



City of Portland Design Commission

Design Advice Request

DISCUSSION MEMO

Date: May 13, 2019
To: Portland Design Commission
From: Tanya Paglia, Design Review
 503-823-4989 | tanya.paglia@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 19-138785 – 1634 SW Alder
 Design Advice Request Memo – May 23, 2019

Attached is a drawing set for the Design Advice Request meeting scheduled on May 23, 2019. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Design Advice Request (DAR) for a new seven-story mixed use building with 218 units on a 20,000 SF, half-block site in the Goose Hollow Subdistrict of the Central City Plan District. The site is bounded by SW Morrison St, SW 17th Ave, and SW Alder St. Both parking access and the main residential entry and lobby are proposed along SW Alder St on the north side of the site. The proposed ground floor will include 6,000 SF of parking, 1,000 SF of ground floor amenity space, and 3,700 SF of retail along SW Morrison St.

II. DEVELOPMENT TEAM BIO

Architect	Kurt Schultz SERA Architects
Owner’s Representative	Michael Nagy Wood Partners
Project Valuation	\$ 25,000,000

III. FUTURE APPROVAL CRITERIA: Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines and Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines

IV. SITE INFORMATION

1. **Policy.** The following summarizes key policy context as it applies to the subject site.
 - a. **Plan** – 2035 Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2018); Goose Hollow Station Community Plan (adopted 1996).
 - b. **Development Standards – CXd Zone / Central City Plan District, Goose Hollow Subdistrict.** *Though early in the design process, the proposal appears generally compliant with most zoning code standards (allowed use, maximum setbacks, parking, loading, landscaping, etc.).*

Anticipated Modifications Include:

1. Parking Stall Dimensions (33.266.130.F). Reduce the required 8'-6" width of some parking stalls to 7'-10" due to structural column layout. Parking spaces are required to be 8'-6" x 16' with 20' wide aisles. The Modification is to allow concrete columns to be located between some parking stalls which would protrude 8" into the 8'-6" clear width of the stall on each side, reducing the width of those stalls.
2. Bicycle Rack Parking Dimensions (33.266.220.C.3.b). Reduce the required 24" width of bicycle rack spacing to 18".
3. Ground Floor Window Standards (33.510.220.B.2). Ground floor window standards apply in the CX zone. On this site, ground level facades that face a street lot line, must have windows that cover at least 40 percent of the ground level wall area. For ground floor residential units, street facing facades of dwelling units are subject to the regulations of 33.130.230.B.4. *The applicant will be making every effort to meet the standard and avoid a Modification, but it is yet undetermined if the 17th Ave frontage will be able to meet the standard.*

c. Streets – The City’s Transportation System Plan (TSP) classifies the abutting rights-of-way (r.o.w.) as follows:

- SW Morrison: Regional Transit/Major Transit Priority Street; Pedestrian City Walkway; Local Service Bicycle Street; and Local Service Traffic Street.
- SW Alder: Major City Bikeway; Transit Access Street; City Walkway; and Local Service.
- SW 17th Ave: Local Service Traffic; Local Service Transit Street; Local Service Bicycle Street; and City Walkway.

2. Natural.

- o Site slopes downwards from South (Morrison) to North (Alder)
- o Historic Course of the Tanner Creek goes through the north half of the subject site.

3. Built. Composition of the subject block:

Half block to be replaced by proposed building:

- o **Southwest quarter block**: Currently a surface parking lot.
- o **Northwest quarter block**: Developed with a two-story office building built in 1925.

Half block with existing buildings to remain:

- o **Southeast quarter block**: Developed with the Commodore Hotel Building, a four-story, Art Deco style, reinforced concrete building, which was constructed in 1927. The building is a Portland Historic Landmark and is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance under Criterion C, primarily due to its association with prominent Portland architect Herman Brookman.
- o **Northeast quarter block**: Developed with a single-story masonry building built in 1906 as an automotive garage. It is currently the Montes Motor Company, a car dealership selling collector cars.

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDED DAR DISCUSSION TOPICS

Staff advise you consider the following among your discussion items on May 23, 2019:

1. **Recognize Tanner Creek / Incorporate Art and Water Features.** The guidelines in this district very specifically call for incorporating water features (GHDG A5-5 – Incorporate Water Features) and art (GHDG A5-6 – Incorporate Works of Art) into development that enhance the quality, character, and image of the Goose Hollow District. Such features are not yet included in the proposal. In addition, the historic course of Tanner Creek runs through the northern half of the site. GHDG A2-1 advises that developments of 20,000 sq. ft. or more including or immediately adjacent to the historic course of the Tanner Creek should recognize it in one of the following ways: exposing the Creek using water features and fountains; or incorporating interpretive trails, art work, murals or sculptures that describe and symbolize the relation between the district and the history of Tanner Creek. Strong consideration should be given to introducing a water feature on the site or celebrating the Creek in some other form.

