

**I. Opening/Citizen Comment**

A regular session of the Gresham Design Commission was called to order on the 14 of January, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Oregon Trail Room at Gresham City Hall, located at 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham Oregon. The meeting was recorded and transcribed by Jamie Zimmerman.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Rob Cook  
David Berniker  
Irene Bowers  
Dick Ehr  
Mike McKeel  
Tom Orth  
Richard Potestio

**COUNCIL LIAISONS PRESENT:**

Councilor Widmark

**PLANNING COMMISSION LIAISON  
ABSENT:**

Joy Gannett

**STAFF:**

Mike Abbaté, Urban Design & Planning  
Rick Faus, City Attorney's Office  
Wendy Marshall, Department of Environmental Services  
Brian Martin, Urban Design & Planning  
Dan McAuliffe, Urban Design & Planning  
Lauren McGuire, Urban Design & Planning  
Ken Onyima, Urban Design & Planning  
Ann Pytynia, Urban Design & Planning  
Jim Wheeler, Urban Design & Planning  
Jamie Zimmerman, Urban Design & Planning

**I. Public Hearing**

**Type IV Hearing – Linden Manor Residential Care Facility Hearing**

Chair Cook welcomed everyone to the hearing and asked Lauren McGuire to introduce staff.

Ms. McGuire welcomed all participants to the Design Commission meeting and noted that tonight would be the first quasi-judicial decision made by the Commission on a development permit application in the Downtown Plan design district. She then introduced staff in attendance and gave a brief history of the Design Commission that included the establishment of the Commission, six design districts and the creation of design regulations for the Downtown Plan district. New developments, additions and remodels within the design districts are subject to design review for a determination of consistency with the regulations. The applicant chooses either the clear and objective design standards process and/or the more discretionary design guidelines process. The clear and objective

design standards process includes measurable prescriptive standards against which the application can be evaluated. The design guidelines process includes more flexible design regulations that permits design creativity and relies on the design expertise of the Design Commission to make the final decision on the approval of the application. Depending on the size of the development as described in the design district definition, the project is either reviewed by staff for a decision or reviewed by staff for a recommendation to the Design Commission.

The Linden Manor Residential Care application is of significant size to warrant a quasi-judicial decision regarding approval by the Design Commission. The applicant has chosen the clear and objective design standards process. The Design Commission will evaluate and discuss the application, review the Staff Report and recommendation, and will make a decision as to whether the application is meeting the design standards. Ken Onyima will provide background for the project.

Chair Cook read the procedures and opened the public hearing process.

No disclosures were made by any member of the Commission. No one wished to object to the Commission's participation in the hearing. No Commission member wished to declare any contact with the applicant or any other source of information outside of staff prior to the hearing. Commissioners Ehr and Orth and Chair Cook indicated that they had visited the site prior to the hearing. There was no objection of the jurisdiction of the Commission to hear this matter.

Ken Onyima, Senior Development Planner, presented a PowerPoint and summarized the proposal and the Staff Report. The proposal consists of a 42-unit residential care facility. The site is generally located between Division Street to the north, Powell to the south, Eastman Parkway on the west and Cleveland Avenue to the east. The site is comprised of two tax lots and fronts on Linden Avenue. The lot is 26,872 square feet in size and the proposed building size is 24,405 square feet. The building will be comprised of three floors with a footprint of a little over 8,000 square feet. The property is zoned Downtown Transit Mid-Rise (DTM). The developer is Larry Lewis.

Mr. Onyima stated that the applicant has met all applicable standards and criteria. A few areas, however, have been highlighted as Conditions of Approval.

The proposal includes a pull-in provision off-street for passenger drop off, a 26 foot wide two-way drive access, a provision for 10 bicycle spaces and a total of 11 auto parking spaces behind the building. With the use of a Site Development Plan, the presence of garbage, recycling and common open space was acknowledged. The Landscape Plan was also viewed by the Commission and included a community open space, a network of pedestrian walkways that wrap around the building and out to the public sidewalk as well as street trees along the front perimeter of the site.

