



City of Portland Design Commission

Design Advice Request

SUMMARY MEMO

Date: July 25, 2019
To: Kristin Solomon & Dave Otte | HOLST Architecture
From: Grace Jeffreys, Design and Historic Resource Review
503-823-7840 | grace.jeffreys@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 19-143851 – 3000 SE Powell
Design Advice Request #2 Commission Summary Memo – July 11, 2019

Thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to hold a Design Advice Request regarding your project. I hope you find it informative and valuable as you continue with your project development. Following, is a summary of the comments provided by the Design Commission at the July 11, 2019 Design Advice Request. This summary was generated from notes taken at the public meeting and a subsequent review of the public meeting recordings. To review those recordings, please visit: <http://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/record/11686822>.

These Design Commission comments are intended to guide you in further design exploration of your project. These comments may also inform City staff when giving guidance over the course of future related land use reviews. It should be understood that these comments address the project as presented on July 11, 2019. As the project design evolves, the comments, too, may evolve or may no longer be pertinent.

Design Advice Requests are not intended to substitute for other Code-required land use or legislative procedures. Please keep in mind that the formal Type III land use review process [which includes a land use review application, public notification and a Final Decision] must be followed once the Design Advice Request meetings are complete, if formal approval for specific elements of your project is desired.

Please continue to coordinate with me as you prepare your Type III Land Use Review Application.

Encl:
Summary Memo

Cc: Design Commission
Respondents

Executive Summary. The Commission complemented the team on their responsiveness to the discussion at the first DAR, held on May 16, 2019, and once again noted appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the proposal again at this early design stage.

The Commission considered the general massing and design approach strong moves, and encouraged the following considerations moving forward to address the approval criteria:

1. The large **massing break on SE Powell** provides space for a **large, activated and landscaped public plaza** that serves as an eddy of calm for pedestrians alongside the busy boulevard, and this space is strengthened by the visual connections to the private courtyard beyond. Together, these work as important context creating moves, creating a stopping place with views towards the active uses within.
2. The **courtyard functions as a strong organizing element** and a useful amenity for residents of high-density housing, providing them with necessary outdoor space. It will be important to maintain a high level of visual connection into the courtyard from SE Powell.
3. **Each frontage should respond to the different conditions presented**, and both current and future contexts.
4. **Simplify and strengthen the composition** by reducing the number of compositional moves and strengthen the ones that remain.

Commissioners Present. Present - Rodriguez, Robinson, Santner, Vallaster. Notes provided - McCarter. Recused – Livingston, Molinar

Summary of Comments. Following is a general summary of Commission comments. The context and public realm part of the discussion was focused on design elements (courtyard and frontages), rather than per tenet, so these notes are also organized that way.

CONTEXT (*Guidelines P1: Community Plan Area Character. P3: Gateways. D7: Blending into the Neighborhood.*)

PUBLIC REALM (*Guidelines E1: Pedestrian Networks. E2: Stopping Places. E3: The Sidewalk Level of Buildings. E4: Corners that Build Active Intersections. E5: Light, Wind and Rain. D1: Outdoor Areas. D2: Main Entrances. D3: Landscape Features. D4: Parking Areas and Garages. D5: Crime Prevention.*)

1. **Context.** As mentioned at the first DAR, this is a great opportunity for context creation, to provide needed repair for pedestrians and the neighborhood, and to create a development that demonstrates affordable housing can be both a place where people want to live and contribute to the neighborhood. Focus on elevating what is here (current context) and demonstrating what is to come (future context).

Considerable discussion occurred regarding context at the second DAR, and how to balance out what the building is - housing for residents, with what the building can give back - an interesting and dynamic place along SE Powell.

Strong moves include:

- The large massing breaks on Powell, which contribute to a dynamic frontage.
- The large, activated, landscaped, public entry plaza, which creates an eddy of calm for pedestrians alongside the busy boulevard.
- The visual transparency to the private courtyard beyond, which provides a connection to the residential use of the building and activity beyond.
- The large bevels that create substantial massing breaks provide a welcome breakdown of the massing.

Further consider:

- Maintaining the overall visual transparency into the courtyard from SE Powell. If some level of privacy is desired at the ground level, study how a level of visual connection can still be maintained.
- The smaller bevels, which do not provide massing breakdowns, are less effective.
- Simplifying and strengthening overall compositional moves.
- Increasing perceived ground floor height along SE Powell and SE 30th.

- 2. Courtyard.** As mentioned at the first DAR, the proposed Courtyard is a strong organizing element and a useful amenity for residents of high-density housing, providing them with necessary outdoor spaces.

