

CITY OF PORTLAND
Bureau of Development Services
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 5000
Portland, OR 97201
P524
Summary Memo EA 09-137408 DA

16

**Return Service Requested** 





# City of Portland, Oregon Bureau of Development Services Land Use Services

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Dave Shiton

# **MEMORANDUM**

Date: August 10, 2009

To: Annie Mahoney, THA Architecture
CC: Historic Landmarks Commission

From: Dave Skilton, Development Review

Phone number 503-823-0660

Re: EA 09-137408 DA – Westminster Presbyterian Church

Design Advice Summary Memo July 27, 2009

Thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to hold a Design Advice Request regarding your project. I hope you find it informative and valuable as you continue with your project development. Attached is a summary of the comments provided by the Historic Landmarks Commission at the July 27, 2009 Design Advice Request. This summary was generated from notes taken at the public meeting and a subsequent review of the public meeting recordings. For a small fee we can provide you with copies of those recordings; to request copies, please call 503-823-7814.

These comments are intended to guide you in further design exploration of your project. They may also inform staff when giving guidance over the course of future related land use reviews. It should be understood that these comments address the project as presented on July 27, 2009. As the project design evolves, applicability of the comments may also evolve or they may no longer be pertinent.

Design Advice is not intended to substitute for other code-required land use or legislative procedures. Please keep in mind that the formal Type III land use review process [which includes a pre-application, a land use review application, public notification, a Staff Report and a public hearing] must be followed once the Design Advice Request meetings are complete, if formal approval for specific elements of your project is desired.

At the end of the hearing, it was understood that you would not return for a second Design Advice Request. Please continue to coordinate with me as you prepare your formal Type III Design Review application.

Encl:

Summary of Comments

# **Summary of Comments**

Commissioners Present: Art DeMuro, Chair; Carrie Richter, Vice Chair; Brian Emerick

## **Topics of Discussion:**

- 1) New accessibility ramps in the lawn area and breezeway facing the NE Schuyler Street frontage;
- 2) A new trash enclosure and a re-used existing fabric awning, at the basement entry to the Education Wing facing NE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue;
- 3) A new three-story elevator shaft, two new above-ground skylight structures, and a new oval seat wall/curb, all in the central courtyard;
- 4) A new ramp and covered porch, and facade alterations including a new door, new windows and a new pediment, at the northeast corner of the Education Wing facing NE Hancock Street; and
- 5) Repair and thermal upgrade of character-defining windows in the Fireside Wing, facing the central courtyard.

#### General comments:

The Commission generally supported the concept of improving accessibility to the church complex and recognized the challenges inherent in striving toward that goal. However, they disagreed with some of the proposed interventions to that end. At the outset Commissioner Richter clarified with staff, that the entire complex, including the 1953 Education Wing, is designated as a historic landmark and therefore subject to Historic Design Review.

# **Access Ramps to Main Church Entrance**

- All of the Commissioners appreciated the concept of keeping the slope of the new accessibility ramp low enough that guard rails would not be required. Commissioner DeMuro stressed the importance of careful species selection for the planting around the ramp to insure it fits into the overall landscape as gently as possible. There was general agreement on retention of as much of the rhythm of opening in the breezeway walls as possible, recognizing that the new ramp will close off the through passage closest to the narthex entry.
- □ Commissioners requested that, upon their return, the applicants provide full plan, section and elevation drawings of the existing conditions and proposed treatments of the covered breezeway structure between the Church and the Education Wing. These drawings should call out all materials and include details on items like gates, railings, light fixtures, etc.

