

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**Astoria City Hall**  
May 3, 2018

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice President Gunderson the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Vice President LJ Gunderson, Sarah Jane Bardy, Hilarie Phelps (via telephone), and Leanne Hensley. President Jared Rickenbach arrived at 5:52 pm.

Staff Present: Planners Nancy Ferber and Mike Morgan. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Vice President Gunderson called for approval of the minutes of the August 3, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Bardy moved to approve the August 3, 2017 minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Phelps. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Vice President Gunderson explained the procedures governing the conduct of public hearings to the audience and advised that the substantive review criteria were available from Staff.

ITEM 4(a):

DR17-03 Design Review DR17-03 by Garry Vallaster, Astor Venture, LLC to construct an approximately 11,850 square foot commercial building at 2350 Marine Drive (Map T8N-R9W Section 9CB; portion of Tax Lot 6803; portion of Block 144, Shively's) within the Gateway and Civic Greenway Overlay Zone in the LS (Local Services) zone.

Vice President Gunderson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the Design Review Committee to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. She asked if any member of the Design Review Committee had any conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts to declare. Hearing none, she called for a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the Findings and Conditions contained in the Staff report. She noted that there was a typographical error in the location, which she had corrected to 2350 Marine Drive. Just before the hearing, the Applicant submitted information from Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), which indicated they preferred access on Steam Whistle Way. Staff recommended approval with conditions.

President Rickenbach arrived at 5:52 pm.

Vice President Gunderson opened the public hearing and called for testimony from the Applicant.

Don Vallaster, 711 SW Alder St., Portland, gave his presentation via PowerPoint, which included photographs of the building, site plan, landscaping plan, and the store layout. He noted the three sets of guidelines that regulate this project are the Local Service zone, Gateway Overlay Zone, and Civic Greenway Overlay Zone. The proposed project is in compliance with all three sets of design standards. The property, which is a little unusual, abuts three streets. Curb cuts are not allowed on Marine Drive and he was not sure where a curb cut could be located on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. The lot has two curb cuts on Steam Whistle Way that have been in place since the initial platting in 1990.

- The building is laid out on a north/south axis and is located five feet off the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street right-of-way to maintain the view corridor for the Civic Greenway Overlay requirements. There are several reasons he chose the proposed configuration and layout of the site. First, the loading bay location allows easy access for



truck deliveries from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. The location also minimizes activity and sound intrusion into the residential area along Steam Whistle Way. The alternative would be to have the long trucks back into the site; the trucks would beep when backing up. The site layout complies with the Gateway Overlay guidelines that discourage parking between the street and buildings. Any alternative layouts would compromise this guideline.

- The east facing entry and signage would identify and announce the presence of the Co-op to westbound traffic entering the city along Highway 30. This is important to the Co-op as they have been hidden from the view of frequent visitors to the city approaching from the west.
- The most important reason for the layout is the concerns for easy pedestrian traffic to the store. There are two nearby pedestrian groups that the Co-op has identified as likely customers of the new facility. There are 600 staff people at the medical campus across Marine Drive and a crosswalk at the intersection of 23<sup>rd</sup> and Marine Drive. This layout provides the shortest distance from the campus to the store. Once across the street, people can enter the site and walk less than 80 feet to the south facing door. This will be an alternative lunch break spot from the campus and will facilitate shopping for pedestrians. Other entrances could be added along Marine Drive, but currently there is a 10-foot bank easement on Marine Drive on the north side of the street. ODOT has stated no crosswalk could be placed in that location, but that might be negotiable in the future. The second pedestrian group would be the Mill Pond homeowners, who would also have easy access to the store with this layout without the need to cross any traffic or the loading bay area. Making it easy for these two pedestrian groups to access the store will cut down on unnecessary vehicle traffic to the site.
- The site gets narrower towards the east property line. If the building were located on that side of the lot, it would be constricted and push the loading area up against the sidewalk. The patio on the south side of the building would also have to be smaller.
- The storm water swale will be on the east side. Landscaping will extend along Marine Drive, 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, and at the rear of the building on the west side. There would also be landscaping in the center of the site.

Matt Stanley, General Manager, Astoria Co-op Grocery, 664 Kensington, Astoria, stated the idea was to transform the Co-op into a full-service grocery store. Right now, the Co-op is cramped and covers most, but not really all of the basics of a grocery store. The new store will have a large expanded produce section at the entrance and the perimeter of the store will have fresh foods, a meat department, and a deli. Meat will be processed in house. The deli will have 25 indoor and 25 outdoor dedicated seats, hot food, and a salad bar. This will be a big draw especially for pedestrians because it can be accessed from the Riverwalk. He hoped the Co-op would become a destination for people to grocery shop.

