



City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Land Use Services

FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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MEMORANDUM

Date: April 3, 2014
To: Phil Stewart, Myhre Group Architects
From: Chris Caruso, Design Review Planner
Re: EA 13-186674 DA – 419 E Burnside
Design Advice Request #2 Summary Memo for March 20, 2014

Thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to hold a second Design Advice Request regarding your project. I hope you find it informative and valuable as you continue with your project development. Attached is a summary of the comments provided by the Design Commission at the March 20, 2014 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/webdrawer/search/rec?sm_class=uri_7547&count&rows=50

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 March 20, 2014. 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 pre-application conference, a land use review application, public notification, a Staff Report and a public hearing] 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 formal land use application. It was understood at the March 20, 2014 Design Advice Request meeting that you do not wish to return for another one.

Encl:
Summary Memo

Cc: Design Commission
Respondents

This memo summarizes **Design Commission** design direction provided on **March 20, 2014**.

Commissioners in attendance on March 20, 2014: Gwen Millius, David Wark, David Keltner, and Tad Savinar.

General Building Massing and Concept

1. The building overall feels more restrained and coherent and has developed in a really good way since the first DAR. The forms are proportionally really good and the massing idea of two buildings with a split in between is successful.
2. The majority of the Commission thought that there is one too many moves and/or materials happening around the forms. Either the white planes or the weathering steel could be removed from the design. The white planes are unnecessary and detract from what could be a very simple and refined design of two buildings that may share color and materials used in different textural ways. The white planes feel applied and graphic. While they are consistently used around the building in a clear way, they are taking away from the honesty of the building. One Commissioner did not have an issue with the white frames on Grand Ave.
3. This building should be simple and direct and honest. It should be an honest expression of its form and its place in the Central Eastside with its industrial aesthetic. Don't be kitschy about the industrial materials. Use them honestly in ways that have an intrinsic authenticity and richness in what they are. That is what this neighborhood is about, authenticity. The people you want to attract can see through fake moves and faux uses of materials and are not attracted to that.
4. The parti is that this is a building that is lacy with a transparent framework and another building that is more muscular, a more solid mass. Make the two building forms really beautiful with the materials – the lacy thing and the more solid boxy thing. Don't be afraid of the building's scale. Things do not have to be broken up into lots of small pieces. The SW corner seems the most unresolved. The steel should just go all the way around the west façade to present itself as a totally honest box with a steel frame. This could be detailed in such a way that expresses the steel frame but is filled in with windows. The question then becomes where does it stop? It could wrap around the north as well.
5. The previous DAR comment to express the corners does not have to mean actually splitting them. Corners can be expressed with windows and/or with one material only. Corners can stay solid and strong as well.
6. The building could explore using one color around all sides but with different textures. The more muscular building could use more muscular metal and the lighter building lacier textures.
7. Really study how the ground plane works and where canopies are desired.
8. The below-grade and covered parking is great.
9. The least resolved facades are the two interior lot line walls. There are too many pieces. Cook these down.
10. The vertical sunshades also seem applied and unnecessary and may not really function as intended, particularly on the west façade. One Commissioner stated that they should go away if the white planes go away. Another Commissioner said they could fine if they are well designed and integrated into the architecture.

Arcade, Utility Vaults, Stormwater Facility, and On-Street Parking

1. **The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT)** staff (Fabio de Freitas and Kurt Kruger) explained issues to the Commission about locating a number of items within the sidewalk area along the E Burnside façade, including the arcade columns, street trees, stormwater facilities, utility vaults, light poles and signals, and road signs. PBOT's preference is to have the arcade columns as close to the curb edge as possible to allow for a wide pedestrian thru-zone underneath the proposed arcade. PBOT also outlined potential conflicts with two twin ornamental light fixtures, street lights, and transportation-related signage at the Burnside and MLK corner as well as at the Burnside and Grand Ave corner. These locations will need to be addressed at the time of design review.

The Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) had indicated in an email exchange just prior to the Design Advice Request meeting that they do not want a steel column located inside the stormwater facility due to concerns about drainage and functional viability of the facility.

The Design Commission was unanimous in its desire to see the utility vaults located underneath one of the surrounding sidewalks. They stated that they will fight hard to make

this happen. They also want the vault doors topped with a concrete surface that matches the sidewalk, not with metal plates. The Commission suggested moving the vault to the Couch Street sidewalk, near the corner of Grand Avenue if this is possible. The vault will need to be worked out with Portland General Electric (PGE).

The applicant was encouraged to continue meeting with PBOT and BES as well as PGE to resolve these conflicts in a way that maintains as much on-street parking as possible, allows the stormwater facility to function properly, moves the arcade columns out to the curb edge, and locates the utility vault below the sidewalk, not on private property.

Note: PBOT asked staff later if there was loading required for the site. The development would need to provide either one large loading space or two smaller loading spaces. The applicant had indicated that they were going to pursue on-street loading with PBOT. PBOT may not support an Adjustment request through Design Review to provide no loading inside the parking garage.

