

**OPPOSE
APPEAL****APPEAL OF NW DISTRICT ASSOC.****RIVERSCAPE APARTMENTS LU 12-212602 DZM GW AD**IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE

Email

✓ Steve P/w/h	1120 SW Couch DD	97204
✓ Lee Novak	Fore Properties	

**SUPPORT
APPEAL**

APPEAL OF NW DISTRICT ASSOC.

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Spoke	John Bradley	2220 NW Johnson	1445 S 27th St
✓	Cheryl Meyers	1742 NW Riverscape	CHELYMEYERS55@gmail.com
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✓	Colin O'Brady	1720 NW Riverscape St.	Colinobradys@gmail.com

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council, Portland, Oregon

FROM: Gustavo J. Cruz, Jr., Planning Committee Member, Northwest District Association

DATE: June 12, 2013

RE: Testimony to City Council Regarding Appeal of Riverscape Apartments
Decision by the Design Commission, April 18, 2013, LU 12-212602 DZM GW
AD

Good afternoon. My name is Gustavo Cruz, and I am also speaking on behalf of the Planning Committee of the Northwest District Association. I would like to highlight three particular areas of concern that were part of our appeal of the Riverscape Decision.

First, the proposed pedestrian “courtyards” emphasize movement through those spaces, rather than focusing on more typical residential uses, like sitting, reading or interacting with your neighbors. The buildings are not oriented toward the courtyards through their entry-ways or lobbies, and the apartments lack balconies and more generous windows overlooking the courtyards that interact with the open spaces. We would prefer to see more of a plaza-style design, and buildings and spaces that respond to and reinforce the context of the site.

Second, the sidewalk context is awkward, with semi-private residential patios and awkward ramps and grade transitions. Overall, our committee would prefer a more simplified approach, without the loading dock feature, and with floor levels at the sidewalk level in the commercial lease areas and the live/work spaces.

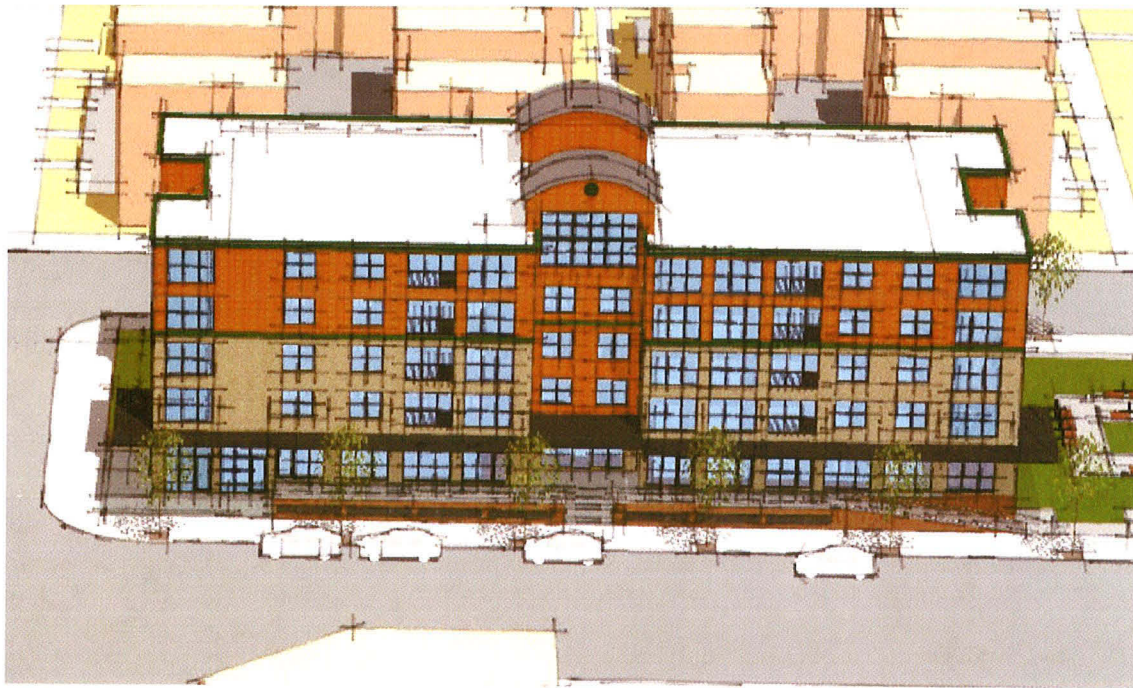
Third, our committee felt strongly that the buildings do not take full advantage of their proximity to the river. Although there are visual obstructions between some apartments and the river, our committee members felt that at least the ends of the buildings could be redesigned to offer some opportunity to see the river. We felt that the buildings were similar to buildings found elsewhere in the city, with nothing significant about them to signal they are near the river and waterfront.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mayor Hales and Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this project with you. As has been summarized by others, one of our main concerns with these structures is their design in response to their river setting. The structures fail to respond to or take advantage of their location 200 feet from the Willamette River. This city is known for celebrating and enriching its waterfront. Unfortunately there is nothing about these buildings that speaks to that rich history.

