

Project Name: Condominiums at Columbia

Project Number #: 17-5161

CONCEPT Design Review

Date: May 3, 2018

CITY OF OLYMPIA
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
Chapter 18.170

18.170.010 Grading and tree retention

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies ☐ Conflicts ☐ N/A ☒

Incorporate existing topography and mature trees in the project design to the extent feasible.

18.170.020 – Pedestrian and vehicular circulation

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies ☒ Conflicts ☐ N/A ☐

Integrate the project with the existing neighborhood through pedestrian and vehicular connections. Provide attractively designed pedestrian and vehicular connections to adjacent public rights-of-way, including any existing or planned bus stops. Provide adequate pedestrian and vehicular access to site features such as mailboxes and other shared facilities.

STAFF RESPONSE: *The building is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Thurston Avenue and Columbia Street, a corner site that occupies the entire lot. New sidewalks, curbs, gutters along Columbia Street and Thurston Avenue will be 10 feet in width, and will include street trees and grates – providing improved pedestrian safety and access to the surrounding amenities and businesses.*

There are two distinct (recessed) residential entries to the building – the main lobby entrance on Columbia Street, and a minor residential entrance from Thurston Avenue. The lobby entryway is 14 feet wide and includes a patterned paver design on the hardscape; the minor entry from Thurston Avenue includes a foyer and openings/glazing – both entries include storefront systems of metal frame, glass panels, and glass entrance doors. This requirement is met.

18.170.030 – Parking location and design

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies ☐ Conflicts ☒ N/A ☐

Reduce the visual impacts of driveways and parking lots on pedestrians and neighboring properties by constructing parking facilities with materials that match or complement the building materials.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Break-up large parking lots by designing significant landscape areas with walkways for pedestrian access.

- ☐ Share driveways with adjacent property owners.
- ☐ Minimize width of driveways linking the project to the public right-of-way.
- ☐ Landscape areas along all driveways and drive aisles that are visible from the street.
- ☐ Limit parking lots on street frontage to thirty (30) percent of the street frontage.
- ☐ Screen parking lots or structures adjacent to residential properties with a landscape area at least ten (10) feet wide.

STAFF RESPONSE: *All off-street vehicular parking will be located within the building, with immediate access onto Thurston Avenue for Level 1 and Columbia Street for Level 2. The driveways are 18 feet wide with metal vented overhead coiling/rollup parking entrance doors. (The applicant indicated that the garage rollup doors will have decorative designs (ideally similar in design to the parking garage openings around the building's first two floors)).*

Safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers near the parking garage entries should be a priority. Methods to reduce conflicts between vehicles and non-motorists should be incorporated in the building design at the street level, such as contrasting hardscape, warning lights and sounds, or building colors and materials that alert drivers and pedestrians to these two areas of potential conflict.

Bicycle parking is shown along the Columbia Street façade in the Site Plan, Sheet A010. However, the Landscape Plan depicts the bicycle parking in a different location. The project is required to have three covered stationary racks, shown in the same location on both the Site Plan, Sheet A010, and the Landscape Plan, Sheet LS-01.