Mr. Vallaster said the relationship between the inside, the deli, and the outside patio would allow the store to become a social place. Heavy duty equipment for refrigeration, air conditioning, heating, and kitchen exhaust would be located in the center of the roof where it would be the least visible. The canopy awning would be made of heavy timber. The parapets would be located high enough to block views of the equipment on the roof from the locations indicated in the guidelines.

- When the property was purchased in 2005, he was presented with a drawing that showed curb cuts were intended for this site in 2000. The first curb cut was for a drive through teller window and the second was for a 65-space parking lot. Access was always to be from Steam Whistle and the bank would have been a more intense use than the Co-op. Utilities would come in from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, and a storm water line would go out of the swale and down into Mill Pond. They have elected not to use the high-pressure line on the site for sewer. A gravity system would be used instead, which would extend down 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to a manhole cover.
- The homeowner's association (HOA) indicated they felt Steam Whistle Way was too narrow, so they spoke with them about widening the street. This would result in the Co-op losing a little bit of parking and the right-of-way would expand from 20 feet to 24 feet. The loading dock area would also have to be narrowed by four feet, but it would still work well for the Co-op. The HOA also requested that the Co-op put doors on the loading bay. Each door would be 8 feet tall and at least 10 feet wide to cover the 20-foot opening. The doors would only be open during deliveries to keep people out of the area.
- Concerns were expressed about the windows, so they added additional windows on the west and north sides of the building. There is no real need for windows on the north of the building because that area will be used for storage and deliveries. The three extra windows on the west side would be in the kitchen area. Installing the windows at 5 feet would not interfere with cooking activities; however, the windows might have to be capped at 9 feet, so a cleanable ceiling can be installed. This might be code-driven.
- He spoke to Staff earlier in the day about the possibility of putting a mural on the west wall that indicated the history of the Co-op or landscaping the west façade with plants that are being sold in the store, like beans



and produce. They also discussed growing plants up the north wall of the loading dock. The landscape architect noted that plants would not grow on the north side of the wall. Therefore, he is considering different alternatives.

- He shared samples of siding materials and said he would consider any color. The large windows along the side would be fiberglass, and they have to use an aluminum siding system on the front of the building. The Co-op has requested that the concrete on the front of the building at the bottom be 42 inches tall to prevent damage from shopping carts.
- The storm water swale on the east end of the site would have trees and plants. Based on feedback received from the HOA, they considered different alternatives for the wall. They wanted to keep it a simple metal because it matches the rest of the building, but they also considered an arbor in the 5-foot space between the sidewalk and the wall. They could grow grapes or wisteria on the arbor to camouflage the wall and bring attention to the arbor. Another option would be to use low colorful materials highlighted with trees, grasses, and bushes along the wall, in the notch area, and at the far end of the site. Posts could be installed with a mesh for growing vines. Trees and bushes could still be planted along the bottom. He wanted input from the Commission on the landscaping.
- Four lights would be installed as requested by Staff. Lights on the west side were needed for security. The light could be cast on the sidewalk, directly down the face of the building, or they could install step lights imbedded in the concrete wall.
- The metal siding is simple and conforms to the Gateway Overlay requirements. They considered putting some wood on the wall, but realized it would be a maintenance headache. The guidelines ask that the building respond to some of the historic architecture in the area, which would be some commercial and waterfront industrial buildings. This proposal is a hybrid between the two types of architecture. It is kind of a warehouse, which is similar to the early industrial buildings, and, it has a commercial entry. The materials are simple in form with very little ornamentation, as required. The windows would be true divided and siding would be galvanized corrugated metal that would be minimally intrusive. Staff has requested a grey roof, which is fine with him, and he planned to use thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO).
- Signage would adhere to the sign requirements.
- The Gateway Overlay indicates more traditional lights should be used in the parking lot. He displayed and explained several options for the lighting layout in the parking lot.
- The proposed awning completely conforms to the guidelines. There would not be any parking between the building and any of the streets. The building massing conforms to the requirements in the Local Service zone and the Greenway Overlay zone.
- There are only two choices for access, Steam Whistle Way and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. He handed out copies of ODOT's response to the proposed loading bay curb cut on 23<sup>rd</sup>, which he had just received that afternoon. They had asked ODOT what the minimum distance from Marine Drive would be if they reoriented the building and installed ingress and egress to the parking lot on 23<sup>rd</sup>. ODOT's Development Review Coordinator for Region 2 responded that offsets from intersections should be as far as possible, but 50 feet is the minimum. However, for larger trucks accessing from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street with a right into the Co-op would have difficulty without encroaching into oncoming traffic. ODOT strongly recommended truck turning templates to determine the impacts. These templates had been given to the Co-op and were part of the public record. In response to having the main drive way into the parking lot on 23<sup>rd</sup>, ODOT stated they were not comfortable providing a minimum distance of the curb cut from Marine Drive. The Co-op would be a large traffic generator, so the farther back the better. The goal is to minimize stacking that would affect operation of the highway.
- Evaluations are done on a case by case basis. The approach at the Costco in Salem is located 450 feet from the highway and traffic still backs up on to the highway affecting operation during peak hours. Steam Whistle Way is only 250 feet from the highway, so it was a bit of a concern. ODOT preferred access from Steam Whistle Way, and recommended that the consultant do a queueing analysis to determine the impacts. It is important that this is evaluated correctly because it could have detrimental effects on the operation of the highway. Flipping the building and moving it to the east side of the lot would put a large truck loading access driveway into the heart of the site. Pedestrians from Mill Pond would have to cross that access to get to the store. This would also put the building farther from the intersection, so people coming from the hospital campus would have to cross the street and walk down Marine Drive to get into the site. The loading bay would be quite a bit smaller and up against the sidewalk, which would prevent landscaping in the area. The patio would be squished between the building and Marine Drive. The rear of the building could have signage, but the most attractive part of the building would not be visible for westbound traffic on Highway 30.



