



City of Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

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April 14, 2018

Anne Hill, Capital Project Manager II
Portland Bureau of Transportation
1120 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 800
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Vertical Infrastructure in the ROW

On April 9, 2018, the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission ("PHLC") received a briefing from PBOT and BPS staff concerning Vertical Infrastructure in the Public Right-of-Way (ROW) and Cellular Antennas. It also received a copy of the summary of the Design Commission's comments following its briefing on this topic on March 1, 2018. PHLC is pleased to provide feedback on this important project.

Although the project does not affect historic resource review, with which this body is charged, other than what is likely to be a small number of designated historic poles, this project will likely impact historic resources where poles affected are in areas immediately adjacent to historic districts, and historically significant properties, even those that are not subject to historic design review under the current code. We thus write to offer our comments on the preliminary project information presented to us on April 9th.

Inventory. PHLC Commissioners agreed with the Design Commission's comment that an inventory of existing infrastructure is critical. Specifically, in addition to identifying designated historic poles, an inventory of poles near historic districts or landmarks is necessary to ensure that special care is taken to prevent changes to such poles that would detract from the historic resource to which it is adjacent.

Mounted Boxes. PHLC also supports the Design Commission's concerns about boxes or cabinets to be mounted on poles. Such equipment should be housed in vaults underground where possible, rather than on poles.

Design. While PHLC appreciates the challenges associated with modifying existing poles to accommodate small cell equipment, and the Design Commission's comments about adding more poles to the ROW, PHLC is very concerned about replacing historic poles with faux historic-looking substitutes. It therefore would prefer adding poles where necessary rather than modifying or replacing existing historic poles. PHLC also suggested developing standards for the new poles specifying size, shape and location for the poles. Specifically, PHLC would support two different designs, one for historically sensitive areas and another for all other areas.

Visual Consistency. As described above, standards for the new poles would help to ensure visual consistency where, as in the case of the poles along the 5th Avenue downtown transit corridor, there is a series of identical ornamental poles. PHLC would support modifying existing poles in such a

circumstance where replacing it with a new pole would detract from the visual consistency of the streetscape.

In summary, PHLC supports PBOT's efforts to proactively address the need for additional cell equipment in the ROW, while ensuring such additions comport with city planning goals. Specifically, PHLC applauds PBOT's plan to develop a master plan for City-owned poles. Thank you for including a representative from the Commission, Annie Mahoney, on the committee reviewing this issue and for considering the Commission's comments on this matter. We hope as the project proceeds, PBOT will return to brief the PHLC on its progress. PHLC would also like the opportunity to continue to participate in the process, and specifically would like to review any inventory or map of historic poles that PBOT may be working on, as well as the pole design narrative that PBOT will use for soliciting designs and bids from pole manufacturers.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Kirk Ranzetta and Kristin Minor in blue ink.

Kirk Ranzetta and Kristin Minor

Chair and Vice Chair of the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

CC: Tim Heron, Portland Bureau of Development