2. Oriel Windows

- a) They are not guaranteed to be approved if they do not measure up to the building's overall design, despite what the code standard allows on paper.
- b) The oriel window on Couch Street should be removed from this elevation. It is not really aligning with anything below it. The Couch Street façade is very narrow and can be a simple finished rectangular form, even with the height and unit differences that could be acknowledged in another way.
- c) The long oriel window along Grand Ave that is framed with the white plane detracts from the nice simple muscular form of the darker mass. This oriel needs to be pulled back at least to before the garage doorway. It could also be completely removed from the project since the arcade floor area is being utilized. If the oriel were removed from this facade, both the arcade and the dark mass of the building along Grand would be stronger.
- d) The Grand Ave oriel does provide weather protection which is something the Commission wants to see on all facades where it makes sense architecturally. If the oriel is removed or reduced in length, canopies will need to be provided at key locations.
- e) The Commission discussed the intention of the oriel window standards in that they are designed to allow more narrow, repetitive wall projections that also allow for light and air to reach down to the sidewalk level, between units, and also provide additional window area and light gathering within units. The oriels shown in this proposal would only allow windows at the two end units, and would not allow light and air to penetrate down to the sidewalk.
- f) The Commission stated that if the arcade on Burnside remains as deep as proposed, then there should be no need for additional floor area to overhang the other streets in the form of oriels. The large oriel on Grand Ave is not necessary to make this a successful design.
- g) PBOT explained to the Commission that the oriel windows as proposed, particularly the large oriel along NE Grand Avenue would have to go through an Encroachment Review and that they would not be supportive of the proposed length. The intent of the oriel window standard is to provide opportunities for minor projections over the public right-of-way which is designed to serve the entire public as an opening between buildings that provides light, air, and places for trees to grow.

3. Arcade

- a) It was very telling that perceptions of the existing arcades are that they are full-block lengths. This speaks to their visual and physical impacts at the ground level of these buildings. While it may be possible to extend the arcade the full length of this site, it may not be desirable.
- b) Keeping the arcade at two-thirds of the block length allows for some relief at the sidewalk, allows the vault and trees to happen on one-third of the block, and maintains the massing break between the two building forms. It also can highlight the main entry.
- c) It would be good to see a shadow study at the arcade as well as along Grand Ave to understand the impacts to the ground floor spaces and the sidewalks.

Materials

1. Weathering steel is a rich and nice looking material that will invite people to touch it. It should not be used at the ground level. It stains, can rub off onto people's clothes, can be scratched, and if it is tagged, will be ruined. Look for another material that will give you the same look but that can be used at the ground level.

2. One Commissioner stated that the weathering steel is being used for architecture and is not authentic to its place in history. It is being used as a symbol of authenticity.
3. Weathering steel is typically plate steel or steel members. The proposed thinner interlocking sheet steel that is proposed does not have the authentic expression of true weathering steel. The manufacturer's information that was handed out at the meeting states that the material has at most a 40 year life span. These buildings need to be designed for 100 years. The Commission is very concerned about what happens when the 40 years are up, how is the material serviced and would it have to be replaced? If weathering steel is desired, it should again be the authentic material.
4. All the Commissioners want the building edited down again and the material intersections well resolved.
5. All materials must be of the highest quality, long-lasting and durable. The metal must be thick enough to have absolutely no oil-canning. Materials should follow the forms well. Don't wrap a thin edge in a material that does not well in that condition.
6. Unit windows can be vinyl but it must be a very high quality system. If the windows are set into the walls as punched openings, they should be set in at least 4 inches so real shadow lines are created. Other new buildings in the area have used more flush windows and this has been successful as well. It really depends on the wall materials and the window systems.

Main Entry

1. The actual entry is in between everything. It needs to be more expressed. It should go underneath one side of the arcade or the other.

Signage

1. It is not desirable to have large signage on upper walls or on exposed large wall planes. Signage should be at the pedestrian level. If signs are desired at the retail locations and the main lobby, they should be included as part of design review. A coherent system or framework for signage should be developed for the building as a whole.

Exhibit List

- A. Applicant's Submittals
 1. Project Narrative for 9/24/2013 drawing set
 2. March 3, 2014 memo
 3. March 13, 2014 vault information
 4. DAR No 02 Summary
- B. Zoning Map
- C. Drawings
 1. 09/24/2013 Set, 8 pages
 2. March 7, 2014 Set, 40 pages
 3. Weathering Steel information
- D. Notification
 1. Posting instructions sent to applicant
 2. Posting notice as sent to applicant
 5. Applicant's statement certifying posting
 6. General information on DAR process included with e-mailed posting/notice
- E. Service Bureau Comments
 1. PBOT & BES email comments from March 2014
- F. Public Testimony – none received
- G. Other
 1. Application form
 2. East Burnside Arcade Design Standards & Guidelines, not adopted
 3. Commission Memo September 30, 2013
 4. Design Guidelines copy October 10, 2013
 5. Staff PowerPoint copy October 10, 2013
 6. Summary Memo October 17, 2013

7. Commission Memo March 10, 2014
8. Design Guidelines copy March 10, 2014
9. Staff PowerPoint copy March 20, 2014
10. Summary Memo April 3, 2014