

**CITY OF OLYMPIA  
Design Review Board**

**DETAIL DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT  
Meeting Date - March 9, 2017**

**Project Name and Case No.:** Columbia Place, 16-0057

**Site Address:** 503 Capitol Way N.

**Project Description:** Construct an 85 foot tall mixed-use building on a 60,000 sq.ft. vacant development site. Uses include street-level retail, 10,000 sq.ft.; office space, 48,000 sq.ft.; 115 residential apartments; and internal parking for 260 vehicles.

**Applicant:** Vine Street Investors, LLC  
PO Box 430  
Arlington WA 98223

**Authorized Representative:** Glenn Wells, Architect  
324 West Bay Dr. STE 102  
Olympia WA 98502

**Zoning District:** Urban Waterfront (UW)

**Future Land Use:** Urban Waterfront

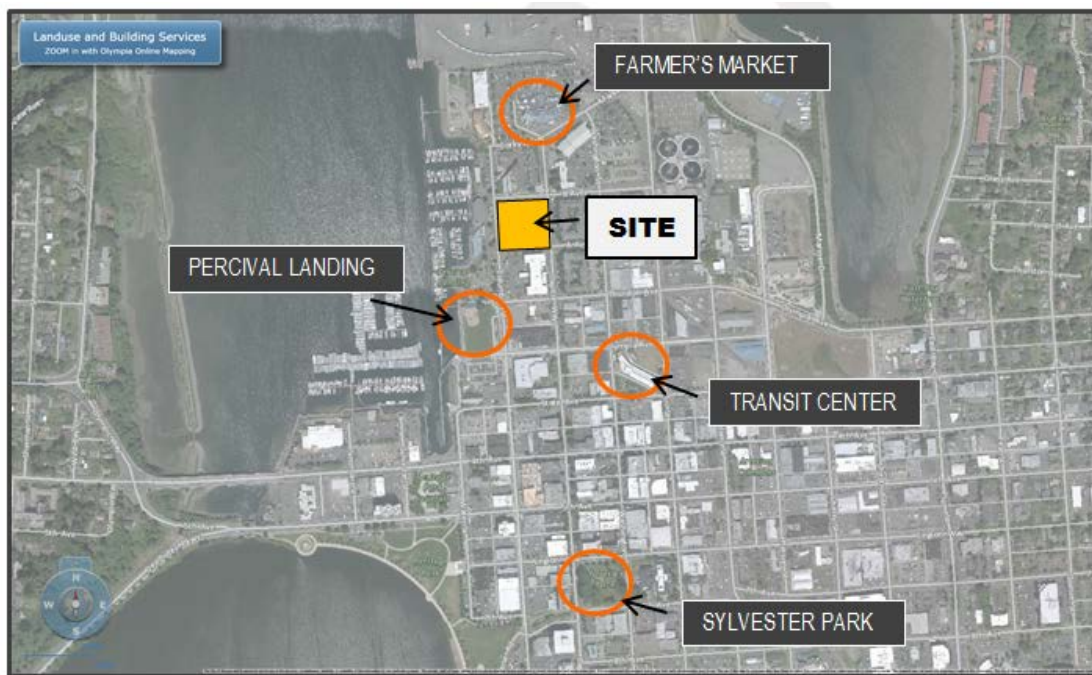
**Design Review District:** Downtown Design Review District

**Shoreline Jurisdiction:** Approximately the west one-third of the project site is located within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark of Budd Inlet and within the urban shoreline environment overlay.

**SEPA Determination:** An addendum to existing environmental documents was issued on December 29, 2015.

**Public Notification:** In accordance with Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) 18.78, public notification was mailed on February 16, 2017, to Recognized Neighborhood Associations, and Parties of Record.

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**Figure 1:** The development site in relation to downtown landmarks and public amenities. CPD ZOOM, 2016. C. McCoy.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Context and Existing Conditions

The 60,000 sq.ft. project site is in Downtown Olympia along the northernmost portion of Capitol Way N. The site occupies a full city block between Capitol Way N. and Columbia St., and between B Avenue and A Avenue.

### Zoning:

- Subject site: Urban Waterfront (UW)
- North approximately four blocks: Industrial (I)
- South approximately two blocks: Downtown Business (DB)
- Further south: Urban Waterfront Housing (UW-H)

### Project Proposal

The project is to construct a new 85 foot tall mixed-use building on a 60,000 sq.ft development site. The site is currently vacant except for a foundation and pilings that were installed as part of a similar project proposal in 2009 (Project 12-0009).

The development proposal consists of:

- Total development: approximately 300,000 sq.ft.
- Street level retail: approximately 10,000 sq.ft.
- Office space: 48,000 sq.ft.
- Residential: 115 residential apartment units
- Parking: 262 vehicle stalls located within the structure
- Pedestrian plazas at each corner of the building, ranging in size from approximately 400 sq.ft. to 1,500 sq.ft.

The height of the building includes a two-story bonus for residential units (OMC 18.06.100). Vehicular access to the internal parking garage is available on both B and A Avenues (north façade and south façade). Commercial uses will occupy a portion of the ground level on Capitol Way N. – two spaces, approximately 1,000 sq.ft. in area, and along Columbia Street occupying the first two stories with retail uses at street level, and general office space above. The internal parking garage, occupying the east half of the lot, begins at the ground level and extends up four floors.

The mass of the retail and office floors is positioned along the Columbia Street façade. The upper residential floors are then stepped back substantially, beginning at the third floor, creating a private open area for on-site users above the retail/office block. Residential uses align above four floors of parking, creating a solid building mass along the Capitol Way N. façade.

