



City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Land Use Services
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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Work Session

DISCUSSION MEMO

Date: May 31, 2024
To: Portland Design Commission
From: Benjamin Nielsen, Design / Historic Review Team
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Re: Montgomery Park Area Plan & Character Statement
Briefing Memo – June 6, 2024

This memo is regarding the upcoming work session on June 6, 2024, for the Montgomery Park Area Plan & Character Statement. The work session serves as a continuation of the joint Planning Commission/Design Commission hearing that was held on May 21, 2024. A recording of that hearing may be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/live/ReUC0eA4vbY?si=iAX8gjc4XFZ3y51n>

The Bureau of Planning & Sustainability staff has provided a summary memo of the last hearing and earlier community feedback regarding the Character Statement, a copy of the Character Statement as presented in the Proposed Draft of the Montgomery Park Area Plan, a table of proposed amendments and recommendations on next steps based off Design Commission comments at the 5/21/24 hearing, and an updated table of contents for the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines.

While most testimony at the combined hearing on 5/21/24 was focused on the overall plan itself, some comments could be applicable to the Character Statement—particularly those concerning incorporating the history of York into any new development. Several testifiers argued for more meaningful representation both York and the Black community—as well as Indigenous communities and the historic Chinese immigrant community that farmed near Guilds Lake—than providing artwork, sculptures, or historic markers. The Design Commission should consider dedicating some discussion time to see if the Character Statement can be strengthened in response to these concerns.

As a reminder, the Design Commission is assigned the authority to provide a recommendation to City Council for the adoption of any new or revised design guidelines—including proposed character statements, which are amendments to the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines—per zoning code section 33.720.030.D. The Design Commission will also provide a recommendation on adoption of the Design Overlay on sites to be upzoned to the EX zone as part of this plan.

The last Character Statement that the Design Commission reviewed and recommended for adoption was for the West Portland Town Center Plan on September 1, 2022. A copy of the Commission's recommendation letter and the Character Statement for that plan are also included with this memo as a reference.

Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Attachments:

1. BPS Staff Memo, dated 5/30/24, plus additional attachments
2. West Portland Town Center Character Statement and Design Commission recommendation to Council (for reference)

Additional information:

Montgomery Park Area Plan: <https://www.portland.gov/bps/planning/mp2h/mpap-proposed-draft>

Written testimony from 5/21/24 hearing:

<https://www.portlandmaps.com/bps/testimony/#proposal=mp2h>