- Another possible location would also have drawbacks. The hospital employees would have to come farther down Marine Drive, cross the easement, and go around the side of the building. A plaza eating area could be provided, but it would be in the parking lot and not nearly as attractive as having it on the south side with a lot of landscaping. Truck access would be from 23<sup>rd</sup> and they would have to back up into the space, which would further deteriorate the west side. Planner Ferber had indicated the west side should be more active, but it would just be a loading dock with this configuration.

Commissioner Hensley said even though the community was concerned about access on the original site plan, it addressed the use of the building in relation to Marine Drive. She supported the original site plan. The outside seating lacked luster, so she suggested fabric sails over the area to liven it up or move the seating to provide ADA access to the door. She believed the metal and top parapet should be colored. The landscaping plans were very well thought out and she believed the trellis with low plantings was the best option. She preferred wall mounted sconces for the lighting, especially over the seating area.

Vice President Gunderson confirmed the patio seating would be along Marine Drive, set back about 25 feet.

Mr. Vallaster explained the intent was to get the seating as far as possible from the traffic noise. There would be landscaping between the patio and the sidewalk to soften the area as much as possible.

Mr. Stanley added the area would also be sunken about two feet. It would be ideal for the seating area to have a great view of the river, but the Co-op agreed to this because it was the best way to make the store successful. He believed it would be fine with the landscaping.

Vice President Gunderson asked if mature trees would be used in the landscaping.

Mr. Vallaster stated two-inch diameter, 12-feet high trees would be planted. Columnar trees would be used so that the store could still be seen behind them. He wanted a simple background color with the steel siding so the wood pops out and creates warmth.

Vice President Gunderson stated for the record that an email from Jennifer Bunch and a color chart was added to the agenda packet.

Vice President Gunderson called for testimony in favor of the application.

Mr. Stanley said the Co-op was going through a rebranding and was working with a national co-op group on a new logo, which would be green. Once the branding is added to the building, it would have more character. They would like to put a sign on the west wall at the corner, so people can see the building when they are coming in an easterly direction. After Mr. Vallaster does the preliminary landscaping, his lease with the Co-op requires the Co-op to maintain the property. The Co-op works with Becky Graham, who creates edible arrangements in planters in very small spaces. They could replace some of the trees with planters to give the area some character. Currently, their customers eat the apples, strawberries, and snap peas in their parking lot. The west wall could be a walkable edible garden. The sign will give the building a nice splash of color. The kitchen will give the back of the store some activity because most of the staff works in the kitchen. However, he did not believe the Commission would want windows into the walk-in coolers and dishwashing area.

- It was tough for them to find a retail space and they spent a lot of time trying to find something. This is one of a few spaces that would allow a grocery store with needs for receiving areas, a loading dock, parking and high visibility. They wanted to be downtown, but that was not a possibility. This is a great location. Paul Benoit worked with Art Demuro to develop the site in the early 1990s. In a letter that was presented to City Council, Mr. Benoit said he knew this use of this land was exactly what Mr. Demuro envisioned. It is a use that would serve the community. The Co-op aimed to bring value to the community by making it more affordable and more accessible. They planned to add 30 living wage jobs. In order to do that in a hyper competitive marketplace, they needed a facility that operated efficiently. Many people have looked at the site plan. The Co-op has a development team and working with a national co-op development team to help do this project successfully. They have also worked with their own architect and Mr. Vallaster's team. All of these groups have considered how to locate the building to meet requirements and this is what works. Some of the HOA members believe the building should be located so that Steam Whistle does not have to be used, but the Co-op is trying to avoid having semi-trucks drive through the parking lot, which would create



pedestrian safety issues and customers would have to walk through the parking lot while cars are backing out. That's not very accessible.