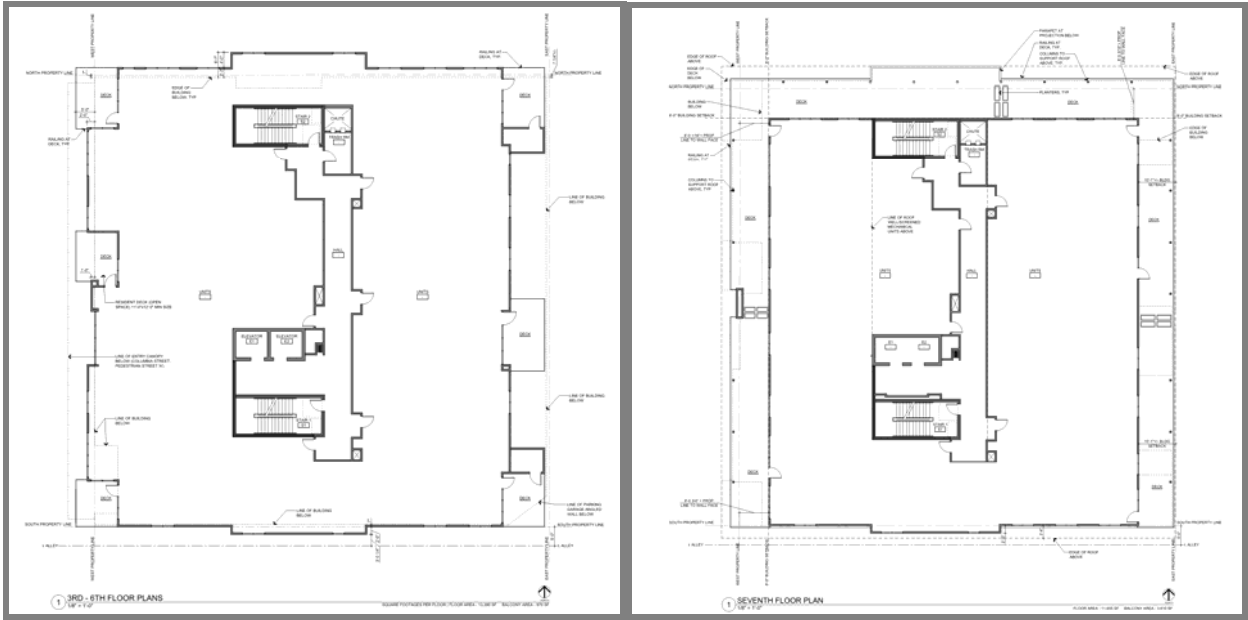
RECOMMENDATION:

1. *Provide design details of the decorative grill screening over parking garage openings in the building, and of the coiling overhead garage doors (2).*
2. *Update the Site Plan, Sheet A010, and the Landscape Plan, Sheet LS-01, with the location of the short-term bicycle parking stationary racks (i.e., along Columbia Street and/or Thurston Avenue?).*
3. *Incorporate building design elements in the building or sidewalk that alert drivers and pedestrians to vehicles entering and exiting from the two parking garage entries.*

18.170.040 – Usable open space			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Provide usable open space for use by residents of the development that is not occupied by buildings, streets, driveways, or parking areas. Usable open space shall include a minimum dimension of ten (10) feet with an overall grade of less than ten percent (refer to each zoning district for specific open space requirement).
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

STAFF RESPONSE: *The building occupies the entire lot, as is allowed in the Urban Waterfront zoning district (UW), and in the case of this proposal the open space concept includes private open air decks for all units on floors three through six (facing west and east), and a top level walk-around open deck that extends eight feet from the property line and building wall (w, n, e, does not include the south side of the building).*

A broader network of open space exists in the neighborhood with Percival Landing Park and Boardwalk Trail immediately west of the building, across Columbia Street. The proposed landscaping, street trees, street level amenities, and private upper decks and walk-around provide a positive contribution and connection to the off-site open areas. This requirement is met.



18.170.050 – Fences and walls			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Minimize the use of fences that inhibit pedestrian movement or separate the project from the neighborhood. Front yards shall be visually open to the street. Where fencing is used, provide gates or openings at frequent intervals. Provide variation in fencing to avoid blank walls.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

STAFF RESPONSE: Though no fencing is proposed at the ground level around the building or otherwise, the upper residential units have decks with railings for safety, open air enjoyment, utility, and aesthetics. The design of the railings, typical or otherwise, should ideally be integrated in the design of the other metal openings in the façade – parking garage openings, rollup entries, etc.

- RECOMMENDATION:**
- Provide details of the upper level residential deck railings (and columns) – the material and color of the railings should correspond with the use of metal throughout the site and on the building.

18.170.060 – Landscape plant selection

A. REQUIREMENT:			Select plants that are compatible with available planting conditions. In particular, ensure that trees will be suited to the planting location at their natural mature size. Avoid use of species that have a high potential to invade or disrupt natural areas.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Provide visual continuity with the existing streetscape by coordinating tree and shrub species with established, healthy landscaping.
- ☐ When choosing a tree species, consider the size of the tree at maturity in relation to: the dimensions of the planting area, the soil type and water holding capacity of the soil, and the depth of the planting bed.
- ☐ Create a natural appearance by using a limited number of plant species.
- ☐ Follow recommendations from the Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Program in regard to problem and noxious weeds.
- ☐ Choose native plant species for landscaping. When established in the appropriate location, native plants are drought tolerant and provide food and/or habitat for native birds and other wildlife.

