - It should be noted that 20 percent of the master plan area must be devoted to open area. And, although the portions of the greenway area can count toward the required open space within the master plan area, using the greenway as the only means to meet the 20 percent requirements is inconsistent with the approval criteria stating that open space should be “**distributed throughout the master plan area.**”
 - The amount of bike, ped area that can constitute open area is also limited (max 25%), therefore, **additional open space outside of the greenway will be required.**
- Shadow Study. No more than 50 percent of the required plaza/park space may be in shadow at noon on the 21st of March, June, and September, and that no more than 75 percent of the space be in shadow at noon on December 21st, and 3:00 pm on the 21st of March, June, and September. Although the current location of the proposed plaza is within a greenway accessway and will need to be located elsewhere on site, it appears that the proposed location would also fail to meet this requirement. However, that is difficult to determine without a shadow study. In short, a shadow study should be provided to ensure the proposal meets this requirement regardless of where the plaza is proposed to be sited.

3. Circulation System

- Provide Context. The approved Land Division for the site has already laid out roads and pedestrian accessways. The Master Plan requires identifying internal pedestrian, bicycle,

and vehicle circulation. The proposed DAR package does not show adopted bikeways or trail alignments that pass through the site, be they in the greenway, or along east-west and north-south public right of way. This information needs to be furnished to provide the full context for the proposal.

- Multimodal Connectivity. The Master Plan should make multimodal connectivity an organizing principle of the design. Central City Master Plan approval criterion H.1 requires that master plans are consistent with applicable subdistrict goals and policies of the CC2035 Plan.
 - Multi-modal connectivity is emphasized in the South Waterfront chapter introduction of the Central City 2035 plan: “A decade ago South Waterfront was characterized by vacant brownfield sites and underutilized buildings. Now the district is home to more than 1,300 housing units, a growing mix of jobs, new parks and greenway amenities. It will soon be connected with the most diverse multimodal transportation network in the state.”
 - There are two streetcar stops adjacent to the site: SW Bond and Lane on Bond Ave in front of the Ella; and SW Lowell and Bond on SW Lowell along the north frontage of Grays Landing. The Master Plan should prioritize connectivity with these transit nodes as well as other multimodal resources.
- Connections to Greenway. There appear to be conflicts with the following CC2035/South Waterfront Policies regarding connections to the Greenway:
 - Policy 3.SW-1, Optimized Street Network, discusses improving connections to adjacent area, such as the Willamette River. As noted in the South Waterfront District Street Plan, Criteria and Standards, SW Abernathy is identified as part greenway accessway, and intended to ensure “frequent pedestrian, bike and visual access to the River and Willamette Greenway.” However, the proposed plan shows a plaza feature within this street/accessway alignment. The plaza cannot be located within this alignment even if it also allows pedestrian and bicycle access through the facility. SW Abernathy needs to primarily serve its intended function as an accessway to sites along the riverfront and to the greenway itself.
 - Policy 5.SW-2, Open Space Network, states: “Create an exemplary open space network that embraces the river as the district’s “front yard” and provides a range of urban amenities, passive and active recreation experiences and ecological functions.” The proposal provides no information about the design concept of the greenway, or other open space areas on-site. Further, the only open space feature specifically required by the master plan approval criteria is sited within a required greenway accessway, which is not allowed, and no design or programming details are provided in the DAR submittal.
- Bike Parking. The proposed master plan must identify the location of bike parking. No information regarding where bike parking will be located, accessed, or the anticipated amount has been provided. This information needs to be furnished.

4. Massing.

- Visual Permeability: The east west lengths of the taller buildings currently shown on block 41 and block 44 are problematic given the heights of those buildings. There are no other buildings of a similar height with that extent of east-west unbroken massing in the area. Having a large wall of 200' and 160' massing for 200-plus feet does not allow the visual permeability desired in the district as indicated in the purpose statement of "*Special building height corridors and tower orientation*." It will create a fortress like atmosphere and present a giant wall barring views towards the north into the neighborhood and to the Ross

Island Bridge. The same square footage of massing could be reallocated into taller towers with smaller footprints.