This is a unique site within the City and within the Northwest Neighborhood District. The four narrow blocks within 200 feet of the river are unlike any other site on the downtown or south waterfront. The narrow blocks are only the depth of the average city lot, about 100'. How do you take advantage of such a site that respects the code requirements? Here is what the applicant has proposed. The major outdoor apartment spaces are on the narrow end facades, balconies that face the adjacent building. There doesn't appear to be any other outdoor spaces, terraces, decks or balconies that face Naito or the river. The buildings could just as readily be on SE Division or N Vancouver. Nothing about them says "welcome to the waterfront."



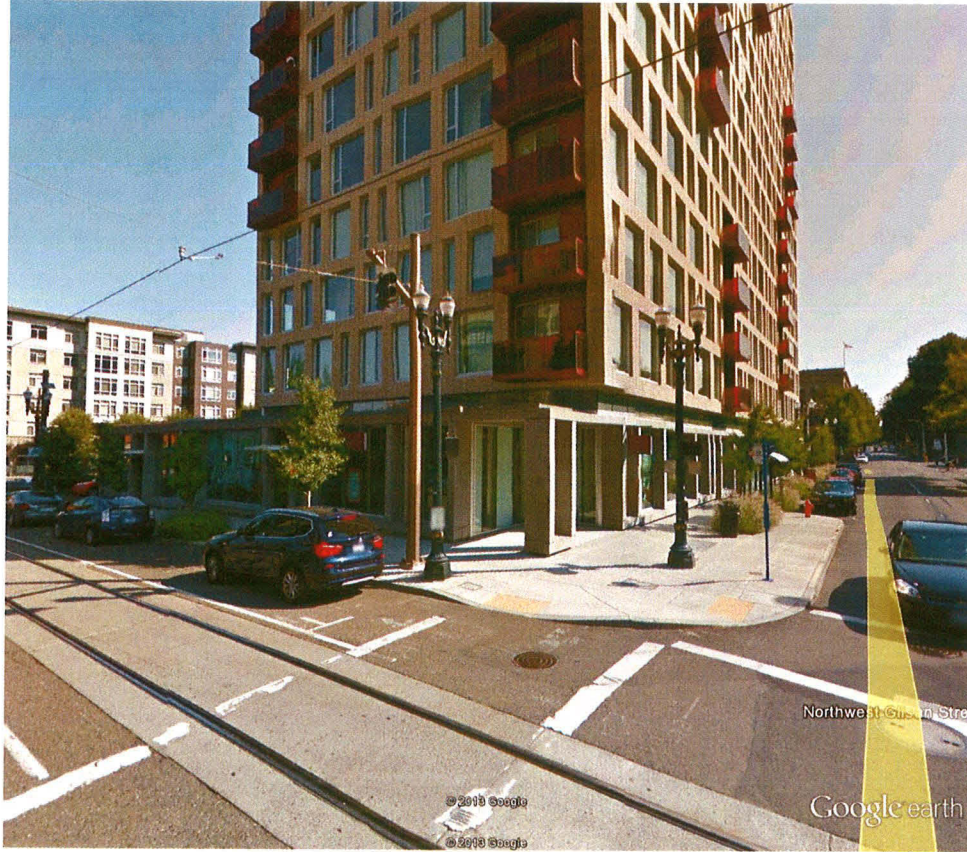
RIVERSCAPE APARTMENTS

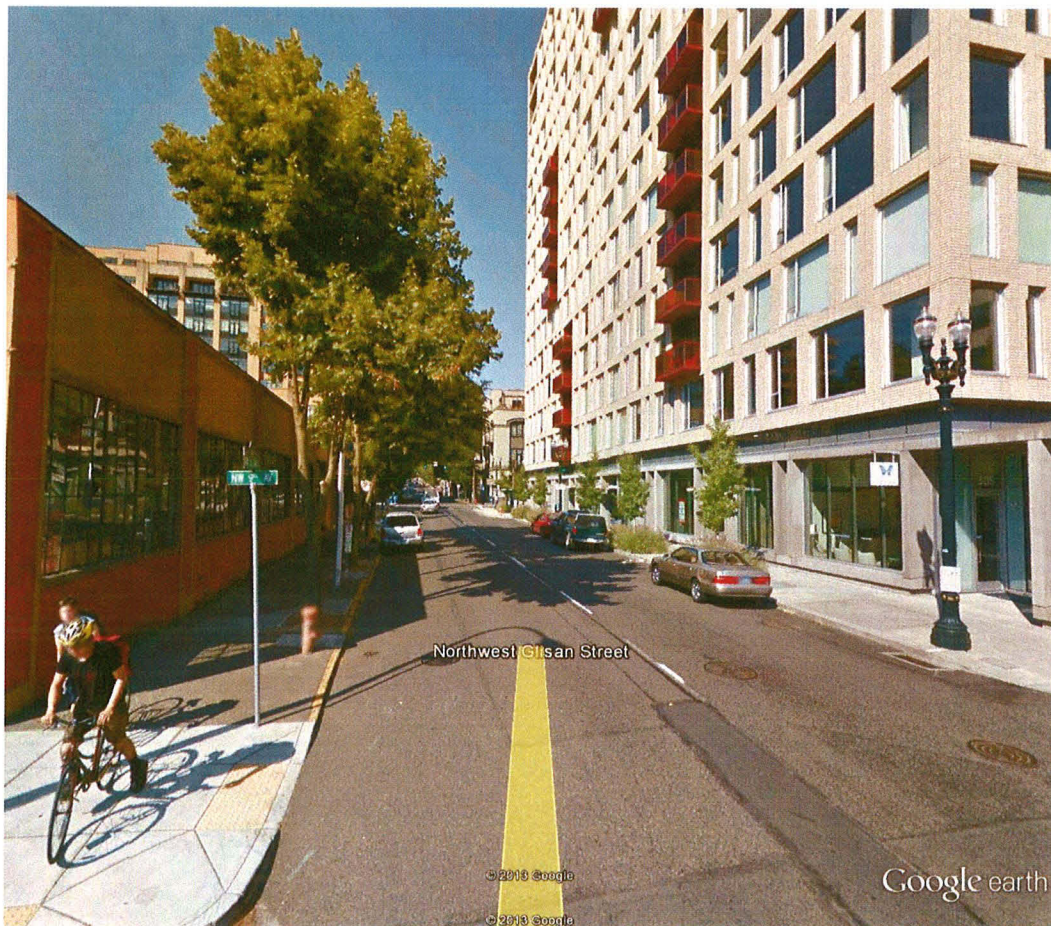
Alternatives

Are there alternative building designs in the city that might suggest a path forward? There are two that come to mind, 937 NW Glisan and Waterfront Pearl.

The 937 Glisan building is located at NW 9th and Glisan, with the long façade facing Glisan. The building is about 75 feet in depth. It includes real balconies for each unit on every façade, narrow and long. These elements would work on a shorter building, such as at Riverscape.

937 GLISAN





The Waterfront Pearl buildings, adjacent to Albers Mill on Naito are the second set of buildings comparable to Riverscape apartments. They are in a very similar riverfront context, though in this case right on the water. The design elements of this building that are transferable to the Riverscape apartments are the multiple balconies, the considerable breaks in the facades, the narrowing of the buildings as they progress toward the river and the faceted building ends.

Though each Waterfront Pearl building is similar in shape each building is quite different at the Naito façade. They share the same materials but use them in different ways, varying the height at which the darker cementitious material is utilized. Overall the color palate of the material is lighter and compliments river, water and sky, rather than contradict or ignore as at Riverscape.

The NWDA urges you to allow for additional design discussion to address the shortcomings of the Riverscape apartments.

Greg Theisen
NWDA Planning Committee
June 12, 2013



WATERFRONT PEARL