- The Co-op has agreed to widen Steam Whistle by four feet, which is not cheap, and the Co-op is paying for that and it's an almost six figure addition to the project. They would also be adding a sidewalk and a setback for landscaping. The alley would become a street that would allow the project to happen effectively and safely.
- The Co-op intends to be a good neighbor. They maintain a nice facility at their current location and intend to the same at the new location. They are open to exploring some of the small details that the Commission is hearing. He believed the criteria had been met, especially the criteria about building orientation. Option B does not meet the criteria because all of the parking would be between the building and the street. It would be challenging to meet that criterion by changing the building orientation. He hoped the Commission would allow the Co-op to get going on the project as soon as possible. Time is of the essence. The Co-op is dealing with a new competitor and they think they have a solid plan to bring this valuable asset to the community.

Vice President Gunderson called for testimony impartial to the application. Hearing none, she called for testimony opposed to the application.

Cheryl Storey, President, Mill Pond HOA, 2605 Mill Pond Ln, Astoria, stated Mill Pond residents wrote a commentary that was submitted and included in the agenda packet. The seven-page commentary included concerns about the current layout and signatures from quite a few Mill Pond residents. The HOA's architecture committee has not written about any approval or disapproval of the Co-op. The HOA supports the Co-op in that location, but is concerned about the way it is sited. They would like to promote Option B. She wanted to make sure the Co-op addresses the architectural requirements in the Mill Pond Architectural Guidelines. Mill Pond does not have design or building standards. The guidelines were written mostly for housing, but there were some sections for commercial with specific language regarding landscaping, lighting, and signage. Before the Co-op can do anything, they have to submit those specifics to the HOA for approval. They also have a color scheme in the architecture guidelines, which have been provided to the Planning Commission. She offered to email a copy of the architecture guidelines to anyone who wants them. Her email is [castorey@frontier.com](mailto:castorey@frontier.com). Although done in 1990, the platting for the lot was based on the AH-MP zone. The zoning has now changed to LS, which changes the design elements and requirements for the lot.

- Four of the five Mill Pond Board of Directors signed a document submitted to the Design Review Committee. They were concerned about the siting of the building. If the building had to be located as proposed, Steam Whistle would have to be widened. The board has always advocated for access to the building on 23<sup>rd</sup>. The access on Option B includes access for trucks on 23<sup>rd</sup>. If there is a truck access on 23<sup>rd</sup>, why not use the same access for the cars? A Mill Pond resident developed a similar plan to Option B with two access points on 23<sup>rd</sup>. She went through the traffic information and the Development Code. A traffic impact study is generally defined as one half mile radius from the proposed development. This traffic study only focused on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and Marine Drive. There was no traffic study that included the impact on Steam Whistle Way or Mill Pond Lane, which are within the half mile.
- She was interested in the increase in car trips as a percent of total car trips on a particular street or intersection. The March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes indicated the increase in number of trips, but the HOA would like to know the percentage of car trips on Steam Whistle that would increase compared to the current percentage on Steam Whistle if access could only be on Steam Whistle.
  - Currently, Steam Whistle is an alley where all the garages of the Mill Pond residents are located. Article 3 Section 3.015.a.5a says that a traffic impact study is required when there are changes in intensity of use; the road authority indicates in writing the proposal may have operational or safety concerns; potential negative impacts to residential or mixed use areas; the location of existing driveways or access connections; or an increase in peak hour volumes of a particular movement to and from a street or highway by 20 percent or more.
  - No one knows what the impact will be on Steam Whistle Way if access to the parking lot is solely through that street. The Mill Pond residents are very concerned about traffic along Steam Whistle and use of their garages safely. Their driveways are short and they have to back out into the street to see traffic. Given the increase in number of trips indicated for the Co-op, this prevents Steam Whistle from being a community friendly and livable environment. Comprehensive Plan CP.358 says the transportation goal is for livability, customized transportation solutions to suit the local context while providing a system that supports active transportation, promotes health, facilitates access to daily needs and enhances the livability of the neighborhoods and business communities. Policies protect residential



neighborhoods from excessive through traffic and travel speeds, balance livability with highway freight and seasonal congestion pressures, and enhance the quality of life in all neighborhoods.

- The HOA board has commented that the siting of the back of the building on 23<sup>rd</sup> is not appropriate, out of scale with the neighborhood due to the size, and impacts the views in the Mill Pond neighborhood and corresponding livability. The Co-op building will block any view of 23<sup>rd</sup> from Marine Drive. The HOA board and Mill Pond residents submitted documentation asking for sound deadening material around the docking bay and a concrete structure, not mesh fencing. The plantings have not been submitted to the Mill Pond Landscape Chair for review and approval under the Mill Pond architecture guidelines.
- Page 16 of the Staff report contains several items that still have to be defined and additional details provided. The Mill Pond Architecture Guidelines require the developer to submit their applications for signage and landscaping for review and approval.