- Massing Step-downs: As presently proposed the massing on block 41 and block 44 is very bulky and the tall volumes do not step-down as they come to the ground, which is uncharacteristic of the district. Square footage should be consolidated into taller towers pulled back from the edges building podiums to provide a human scaled base. Massing needs to erode along the Greenway in particular (height step-downs are also required by zoning code described below). Note that taller massing is also often curved and or eroded at upper levels.
- Code required step-downs for Blocks 41 and 44.
 - Height along the Greenway is limited to 75' for the first 125' from top of bank. Your draft packet does not provide enough information to establish if this standard is being met. However, it appears these two buildings are 200' and 160' tall in this area. Modification and Adjustments to this standard are prohibited.
 - The area located between 125 feet to 150 feet landward of the South Waterfront height reference line, buildings may earn a height bonus of 25 feet as a modification through design review (Total height of 150' for this area of the site). Projections above 150 feet are prohibited. Again, there is not enough information in the draft packet to know if this is being met.

5. Programming

- Activation along SW Bond Ave and SW River Pkwy. Building ground floor frontages along the two main corridors running through the site, SW River Pkwy and SW Bond Ave, should have active uses with minimal work/live and no residential use. The proposal currently is showing an extensive amount of residential use. SW Bond Ave also has a code requirement for ground floor active use which prohibits dwelling units (described below).
- Required Ground Floor Active Use Areas: Dwelling units are prohibited on the ground floor in specific areas of the site. Buildings must be designed and constructed to accommodate lobbies, retail, commercial, office uses, and the like. This standard must be met along at least 50 percent of the ground floor of walls that front onto a sidewalk, plaza, or other public open space.
 - The southeast corner of Block 44 where SW Lowell and the Greenway intersect is subject to the Ground Floor Active Use requirement. Right now this corner is shown as entirely residential.
 - The entire stretch of SW Bond Ave along the northern edge of Blocks 45 and 42 is subject to the Ground Floor Active Use requirement.
- Riverfront Development. When a master plan includes sites adjacent to the river, development should incorporate "elements that activate the riverfront, such as open areas, trails, accessways, and active land uses that encourage public use and enjoyment of the river." The proposed DAR package provides no information regarding how development on-site would respond to this approval criteria.
- Additional Context Studies. Massing and ground floor studies for existing and approved development south of Zidell along Greenway, SW River Pkwy, and SW Bond Ave are needed to create a responsive Master Plan. Among other things, such studies would be very helpful in showing how other existing South Waterfront buildings relate to the river. This project's setbacks should be similar to the other greenway fronting buildings and tower elements should be set back behind podiums at least as much as other buildings along the greenway.

- Parking Above the Ground Floor and Loading. There is not yet a great deal of detail on the parking to be located above ground in all four buildings but thought should be given to how this parking will affect the facades of buildings above the ground floor. More information on the location of loading is also needed. Ideally it is located entirely within the parking garages to consolidate various vehicle access points.

6. Sustainable Development

- With the preliminary information provided, the sustainability of the project has not yet been outlined. Staff would like any input from the Commission on how the applicant should address these goals. From the South Waterfront 2035 Vision of the Central City 2035 plan: “The district serves as a model for sustainable development.” Per the Central City Master Plan Approval Criteria (33.510.255.H), to be approvable, the Central City Master Plan should be consistent with applicable subdistrict goals and policies of the Central City 2035 Plan.



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DISCUSSION MEMO APPENDIX - EA 18-281485 DA - The Landing at Macadam

As this project will serve as one of the first to utilize the new Central City Master Plan code found in Section 33.510.255 of the Portland Zoning Code, the following will serve as information on the purpose, requirements, and approval criteria for a Central City Master Plan.

