



City of Portland Design Commission

Design Advice Request

DISCUSSION MEMO

Date: June 13, 2019
To: Portland Design Commission
From: Tanya Paglia, Design Review
503-823-4989 | tanya.paglia@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 19-134120 DA – MorningStar at Laurelhurst
Design Advice Request Memo – July 11, 2019

Attached is a drawing set for the Design Advice Request meeting scheduled on Thursday, July 11, 2019. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

DAR for a new five-story, 59' tall senior living facility on Sandy Blvd with 113 units of memory care and assisted living. The 42,757 SF site is located in the Sandy Boulevard Plan District and is bounded by Sandy Blvd, NE 31st St, and NE Hassalo St. The proposed building will be approximately 118,685 SF including associated residential units as well as dining, and amenity spaces, including outdoor amenities. The ground floor will include a number of active uses for use by the residents such as a lobby, bistro, offices, salon, and theater. The proposed primary entrances are an entry court located in "the notch" on Sandy Blvd and a porte-cochère on the south side of the building along NE Hassalo St which is a dead-end street. Structured parking with approximately 70 parking spaces is proposed with access also off NE Hassalo. Loading is proposed mid-block on NE Sandy Blvd at the northeast corner of the building.

Anticipated Modifications:

1. Maximum Building Length (33.130.222.B). In the CM3 zone, the maximum building length for the portion of a building located within 20' of a street lot line is 200'. Each 200' building length must be separated by a notch that is a minimum of 20' wide and extends for the full depth from the street lot line to 20' back. If a building is located right at the lot line, the notch would then need to be 20' wide by 20' deep, which is the case for this building.

The Sandy frontage of this site is 397'. The applicant has provided a notch 20' wide and 20' deep, however it is shifted along the façade so as to leave a segment longer than 200' of building length on the eastern portion of the frontage, with a significantly shorter segment of frontage west of the notch.

2. Sandy Boulevard Plan District height limits in transition zones (33.575.100.C). Sites in commercial zones abutting or across the street from residential zones have special height

limits that create a transition to the residential zones. The proposal would not meet these standards as follows:

- For sites abutting R5 zones, the portion of a site that sits between 25' and 50' of the property line, the maximum building height is 45'. The subject site abuts an R5 site (which is the Landmark *Anna Lewis Mann Old People's Home*) along its southern interior property line, and is proposed to be 51' tall, instead of 45' tall. This is at the location of the fifth floor Club Room which protrudes into the height step down zone.

The applicant has provided a diagram of the requested Modification in the plan set.

3. Setback Landscaping (33.130.215.B.2). Along the southern interior property line, the site abuts an R5 site (which is also the Landmark *Anna Lewis Mann Old People's Home*). The required minimum setback from a lot line that abuts an R5 zone is 10'. The required setback area must be landscaped to the L3 standard. The proposal provides less than 10' along a portion of the boundary and in addition, much of the landscaping provided is not in ground and thus does not formally meet the L3 landscaping standard.

II. DEVELOPMENT TEAM BIO

Architect	David Howard, Mark Coplin, Jason Erdahl Ankrom Moisan Architects
Owner's Representative	Brandon Lesniak MorningStar Senior Living
Project Valuation	\$23,000,000

III. FUTURE APPROVAL CRITERIA: Community Design Guidelines (see attached matrix)

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDED DAR DISCUSSION TOPICS

Introductory notes:

- The applicant has addressed some concerns raised at the last Design Advice Request. This includes adding an entry in the building notch, carrying the chamfered corner all the way up the building and putting active programming in this corner at the ground floor, covering over the open garage ramp to provide terrace space and landscaping in an area that was previously unsightly vehicle area, and adding more landscaping to the boundary shared with the historic *Anna Lewis Mann Old People's Home*.
- At the relocated entrance, Staff suggests ways to take it to the next level by creating an entrance and lobby that is activated and welcoming.
- Given the area context, a simpler, more streamlined expression with less materials could enhance the building's relationship to the Sandy corridor and provide a more cohesive expression. The applicant should look at Sandy precedents as explained in section 2. below.