#### Awning and Trash Enclosure at Basement Entry to Education Wing

- □ Noting that it would obscure the attractive brick detailing around the basement entry, Commissioner DeMuro recommended that the existing awning not be reused at this location, and that perhaps no awning was needed at all. Commissioners Emerick and Richter agreed, noting further that the awning would introduce a new material in this area and conflict with the slope of the shed roof over the door. A much smaller awning, or canopy, better integrated with the doorway, could be entertained.
- □ There was some discussion about using a simple, unroofed fence to enclose the dumpsters, but that approach is no longer approvable per code. Four suggestions were offered for minimizing the visual impact of the new trash enclosure: moving all openings to the north side; using stone for the facing material rather than stucco or brick; screening with plantings, especially against the south wall; and carrying the proposed berm around to the west side. In general the Commission stressed the concepts of compatibility and subordination for the new structure.
- □ Commissioners requested that, upon their return, the applicants provide full plan, section and elevation drawings of the existing conditions and proposed treatments of the area around

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the basement door where the trash enclosure is proposed, including the sidewalk, parking strip, and curb. The drawings should call out all materials and include full details for items like doors, light fixtures, signs, etc.

# Elevator Tower, Seat Wall, and Tunnel Skylights

- The proposed external elevator tower and the associated enclosure of part of the covered walkway were not well received. The Commission's main conceptual objections to this proposal stemmed from the structure's violation of the spatial ordering of the courtyard and its competition with the bell tower. There was general consensus that a solution which places the new elevator within the existing building footprint and roof structure would be far superior. Barring that possibility, suggestions for improvement included: lowering the tower height by approximately a third, minimizing the width and depth of its footprint, eliminating the glazed offsets, using significant plantings as screening, using stone or another more textured material on the surface rather than stucco, and integrating the roof better with the adjoining roofs.
- □ Commissioner Emerick supported the concept of the oval seat wall and curb because he felt it would help to unify the courtyard space and make it more attractive for use. Commissioners DeMuro and Richter agreed, with the proviso that it be carefully detailed.
- □ Commissioner Emerick also suggested that the proposed above ground skylight structures be replaced with grate-covered in-ground units that would integrate better with the open character of the courtyard and its plantings. Commissioners DeMuro and Richter agreed.
- □ Commissioners requested that, upon their return, the applicants provide full plan, section and elevation drawings of the existing conditions and proposed treatments of the area around the proposed elevator, including the existing covered walkway along the east side of the Education Wing. The drawings should call out all materials and include full details for doors, windows, storefront systems, light fixtures, signs, etc.

# Alterations of the North Entry to Education Wing

- □ The Commissioners raised three main conceptual objections to the proposed alterations at the north façade of the Education Wing: change of a historically minor entrance to a major status; loss of significant historic fabric; and creation of a false sense of historic development. As with the proposed elevator tower, their strong first preference would be to accommodate the grade change made possible by the new ramp within the existing building footprint. Barring that, they offered the following suggestions for improving the proposed design: eliminate the new pediment; retain the existing second floor window; reduce the width and transparency of the proposed door opening; and use a flat or low-pitched roof to shelter the porch.
- □ Commissioners requested that, upon their return, the applicants provide full plan, section and elevation drawings of the existing conditions and treatments of the area proposed for alteration at the north entry to the Education Wing. The drawings should confirm the removal of existing exterior conduit and abandoned hardware, call out all materials, and include full details for items like the porch, doors, light fixtures, signs, etc.

#### Window Repair and Thermal Upgrade

□ The Commissioners endorsed the concept of repairing any deteriorated cast stone window frames in kind and agreed with replacement glass, so long as the new glazing units either replicate the existing exterior appearance or reinstate a demonstrated historic appearance.

