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Land Use Services

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Memorandum

To: Portland Design Commission

From: Chris Caruso, City Planner II, 503-823-5747, Chris.Caruso@portlandoregon.gov

Re: Type III Design Review Hearing Summary Notes
LU 12-215106 DZM, AD – Market View Apartments

The following notes are a summary of Design Commission comments heard at the March 7, 2013 review of Market View Apartments. This was Design Review Hearing #1 and a 2nd hearing is scheduled for April 18, 2013. I spoke with PBOT after the hearing and was told that SW Market Street is not an ODOT facility in this location.

1. Adjustment and Exception

- a. All six Commissioners present supported the Adjustment request for parking access from SW 11th Avenue.
- b. The exception for the oriel window width is generally supported by the Commissioners present.

2. General Comments

- a. The presentation was very comprehensive and helpful.
- b. Quarter block development is very challenging and has many economic pressures on it. This site is particularly challenged with its slope and streetcar frontage.
- c. The quarter block massing presents a solid argument for not breaking up the building at the corner at this location.
- d. Feel no need to open up the corner at this location.
- e. Appreciate the façade manipulation.
- f. The massing and the fully solid corner are good.
- g. It is important to create shadows in a brick building and the use of oriels windows and efforts to make the other windows look recessed creates this.
- h. Appreciate the added window depth for the shadows it creates.
- i. The majority of the Commissioners were not concerned about the bench being in the right-of-way.
- j. One Commissioner was not supportive of the bench being in the right-of-way.
- k. Having no commercial use in the building is reasonable and supportable as there is precedent downtown for apartment buildings that are all residential.
- l. An all-residential use is good in this area.
- m. Having 17 parking spaces is better than having none at all.
- n. Take a look at how the street trees will work with the building's concept.
- o. Commissioner always tries to balance what is being asked for by a project against what the City is receiving in return. While there is a good start to the massing, this project is asking for a lot with an Adjustment, an Exception, and a Modification, so it has to give something more back.
- p. Make sure you check with the City about rainscreens and continuous insulation. These are new requirements.

- q. The curb extensions and crossing improvements presented by the neighbors are great ideas that should be pursued by the neighbors with PBOT.
- r. The Downtown Neighborhood Association should bring their parking discussion results back to the Commission when they are ready.

3. Building Style

- a. Appreciate the modern interpretation of this older style.
- b. Design for Coherency guideline is not yet met. Confused by the mix of building themes that include a French mansard roof, Native American decoration, 19th Century wood paneling around the entry, and 1960's office window proportions that are all coming together and trying to be one building.
- c. The vents are not integrated into the design. They are just another pattern that is laid over the building. They need to be thought out and more carefully located.
- d. The proportions of the windows feel like a ubiquitous application of static openings. The windows have to all work together and make sense, showing the building base, middle, and top as they go up the building.
- e. Older buildings often changed their window sizes to enhance the building's design and floor types.
- f. The windows have to come together to form a whole.
- g. The windows on SW Market in the double height units should reflect their double height.
- h. Change the windows in the double height spaces to reflect the height.
- i. Making the windows appear more like true punched openings is good.
- j. Needs a more careful study of proportion.
- k. Study the overall style and pull the building together more cohesively.
- l. The overall design could be edited down a bit.
- m. The mansard roof should have more thought to the quality and use of the materials. It seems incongruous to have the red brick up against the dark brown metal.
- n. The brick pattern looks like chevrons, not like Native designs. While this type of patterning can be interesting and expressive on this building, the current approach is not yet working.
- o. The heritage cues for the brickwork is not quite there yet. It needs more work. The pattern seems like stripes. The mass and style is in conflict with Native American designs and feels like an awkward finish.
- p. Perhaps the brick patterning moves down to the street level so it can be enjoyed by pedestrians as well.
- q. The brick patterning could perhaps be more subtle in its coloration to draw the eye up to what's happening at the building top but not overwhelm the design.
- r. The thin brick woven corner may need more explanation of how it will work and hold up over time.
- s. The oriels are stubbier than typically seen on these types of buildings.
- t. The ivy detailing does not tie into the Native American theme.
- u. The ivy on the canopy seems to not be part of the overall building design.

4. SW 11th Avenue Façade and Streetscape

- a. The main entrance on SW Market is doing a really good job of activating the street.
- b. Providing passive views from units out onto the street to provide eyes on the street and some visual security is nice.
- c. There needs to be an active engagement of the street with things like Juliette balconies, larger window openings on the lower level, or recesses with stoops, etc. There are many ways to create interest along this frontage.
- d. You have to address every square foot of this base along SW 11th with things that activate the street.
- e. Concerned about the lack of activity on SW 11th.
- f. Need to stabilize and enhance the streetscape on SW 11th.

- g. Focus your efforts on making ground floor active spaces with balconies, larger windows, and playing with depth.
- h. The ground level along SW 11th needs more work.
- i. Some active use must be provided along SW 11th. Look at options for this. Sacrificing parking may be necessary.
- j. It feels like the pedestrian experience is being sacrificed for 17 parking spaces and the pedestrian zone needs to be better.
- k. The lower 20 feet of this building is really important and needs to be pedestrian in scale with textural changes and small scale elements.
- l. The garage door seems overly large and is not adding to the pedestrian experience in a positive way. It could be softened.

5. Lightwells

- a. The livability of the units facing west into the light wells is minimal and will be really terrible if a building is built on the adjacent lot. The units at the top floor may be okay but the ones down in the chasm will be really bad.
- b. Look at completely realigning the unit layout so spaces that access the lightwells are secondary spaces, not main living spaces whose only source of light is the lightwell.
- c. The lightwells on the west side should be deeper.

6. Materials

- a. The strong majority of the Commission expressed serious concern with the brick veneer proposed, believing it will not meet the desired level of quality, durability, and long-lasting permanence required in the Design Guidelines.
- b. The idea of brick is good but the thin material is an issue if the thin brick cannot meet the quality and permanence in the design guidelines.
- c. Thin brick was invented as an inexpensive replacement for a more substantial material. The issues is the combination of the systems, how the brick comes around corners, sits around windows, or meets up with trim elements.
- d. The thin brick seems like a cheap replacement without durability and permanence.
- e. The brick tile is not permanent enough.
- f. Not convinced about the quality or permanence of the brick veneer. Please provide long-standing examples where this has been successfully used. May only be convinced of the permanence over a long time.
- g. Concerned about how the thin brick will express corners.
- h. Thin brick is okay. This is just the next level of technological innovation for this material. True brick can also fail, so the thickness of the material is not the issue. It comes down to the installation method. If thin brick is installed well, it can last even longer than regular brick.
- i. The laser cut signage is not a high enough quality. For this style of building, the signage should feel substantial and handcrafted – more artful.
- j. The metal mansard is a budget finish that should be a different material or an installation with more detail and finesse.