John Ryan, 2495 Mill Pond Ln, Astoria, said his garage exits on to Steam Whistle and is across from the proposed exit and entrance. He would not be able to use his garage as efficiently as he does now. This will interfere with traffic, livability of Mill Pond residents, and will have an immense effect on the city. He has several issues with the interpretation of the guidelines by Staff. The use of Steam Whistle Way for direct traffic to and from the Co-op is unacceptable. Move the building to the east of the property and use 23<sup>rd</sup> for access and egress. It was interesting that the architect made it clear that access off of 23<sup>rd</sup> is okay for trucks but not for the entrance to the parking lot. He believed this was strange. He heard there would be very little truck traffic into the site. A retaining wall or a sound wall along the garages would make noise from the trucks much more acceptable than 100 cars per hour on Steam Whistle. The orientation of the design presents an unfriendly solution to the neighborhood and it would affect their livability in Mill Pond. The massing of the building is not pedestrian friendly when an unappealing back wall is five feet from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue sidewalk. Move the building to the east line and have a continuous visual pedestrian walkway with open access and views through the parking along the sidewalk on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

- The little trees the Applicant has proposed to put up would not hide anything. The access along 23<sup>rd</sup> would be very unappealing. The location of the building with the metal facing downtown does not complement or show off the Co-op from the downtown area. One of the specific goals of the zoning was to complement downtown; here the back of the building faced downtown. Relocate the building to the east side so the people who are members and use the Co-op can see the real building as they come from downtown, not visitors from Portland. The massing of the building shuts down any river views down 23<sup>rd</sup>. Relocate the building to the east side.
- Driving down Highway 30, all one will see is a glimpse of the river, which is minimal. Relocation of the building to the east includes all the amenities, outdoor dining, storm drainage, surface area, and provisions for the entrance to the Co-op. Future development of the parcel to the east would block the back of the building. This is not the case with the proposed design. People will always see the back of the building. He was concerned with the comments about pedestrians. All the Applicant has to do is provide a sidewalk along Marine Drive. He lives in Mill Pond and would not have any problems getting through traffic.
- There are two options for locating the building to the east side, the one submitted by the developer called Option B and one he submitted. The main difference is the number of parking stalls. He asked the Commission to delay approval of the plans until Staff can review the new location of the building with the owner and resolve the other 13 issues that need to be completed and defined by the owner.

Arlie Jensen, 1885 Huckleberry Ln, Seaside, said she and her husband own two lots immediately adjacent to 23<sup>rd</sup> on Steam Whistle. It is clear that of all the lots impacted that her lots would be significantly impacted because every car would need to come in through that location. The wall behind her is approximately the width of Steam Whistle after it is expanded. Her husband is handicapped and uses an electric wheelchair or mobility vehicle 100 percent of the time. His only egress from their home will be through the back exit. It would be challenging to back out their car. Cars will be turning in from 23<sup>rd</sup> at a relatively blind spot with the loading dock, which put them in significant peril and will significantly change the quality of their lives in that location. They have known for ten years that her husband would be wheelchair bound. Now, as they approach the time to build their house, it is incredibly painful to know that is the level of space they will have to back out their car and access the Riverwalk and downtown. She believed they would be great customers of the Co-op, but the challenge is huge. Everyone with alley load garages faces peril with the traffic patterns that will come through the area. As cars come in and out of the Co-op, those on the corner will have an incredibly difficult time access and exit their homes, including her husband with his ADA access needs.



Gary Huffman, 2410 Aurora Ave. N, Seattle, said he owns Lots 19 and 20 on Mill Pond Lane. The back access to the garage he is building is on Steam Whistle Way. He has owned the property for 12 years and is now in the design review process. He was not opposed to the Co-op, but was open to Option B. He objected to using Steam Whistle. Right now, there is only one curb cut in Steam Whistle, not two. The traffic survey that is available to him does not include Steam Whistle. It also represents traffic flows at a greatly reduced rate. The traffic counts were done on a Thursday. He has come and gone in Astoria for years and chose this area for a reason. The worst time on Highway 30 is Fridays and Sundays. He believed the survey was incorrect. He has not been able to find any soil surveys of the site. This is important because the land is fill from the development when it was built. He did not know how far the Co-op would have to dig to widen Steam Whistle Way. Additionally, he could not see that the Applicant had complied with any Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements.