Mr. Onyima noted that in the Staff Report, the Commission will see there was an issue with the garbage/recycling area; after consulting with the garbage handler in the area as well as staff, the refuse bin proposed was too small and the orientation would make it difficult for the garbage haulers to service the site. Consequently, a condition has been made that the garbage area must be oriented to face south and made larger in order to have enough capacity to serve the project. Also, after the initial distribution of the Staff Report, it was determined that the applicant has met the required minimum area for shared open space, which came out to about a 1,550 square foot area. An Addendum has been distributed to the Commission that addresses the met shared open space requirement. Additionally, discussion also took place prior to the hearing about the requirement of a

turn-around for the Fire Department. Fire has concluded that they can service the building. An Addendum has been distributed to the Commission that addresses the met turn-around requirement for Fire.

A building with a footprint less than 10,000 square feet requires one building massing. All architectural features as required in the Design Standards are incorporated into the design, including recessed windows, horizontal façade articulations, front window requirements, transparency standards on the street facing windows, and the use of Hardi-plank as a siding material.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Based on the standards and Conditions of Approval, staff recommends approval of the proposed 42-bed residential care facility based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations stated in the January 6, 2010 Staff Report and January 11 and 13 Addendum Staff Reports.

### **Commission Questions**

Commissioner Berniker asked from where the 26 foot driveway requirement was derived and if it was the minimum. Mr. Onyima stated the driveway for residential development must be at least 24 feet; however, the Fire Department required it be 26 feet, the reason being that when they arrive, they need the extra space for the ladder, trucks, etc. Staff agreed to the requirement because even for regular residential development, the driveway may go up to 28 feet. Commissioner Berniker asked if the driveway width could be narrowed where the driveway meets Linden to allow for additional landscape provided it was expanded to 26 feet at the heart of the site. Mr. Onyima could not see why that could not be the case as long as the 24 foot requirement were met. Commissioner Berniker noted that a little more landscape would make the site more appealing.

Commissioner Berniker asked if there was a requirement for the amount of building that needs to face the street as it relates to the 26 foot driveway width question. He then asked for the overall width of the site. Mr. Onyima said that there is a requirement that 75% of the frontage be occupied by the building. With the need for driveway access, it makes it impossible to meet the frontage standard; however, the standard indicates that the 75% could be reduced to meet the driveway access need. Bill Whitney, the architect for the project, said that they met 68% for the front façade due to driveway width and setbacks. Commissioner Berniker wondered why the driveway needed to be so wide and repeated that it would be nice to consider removing asphalt and providing additional landscape to make a nicer entry.

Commissioner Ehr asked if on-site parking and required parking was 1 space per 5 beds. Mr. Onyima said it was 1 space per 4 beds. Commissioner Ehr asked if it were for staff parking and wondered about visitor parking. Is there any provision for off-street visitor parking or are the spaces for staff primarily? Mr. Onyima explained that the provision is tied to the number of beds, in this case 42 beds. Using that, they were able to come up with the ratio. Commissioner Ehr asked if he knew the rational for 1 parking space per 4 beds. Mr. Onyima replied that the rational came straight from the Gresham Development Code. Commissioner McKeel noted that the close proximity of the site to the light rail station may have an effect on parking. Also, Commissioner McKeel wondered if 11 spaces would be sufficient. Commissioner Ehr wondered how visitor parking would impact adjacent streets; he also believed that 11 spaces was not enough parking for a facility of this size. Commissioner McKeel concurred with Commissioner Ehr.

Chair Cook noted that on both sides of the site, the potholes are terrible. He asked if there was any missing links program or CIP project that could do something to repair the potholes. He noted that it was nice to have a pull-off and turn-around, but Linden has some of the worst potholes in town. Mr. Wheeler said that half-street improvements will be provided along the frontage and in connection with 9<sup>th</sup> Street, so there will be 20 feet of pavement provided to the site absent of potholes and so forth. However, there will not necessarily be through connections to another street, it would be just to the site. Local streets are typically not part of the CIP for improvements. There has been some effort for some Downtown improvements, but prior to the Downtown Plan, improvements were mostly directed to the community and/or neighborhood streets. At this time, there are no plans for improvements to local streets beyond private development such as this.