Relevant Guidelines: Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines: *A2-1 – Recognize the Historic Tanner Creek Theme, A5-1 – Strengthen the Identity of the Civic Stadium Station Area, A5-5. Incorporate water features or water design themes that enhance the quality, character, and image of the Goose Hollow District, A5-6. Incorporate works of art or other special design features that increase the public enjoyment of the District,* and Central City Fundament Design Guidelines: *A2 – Emphasize Portland Themes, A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas, A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B1. Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System; B4 – Provide Stopping and Viewing Places, C6 – Develop Transitions between Buildings and Public Spaces, C8. Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings.*

2. **Scale of SW 17th Frontage.** The proposed building's 200' seven-story western frontage along SW 17th Ave presents a large scale along the streetscape. In addition, much of the ground floor uses along the frontage are not active or at grade. To enliven the façade at the street level and break down the large scale, juliets or balconies at the higher ground floor windows would bring a more active frontage. A good example of this can be seen at the Parker in the Pearl District along its NW Pettygrove St frontage. Introducing balconies above the ground floor could be another way of bringing more human scale to the building's mass on its western elevation. These could also contribute to a more lively and active façade and increase eyes on the street. Increasing activity and life on the building's exterior and providing outdoor areas where active uses can take place and signs of occupancy can take root would enrich the pedestrian experience for people passing by.

Another way to break down the fortress-like sensibility at the sidewalk level along SW 17th could be fitting landscaping in between the building and street. The building has a certain amount of "hardness" to it that this could soften. Adding a small landscape buffer on the other frontages could also work to soften the building's hardness. Many of the established buildings in Goose Hollow have some minimal landscaping in a similar location so it is a common characteristic of the district.

Relevant Guidelines: Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines: *B1-1 – Provide human scale and interest to buildings along sidewalks and walkways;* and Central City Fundament Design Guidelines: *A7 – Establish and Maintain a Sense of Urban Enclosure, A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B1 – Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System, B2 – Protect the Pedestrian, C6 – Develop Transitions between Buildings and Public Spaces, C8 – Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings, C9 – Develop Flexible Sidewalk-Level Spaces.*

3. **Tripartite Scale.** Because of the significant downward slope from Morrison to Alder, the building's tripartite composition wraps from a single story base on Morrison to a two-story base

on Alder with a two story top and four-story middle all the way around. Exploring a few options of how the tripartite sections are allocated would be helpful to finding the combination that conveys the greatest sense of human-scale to the building's massing. The two-story base with two-story top along Alder has a particularly looming scale.

Relevant Guidelines: Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines: *B1-1 – Provide human scale and interest to buildings along sidewalks and walkways*; and Central City Fundament Design Guidelines: *A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B1 – Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System, B2 – Protect the Pedestrian, C3 – Respect Architectural Integrity, C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings, C5 – Design for Coherency, C8 – Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings.*

4. **Weather Protection.** The design so far has limited weather protection on the SW Alder and SW Morrison frontages and none whatsoever along SW 17th Ave. Bringing in more canopy coverage on all three street facing facades would bring more human-scale to the building and also provide needed weather protection.

Relevant Guidelines: Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines: *B1-1 – Provide human scale and interest to buildings along sidewalks and walkways, C1-2: Integrate signs and awnings that complement & respect a buildings architecture*; and Central City Fundament Design Guidelines: *A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B1 – Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System, B2 – Protect the Pedestrian, B6 – Develop Weather Protection, C6 – Develop Transitions between Buildings and Public Spaces, C8 – Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings, C9 – Develop Flexible Sidewalk-Level Spaces.*

5. **End Wall.** The proposed building's end wall will be very visible as long as the abutting single-story building on the block's northeast quadrant remains. In addition, its top two floors will remain visible in perpetuity where it abuts the landmark building on the southeast quadrant. Thus, it should be conceived as a four-sided building. The end wall is commendable in having recessed niches that allow windows on the east façade as well as brick veneer wrapping the north and south ends of the façade. The fiber cement panels that make up the bulk of the façade are less in keeping with the abutting landmark.

Relevant Guidelines: Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines: Central City Fundament Design Guidelines: *A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish, and Identify Areas, A6 – Reuse/Rehabilitate/Restore Buildings, C2 – Promote Quality and Permanence in Development, C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings.*

6. **Parking & Loading Entry.** The entry as proposed is in a good location and on the only frontage where it would be permitted by PBOT policy. Given the scale and use issues along SW 17th, the vehicle entry should be designed to add human scale and interest. A canopy would be an element that could bring such scale and interest and could help make it look like an intentional part of the building.

Note: Motor vehicle access to or from any parking area, loading area, or parking structure is prohibited on or along SW Morrison. Additionally, motor vehicle access to any parking area, loading area, or parking structure is not allowed on SW Alder Street, a designated Major City Bikeway.

Relevant Guidelines: Goose Hollow District Design Guidelines: *B1-1 – Provide Human Scale to Buildings along Walkways, C1-1: Design parking exteriors to visually integrate with their surroundings, C1-2: Integrate signs and awnings that complement & respect a buildings architecture*; and Central City Fundament Design Guidelines: *A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish, and Identify Areas, A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B2 – Protect the Pedestrian, B6 – Develop Weather Protection, C6 – Develop Transitions between Buildings and Public Spaces, C8 – Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings.*