STAFF RESPONSE: *The planting plan is limited to four plant species along Columbia Street and Thurston Avenue: Fagus Beech (NN), Redtwig Dogwood (N), Heavenly Bamboo (NN), Sand Strawberry (N). The Beech trees are proposed as street trees along Columbia and Thurston. The plant selection exists in Olympia and the Puget Sound region (climate zones 4 and 5). Staff recommends the Board weigh-in on suitability of the plant choices. The Landscape Plan and street trees will (also) be reviewed during Site Plan and Engineering stages of land use review.*

18.170.070 – Screening mechanical equipment			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Screen mechanical equipment and utility vaults so that they are not visible from adjacent public rights-of-way, parks, or adjacent dwelling units. Screen roof-top mechanical equipment on all sides.
Complies <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	

STAFF RESPONSE: *Mechanical and electrical equipment are located in the building on the first floor, north side of the building accessible via an external doorway. A gas meter alcove is located in the south façade along the alley. Mechanical equipment is also located on the roof, screened from view by what appears to be solid 8'h x 36' w x 86'l screen.*

Roof and building mounted mechanical equipment, such as vents, stacks, meters, and service connections should be compatible with building design and screened or painted to blend in with the building. There should be minimal visibility of the equipment from a pedestrian view, from nearby dwelling units, and with consideration for future development in the vicinity. At-grade equipment should also be minimized from view to such an extent that the presence of equipment does not dominate or create a visual impact on the streetscape.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. *Provide design details of the rooftop equipment and stairwell screening structure (i.e., material(s), color, dimensions).*

18.170.080 – Site lighting

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

☐

Conflicts

☒

N/A

☐

Provide adequate lighting along all pedestrian walkways and building entrances. Site lighting shall not unduly illuminate surrounding properties. Direct lighting away from windows of residential units. Locate all light posts away from tree canopies (at least half the width of canopy at maturity).

B. GUIDELINES:

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Use low-intensity landscape lighting along walkways.

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Use fixtures with directive shields to prevent lighting spill-over.

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Use light posts of medium height to avoid spill-over lighting.

STAFF RESPONSE: At this early stage of conceptual design review, only building mounted sconce lighting is shown in the black and white elevation drawing Sheet A200, Building Elevations. Attention should be given to parking garage lighting, residential and parking garage entries, and all locations used by pedestrians. Lighting should be directed onto the building and site, and should limit undue trespass/spillover and over-illumination.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Provide a lighting plan that depicts 1) parking garage lighting options, 2) solid waste rollup door, 3) building mounted lighting on all facades, 4) lighting proposed above residential entries, and 5) lighting on and along decks. The lighting plan should include, but not limited to, fixture photos, cut sheets, building mounting heights from grade, duration of fixture illumination, and distance of illumination per fixture.

18.170.90 – Screening blank walls and fences

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

☒

Conflicts

☐

N/A

☐

Use vertical landscaping to screen or break-up long expanses of blank building walls or fences.

STAFF RESPONSE: There are no stretches of blank wall along visible facades. Blank walls that do exist, such as at the base of the building's east wall, and along the south façade, appear to include minor horizontal banding design treatment(s) of a human/pedestrian scale. This requirement is met.

18.170.100 – Building orientation and entries

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

☒

Conflicts

☐

N/A

☐

Provide a clearly defined building or courtyard entry to the building from the primary street.

B. GUIDELINES:

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Use distinctive architectural elements and materials to indicate the entry.

☐

Define the transition space from the sidewalk to the entry with a terrace, plaza, or landscaped area.

- ☒ Avoid the use of exterior stairways to second stories that are visible from the street.