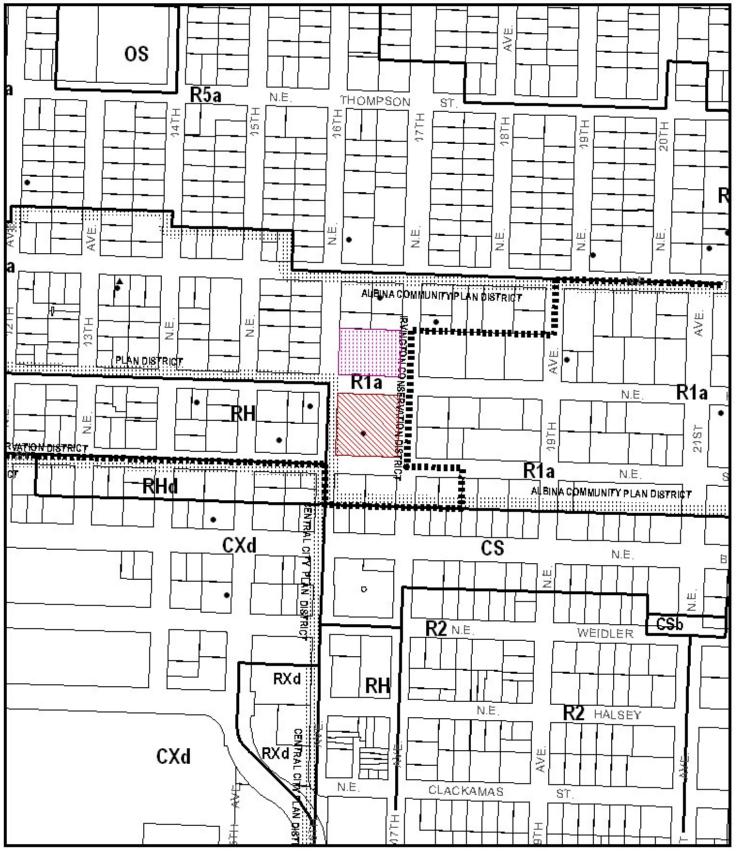
### **Exhibit List**

- A. Applicant's Narrative
- B. Zoning Map

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- C. Drawings and Photos
  - 1. Site Plan (attached)
  - 2. Model from Southeast (attached)
  - Model from South (attached)
     Model from North (attached)

  - 5. Window Repair Details
  - 6. Packet sent to Commissioners, including:
    - a. transmission memo from staff (2 pages);
    - b. introductory letter from applicant (3 pages);
    - c. applicant presentation (41 pages); and
    - d. NPS Preservation Brief 32, Making Historic Properties Accessible (13 pages).
- D. Notice
  - 1. Mailing list
  - 2. Mailed notice
- E. Public Testimony: none
- F. Other Materials
  - 1. Application form



ZONING



Historic Landmark



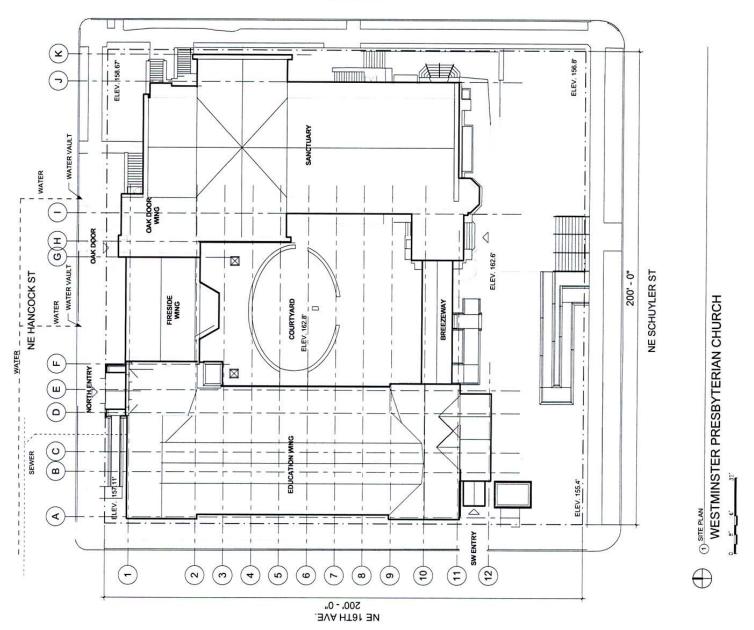
This site lies within the: ALBINA COMMUNITY PLAN DISTRICT IRVINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT File No. <u>EA 09-137408 DAR</u>

1/4 Section <u>2832</u>

Scale <u>1 inch = 300 feet</u>

State\_Id <u>1N1E26DC 11300</u>

(Jun 22,2009)



EA09-137408

