

After leaving the 2/3 committee meeting, we went to the drawing board looking to come up with modifications to our current building that attempt to capture the intent of the design code in which the recessed windows were discussed. We started with the obvious ... which was to come up with a trim option that would create or enhance the depth and shadowing at each window opening. We talked to a few different trim supply companies in the Portland market as well as with our architect and decided that a tapered trim, thicker at the window edge which tapers down to meet the siding, would be most effective. To put this idea to the test, we had our subcontractors mock up a few different window sections at the job site and we presented these photos as part of a consultation with Terra and her design team. While the window trim did help -- specifically on the center column underneath the main building sign -- it was fairly conclusive that we still weren't getting the overall impact that was intended. Not only did it add to an already busy façade, but it felt retrospective and piecemealed together.

Back to the drawing board...rather than just focus on the windows themselves, we started to look at the building as a whole. The design code examines what areas of the structure enrich and give design prominence to critical locations? What characteristics create a true visual interest and eliminate the appearance of a blank façade? And something important to me...what regional building materials are represented giving this hotel a true "Pacific NW" feel and how can we expand and integrate those to add even more visual interest?

The answer to those questions wasn't very hard to settle on: the stone and the wood.

We already have the stone. The building has a very strong 'ground up' presence, a convincing foundation – we've already all agreed on that. We also agreed during the original design review that the timber corbels needed to be enhanced. So we decided to take that a step further by looking at options that unite the stone and timber, giving the appearance that these wood elements contribute to the overall structural integrity of the building. We had to make sure that the column locations were convincing and we wanted to pay the most attention to the front and street facing facades. You'll see we went through multiple iterations for column placements before finally settling on what we feel is the optimal aesthetic and placement. You'll find those locations on the two final iterations in the PowerPoint along with the construction details for the columns. As illustrated, they will be stained to match the other wood elements located at the Porte cochere and window lintels. A couple of other items to note: We elected to not add any wood elements to the rear elevation. The stone configuration doesn't provide any convincing locations nor would anyone be able to see them due to the proximity of our southerly neighbor. Also, we mirrored the East facing elevation to the West (street) facing elevation. Additionally, as mentioned above, I would like to discuss the committee's thoughts on continuing with the trim on the center bay of windows located under the main ID sign. This section of the hotel has minimal façade changes and I feel is an area that could really benefit from giving the windows some "love".

In summation, we ended up with a less is more solution. The code's intent of the recessed windows was to create depth and substance, giving the building's walls a sense of purpose and permanence. Our intent was to capture that essence by focusing on the hierarchy of the building, using regionally prominent and visually stimulating materials, that subtly yet convincingly suggest this hotel belongs here.