STAFF RESPONSE: *There are two residential entries. The main lobby entrance is along Columbia Street and the secondary residential entry is from the Thurston Avenue right-of-way. Both entrances are obvious and identifiable with human-scale storefronts, transparent glazing, overhead canopies, and amenities at the street level. This requirement is met.*

18.170.110 – Neighborhood scale and character

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies



Conflicts



N/A



The building scale identified for the district may be larger than the building scale that exists in the neighborhood. Minimize any appearance of scale differences between project building(s) and existing neighborhood buildings by stepping the height of the building mass, and dividing large building facades into smaller segments. Reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood (within 300' on the same street) through use of related building elements.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☒ Step the roof on the building perimeter segments to transition between a proposed taller building and an existing residential structure.
- ☐ Replicate or approximate roof forms and pitch found on existing residential structures in the neighborhood.
- ☒ Use wall plane modulation to divide the building facade into house-size building segments.
- ☒ Use window patterns and proportions similar to those on existing residential structures in the neighborhood.
- ☐ Use building facade materials similar to those used on existing residential buildings in the neighborhood.
- ☒ Maintain a relationship to the street (i.e., building setbacks and entryways) similar to existing buildings.

STAFF RESPONSE: *The architectural character of this area of downtown Olympia is evolving and in transition, currently experiencing considerable growth and newer modern development. Multiple land uses and building styles add to the eclectic character of this waterfront area of downtown. Taken in the greater context of the Waterfront and Capitol to Market “character areas”, the scale and character of the building are quite similar to newer development east and south of the site.*

There is a distinct difference in scale between the new building and the buildings adjacent. However, the design team has gone to great lengths to articulate, modulate, and introduce forms, breaks, and segments in building planes to minimize impacts to neighboring structures. Windows and decks are above the adjacent single story buildings; the top level of the building is stepped back 8 feet from the property line and lower stories; and the east building wall is set back 10 feet from the property line with respect to the adjacent building. This requirement is met.

18.170.120 – Building modulation

A. REQUIREMENT:			Use building modulation at least every 30 feet to reduce the appearance of large building masses.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Modulate the building facade at regular intervals.
- ☐ Articulate roofline by stepping the roof and by using dormers and gables.
- ☐ Incorporate prominent cornice, fascia or soffit details that emphasize the top of the building.
- ☐ Use prominent roof overhangs.
- ☐ Provide porches, balconies, and covered entries.
- ☐ Provide deeply recessed or protruding windows.
- ☐ Provide light fixtures, trellises or architectural to accentuate modulation intervals.

STAFF RESPONSE: *Sizable open decks, building intervals and setbacks, among other design elements and treatment, combine to form an integrated, consistent and legible building design. The upper levels of the building on all exposed public-facing facades are adequately modulated. This requirement is met.*

18.170.130 – Building windows			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Provide relief, detail, and visual rhythm on the facade with well-proportioned windows. Minimize window locations where residents from one unit may look directly into another unit.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Use vertically proportioned windows (i.e., windows that have a height of at least one and one-half times their width).
- ☐ Use multiple-pane windows.
- ☐ Provide windows that are designed to create shadows (either recessed or protruding).
- ☐ Use visually significant window elements (i.e., frame dimensions, lintels, sills, casings, and trim).

STAFF RESPONSE: *The building design includes ample glazing as in windows, doors, building openings. The windows are vertically and horizontally aligned, and at this stage of conceptual design review appear to be similar in type and transparency (multiple panes, muntins, horizontal railings). Ideally, the window openings will be operable; nonetheless, the windows are required to have additional details such as windowsills, frames, and or dressing that provide relief and depth (recessed or protruding) in the façade.*

RECOMMENDATION:

*Add window treatments that provide relief and depth to the windows.
Recess the storefront entries for increased depth and interest at the street level.*

18.170.140 – Materials and colors
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A. REQUIREMENT:			Use building materials with texture and pattern and a high level of visual and constructed quality and detailing. Reserve brightly saturated colors for trim features.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Use natural appearing materials such as painted or natural finish horizontal lap siding, brick, stone, stucco, ceramic or terra cotta tile.
- ☐ Coordinate change in materials and color with building modulation.
- ☐ Use changes in colors or building materials to differentiate the ground floor from upper floors of the building.
- ☐ When remodeling or adding to an existing building, use materials and colors that preserve or enhance the character of the original building.
- ☐ In multi-building projects, vary building colors and/or materials on different buildings.

STAFF RESPONSE: *At this conceptual stage of design review, the materials and colors have not been fully identified. The building should be constructed of durable and attractive materials that age well in the Pacific Northwest and Puget Sound climate. Materials that have texture, pattern, and high quality detailing are encouraged.*

RECOMMENDATION:

Provide a materials and colors board at the next stage of design review, for Board review and approval.