Strong moves include:

- Surrounding the courtyard with activate ground floor uses that spill out into it.
- The highly landscaped ramps to upper courtyard.

Further consider:

- Providing some programed play area/s.
- Adding more landscape layering at residential units to provide buffering from courtyard.
- Adding a place to pause, perhaps to sit and read, at ramp direction changes.

- 3. Frontages.** As mentioned at the first DAR, the frontages should respond to the different conditions each side presents, and both current and future contexts:

a. North side, facing SE Powell Blvd:

Strong moves include:

- The large breakdowns of massing and the transparency to the open courtyard beyond.
- The active ground floor uses with spill out and urban landscaping in the setbacks, which will create a comfort zone for pedestrians to both pass by, but also to stop and pause, buffering them from the busy SE Powell.

Further consider:

- Increasing perceived scale of ground level across frontage.
- Adding prominence to main entry. It was noted that the expansive transparency into the courtyard did provide some indication of entry, however, the entry doors need to be better indicated.
- How bike and pedestrian movement occurs across the frontage, as this is where SE 30th links to the new crossing of Powell at SE 31th.

b. West side, facing SE 30th:

Strong moves include:

- The added bevel and terrace at massing change, which adds interest and breaks up mass.
- The activated corner.

Further consider:

- Adding ground level activation, which will be critical to activate SE 30th.
- Stepping back storefronts at corner facing SE 30th to create a less busy spill-out space for outdoor seating.
- Adding canopies and entries facing SE 30th at the corner.
- Reducing over-scaled ground level treatment at service and parking.
- Adding “windows” into the blank walls of the parking area to create some level of “eyes” to the outside. This could also help add patterning and reduce scale of the ground level facades.

- Strengthening landscape with deeper layering and trees.

c. South side, facing the undeveloped site:

Further consider:

- Reducing over-scaled ground level treatment.
- Adding “windows” into the blank walls of the parking area to create some level of “eyes” to the outside, and, also add patterning and scale to the ground level facades.
- Strengthening landscape with deeper layering and trees.

d. East side, facing the Motel 6 parking area:

Further consider:

- Providing a better transition from the Powell façade, which should wrap the side.
- Adding more changes in massing. There could be some level of play in the composition between the highly sculpted front and the side, look at pattern and repetition.
- Strengthening landscape with deeper layering and trees to buffer ground level residents from adjacent parking.

QUALITY AND PERMANENCE (*Guideline D8: Interest, Quality and Composition.*)

Work with the composition and facades to break down the scale of the development and create a nicely put together building. It need not be an expensive development, but it does need to be well put together.

Further consider:

- Simplifying and strengthening the composition by reducing the number of compositional moves and strengthen the ones that remain.
- Use massing breaks rather than façade treatments to break down the scale of the development and create a nicely put together building.
- Reducing the number of compositional moves and strengthen the ones that remain.

Exhibit List

- A. Applicant’s Submittals
 1. Original drawing set
 2. Email confirming adding Kristin Solomon to Application, 5/22/19
 3. “C” drawings from first DAR, May 2, 2019
- B. Zoning Map
- C. Drawings
 - 1-42: Drawing set, 6/27/2019 (attach sheets C.14, C.18, C.19, C.21)
- D. Notification
 1. Posting instructions sent to applicant
 2. Posting notice as sent to applicant
 3. Applicant’s statement certifying posting
 4. General information on DAR process included with e-mailed posting/notice
- E. Service Bureau Comments – Refer to PC notes
- F. Public Testimony – none received
- G. Other
 1. Application form
 2. Pre-Application Conference Summary, 12/28/18
 3. Staff memo to Design Commission, dated 5/9/2019
 4. Staff Presentation from 5/16/2019

5. Applicant Presentation from 5/16/2019
 6. Public Testimony Sign-in Sheet, 1/28/19
- H. After First Hearing
1. Summary memo from first DAR, 3/31/19
 2. Staff email with schedule for 2nd DAR and fee breakdown, 5/21/19
 3. Posting instructions and Posting notice sent to applicant
 4. Applicant's statement certifying posting
 5. Fees paid for second DAR, 6/28/19
 6. Staff memo to Commission, dated 7/2/19
 7. Staff presentation, 7/11/19
 8. Applicant presentation, 7/11/19
 9. Public Testimony Sign-in Sheet, 7/11/19
 10. Letter from Doug Klotz, 7/11/19, in support of proposal and encouraging ROW changes.
 11. Written comments from Commissioner McCarter