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March 13, 2014

RE: Type III Design Review Hearing DRAFT Summary Notes  
**LU 13-231297 DZM – 1420 Pearl Apartments**  
Chris Caruso, City Planner II, 503-823-5747, [Chris.Caruso@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Chris.Caruso@portlandoregon.gov)

The following notes are a DRAFT summary of Design Commission comments at the March 6, 2014 hearing for 1420 Pearl Apartments. This was Hearing #1. Please send me any corrections or comments by the morning of Friday March 14<sup>th</sup> so I may include them in the notes sent to the applicant. The Commission requested the following comments at this first hearing:

One Commissioner feels that your narrative basically recycled the same six sentences to explain how you were meeting all the design guidelines. It wasn't telling a story, it wasn't thoughtful, it wasn't writing. It was cut and paste. You are encouraged to troll the office for that English major working at the reception desk or in the copy room and get them involved in actually putting together a decent written summary and argument for your project. The projects deserve better.

**1. Retail and Live/Work**

- a) Investigate the possibility of including retail and/or live/work spaces along both NW Pettygrove and NW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, particularly at the SW and SE corners of the site that can have easier ADA access from the sidewalks and loading dock.
- b) Having the live/work units on NW 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue makes sense here since the majority of spaces facing existing loading docks have been converted to commercial uses. NW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue is also a growing commercial street which is why the Commission would like to see units along this street than can also accommodate retail in the future.
- c) This area is being built out with no retail. Commission is worried about creating a residential neighborhood that is too quiet. As more people move here, retail demand should grow. This project needs to design ground level spaces that, if not retail now, can accommodate retail in the future. Investigate if there is a use that can happen in this in between time before retail is supportable.
- d) Differentiate the live/work units from the rest of the building patterning by changing the size of openings in the brick frame. The red spandrel panel between the windows is not working here.

**2. 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue Ground Floor**

- a) A better relationship between the ground level and the street needs to be provided along NW 14<sup>th</sup>. Investigate inserting stoops and unit doors with canopies above facing the sidewalk along this street edge. Another idea is to raise the sill level at certain windows to create more privacy options for residents that will not require them to pull their drapes closed. A third idea is to increase the amount of glazing along this street. The Commission did unanimously agree that NW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue is not quite right yet.
- b) Investigate the possibility of including retail and/or live/work spaces along both NW Pettygrove and NW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, particularly at the SE corner of the site with ADA access from the loading dock.
- c) Space out the columns along NW 14<sup>th</sup> and Pettygrove to get more glazing at the ground. This will allow the design to accommodate retail in the future.

**3. Fiber Cement Panels & Panel Details**

- a) One Commissioner stated that there is an incongruous use of materials with the curtainwall system and then using fiber cement panels. The Commissioner suggested removing the fiber cement panels altogether and replacing them with metal panels. The rest of the Commission indicated that this would be a supportable option but that the complete removal of fiber cement panels was not necessary if they were used judiciously and were well detailed. But the entire Commission did say that if there was a way to remove the 3" plane and have all the openings be 7", or close to 7", that this should be seriously investigated.
- b) Quality detailing of the fiber cement panels around the windows is very important for project approval. There should be no exposed fasteners and the panel-to-panel joint at the window spandrel should be shown in the drawing set.
- c) Fiber cement panels should not go down to the ground.
- d) The fiber cement panels in two different colors, with the brick frame patterning and the curtainwall patterning makes the design too frenetic. It is hard to understand the overall building hierarchy. The fiber cement panels could be one color that allows them to recede into the background.

**4. Overall Building Patterning & Forms**

- a) The 9<sup>th</sup> floor is a great addition to the project and helps better differentiate the massing.
- b) The building is essentially a brick building. That's what it really is and how it should express itself. Make this building a strong statement of the solidity of architecture.
- c) The two colors of brick are a nice way to break up the massing.
- d) The brick patterning seems a bit relentless. Maybe there are logical places in the composition that can be liberated from the pattern such as at the double balcony bays or the ground floor. Look for ways to make exceptions. This could also help reduce the width and amount of the fiber cement panels.
- e) The 7" depth of the brick frames reads really strongly and the push-pull on the facades is really nice. Look at your precedent images and return to those as examples for patterning shifts and frame depth.
- f) The building base seems to get very thin at the highest point of the sidewalk and seems too small for the mass of the brick above. Look at doing a consistent brick sill height around the entire building, similar to the height near the front slot.

**5. Roof Forms**

- a) The oval has lost its power as a form and should be removed as it will never be truly perceived. The rectangular penthouse box can be better integrated into the other building forms if the oval is gone.
- b) The squared off penthouse box with the projecting flat canopy is a nice rooftop feature. Pull it up to the slot in the front and the back and let the curtainwall flow down to the ground.

**6. Roof Deck & Courtyard, Vents & Fencing**

- a) Please add basic dimensions to the courtyard and roof deck plans so the Commission can understand the widths of the pathways and gathering spaces.
- b) The southern orientation of the courtyard which allows it to act as an extension of the NW Pettygrove greenstreet is a good strategy and the building should stay at this alignment.
- c) The roof deck is nicely organized with the variety of compartmentalized spaces that help it feel private enough that people will want to hang out there. The structures and plantings and materials are all nicely designed.
- d) The rooftop exhaust vents should be screened in a material that will not allow people to stick things into them. They should also be screened with plants when possible.

- e) The courtyard palette is nice as is the play of negative and positive shapes that create rooms within rooms.
- f) Get rid of the dead spaces around the furnishings or along the walkways.
- g) The courtyard garage vents seem awkward. Either use them as bases for artwork or make them disappear in planting areas. If they can be ganged together or narrowed into longer slots, that may help minimize them as well.
- h) Verify that the lighting will be strong enough to allow facial recognition for safety.
- i) The courtyard fencing should be as see-through as possible. The pylons on either side of the gate should be significantly reduced in size or removed completely to allow views all the way through the courtyard from the sidewalk and plaza.
- j) Set the generator intake louvers into the building wall and provide a more decorative metal screen in front of them. The garage door, the louver screens, and the courtyard fencing could be three parts of a consistent design feature on the building.

#### **7. NE Entry Corner & Loading Dock**

- a) The entry seems disjointed. There should be a seamless composition that gets you from Point A to Point B.
- b) The raised entry really wants to be a front porch with an area for people to gather and sit, to hang out and view the surrounding streets.
- c) Move the bicycles out of any front porch area that is created.
- d) The solid concrete ends of the loading dock could be pulled back and changed to railings so the corners are more open, allowing for those oblique views for pedestrians coming around the corners.
- e) The center could be more celebrated, a bit wider than the slot currently shown.
- f) The third floor projection will not provide a lot of weather protection. Extend the lower canopy across the front door entry space a bit more, but not so much that it negatively impacts the open glassy experience of the double-height lobby.
- g) The curtainwall system mullions seem too large for this glassy space you are trying to create both at the entry and at the roof penthouse. Investigate the possibility of using butt-glazing at these spaces. *(Staff comment: This does call into question the use of dark bronze mullions which may also be too prominent, and if butt-glazing should be used in the slots as well.)*