In terms of the open space calculation and requirement, Chair Cook asked if the open space had to be usable open space that could be occupied. He noted that most of the open space on the south side of the building is mainly raingardens and other vegetation and landscaping. He wanted some clarification on the calculation and definition of the open space and whether it had to be usable or just landscaped area. Mr. Onyima replied that it was a combination of both. The open space areas could serve as picnic areas, places for residents to congregate and play cards or other social activities. The open spaces are not passive but are meant to be actively utilized.

Commissioner Potestio asked that the issues concerning the trash collection and recycling area be clarified. Mr. Onyima explained that the area will be an enclosure that will face south rather than east as currently depicted. The enclosure will be made of concrete block with the containers located within the enclosure. Once the Site Development Plan is modified to reflect this rotation, the area will need to be landscaped somehow. Commissioner Potestio asked if there would be enough room for the parking spot near the enclosure to allow for adequate vehicular movement. Mr. Onyima replied in the affirmative. Commissioner Potestio noted that the parking space in question was marked as a handicap space and asked if there would be a conflict with the garbage hauler retrieving the garbage and recycling. Mr. Onyima did not believe there would be a conflict.

### **Applicant/Representative**

Bill Whitney, the representative of the applicant, explained that the project would help to upgrade the neighborhood; also, the area has a lot of development potential. He also believed the project would work as an incentive for people in the area to improve and upgrade their property; developers have avoided the area due to the expenses of half-street improvements.

Mr. Whitney explained that much of the surrounding development is single-family houses. The scale of the project is three stories, but transition elements have been introduced to the project to assist with the transition to the surrounding single-family homes. He also described how the east/west access of the building was chosen in order to keep the open space at a maximum. The open space was a combination of a patio with colored concrete and intensive landscaping; this also works as an important focal point for people sitting in the dining area or for the people in the recreational rooms. Quality of light was also mentioned for those rooms as well. The floor area ratio (FAR) was barely met. The back of the site has service related spaces off of it as well as stairs. As the standards require, parking is secured in the back of the site. Also, there is landscaping around the perimeter.

Mr. Whitney mentioned the desire to make the project less institutional in comparison to most senior housing; this was accomplished by:

- Providing a great amount of daylight;
- Providing a view of the common courtyard;
- Organizing the building so that the residents would need to go only a short distance to a common area;
- Siting a sitting/activity room in the structure; and
- Providing a dining room/meeting room that is surrounded by glass and has good connections to the street as well as the central courtyard.

Mr. Whitney noted that the new Downtown standards go well beyond the previous standards in terms of scale transition and detail along the façade. He said that the project needed to be three stories in order to accomplish many of the standards. An element was added to the single-story in order to more easily transition to the nearby single-family homes. As required, there is a fair amount of glass in the front of the building, which gives a good street to interior function, the interior being the reception area, lobby, some offices as well as the common dining area. He also noted that the glass at the end of the structure works to create a sitting area rather than an institutional hallway end. The eastward orientation of this sitting area has the potential to provide a view of Mt. Hood. These types of spaces are important elements to the project and are not normally found in a senior care facility. The basic mass of the structure is rectangular but is broken up vertically with bays of various depths. Also, a taller bay was provided in the front with a larger opening to give it a special character. Horizontally, the structure incorporates Hardi-shingle siding in a lighter color on the top floor for articulation. The bottom two floors are Hardi-panel. Additional horizontal details include trellises along the front with a metal canopy covering the entryway. When the structure is built, it will have a banding system to give an extra break in the large panes by utilizing color, material and distinctive trim.

Bike parking is provided. The landscaping gives good shadow patterns and creates interest along the façade. The trellises will also cause different shadow patterns on the structure throughout the day, which will give a dynamic quality to the structure. The base of the building is a stone veneer and wraps along the entire front of the building, which gives more variation in material. The windows are varied in the sense that it gives a residential character to the bulk of the rooms. The windows of the dining room differ to make the room a light-filled, pleasant space to be in during the day. There is also window variation at the entryway.

The building is simple in detail; the clientele is going to be elder care patients whose budgets will be modest. As a result, the intent of the design was to break up the mass and create a more residential character.

