



City of Portland Design Commission

Design Advice Request

SUMMARY MEMO

Date: January 5, 2021
To: Francis Dardis, Ankrom Moisan Architects
Cassidy Bolger & Sam Rodriguez, Mill Creek Residential Trust
From: Benjamin Nielsen, Design Review
(503) 865-6519, benjamin.nielsen@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 20-193235 DA – *Modera Main Street*
Design Advice Request Commission Summary Memo – November 5, 2020

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 November 5, 2020 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: <https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/13963187/>.

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 November 5, 2020. 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:
DRAFT Summary Memo

Cc: Design Commission
Respondents

Executive Summary.

Commissioners generally believe that the massing and articulation strategy is working well to help the very large building integrate into its context, though some commissioners believe a bar tower would better integrate into the district than an L-shaped one. Commissioners were glad to see the structured parking wrapped almost entirely with active ground floor uses and thought the approach to addressing the public realm is generally working well along the SW 20th Ave and SW Madison St frontages, with the large setbacks and townhouse-style articulation in the building. Additional work is needed along SW 19th Ave and especially SW Main St, where mitigation for the inactive ground floor is needed. Additional weather protection and a response to Goose Hollow-specific public realm guidelines is still needed. Commissioners believe the design of the building is generally cohesive, though additional articulation of the massing is needed in the tower portion. They said that brick or stucco are appropriate for cladding materials, as opposed to metal panels.

Nine members of the public provided verbal comments during the DAR in addition to written comments submitted before the DAR. Comments primarily concerned the large number of parking spaces, particularly those designated for MAC parking, dangerous traffic that already exists in the neighborhood, and the overall scale and height of the building.

Detailed comments are provided below.

Commissioners Present.

Brian McCarter, Jessica Molinar, Chandra Robinson, Zari Santner, and Don Vallaster. Julie Livingston submitted comments by email, and these were read aloud at the DAR by Commissioner Molinar.

Summary of Comments. Following is a general summary of Commission comments by design tenet.

CONTEXT

1. Commissioners generally believe that, considering the size of the building and its program, the proposed massing scheme presented addresses the context of the surrounding neighborhood well, though two commissioners thought a bar tower atop a podium would better integrate with the context.
 - a. Commissioners agree that the podium massing and articulation does a good job relating to the lower-scale of existing development along SW Madison Ave and SW 20th Ave with the large windows and entries facing the streets. Similar articulation is needed in the podium along the other two street frontages.
 - b. Commissioners also agree that the tower should not touch the ground and should be pushed back from the podium along the SW 19th Ave and SW Main St frontages, as this would better complement the area's context. One commissioner called the current design along these frontages "harsh".
 - c. Commissioners believe that the tower needs additional sculpting at the top in general and at the proposed shift in material from brick to metal, in particular. Commissioners also noted that brick or stucco (or similar) materials are more appropriate for the Goose Hollow context.
 - d. It should be noted that one commissioner questioned the proposed podium and tower design and said that the tower should be more slender and properly-scaled to the neighborhood and that additional open area should be provided at the ground level.

PUBLIC REALM

1. Commissioners generally believe that the proposal is on the right track to respond well to public realm guidelines along the SW Madison St and SW 20th Ave frontages. Specifically, commissioners cited the setbacks, which some said could even be greater, as well as large street-facing windows and entries and finer-scaled articulation of the podium mass as being beneficial to creating a strong public realm.
 - a. Commissioners said that balconies should be provided for each of the units in the podium level, in particular, and for every unit in the building, in general. One commissioner specifically noted that “a strong and rational architectural parti should address the provision of balconies.”
 - b. Ground-level residential entries need to include outdoor porches or stoop spaces that are occupiable, with the ability to place outdoor furniture and planters, rather than just an entry into a doorway. The setback areas should also be richly landscaped – “lush and green” – both for tenants of the dwelling units behind them and for the benefit of the pedestrian environment.
 - c. The main residential entry on SW 19th Ave needs greater articulation and prominence.
2. Commissioners agreed that the design of the building does not yet create a healthy public realm along SW Main St and that some “big ideas” are needed along that frontage.
3. Commissioners believe that proposed pocket parks at the southwest and southeast corners of the site should have more grassy, landscaped area and little to no paved area, possibly with seating along the sidewalk edge. The more active and paved elements shown in these pocket parks should be relocated to a pocket park-type space at or near the main entry to the building along SW 19th Ave.
 - a. Additional windows need to be provided overlooking proposed pocket parks at the southwest and southeast corners of the site.
4. Commissioners stressed that responses to Guidelines *A5-5 Incorporate Water Features*, *A5-6 Incorporate Works of Art*, and *B6 Develop Weather Protection* need to be provided.
 - a. Commissioners noted that the proposed pocket parks would be good locations for public art and water features.
 - b. A big, “copious” canopy is needed at the main residential lobby along SW 19th Ave and at the northwest corner entrance.

QUALITY & PERMANENCE

1. Commissioners generally agreed that the proposal was cohesive in its design, though the transition from brick to metal was noted as needing an accompanying massing shift.
2. One commissioner recommended using the materials in a way that helps to make the tower appear more slender and “reduce the enormity of the structure.”

Exhibit List

- A. Applicant's Submittals
 - 1. Narrative Statement
 - 2. Original Drawing Set
 - 3. Revised Drawing Set, received 10/22/2020 and dated 11/05/2020
 - 4. Applicant's Presentation to Design Commission, 11/05/2020
- B. Zoning Map
- C. Drawings
 - 1-53. Revised Drawing Set from Exhibit A.3.
- D. Notification
 - 1. Posting instructions sent to applicant
 - 2. Posting notice as sent to applicant
 - 1. Applicant's statement certifying posting
 - 2. General information on DAR process included with e-mailed posting/notice
- E. Service Bureau Comments
 - 1. Bureau of Environmental Services, 10/16/2020
 - 2. Bureau of Transportation – Development Review, 10/26/2020
- F. Public Comments
 - 1. Jeff Malmquist, 11/01/2020, comments in opposition
 - 2. Melanie Yoo, 11/02/2020, comments in opposition
 - 3. Sean O'Donnell, 11/02/2020, comments in opposition
 - 4. Judith E. Widen, 11/03/2020, comments in opposition
 - 5. Nic Cota, 11/03/2020, comments in opposition
 - 6. Marilyn Weber, 11/04/2020, comments in opposition
 - 7. Amy Cook, 11/04/2020, comments in opposition
 - 8. Laurie Goldsmith, 11/04/2020, comments in opposition
 - 9. Rachel Clark, 11/05/2020, comments in opposition
 - 10. Karl Reer, 11/05/2020, comments in opposition
 - 11. Scotty Iseri, 11/05/2020, comments in opposition
 - 12. Jon Beil, 11/05/2020, comments in opposition
 - 13. Jerald Powell, 11/05/2020, comments in opposition
 - 14. Jackie Lowthian, 11/05/2020, question
- G. Other
 - 1. Application form
 - 2. Staff memo to Design Commission, 10/29/2020
 - 3. Staff Presentation to Design Commission, 11/05/2020