I. OVERVIEW

The Central City Master Plan Code was rolled-out in the July 9, 2018 code update based on the Central City 2035 Plan:

- Requires specific large sites (US Main Post Office; PPS Headquarters Site (Blanchard); Clinton Station Area; OMSI Station Area; RiverPlace Area; Lincoln High School) to submit a master plan prior to new development. Sites at least 160,000 sq. ft. may voluntarily create a master plan. The Landing at Macadam Project is a voluntary master plan.
- Intended to focus on location of building pads, open space areas, circulation, accessways, and maximum potential building massing (height and bulk).
- Specific design details, materials for a building or open space area are reviewed during later phases, after approval of larger master plan.
- Components of a Central City Master Plan are:
 - Site Plan
 - Three-Dimensional Massing Diagram
 - Sections and Sectional Diagrams
- **Purpose statement for a Master Plan:** A CCMP establishes a clear development strategy for significant redevelopment sites in the Central City. Central City Master Plan review is intended to ensure that development on the site will positively contribute to the existing and desired surrounding urban form. The review will result in an urban design framework and layout for the site as a whole, allowing subsequent reviews for individual buildings and other development to focus on materials and façade treatment.
- A Central City Master Plan is intended to result in the following **urban design outcomes**:
 - A development site that has a strong orientation towards transit and multimodal transportation alternatives;
 - A safe and vibrant public realm, supported by active ground floor uses, open space areas and an internal circulation system that provides access to adjacent public rights-of-way and multimodal transportation options;
 - A development site that has adequate urban services such as water, stormwater, sewers, and fire-hydrants, and
 - Building bulk, height, orientation, and programming that protects public views and preserves light and air within the public realm, and is oriented to active and passive public gathering spaces, including public open spaces, transit stations, and the Willamette River.

II. FUTURE APPROVAL CRITERIA

Central City Master Plan Review approval criteria are found in zoning code section 33.510.255.H

1. The Central City Master Plan is consistent with applicable subdistrict goals and policies of the Central City 2035 Plan;
2. The master plan demonstrates how development will comply with the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines, as well as any applicable design guidelines specific to the subdistrict the master plan site is located within;
3. Development on lots with river frontage incorporates elements that activate the riverfront, such as open areas, trails, accessways, and active land uses that encourage public use and enjoyment of the riverfront;
4. The proposed uses will not have significant adverse effects on industrial firms or result in conflicts with industrial activities located within the plan boundary or within 500 feet of the plan boundary;
5. The master plan demonstrates that development within the plan boundary will establish an overall building orientation through massing, the location of entrances, and the location of ground floor uses that result in an edge that embraces adjacent public park rather than creating an abrupt edge between the plan area and parks, and ensures that development within the plan boundary will not excessively shade the adjacent park;
6. The master plan demonstrates that easy and safe access will be provided to transit stations located within or immediately adjacent to the master plan boundary, and any buildings located immediately adjacent to a transit station include ground floor uses that create an active and safe pedestrian environment throughout the day, evening, and week;
7. Internal open areas are accessible within, and distributed throughout, the master plan area and have connections to the surrounding neighborhood and to any adjacent open space. Internal open areas enhance visual permeability through the site, especially on sites near the Willamette River. The size and location of each open area must be adequate to accommodate the intended use of the space.
8. The transportation system is capable of supporting the proposed uses in addition to the existing uses in the plan area. Evaluation factors include street capacity, level of service, connectivity, transit availability, availability of pedestrian and bicycle networks, on-street parking impacts, access restrictions, neighborhood impacts, impacts on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit circulation, and safety. Evaluation factors may be balanced; a finding of failure in one or more factors may be acceptable if the failure is not a result of the proposed development, and any additional impacts on the system from the proposed development are mitigated;
9. The proposed street plan must provide multi-modal street connections to support the surrounding street grid pattern;
10. The plan ensures that there will be adequate and timely infrastructure capacity for the proposed development; and
11. The master plan demonstrates that, to the extent practical and feasible, inactive uses such as, but not limited to, parking and access, loading, and trash and recycling are shared or consolidated, with the goal of activating the pedestrian environment.