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New Chinatown/Japantown Design Guidelines Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #4

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

Portland Development Commission

Commission Room: 1st Floor

3:30 – 5:00 PM

Meeting Summary

Members in attendance: Hillary Adam, Joren Bass, Hermann Colas, Mike Hayakawa (alternate), Neil Lee, Peggy Moretti, Will Naito, Jackie Peterson Loomis, Matthew Roman, Katherine Schultz

Consultant team in attendance: Adrienne DeDona (JLA), Brandon Grilc (PMA), Karen Lange (Waterleaf), Peter Meijer (PMA), Kristen Minor (PMA)

City Staff in attendance: Lisa Abuaf (PDC), Anne Crispino-Taylor (PDC), Sarah Harpole (PDC), Brandon Spencer-Hartle (BPS)

Public participants: Rose Kowalski (AHC Advisory Committee), Lynn Longfellow (Oregon Nikkei Endowment)

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Design Guidelines Discussion Draft: Chapter 3
- Guidelines Test Exercise: Alteration
- Guidelines Test Exercise: Addition
- Guidelines Test Exercise: New Construction (2 test cases)

1. Welcome

Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement

Adrienne explained the goal of today's meeting was to focus on Chapter 3 of the Guidelines draft document. She explained that members were assigned to small groups to apply guidelines to test cases and gather feedback regarding the draft document.

2. Community Engagement Summary Report

Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement

Adrienne explained how the draft guide concepts were presented at the open house on May 3rd. The Open House was well attended (around 50 people) and a lot of good feedback was received. She also stated that interviews with the committee members and key stakeholders have mostly been conducted. Feedback thus far includes the following primary themes:

This summary is PDC staff's interpretation of the main points of discussion, including statements attributed directly to committee members, staff and the public, and is not intended to be a word-for-word transcription of the meeting.

- Need clear and consistent guidelines;
- Promote compatibility with flexibility for development;
- Tell the story of the District
- Establish a “sense of place” by preserving existing unique design elements and through use of unique architectural features.

3. Draft Guidelines Report Overview (PowerPoint slides)

Kristen Minor, Peter Meijer Architects

Kristen explained that today’s meeting would focus on Chapter 3 (the Design Guidelines). The next SAC meeting will focus on the other chapters, in addition to taking another look at Chapter 3. She presented a high level overview of changes made to the draft Design Guidelines since they were last presented to the committee. She stated how the concepts have not significantly changed but, based on feedback received from the SAC and the public, there has been some “re-ordering” and clarification of the draft guidelines. Some edits include:

- General Guidelines were moved to the front because they are always applicable.
- It was also determined that for projects in the area overlapping with the Skidmore Old Town Historic District, the Skidmore Old Town Historic District Design Guidelines will apply as well as a subset of the New Chinatown/Japantown guidelines (which are still to be identified).
- Guideline A3 was updated to include the use of signs to help preserve the District’s character.
 - It was asked as to whether the document should also include specifics regarding larger signs to allow for them more easily.
- Guideline A7 was modified to include improvements in the right of way and the exterior walking surfaces, as well as the use of special entry treatments.
- Guidelines A9 and A12 were moved from New Construction to General Guidelines.
- Guideline A13 adds a section to ensure the use of authentic design expressions of an Asian cultural group.
- Additions Guidelines C2 and C3 were revised to incorporate the concept of “visually secondary” , which was previously captured in a separate guideline
- New Construction Guidelines D2 added that emphasis should be placed the form, scale and proportion of the District’s Contributing buildings.

4. Discussion: Feedback on Design Guidelines and Test Case Scenario

All (small groups)

Table exercises – Members were divided into three groups with a fourth group encompassing members from the public. Tables were provided 4 sample projects of varying types (alteration, addition, and new construction) to use as test cases. Adrienne explained that groups should discuss how, or whether, the proposed guidelines might have shaped these projects differently and whether the guidelines were resulting in desired projects. The goal was not to come to consensus, or critique the desirability of the test cases, but to evaluate how (or if) the guidelines were creating desired results and were clear and easy to understand. As members applied the guidelines to the test cases, they were asked to consider:

- Where are the guidelines already being met?
- Are any changes required to meet the guidelines?
- What do you think of the outcome of the test cases? Are the proposed guidelines creating desired buildings?
- Were there any specific areas or guidelines that seemed confusing in regards to interpretation and/or application?

Report out from table exercises included the following:

- Guidelines were mostly being met in each of the case studies
- Some contradiction in relating to the guidelines
- Need a vision rather than meeting certain elements
- Missing concepts
 - Addition test – nothing about windows and fenestration patterns. Need more examples for vertical addition for Storefronts. Are we encouraging awnings? Need better language about materials.
- New construction
 - Test case not meeting guidelines due to height. Need more information about height.
 - Difference between lighting on new and historic buildings – more leeway on new building. Need for including larger historic signs, not simply faded, and painted signs.
 - One test case could meet guidelines if ground floor came out to street – need examples for inspiration for cultural elements.
- Materials. How to handle historic/compatible vs. durable – particularly wood vs aluminum storefront?
- Addition – what is secondary? Important to have options. Addition test case did not meet all the guidelines but seems to be a desirable project.
- Language unclear regarding “background building” – what does that mean – need a better definition.
- Define adjacent building – almost everything is neighboring. Should this apply to the district vs immediately adjacent buildings only?
- Street activation is important to neighborhood vibrancy and quality design.
- How do you allow change that brings vibrancy without losing history?
- Inspire the development community to tell the story of the district.
- General consensus like Society Hotel as an example of a desired development project

5. Next Steps / Closing Comments

Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement

- Next meeting: June 7, 2016, 3:30 – 5:00, PDC Commission Room
 - Revisit chapter 3; more comprehensive look at chapters 1 & 2
- Open House June 15th, 5:00-7:00 pm, PDC Commission Room. Will be presenting draft design guidelines
- Provide comments and/or additional feedback to Sarah by June 1st.

Meeting notes prepared by Anne Crispino-Taylor, PDC Senior Administrative Coordinator, Central City