### **Commission Questions**

Commissioner Ehr noted that the siding appears to be Lapp siding on the Elevations Plans. However, the illustration seems to show simulated shake siding. What materials will be used? Mr. Whitney replied that the bottom two floors will have the horizontal Lapp siding and the top floor will utilize Hardi-shingles. On the north and south sides of the hip roof there are some unfamiliar elements that appear to be dormers projecting out; Commissioner Ehr asked Mr. Whitney if he believed this was a requirement of the Code or if it was a design element. Mr. Whitney said that the element was added for variety and he did not believe it was a standard. Commissioner Ehr noted that the design element

was subtle and asked if it benefited the design. Could a continuous face be placed on the outer projection with a hip continued upon that? Mr. Whitney explained that he and the applicant felt it was important to have some conclusion to the top of the bay. He was unsure if the different shapes helped, but thought it could be used as a continuation of the bay expression.

In terms of windows, Commissioner Ehr asked what materials will be used and how the windows will be finished. Mr. Whitney explained that they have come up with a way to have them recessed; the windows will be vinyl. Commissioner Ehr asked if the windows will be finished in white as depicted on the illustration. Mr. Whitney replied in the positive. Commissioner Ehr asked if Mr. Whitney and the applicant brought a color board or material board. Mr. Whitney responded in the negative.

Commissioner Bowers noted that she was very interested in what materials will be used. She told staff she would love to see a materials board in order to view the stone veneer that will be used as well as the siding and other materials that were mentioned; she recommended to staff that for future hearings materials boards should be presented. The quality of the built environment in Gresham must be increased.

Commissioner McKeel was unsure if there were differences in the quality of the material when using Hardi-board, but whatever material is used, it needs to be long lasting. He noted that many times usually the thinnest product is used on the project, so it is especially important to ensure that quality materials are used that will not deteriorate over time. If the materials meet the Code requirements, then it is permissible. However, as the Design Commission continues into the future, perhaps the Code should be modified to clearly articulate that the material must also be long lasting. Mr. Whitney agreed and said that in terms of Hardi-siding, most projects that do not use it well are due partly to the thickness and spacing of the boards.

Commissioner Orth observed that the drawings presented are not construction drawings. Since the hearing is quasi-judicial, he cited concerns for the variances between the sketches that were presented. Also, he asked Mr. Whitney if roof equipment would be incorporated. Mr. Whitney replied that there is some space above the dining room for roof equipment, which would also be screened. He also noted that there was a little bit of room in the back for such equipment if needed that would keep such equipment out of sight. At this time, there has not been much discussion concerning mechanical equipment. Commissioner Orth asked if the Hardi-plank will back into the trim that will be used for the windows. Mr. Whitney replied in the affirmative. Commissioner Orth noted that there was no mention of any exterior lighting except for in front of the structure. Chair Cook cited the Lighting Plan that lists the lighting all around the building to address security issues.

For the front bay, there is a projection of the trellis coming out the front door. However, Commissioner Orth voiced concern that the windows on the sides would not be wrapped on all four sides. It appears as if it was unfinished. Mr. Whitney said that it was a product of the rendering and that it is intended to have a continuation of the trim. Since the structure is three stories in height, Commissioner Orth observed that the upward view is critical; he also asked if it was safe to assume that soffits will be closed as rendered as it is an important element on a taller building. Mr. Whitney replied in the affirmative.

Referencing the earlier question from Commissioner Orth about construction plans, Ms. McGuire said that Mr. Onyima has a list of Conditions of Approval in the Staff Report. Those conditions will be checked against the construction plans when the applicant comes in for the building permit. If the

Commissioners feel something should be added to the Conditions of Approval, they should do so now.

Given the 5 foot setback on the north side of the structure, Commissioner McKeel asked if it would be possible to require the neighboring structure to the north, if redeveloped, to move the access point so that it faced south toward the senior care facility. This would result in a greater setback between both buildings. Mr. Onyima replied that the development must front on Linden and that the side boundary between the two properties would not allow the structures to face one another. Mr. Wheeler explained that the difficulty with the site to the north is that if south side access were allowed, it may not be as safe as a northern access point. Commissioner McKeel asked if the speed of traffic was a factor in access safety. Mr. Wheeler replied in the affirmative. Commissioner McKeel did not agree with the requirement, but understood from where it was derived.

