

**Design Commission Meeting  
Council Chambers  
Gresham City Hall  
May 16, 2018, 6:30 p.m.**

**I. Opening/Citizen Comment**

A regular session of the Gresham Design Commission was called to order on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, located at 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham Oregon. The meeting was recorded and scribed by Amanda Lunsford.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Camilla Cok  
Rob Cook  
Robert Hayden  
Tom Orth

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Bill Bailey  
Pat Lando  
Mike McKeel

**COUNCILOR ABSENT:**

Kirk French  
David Widmark

**STAFF:**

David Berniker, Urban Design & Planning  
Amanda Lunsford, Urban Design & Planning  
Terra Wilcoxson, Urban Design & Planning  
Josh Williams, Urban Design & Planning

Chair Cook introduced staff and members of the Commission that were present as well as described how public comments could be provided.

**II. My Place Hotel Option Design Commission Consult: R943302470, NE 178<sup>th</sup> Ave. and NE Sacramento St.**

**Presentations**

The applicant gave a presentation that included:

- Parking location and amount of parking
- Fencing and fencing materials
- Ground floor requirements
- Window location and quantity
- Landscaping along the property and specifically on the sides of the building that lack the transparency requirements.

- Materials
- Packaged Terminal Air Conditioner screening

Staff gave a presentation about the project which addressed the following questions from the applicant:

1. **Building Placement and Frontage.** The entry structure is within the setback zone, occupying 14% of the total frontage. Enhanced landscaping is proposed. Is this acceptable? Staff stated that it is interested in alternative building orientation options and requests the Design Commission's perspective on the placement of the building.
2. **Frontage: Parking & Vehicle Circulation.** The proposed parking and vehicle circulation area occupies 43% of the site's frontage. Historically, the Design Commission has offered some flexibility on the parking frontage requirement. Staff recommended a low decorative fence to screen the parking from the street.
3. **Maximum Building Height.** The applicant plans to apply for a minor variance to the height requirement. The proposed height is 52 feet 1 inch. The applicant asked the Commission to comment on this request.
4. **Ground Floor Height & Transparency.** Is the anticipated ground level height of 8 feet 1 inch permissible? Staff stated that the low ceiling height results in difficulty meeting the transparency standard. Typically the Commission requests that proposals maximize ground floor transparency, particularly around the entries.
5. **Packaged Terminal Air Conditions (PTAC).** The applicant requested feedback on how the proposal integrates the PTAC into the façade and wanted to know if it is permissible to project 3 inches from the finished wall plane. The proposal contains decorative PTAC grills. Staff stated that in the past, the Commission has required that PTACs are flush with the finished wall plane.
6. **Window Reveal.** Is a window reveal depth slightly under 3 inches acceptable where the façade material is stucco? Staff stated that historically, the Commission has carefully evaluated deviation from the reveal standard on a case by case basis and has preferred that window recesses are no less than 2 inches.
7. **Ground Floor Height & Transparency.** As proposed, the street facing façade at the ground level is less than 10% glazed between the height of 2 feet and 12 feet. Is the design acceptable? Staff stated that the low ceiling height results in difficulty meeting the transparency standard. Typically the Commission requests that proposals maximize ground floor transparency, particularly around the entries.

Staff also presented the following discussion items on the project:

1. Staff requested the Design Commission's comments on the design of the building base. As proposed, the height of the base ranges from approximately 25% to 63% of the façade height. Staff was interested in the Design Commission's impressions and advised the applicant at the Pre-Application meeting that natural stone would be required.

## Commission Comments

The Commission first addressed the questions from the applicant:

1. The Commission was generally comfortable with the proposal not meeting the standard; however, the Commission was interested in the building exhibiting greater visibility from NE 178<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Some Commissioners expressed that they would like to see the applicant consider alternative building orientations and ways to increase the area of the building fronting the street. Overall, if Building Placement and Frontage is a discretionary request, the Commission felt a more inviting street-facing façade would be necessary to meet the intent of the guideline.
2. The Commission was supportive of the parking and vehicle circulation area as proposed but endorsed the addition of a low decorative fence to screen the parking area from the street.
3. The Commissioners felt the proposed roof form was a significant architectural feature. The Commission requested information on the height of the buildings in the immediate vicinity; however, they also indicated they would support a minor variance request to exceed the maximum building height for the Moderate Commercial District.
4. The Commission did not express concern with the height of the ground level, as proposed.
5. The Commission requested that PTACs integrate with the façade and be flush with the exterior wall plane. The Commissioners did not feel the proposed design successfully concealed the PTACs.
6. The Design Commission and the applicant discussed alternative exterior wall construction methods, which would facilitate a 4-inch window reveal and result in flush PTACs. The Commission was supportive of such a solution.
7. The Commission recognized that the project site is not a high pedestrian traffic location and understood that the proposal may not reach 60 percent transparency on the street-facing façade between the heights of 2 feet and 12 feet. However, the Commission felt that the proposed quantity of transparency would not be sufficient, and would like to see the transparency significantly increased, particularly around the entry areas.

In regards to the staff discussion item on building base, the Commissioners stated that exceeding the maximum building base height would be acceptable as shown in the presented elevations.

The Commission advised the applicant to provide materials boards, product specifications and construction details for the façade materials and fenestration, particularly for the natural stone. The Commission also stated a preference for including an additional façade material, such as board and batten.

The Commission recommended that the street-facing façade entrance be enhanced in the following ways:

- Increase the transparency around the entries

- Widen the port-cochere
- Use façade materials to create interest
- Decrease the blank wall area on the façade.

### **III. Civic NW Early Assistance Design Advice: R993042370, R993043470**

#### **Presentations**

Staff gave a presentation on the project which included:

- Site map
- Land Use and Future Street Plan
- Applicable principles and code provisions
- Section 4.1210 – Design Principles - One of the challenges and opportunities in this site is the incorporation of the slopes into the site and building design including placement of open spaces and parking.
- Connectivity
- Parking
- Strong Edges

The applicant gave a presentation on the project which included:

- Development Program Goals
  - Higher density house – 50 units per net acre
  - Neighborhood plaza adjacent to the MAX stop
  - Convenience retail at ground floor along Civic Dr.
  - Adequate parking 1:1 or higher target parking ratio
  - Excellent connectivity pathways through the site
- Master Plan First Principles
  1. Create pathways along desire lines, and provide access at intentional locations
  2. Create urban edges with appropriate massing
  3. Locate active uses in key places
  4. Visually screen and green buffer required parking from view
  5. Concentrate the active park space and playground in a safe and central location to create a successful outdoor use
- Additional Design Opportunities
  - Uniquely Gresham - An urban village

- Building on a hill – Embrace the topography
- Design for people – Neighborhood scale
- Front doors & rooftops – Active edges
- Smart density – Efficient construction
- Sustainability throughout

## **Commission Comments**

### **4.1210 – Design Principles**

The Design Commission responded favorably to the use of slopes on the site, given the challenges they present. The Commission felt the integration of site elements, including the play area and pedestrian paths, was thought out given the challenges of the site.

#### **Connectivity (Pedestrian Paths)**

The Design Commission spoke favorably of the more recent conceptual plan presented in the applicant’s presentation, showing a better alignment of the pedestrian path through the parking lot from the amenity deck area or the stairs at the bottom of the site (adjacent to the plaza), connecting up the hill to Fanning Way.

#### **Plaza Size**

The Design Commission had no issues with shrinking the size of the plaza, although they noted sizing could be an issue with regards to Metro and City requirements. The Design Commission also recommended better connections from other areas on the site back to the plaza.

#### **Children’s Play Area**

The Commissioners recommended a better transition be incorporated between parking areas and the pedestrian areas; and, in particular; where parking abuts the children’s play area. A more pronounced separation between the uses is needed.

#### **Head in Parking**

The Commissioners responded to the applicant’s presentation slide showing head-in parking around the site perimeter on public streets (Civic, Council and Fanning). The Commissioners agreed that head-in parking on Civic was not recommended, however inclusion of angled head-in parking on Fanning Way could be considered, depending on the requirements of other City departments.

## **V. Adjourn**

### **Chair Election**

Commissioner Orth nominated Rob Cook for the position of Chair for the Design Commission. Commissioner Hayden seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.**



Chair

8/1/18

Date



Recording Secretary

8/1/18

Date

For more information, please visit: [www.GreshamOregon.gov/DesignCommission](http://www.GreshamOregon.gov/DesignCommission).