



August 11, 2016

Planning and Sustainability Commission
City of Portland
1900 SW Fourth Ave, Suite 7100
Portland, OR 97201

RE: CC2035 Plan Testimony

This letter focuses on key concerns regarding the protection of historic resources within the West End, preservation of view corridors, sunlight on public open space and opportunities for compact, mixed use density that address these concerns. Please note that the opinions expressed in this letter are specific to the AIA Historic Resource Committee and are not necessarily reflective of the broader AIA Portland membership or AIA Portland Board of Directors.

WEST END HEIGHT/FAR

AIA Historic Resource Committee (HRC) advocates a proposal that creates a *step down district* with a dense, compact urban form in the West End where so much of Portland's early history survives. A stepped-down area will create a better transition between the tall, dense corporate Downtown district and the lower adjacent districts of the University, Goose Hollow and the Pearl. The residential districts have FARs of 6:1 and 4:1 whereas the Downtown has 12:1 and 15:1.

Lowering the FAR to 7:1 and the maximum building height to 100' throughout the West End will allow for an increase in density but the density would be in compact form. Creating this transition will preserve the West End's *compact, dense mixed-use urban character of smaller businesses/offices and residential apartment/condo buildings many listed in the historic resources inventory*.

The proposed changes will:

- Help preserve the unique, irreplaceable historic buildings of the West End from demolition
- Help preserve these historic buildings, such as **Central Library**, from a high-rise being built next door
- Add needed density, meeting the West End density goals in a compact form
- Help preserve the dense, compact, mixed-use urban form typical in the West End rather than spreading the podium-towers form of the corporate downtown.
- Strengthen the distinction between the smaller business/office/residential/condo area and the taller corporate area.
- Help preserve the historic view corridors from Goose Hollow to Mt. Hood that are threatened by the proposed heights (See Photo A, below). The historic view includes trees below the tree line.
- Help preserve sunlight on the streets

SOUTH PARK BLOCKS

AIA HRC:

1. **Endorses the goal of obtaining historic designation for the South Park Blocks. However, the timeline should be shortened to 2-5 years, not 6-20 years.** There is some urgency, since the heights and uses being proposed along the park blocks could incentivize the demolition of historic churches, historic cultural facilities and early apartment buildings, all of which offer human scale, sunlight and historic character to the park blocks.
2. **Recommends maximum building heights for both sides of the blocks be no more than 100' and remove the designation of "area eligible for height increase."**
3. **Recommends shadow studies be required on both sides of the park.** In the current proposal, shadow studies are required on the west side of the park blocks, but not the east side. People use the park both mornings and evenings. Sun in Portland is always at a premium both for people and for trees.
4. **Recommends strengthening sunlight priority. Change word from *Encourage* to *Require*** in last sentence in Vol1 p66, Urban Design 5.3 Dynamic Skyline to read: "***Require*** heights and building forms that preserve sunlight on public open spaces and parks." This will preserve sunlight on all our parks and open spaces, including the South Park Blocks.

The AIA Historic Resource Committee appreciates the opportunity to comment on the West End and also your consideration for implementing our recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter R. Meijer, AIA
Chair
AIA Portland Historic Resource Committee



LeRoy A. Landers, AIA
President
AIA Portland
Reviewed