Mr. Whitney asked Commissioner McKeel how he would solve the concern he cited. Commissioner McKeel did not believe a greater setback would help. Mr. Whitney observed that the issue was tricky due to the FAR. Commissioner McKeel believed that if the Commission was too strict on standards and traffic issues, the result could be a poorly designed site, which would diminish the value of the site for the owner as well as the community. Mr. Whitney agreed.

Commissioner Berniker asked Mr. Whitney to expand on his previous description of the bay windows. The vocabulary of the windows on the bay seems different, which may not fit into Mr. Whitney's earlier comment about utilizing windows that will fit into the vocabulary of the neighborhood. What will be accomplished by using the bay windows as depicted? How do they relate to the other windows? Mr. Whitney explained that the bay windows do not relate to the other windows; the idea is to have as much glass as possible to give a better residential character to the building. The windows relate to a good extent to what is going on inside the building with the sitting area as well as the visual contact to the street. Commissioner Berniker said he liked the transparency and agreed with the openness of the rendering, but felt it was a little store-front looking. Is there a way to get more articulation and relate the bay windows better to the other windows? Mr. Whitney thought that possibly horizontal elements could be added to break up the large opening of the glass or perhaps the other portions of the bay could be changed to have a similar character to the top of the bay. The intent is to accomplish a contrasting element to the frequency, size and character of the other windows. Commissioner Berniker asked the other Commissioners for their thoughts. Commissioner Bowers said she liked the contrast as illustrated. If the bays are sitting areas, it would be very nice to have as much eastern light as possible. Commissioner Berniker noted the opening would be the same, but perhaps more mullions should be used. Commissioner Ehr was agreeable to the bay windows as illustrated. Mr. Whitney observed that in time, the area will be developed to a higher density; while there are single-family homes currently, he could envision a developer constructing a building that was different than a single-family building. If so, the storefront appearance of the structure would be less noticeable.

Commissioner Berniker asked how deep the overhang was over the entryway. Mr. Whitney said it was 3 feet. Commissioner Berniker wondered if it could be a little larger. Mr. Whitney explained that they had been going back and forth between 3 and 4 feet; however, they are a little limited on how far out the overhang may protrude. Commissioner Berniker felt it was not enough and wanted a greater sense of entry. He did, however, like the trellis element and asked why it was not incorporated on the south side of the building in the open space. Mr. Whitney said that it was an issue of budget and noted it was an important feature where currently located. However,

consideration could be given to adding a trellis to the opposite side of the dining room. Commissioner Berniker observed that incorporating a trellis to the south will be more functional since it will provide additional shade. Mr. Whitney concurred and thought it would also add to consistency as well.

Commissioner Potestio thought that more detailed drawings for future hearings would be needed in order to better understand the intent of the detail. Also, having greater detail about the transition of the horizontal Hardi-boards and how they are treated would have been helpful. Commissioner Potestio asked if there was a way to integrate the trellis and steel frame awning to achieve one element or if it might make sense to recess the doors to help with the distance the trellis may be projected. This may result in a greater coverage of the entry. Commissioner Potestio asked for clarity on the intent of the different paving patterns utilized. Mr. Whitney replied that the intent was to show different material that would have a slightly different color and pattern. Commissioner Potestio suggested considering the different paving materials at the front of the structure to break up the surface. He then asked if the bicycle parking racks were oriented east to west; Mr. Whitney replied in the affirmative. Commissioner Potestio thought the design of the bike racks could be changed to a staple design for ease of use. However, the east to west orientation should be retained.

Commissioner Potestio asked what the extent of the stone base would be as well as if there was an alternative material. Is the stone real or faux? Mr. Whitney described the stone as wrapping around the dining area to the three story portion, then stopping. It extends to the recesses to each side of the storefront protruding entry, over to the corner and finally wraps the corner and back to about 8 feet. The stone will be faux; if the budget were larger, then real stone would have been used instead. Mr. Whitney stated that the color and detail of faux stone has improved drastically within the last few years. Commissioner Potestio would have been pleased with a nicely finished concrete base rather than the application of artificial stone, however. Commissioner Potestio also noticed two different roof treatments for the bays; since the building is fairly cohesive in design, perhaps only one roof treatment should be used. Mr. Whitney said he struggled for an element that would provide some variety; also, at the three story level, the variation will not be seen easily so the variation is not of large consequence. Commissioner Orth thought the one consistent roof treatment would also create a greater hip and thus reduce the potential for leaks.