Staff advise you consider the following among your discussion items on July 11, 2019:

1. **Prominent Entrance.** Staff notes that additional enhancements could be made that would strengthen this condition. As a key element on the building's prominent 400' frontage on Sandy Blvd, strengthening this element would better align the proposal with guidelines. The notched space should be a truly active entry court and further refinement could get it there. This outdoor space should be a place that people want to be. In addition, enhancing the connection between the indoor space and the outdoor space at this area of the building would bring more activation. Elements that can help to achieve this include materiality, finely-scaled details, landscaping, lighting, type of doors, more glazing all around the notch as well as

indoor/outdoor connected spaces such as spill out space from the bistro. Consider blending indoor and outdoor activity and providing a private to public transition zone by allowing room for an active outdoor space potentially featuring outdoor seating associated with an indoor space to promote activity and safety.

Another key element is the interior programming. The area behind the entrance is primarily a corridor connecting other spaces rather than a vibrant, welcoming lobby. As the main entry off of one of Portland's Major Transit and Pedestrian corridors, this should be enhanced by making the entry area into an active and generous lobby. While there is a more robust lobby/reception area at the Hassalo frontage at the porte-cochere there is no vertical integration of the two lobby/entry spaces. There is an opportunity to better connect these two spaces to make a truly welcoming two-level entry zone in this part of the building. There needs to be a strong lobby space on the ground floor along Sandy and a connection between the upper and lower lobby. Refer to Guidelines *P1 – Plan Area Character, E1 – The Pedestrian Network, E2 – Stopping Places, E3 – The Sidewalk Level of Buildings, E4 – Corners that Build Active Intersections, D1 – Outdoor Areas, D2 – Main Entrances, D3 – Landscape Features, and D7 – Blending into the Neighborhood.*

- 2. Building Architectural Cohesion & Contextual Response.** The proposal is located along the Sandy Blvd Corridor and its distinct character should be taken into consideration when further evolving the building design. As per Guideline P1: Plan Area Character, new development should blend into established areas by reflecting the architectural features and site design of the surrounding buildings, responding to views, topography and materials. Sandy Blvd has always been an important street, serving as the main street for early northeast neighborhoods and is designated as a main street in the Region 2040 Growth Concept Plan.

The building should take cues in its materiality, massing, character and orientation from the buildings that create the "historical" context of Sandy, many of which have deco overtones. While there is an eclectic ensemble of buildings along Sandy a large amount of the neighborhood character derives from buildings of the streetcar commercial era, art deco style apartment buildings, and early automotive commercial and service uses. Symmetry and horizontality play a large role in the design of buildings throughout the corridor. Many of the characteristic buildings of the corridor have facades that are large areas of simple wall and window patterning refined with discrete areas of ornate details. Horizontality is emphasized with bands of décor and strong bands of windows along each floor level.

While breaking down the building's extremely long frontage is an understandable objective, the amount of variation currently shown is excessive and lacks cohesion. It conveys a busy, disjointed sensibility. Given the area context, a simpler, more streamlined expression with less materials could enhance the building's relationship to the Sandy corridor and provide a more cohesive expression. Longer, simpler façade zones should not be feared. Efforts should be made to keep the design simple with a cohesive composition and the roofline should also be of a more traditional style. Given the non-commercial and all residential use of the building, Staff suggests taking cues from some of the traditional apartment building on and near Sandy in addition to other buildings on the corridor.

Finally, the subject site's southern and eastern property lines abut the 1910 National Register of Historic Places landmark site of the *Anna Lewis Mann Old People's Home*. The proposed south elevation could do more to respond to the landmark.

