



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

FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** June 30, 2014  
**To:** SERA DESIGN \*KURT SCHULTZ\*  
**From:** Hillary Adam, Development Review  
503-823-3581  
**Re:** 14-138632 DA – 1501 SW Taylor  
Design Advice Request Summary Memo June 19, 2014

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. Attached is a summary of the comments provided by the Design Commission at the June 19, 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](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 June 19, 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, 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, or if you desire another Design Advice Request meeting with the Commission.

*Encl:*  
Summary Memo

*Cc:* Design Commission  
Respondents

**Massing, Program, Exterior Articulation**

- Generally, the Commission was supportive of the proposal, noting that the proposed building was a quiet introduction into this established neighborhood that contains several highly articulated Landmark buildings. Despite general support for the proposal, a couple of commissioners questioned whether a building designed with a traditional aesthetic was appropriate, suggesting a building that is clearly contemporary would add more to the neighborhood, possibly jumpstarting similar development and serving as a legacy building for the designer and developer.
- One commissioner noted that there was a great rigor and rhythm to the façades, noting that they were beautiful straightforward. He noted that the composition could be stronger if the exterior articulated what was actually happening programmatically, specifically at the attic level. It was suggested that if the program is to stay the same on the interior of the attic level then the exterior should stay the same at this level as it is below; alternatively, it would make sense for the articulation to change if the interior spaces of the attic level were distinguished from the levels below. He noted that this should be the case at the ground level, in line with history, with stronger different material base, more openings, and taller spaces. A second commissioner also suggested that the ground floor be as open and glassy as possible to further distinguish itself from the upper floors.
- With regard to the location of the courtyard, the Commission noted that it would be preferable to have a south-facing courtyard but understood the constraints of the site and surrounding development.
- The majority of the Commission liked the duality of the cozy courtyard at the rear ground level and the more open rooftop terrace above, providing users with options.
- One commissioner noted it may be more appropriate to have balconies on the south façade, as a means of highlighting this façade as the important one, noting appreciation the additional canopies on the latest drawings.

**Exterior Materials**

- The majority of the Commission was comfortable with stucco as the proposed primary exterior material. One commissioner expressed concern that stucco was less substantial than brick, while another noted that it can be beautiful and is of the time period of the historic buildings in the neighborhood. They noted potential concerns with stucco including expansion joints, suggesting Vestas and the project at NE 33<sup>rd</sup> and Broadway as examples of what not to do, and planting against it which can lead to rot.
- One commissioner noted the plasticity of stucco and wondering what could be done to make the most of that quality through pushing and pulling of the façade while another commissioner noted that the moves have to have to have realness and a reason to them.
- One commissioner noted that this building is following the mantra of the Design Commission, which is generally “fewer nicer materials, done well”.

**Ground Floor**

- The greatest struggle for the Commission was how to resolve the transition between residential units and the sidewalk that they directly access. The Commission appreciated the intent to design the ground floor with a long-range view of the city, but had concerns with how those spaces would function as residences in the meantime.
- Half of the commissioners felt very strongly that the ground floor does not work with residences opening directly on to the sidewalk, preferring that the residences be separated, with them staying as residences forever than future commercial spaces that don't work now. It was suggested that the units should be designed as live/work now, noting that the height is almost there for lofts spaces. One commissioner noted that it was great to have a barrier-free option and that the concern is more about the urban condition, rather than how the interior spaces will function.
- The Commission suggested that, if it can be resolved, this could be the opportunity for you to *invent* a path for Portland to follow and solve that problem of residences connecting directly to the street. They wondered if there was a precedent study of this type of threshold condition and suggested further investigation into the appropriate depth and layers of that space. They warned that the space has to be the right depth so that it be activated and not be dead space, and it has to be able to be privatized enough to dissuade negative activities.
- One commissioner noted that additional plantings to elongate the garden feel at the entry would be nice.

- There were no major concerns with the west façade.

This memo summarizes **Design Commission** design direction provided on June 19, 2014.

Commissioners in attendance on June 19, 2014: Guinevere Millius, David Wark, David Keltner Tad Savinar, Jane Hansen, Jeff Simpson.

#### **Exhibit List**

- A. Applicant's Submittals
  1. Original drawing set
  2. Drawings distributed to Commission for hearing
- B. Zoning Map
- C. Drawings
  1. Drawings set submitted on June 19, 2014 (14 sheets)
- D. Notification
  1. Posting instructions sent to applicant
  2. Posting notice as sent to applicant
  3. Applicant's statement certifying posting
  4. General information on DAR process included with e-mailed posting/notice
- E. Service Bureau Comments: none
- F. Public Testimony: none
- G. Other
  1. Application form
  2. Memo to Design Commission, dated June 5, 2014
  3. Staff Presentation, dated June 19, 2014
  4. Summary Memo, dated June 30, 2014