For site lighting, Commissioner Potestio thought the lighting fixtures intended to be mounted to the building would give off a large swath of light that would extend to the parking area; however, it does not add to the ambiance of the sitting areas outside of the dining room and the activity room. Perhaps landscape lighting or bollard lighting would be a better fit for the area around the dining room with a different plan for lighting the parking area. Commissioner Orth also suggested taller lighting that would work to illuminate the parking area but would not over illuminate the sitting area.

Commissioner Potestio expressed concern about the potential placement of the mechanical equipment; visibility and sound may be an issue as the equipment would be in close proximity to two residential rooms. Mr. Whitney explained that he preferred if the equipment was located on the ground at the back of the structure; over the dining area would be the second choice. Commissioner Potestio asked if it were possible to situate the mechanical equipment in the back of the building. While this possibility has yet to be discussed, Mr. Whitney replied that there is some space in the back that could be utilized. Since the building will be a residential care facility, Commissioner McKeel asked if central heating and cooling will be required. Mr. Whitney said it has yet to be determined. Commissioner McKeel believed the vent material was done well based on the rendering and hoped

cheap metal would not be used. Mr. Whitney noted that if the mechanical equipment were placed on the roof it would be somewhat visible, which is why the little margin on the back wall would be ideal.

## **Public Comment**

Robert Pung, who is vice president of the Central City Neighborhood Association, spoke in favor of the project. The developer attended a neighborhood meeting within the past few months to speak about the project. Mr. Pung has conferred with many constituents of the neighborhood about the project and the neighborhood is very much in favor of it. Mr. Pung believed the project fulfills the need for housing within the neighborhood. Mr. Pung said seniors deserved a place such as this and noted that there is a shortage of similar facilities. The facility was approved by the State of Oregon. Mr. Pung believed that the overall design of the building is done well and may result in another facility in the neighborhood that might provide other kinds of care. Additionally, the design adequately sites the building as it is adjacent to the National Guard property, which is in the process of being fenced-in. He noted that the largest problem for the townhouses facing across the street on 9<sup>th</sup> is the lack of street parking, and that is difficult. When the project is eventually built, it will hopefully provide for adequate parking. Also, if a similar facility were built near the project, less overflow parking would be required for the area and would consequently help the neighborhood. The state building located on Kelly has very limited parking as well and the National Guard fence will make parking even tighter. Mr. Pung said that he totally endorses the project.

Ms. McGuire asked that he state his address for the record; Mr. Pung complied and said his address is 777 NE A Street. He was first a resident twelve years ago. Everyone who lives in the Central Station facility where he lives is in a wheelchair. The project, therefore, will be an asset to the neighborhood as it will fit into that part of the City. There are other kinds of planning for the Downtown business area, so this is a perfect location for it. When he was president of the neighborhood association, there was a building planned on Division and 10<sup>th</sup> that would require parking in the back of the site; however, the building was never built. He is confident that the big lot that faces Division will have offices or something akin to that as that would fit in with the area and with traffic. For this project, he believed the parking provisions were adequate as most who need parking will be staff.

There were none to speak in opposition to the proposal.

## **Final Comments from Staff**

Mr. Onyima referenced Commissioner McKeel's earlier question about setbacks and said that the project was not required to utilize a setback on the side that could potentially face another structure. Therefore, the applicant is giving more than what is required. He also mentioned the issue of the inconsistencies between the illustration and the plans submitted. The applicant will take control of this issue during the building permit application process. Mr. Abbaté asked if the illustration should be made a condition, approval or exhibit. Ms. McGuire said that if the Commission feels the rendering is adequate and wants the project to comply with the rendering, then a condition describing that should be made by the Commission. Attorney Richard Faus indicated that the rendering was now part of the application and therefore would have to be complied with. Rick Faus said that the role of the Commission is to determine if what was demonstrated by the applicant meets the clear and objective standards, which may not allow the Commission to change what is being proposed with the use of conditions unless they feel the standards have not been met. What Mr. Faus has heard are many suggestions made by the Commission to the applicant, which is appropriate for a quasi-judicial

hearing. Mr. Abbaté asked if the rendering can be incorporated into the record as an exhibit so that when the construction drawings arrive, they can be compared to the rendering. Mr. Faus replied in the positive. Chair Cook said the rendering is an exhibit. Commissioner Ehr was unsure if the rendering was an exhibit as it was not marked as such. Chair Cook recommended the rendering be marked appropriately and entered into the record so that the findings match what was reviewed.