Vice President Gunderson noted the DEQ requirements would be addressed by Public Works and were outside the scope of the Design Review Committee.

Mr. Huffman said he understood, but if the Co-op has to widen Steam Whistle, they would have to get DEQ's approval. He asked how using Steam Whistle will improve the safety of those living on Steam Whistle or Mill Pond. There has been no previous approval to use Steam Whistle on any of the prior developments that have gone into the subject site. The Mill Pond HOA is not in favor of using Steam Whistle. The original Wauna site was never approved to use Steam Whistle. The drawing that was presented earlier was not an approved site and has never been approved. This is supposed to be a green belt, and he was concerned that the development on the west side takes out the largest and oldest tree in the Mill Pond area. The site across 23<sup>rd</sup> retained the pear tree when the development went in. How is removing a 150-year-old tree considered green?

Vice President Gunderson called for the Applicant's rebuttal.

Jennifer Bunch, Wickiup Consulting, P.O. Box 1455, Astoria, said any comments and concerns about the traffic study is outside the purview of the Design Review Commission. The Commission has to consider orientation, which includes access. The traffic study was reviewed by ODOT and they supported the traffic study. It was prepared by professional engineers in accordance with professional guidelines. It was also accepted by the Public Works Department and they did not submit any comments against the study. The traffic study was used in support of the zone change. Approval by the HOA architectural committee is a civil issue between property owners. This Commission cannot require compliance with the HOA. The City can require things that can be reasonably attained through a condition of approval. The email from ODOT explained why it was appropriate for trucks to enter the loading bay from 23<sup>rd</sup> instead of the main entrance. ODOT was concerned about back up on 23<sup>rd</sup> affecting the flow of traffic on Highway 30/Marine Drive. The traffic study analyzed the access off of Steam Whistle and was reviewed by the City and ODOT.

Mr. Stanley said the Co-op intends to work with the HOA on signage; that was always the plan. They are working on the rebrand and expect to bring a design to the HOA and to the City. They have been working with City Staff on this project for almost three years and have always looked at it with the building sited the way it is now. He did not believe having trucks go through the parking lot would not allow for a 150-foot sound wall. It will be challenging to have trucks go in and out as proposed in Option B. This lot was always zoned commercial and the idea was that it would be mixed use when Art Demuro developed the Mill Pond area. This will bring life to the neighborhood, and the impact of having a nice affordable food store in the neighborhood, which would vastly outweigh any potential negatives. They planned to consider ways to repurpose the tree. The overall impact of the Co-op will outweigh the tree being removed.

Mr. Vallaster said he understood change was difficult and the people who live on Steam Whistle have become used to a private street. The proposal to do a development was inevitable, so there would be some impacts to the street and the living conditions. Even though the concerns about traffic are not relevant at this time, all of the traffic information is available. They have offered to do different things on the west side to enhance that side of the building. They want to work with the Design Review Committee on that and have submitted a couple of options. They have an environment report and a soil structure report on the property, and the HOA is welcome review that information. They have not submitted signage to the HOA for review because the Co-op has not yet decided what kind of signage they want. The landscaping is dependent on the site layout that is approved by the City.



Vice President Gunderson called for closing remarks from Staff.

Planner Ferber said this was the first she had heard of doors on the loading bay. Details about the doors would have to be submitted to the City before building permitting. She also needed to know if the building would have a staff entrance. A mural and anything related to signage would be reviewed later on in the process and might require approval by the Planning Commission. Staff has not had time to review the emails with ODOT because they were received at 4:30 pm; however, she did speak to Nathan Crater in Public Works who said he would need additional information, including a queuing analysis in order to review the impacts of using 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. Awnings over the seating area would be appropriate, but the City would need dimensions and sizes. Signage is limited to 150 square feet in this zone, which is minimal for a large building. Therefore, she would be concerned if the Applicants were relying on signage to jazz up the building, especially on the west wall. It would be nice to see another permanent element. If the Co-op is not there in the future and the building sits empty with no signage, then there would not be a lot of design related to the building. Article 14 says that the building should be sited without a parking lot between the main street and the building. That is intended to avoid a strip mall effect. The word 'should', as opposed to 'shall', means there is some flexibility in the Code. It is ideal to have the building situated to be pedestrian friendly and safe, and there is a sidewalk along Marine Drive. She was not clear how tall the parapet walls would be, but there is a minimum height requirement. The HOA architecture review is a separate process from the City. It is up to the Applicant whether they go through that process first or the City's design review process. If Mill Pond requires significant changes from what the City approved, the Applicant would have to return to the Design Review Committee to amend what the City approved. The City does not have a say over the HOA criteria.

Vice President Gunderson noted that this meeting was not the last step in the development process. She closed the public hearing and called for Committee discussion and deliberation.