Refer to Guidelines *P1 – Plan Area Character, P3 – Gateways, E1 – The Pedestrian Network, E2 – Stopping Places, E3 – The Sidewalk Level of Buildings, E4 – Corners that Build Active Intersections, D1: Outdoor Areas, D3: Landscape Features, D7 – Blending into the Neighborhood, D8 – Interest, Quality, and Composition.*

3. **Loading Dock Design.** While a loading dock on Sandy Blvd was eventually supported by Commission, it was noted that design should be used to ameliorate its impact on the pedestrian realm. Sandy is a Major Transit Priority Street and the City is planning a future Streetcar line along Sandy. It is also a designated City Walkway. The Hollywood and Sandy Plan indicates that the community's vision of the area focuses on a mix of uses and activities that can be reached by walking, transit and other modes of travel. Sandy Blvd is not a successful place to locate back of house functions. Staff advises that improvements to the loading zone be made using architecture to visually minimize the size of the opening and consider adding a canopy above to add additional human scale and weather protection along this very long site frontage.

Refer to Guidelines *P1 – Plan Area Character, E1 – The Pedestrian Network, E3 – The Sidewalk Level of Buildings, E5 – Light, Wind, and Rain, D4: Parking Areas and Garages, D5: Crime Prevention, D7: Blending into the neighborhood, and D8: Interest, Quality and Composition.*

4. **Modifications.** Modifications carry a high burden of demonstrating how they are meeting the purpose of the standard and how they are better meeting design guidelines. Based on Commission feedback from DAR #1, Staff notes that the Modifications requested could meet those criteria, but invite discussion from Commissioners to confirm consensus.
- Purpose of Maximum Building Length (33.130.222.B): These standards, along with the height and setback standards, limit the bulk of buildings close to the street. These standards help ensure that large buildings will be divided into smaller components that relate to the scale and patterns of Portland's commercial/mixed-use areas and add visual interest and variety to the street environment.
 - Note: this Modification allowed the notch to be placed in a portion of the building where it could be utilized as the building's main entrance on Sandy. Commissioners indicated such a Modification could be supportable to provide a sufficiently prominent entrance to the building. However, more design work is necessary at the ground level, and especially at the main entrance, to better meet guidelines so that the ground level in its entirety mitigates for not meeting this standard.
 - Purpose of Sandy Boulevard Plan District height limits in transition zones (33.575.100.C). Sites in commercial zones abutting or across the street from RF through R1 zones have special height limits that create a transition to the residential zone.
 - Note: this Modification allows an active rooftop space that will provide bring more activity and vitality to this side of the building rather than a lifeless façade. It thus better meets pedestrian guidelines while providing human scale and relating to the few residential buildings within eyeshot of it.
 - At the prior DAR the Commission noted this Modification could be supported with a very cohesive building design, which still needs refinement before this Modification could be recommended for approval.
 - Purpose of Setback Landscaping (33.130.215.B.2): The required building setbacks promote streetscapes that are consistent with the desired character of the different commercial/mixed use zones. The setbacks promote buildings close to the sidewalk to reinforce a pedestrian orientation and built-up streetscape. The setback requirements for areas that abut residential zones promote commercial/mixed use development that will maintain light, air, and the potential for privacy for adjacent residential zones.

The minimum building setbacks along local service streets adjacent to residential zones work together with requirements for step downs in building height (33.130.210.B.2.b.) to ensure that there is a transition in street frontage characteristics to lower scale residential

zones. In these situations, the building setback regulations promote street frontages with landscaping and residential uses to provide a transition and a cohesive street environment with similar street frontage characteristics on both sides of the street and limit exterior display and storage to minimize impacts to nearby residentially-zoned areas.

- Note: given the challenges of the site topography and program, the applicant is providing a higher net area of setback landscaping than is required by code. However, the landscaping is not provided at the consistent 10' band required. It is also not "in ground" and thus does not technically meet the definition.
- Per a suggestion of the Commission, the applicant covered the open garage ramp along the south side of the building and used that area to create a more cohesive Memory Care terrace as well as provide additional landscaping. The current proposal now provides 456 SF of landscaping over and above what would have been achieved with a consistent 10' band along the entire border. The width drops below 10' in areas, but increases to areas of 23'-9" in width and 17'-3" in width in other areas.