



City of Portland Design Commission

Design Advice Request

SUMMARY MEMO

Date: December 8, 2020
To: Leslie Cliffe | BORA Architects
From: Hannah Bryant, Design Review
503.865.6520 | hannah.bryant@portlandoregon.gov
Re: EA 20-194404 DAR – 1325 NW Kearney | Welby
Design Advice Request Commission Summary Memo – November 5, 2020

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. Following, is a summary of the comments provided by the Design Commission at the November 5, 2020 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/record/11686822>.

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 November 5, 2020. 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 land use review application, public notification and a Final Decision] 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 Type III Land Use Review Application.

Encl:
Summary Memo

Cc: Design Commission
Respondents

Executive Summary. Commission expressed concerns about the scale of the south façade and suggested that massing shifts and façade articulation are needed to better respond to the site context. The current massing presents a monolithic façade toward NW Kearney, and the overly busy façade patterning does not relate to the contextual fenestration patterns.

Commissioners Present. *Chandra Robinson, Zari Santner, Jessica Molinar, Don Vallaster, Brian McCarter. Julie Livingston provided comments in writing that were presented by another Commissioner.*

Summary of Comments. Following is a general summary of Commission comments by design tenet.

CONTEXT

1. **Massing** – Relief is needed from the sheer wall on Kearney. Consider alternative façade patterns and massing shifts to break the scale of this façade. Some commissioners suggested using the terracing to add articulation to this façade.
2. **Façade Articulation** – PDNA raised concern that façade looks more like cast iron facades of Old Town or the grids of Lloyd District. This façade does not look like the NW 13th context. Floor plan allows for wider window bays to provide less cellular, more contextual appearance. The busy grid pattern on NW Kearney accentuates the sense of that façade being very large and out of context.
3. **Terraces** – Commission recommends a stronger response between terraces and adjacent streets. Locating terraces on the south side of the building and ensuring interior program maximizes access to lower terraces may contribute to their activation. The north facing terrace does not contribute to the activation of the public realm.
4. **Art and Water Features** – Commission expects these guidelines to be responded to separately (i.e. a water feature does not necessarily meet the requirement for art). One commissioner suggested locating these elements at the residential entry. Please identify a location for these elements at the next DAR.

PUBLIC REALM

1. **Ground Level.** Explore opportunities to better convey and celebrate the tall ground floor with larger windows at the ground level. The current design does not communicate the mass timber structure or the tall ground floor to outside observers.
2. **Canopies.** The rational structure of this building can easily support a nearly continuous canopy on all frontages. Canopy coverage at all bays is necessary to meet Guidelines A4: Use Unifying Elements, B2: Protect the Pedestrian and B6: Develop Weather Protection.
3. **Residential Entry** – The residential entry needs emphasis to express that it is a special place. A larger entrance area, deeper canopies, and unique detailing at this location are appropriate, as it is the primary entrance for most building tenants.
4. **Landscaping** – Dedicate as much effort into landscaping at the street level as on the upper terraces. A stronger street tree response would better meet the guidelines.
5. **Ground Floor Program** – Commission supported the bike repair area on NW 14th, and appreciates the consolidated loading and parking access, as well as the location of the bike storage area off the street frontage. Commission would support operable windows at the SE corner commercial space if desired, to further activate the loading dock.

QUALITY & PERMANENCE

1. **Exterior materials** – Wood at the ground level is problematic. Explore more permanent materials (concrete, etc.) as wood at the ground level demonstrates significant water damage in a short timeframe. The Commission feels the cementitious cladding proposed for upper levels meets quality and permanence guidelines but questions whether it can be deployed in manner that also meets context guidelines. Please explore this further.

Exhibit List

- A. Applicant's Submittals
 1. Original Submittal
- B. Zoning Map
- C. Drawings
 1. Drawing Set, dated November 5, 2020
- D. Notification
 1. Posting instructions sent to applicant
 2. Posting notice as sent to applicant
 1. Applicant's statement certifying posting
 2. General information on DAR process included with e-mailed posting/notice
- E. Service Bureau Comments
 1. Portland Bureau of Transportation
 2. Bureau of Environmental Services
- F. Public Testimony
 1. Pearl District Neighborhood Association
- G. Other
 1. Application form
 2. Staff memo to Design Commission, dated October 27, 2020