President Rickenbach declared a potential conflict of interest as a general contractor, however, he was not involved in this project. He understood the application was for Option A because Option B was not included in the agenda packet. Planner Ferber explained that the Applicant submitted Option A, and Option B was presented during public testimony by a homeowner in Mill Pond.

President Rickenbach stated the Applicant has asked the Commission to comment on several items. He recommended the Applicant make those choices and present them to the City for approval. Quite a few comments were made that are not part of the Commission's criteria, so the Commissioners needed to make sure they only reviewed what the Commission had jurisdiction over.

Commissioner Phelps said she was concerned about the building along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. She did not believe it met the criteria for pedestrian-oriented street frontage. The Applicant talked about hospital employees walking over to get lunch, but she believed there would be a much better approach and view along 23<sup>rd</sup> if there was a pedestrian friendly entrance on 23<sup>rd</sup>. The entrance is completely oriented to the east in the parking lot just as if it was a shopping center, not a pedestrian-friendly building, which the Code requires. She did not like that it would be a completely blank wall except for a couple of windows that relate to the floor plan. The orientation of the building does not meet the pedestrian-friendly goal because there is no pedestrian access on 23<sup>rd</sup> for people walking or driving from downtown. She wanted to know why Staff recommended approval of a 20-foot building that did not meet the minimum 24-foot height requirement. Additionally, the Commission has denied requests for wainscoting in the past, but this request included wainscoting, and she asked for an explanation of that discrepancy.

Planner Ferber stated she had addressed the building height in the Staff report. The awning, which is a major design element, is 25 feet high. So, it meets the criteria and will visually protect the view corridor on the west side of the building. The trees on the west side will be narrow to maintain views of the river. The wainscoting on the Dollar General was a decorative element, but this building has a 4 1/2-foot cement base that ties into an industrial feel. She believed it met the criteria for matching with the waterfront and the industrial look while incorporating a contemporary commercial look.

President Rickenbach said he did not believe the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street side of the building was an issue after considering the criteria. Safeway is an almost identical layout on its site and a lot of the commercial buildings in downtown have similar walls that side to public spaces.

Commissioner Phelps said Safeway was built after the design review process, so it did not apply to this situation.



Planner Morgan clarified that the City did work with Safeway to incorporate the windows on the south side, noting their original proposal was a blank wall.

Commissioner Bardy agreed this proposal was very similar to Safeway's orientation, but it would be difficult to find someone who would say Safeway was a wonderful building. The Commission can do better. She believed the front of the building was really nice.

Commissioner Phelps said she liked the parking lot and wanted some of those design features to wrap around to the other side. She realized this would interfere with the floor plan, but the proposal was a very unappealing wall on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Commissioner Hensley stated it would be nice to see the site options. President Rickenbach believed the Commission needed to either accept or reject the Applicant's proposal.

Commissioner Hensley suggested the request be accepted with conditions. She trusted the architect's judgement on design decisions for his client as opposed to an HOA's architectural board. On the west elevation, there is a long span between two or three windows. That area and the area to the right of the loading bay could have a mural with additional lighting on the east side and fabric sails on the south side to dress it up for pedestrians.

Vice President Gunderson said she would like to see more on the back wall.

A member of the audience requested the public hearing be reopened for public testimony, as he believed Vice President Gunderson had promised him the opportunity to speak during the Applicant's rebuttal.

Vice President Gunderson declined the request and explained that there were opportunities to appeal and speak on the record at future public hearings on this development. She apologized for deviating from the rules of conduct for public hearings.

Commissioner Phelps asked if she was the only Commissioner concerned about the lack of pedestrian friendly access on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Commissioner Bardy said she was as well, but had not yet spoken. She did not believe the Commission could approve this request yet. She liked the idea of using foliage on the loading bay to obscure view of the trucks, but because it would be visible to anyone living in Mill Pond it needs to obscure the view year-round. The design on the north side is pretty blank, but is visible by anyone on the river or who lives in Mill Pond. She felt strongly about the siding. The zinc grey color is nice, but Section 14.025 identifies acceptable wall treatments for waterfront industrial. The only two options are board and batten or galvanized corrugated metal. Siding manufacturers now make a galvanized board and batten. A lot of the historic buildings have board and batten. The proposed design is nice, but board and batten would tie in more to bridge the gap with less contemporary industrial. She preferred the more historic style of lighting, but she understood energy usage concerns. She questioned why solar panels had not been considered, given that this is a new building. Astoria does not have a lot of sun, but it would offset energy use.