## DESIGN REVIEW

The purpose of design review is articulated in OMC 18.100.040:

- A. To promote those qualities in the natural environment which bring value to the community;
- B. To foster the attractiveness and functional utility of the community as a place to live and work;
- C. To preserve the special character and quality of Olympia by maintaining the integrity of those areas which have a discernible character or are of special historic significance;
- D. To raise the level of community expectations for the quality of the built environment;
- E. To encourage originality and creativity in site planning and architecture;
- F. To communicate these purposes to the applicant and to assist the applicant in achieving these purposes;
- G. To preserve and enhance property value;
- H. To ensure that new developments maintain or improve neighborhood character and livability; and
- I. To consider the applicant's needs and goals and the broader public impact of any proposal.

### Detail Design Review

Please note that this is a **Detail Design Review**. Detail Design Review involves all the detailed design elements of a project, which include the architectural details of materials, colors, and final architectural elevations, the final landscape design including the required lighting plan, the sign program as it relates to the applicable Design Requirements (Criteria) and Guidelines, and zoning classification, parking and landscaping chapters, and overlay districts contained within the Unified Development Code.

The section called "How to Use Design Guidelines (OMC 18.100.100)" in the Olympia Municipal Code encourages creative solutions in meeting the requirements as long as these design solutions are **equal to, or better than**, the guidelines listed below the Requirement Sections.

The proposal shall comply with the following Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) requirements:

- Pedestrian Street Overlay District, OMC 18.16
- Basic Commercial Design Criteria, OMC 18.110
- Commercial Design Criteria Downtown, OMC 18.120

City staff evaluated the detail design proposal based on:

- Architectural Plan Set including the Site Plan, Building Elevations, and the Preliminary Landscape Plan
- Civil Plan Set
- Detail Design Review Application Form

### Key Design Issues

The prevailing theme of this report and set of recommendations to the Design Review Board, and the key to a positive approach to the design program, will be to develop the site such that the “main street” vision is brought to this particular locale along both Capitol Way North and Columbia Street. The terms “streetscape”, “street frontage”, “human scale”, “pedestrian-oriented”, and “street-level environment” are consistent throughout the Pedestrian Overlay District requirements and the Basic Commercial and Downtown District design requirements.

Major considerations of the design of the Columbia Place project include:

- The building’s architectural expression at the street level
- The bulk of the building’s upper floors along Capitol Way N.
- Creating a well-proportioned and unified building
- Minimizing vehicular access (parking garage) impacts on the pedestrian environment

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The applicant substantially revised plans and elevations in response to conditions of approval outlined in the Concept DRB Recommendation Memo and incorporated into the Director’s Notice of Land Use Approval. Key changes in the design program include:

- The addition of recesses and indentations in the building envelope are better arranged to reduce the perceived mass of the building, add depth and variation, particularly along Capitol Way N.
- Facades include an attractive color palette, durable building materials, and blend in more successfully with the neighboring buildings
- Awnings, pedestrian scale amenities (e.g., seating, art work), building lighting, trees and landscaping combine to create human scale interest at the street level, particularly along Columbia Street and Capitol Way N.

Staff’s analysis of the proposed changes is incorporated into the Basic Commercial and Commercial Downtown Design Criteria checklists (Attachment 2). Staff found that many of the conditions of approval have been addressed, and the associated design requirements met. The recommended conditions of approval below are intended to address elements of the proposal that do not comply with the design requirements at this final stage of design review.

Key considerations at the detail design stage of review:

- Consistency in the building design, around the building, both vertically and horizontally
- Legibility of the building, vertical and horizontal symmetry and rhythm

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the Design Review Board recommend to the Olympia Building Official approval of the site plan, landscape plan, building elevations, materials, colors, lighting, and details for the Columbia Place Amendment, Project 16-0057, subject to the conditions listed below, which shall be addressed at the time of engineering and building permit review. All conditions of concept design review apply in addition to the conditions listed below.

**Context Plan:** *Approved as proposed on June 23, 2016, Concept Design Review Board meeting.*

## Site and Landscape Design

1. Provide additional projections in the rights-of-way along B Avenue and A Avenue that reflect the level and extent of detail provided in the Columbia Street and Capitol Way rights-of-way, such as trellises, planter boxes, and seating (adjacent to the building, or in lieu of curbing). OMC 18.16.080.D, OMC 18.110.110, OMC 18.120.100.

## Building Design

2. Incorporate design features into building entrances, particularly retail entrances that are clearly articulated, distinctive, and obvious from the street. OMC 18.110.070.
3. Revise the building design to comply with this requirement: commercial and public buildings over three (3) stories shall have a clearly defined base at street level that is no more than two stories high. OMC 18.110.070, OMC 18.120.070.
4. Rooftop equipment/units shall meet the standards in OMC 18.110.120. Screen from all sides and integrate the equipment into the building design.
5. Openings in the façade for the parking garage, on all sides of the building including lower and upper levels, shall include architectural detailing that covers the openings. OMC 18.110.170, OMC 18.16.080.J.
6. Tie together the various elements and components of the building; the base, middle, and top of the building, the vertical and horizontal articulation, the use of materials, colors, detailing – all shall combine into one unified and integrated form. Use exterior materials, architectural detailing, and color schemes around the building envelope consistently. OMC 18.110.040, 18.110.050, 18.110.120, 18.110.140, 18.120.050.

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### Attachments:

2. DETAIL Checklists
3. Detail Architectural Packet
4. Civil Plan Set 112917
5. Detail Design Review Application Form
6. Applicant Response to OMC 18.16, Pedestrian Street Overlay
7. Concept Design Review Meeting Memo