Commissioner Bowers said that much of the discussion has been directed toward the quality of materials and details. In this situation, many details are missing. She asked how the Commission can be assured that the applicant will meet the details and concerns voiced by the Commission as well as if staff knows the quality the Commission would like to see since there was no materials board. She said she is not seeing everything she needs to see tonight, which is giving her problems. How can this be resolved? Ms. McGuire asked Mr. Whitney to describe the materials that will be used so that the Commission may make a decision based on the description. Mr. Whitney asked what should be described and Commissioner Bowers replied the stone, the windows, the stone veneer and where it will sit. These are the details that will make or break a project. Mr. Whitney said most of the products were standardized, such as the Hardi-board and Hardi-shingle, so there is not much variation from the company. In terms of the vinyl windows, he will push for the better quality windows. Perhaps in later hearings, it should be made clear to the applicant to submit a color board and a materials board.

Commissioner Ehr stated that his concerns were the same as Commissioner Bowers'. He recommended as a future agenda item standardizing submission requirements of what should be included and requiring that plans agree with one another. If they do not, the applicant should have a written explanation detailing why there is not agreement. Commissioner McKeel had the same concerns. Since the lack of boards was not the fault of the applicant, Commissioner McKeel did not believe that the project should be delayed. On the other hand, not having final drawings and having no assurance that quality materials will be used, perhaps the task should be left to staff to ensure that what was discussed is done for the project. Chair Cook said that the project took the clear and objective standards track, so most of the elements will be more of a checklist. Those elements have been addressed in the hearing and the requirements will be met when the construction plans are submitted. For the mechanical equipment screening, it is another standard check element and Chair Cook was sure that the applicant would not do anything that would be detrimental to the project. All other administrative issues can be addressed before the next hearing. Commissioner Orth noted that the bottom line is addressing whether or not the standards have been met. However, the rough edges of the project made him uncomfortable. Ms. McGuire drew the attention of the Commission to page 25 of the Downtown Code where there was a description of what building materials may be used. Also, since the applicant has prepared a narrative that describes what materials will be used, a condition could be created that the applicant would need to meet those criteria. Mr. Onyima said that once the applicant states in the narrative and the plans the materials that will be used, the materials must comply with the material list in the Code. Consequently, a condition of approval is not needed. The question for the Commission is if the findings of staff are agreeable. While the Commission may want fancier material than what is listed in the Code, the applicant still complies with the Code. Also, the requirement of the materials board is not in the Code currently, so the applicant does not have to submit one.

Ms. McGuire recommended the Commission bring their Code books with them to future hearings. The applicant has addressed the materials section within the Code. Ms. McGuire then read from the Code the primary materials, the prohibited materials, the secondary materials, the building base

materials, the changing of materials facing the street, and the accent materials. Staff will need to verify that the materials used meet what was approved with the construction plans. Mr. Abbaté acknowledged the comments made by the Commission about the materials board; staff will ensure that there is a good selection of materials that the Commission may view at the next hearing. Commissioner Ehr noted that the evaluation of the Design Commission is how the materials relate to each other, which is missing in the checklist. The Hardi-plank siding comes in three different textured materials. Therefore, the Commission would need clear illustrations of the materials in order to determine if those materials comply with the Code as well as how they relate to each other.

Mr. Abbaté noted that the vast majority of the comments made by the Commission add more specificity than what the Code currently requires. Comments and suggestions that help the applicant meet the standards are exactly right. However, the level of specificity the Commission would like to offer is advisory for the clear and objective track, although not for the discretionary track. In following the clear and objective process, many of the comments will help the applicant. Staff is trying to track those issues that are insufficient in the standards so that they may be updated with a greater degree of specificity. Staff will also take the comments given by the Commission and give them to the applicant.

### **Staff Final Recommendation**

Staff recommended approval of the proposed 42-bed residential care facility based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations stated in the January 6, 2010 Staff Report and January 11 and 13 Addendum Staff Reports.

It was the consensus of the Commission to close the hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ehr, seconded by Commissioner McKeel, to recommend approval of City Application DR-E 09-26000230 based on the standards, findings, conclusions, and recommendations stated in the January 6, 2010 Staff Report and January 11 and 13 Addendum Staff Report.

The motion passed unanimously as follows:

Chair Cook	Yes	Vice Chair Berniker	Yes
Commissioner Bowers	Yes	Commissioner Ehr	Yes
Commissioner McKeel	Yes	Commissioner Orth	Yes
Commissioner Potestio	Yes		

Mr. Abbaté and staff commended Mr. Whitney and the applicant for their willingness to be the subject of the first Design Commission hearing as well as for listening to staff. Mr. Abbaté also thanked the Design Commission and assured that future hearings would be smoother. Also, staff will pass along the comments made by the Commission to the applicant.

Mr. Whitney said that even though it was more work to follow through with the narrative, in the long run the City will be better off for having stricter standards in order to ensure for a quality product and built environment. He expressed his appreciation for all the hard work that has gone into improving the process.

Chair Cook asked Mr. Whitney to describe his experience with the new Design Commission. Were there any major hurdles that could have been dealt with in a better way for the future? Mr. Whitney felt that perhaps over time the narrative could be simplified; currently, there is a great amount of repetition. He understands the need for more specifics, but there is an incredible amount of repetition. Any way to simply while still making statements on specific standards would be ideal. Mr. Abbate asked Mr. Whitney if we would be willing to meet with staff and indicate where repetition occurred within the narrative. Mr. Whitney replied in the affirmative.

## **II. Downtown Storefront Improvement Program**

Mr. Martin said that the City is applying for a \$100,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to establish a Storefront Improvement Program. The program will help to improve the appearance and competitiveness of Downtown Gresham. While the focus of the program will be the historic core of Downtown, an actual project boundary has not yet been set. As part of the application, a letter of support was requested of the Design Commission. If the Commission is in agreement for the letter, staff can prepare it and share it with Chair Cook for his signature sometime before February 1. The Commission was in agreement with the request.

One Commissioner expressed his hope that a professional designer would be utilized with the program as well as the continuation of such a program for the future to work as a catalyst for the area. Councilor Widmark suggested that other options be included with the application. A Commissioner noted that \$100,000 is not a lot of money for a program such as this; the recommendation was also made to not combine the program with another redevelopment loan program. The focus should be on the storefront only as well as the matching 50/50 program; such a combination works well together. Commissioner Bowers mentioned that Portland's program works with storefront owners and will pay for architectural fees up to a certain amount. Portland also uses a cap on the grant; the owners may then use the grant money to apply for a loan. A Commissioner suggested staff speak with the people in Portland who work with the Storefront Improvement Program.

## **III. Multi-Family Design Standards**

Comments from the Commission included:

- One Commissioner said that the illustrations were well done and matched the intent of the dialogue and descriptions of the draft manual.
- On page 12 of the manual, the Commission did not believe the sketch and diagrams were too prescriptive but were more of a visual definition. However, a disclaimer should be utilized throughout the document.
- One Commissioner did not believe checklists would result in creative and innovative design; the Commission should discuss the philosophy of how the objectives of the City and Council can be met. Checklists and their components do not ensure for good design.
  - Perhaps the materials section needs additional work.
  - If the submittal requirements were increased, the Commission could potentially see a greater amount of detail that couldn't be derived from checklists.
- On pages 12 and 13, the images are a little confusing; perhaps the image on page 13 needs some modification.

The Commission recommended that submittal requirements be discussed at the next meeting.

The Commission approved the cancelation of the January 28 meeting.

The Commission approved moving the Design Commission meetings to two Wednesdays a month rather than every fourth Thursday of the month. Ms. McGuire will send an e-mail to the Commission detailing if the Commission will begin meeting the first and third or second and fourth Wednesday of the month.

Councilor Widmark announced that this was his last Design Commission meeting as Council liaison.

**IV. Adjourn**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date