- The site orientation is really complicated, but she was concerned about the back of the store facing 23<sup>rd</sup> and access from Steam Whistle. The Co-op gets a lot of foot traffic in its current location. Moving the Co-op out of downtown would result in a huge switch in the way most people access the store. There seems to be a lot of emphasis and priority on hospital staff getting to the Co-op, which makes sense because they will probably eat there. But there is no mention of how people in Mill Pond or the apartments will access the Co-op. She found it strange that the hospital was the priority. Most people will probably drive and she believed the amount of traffic was underestimated. She understood why the Applicants proposed the orientation to fit within the guidelines; however, she recommended making the footprint smaller. She believed the lot was zoned for half the square footage and if the footprint was a little bit smaller, the access points would be wider and could possibly get cars and trucks in at the same time. Generally, it is a beautiful design, but there is still a lot of work to do.

Commissioner Phelps said the property owner will eventually put apartments on the adjacent parcel. It is a lost opportunity that a mixed-use building has not been proposed. This building is just a little under 12,000 square



feet and if it were more than 12,000 square feet a second story would be required. Compared to what could have been, it is sad that a mixed-use development was not proposed.

President Rickenbach said the siding in the email sent out by Staff earlier that day looked different from the siding sample provided during the hearing. He asked which one the Commission was supposed to consider.

Planner Ferber confirmed the sample is what the Applicant has proposed. The email just showed an example of a similar siding.

President Rickenbach asked if the Applicants would be required to heighten the parapet if there were height issues. Planner Ferber said the HVAC equipment creates a very busy rooftop and she has asked the Applicant if it would be screened or hidden by the parapet. She was not clear on the height of the mechanical units. The criteria do not state whether the view should be considered from the ground elevation or a neighboring property. The roof can be seen from up on the hill, but screening it in makes the building appear bigger.

President Rickenbach said he was concerned that there were still so many unanswered questions about the items the Commission is reviewing. He asked if the Commission wanted to vote or offer the Applicant the opportunity for a continuance so that some of the questions can be answered.

Planner Ferber stated many of the items on her list were addressed during the hearing and some will be easy to take care of later on. The Commission can require the Applicant to submit more details to Staff prior to a building permit or require the existing permit be amended. The request can be tentatively approved or denied pending specific direction given to the Applicant or the review can be continued to a date certain. If the Commission requires items not already in the Staff report, it is important to give the Applicant clear direction so they can address the items and come back with a complete application.

President Rickenbach and Vice President Gunderson both agreed they were comfortable allowing Staff to approve the additional details. The major consideration is the building orientation.

Commissioner Phelps believed the building materials were lovely, but she objected to the orientation of the building. She suggested widening Steam Whistle to 30 feet to accommodate a buffer in front of the garages to mitigate the impacts of access to the parking lot.

Vice President Gunderson confirmed there was currently no sidewalk on Steam Whistle.

Commissioner Bardy suggested the building be bumped back, even though it would decrease parking and impact the floor plan, to provide a residential feel.

President Rickenbach moved the Astoria Design Review Committee adopt the Findings and Conclusions stated in the Staff report and approve Design Review DR17-03 by Garry Vallaster with the following additional conditions:

- Main doors and loading bay doors shall be approved by Staff.
- The Applicant shall work with Staff to make minor alterations to the layout of the site to create a buffer.
- Delete Recommendation Numbers 1 and 5.
- Additional design elements and pedestrian access on the west facade of the building shall be approved by Staff.

Commissioner Bardy believed Staff was being asked to approve too many elements of this request.

Planner Ferber confirmed she understood the additional conditions.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phelps. Motion failed 2 to 3. Ayes: President Rickenbach and Commissioner Phelps. Nays: Vice President Gunderson, Commissioners Bardy and Hensley.

Staff reviewed the Commission's options for moving forward and answered Commissioner's questions about how each option would impact the design review process. Staff reiterated that if the hearing is continued, the Applicants should be given clear direction about what information to provide at the next meeting.



Commissioner Bardy said she wanted to see the building moved back 40 feet and more design elements on the south elevation.

President Rickenbach said there are so many issues among the Commission and the public that the next design should meet as many of the criteria as possible to ensure it does not get appealed to City Council. He did not believe the Commission should dictate how to design the building or solve the problems. Vice President Gunderson agreed. President Rickenbach said he would be fine with a continuance that included the Commission's recommendations as part of the criteria. Currently, the Applicants do not have any buy-in from this Commission or the public, which was confirmed by his failed motion.

Commissioner Phelps said she was okay with the proposal except for the lack of an entrance on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. If there was a pedestrian-friendly front view access from 23<sup>rd</sup>, she would not mind where the building was located.

Commissioner Hensley said in its current location, the building still has the Steam Whistle access problem. President Rickenbach stated that was not the Commission's problem. Commissioner Hensley clarified she was not talking about the cars on the street; she was talking about the design, which implies the cars on the street. She believed more consideration should be given to the people who live in the neighborhood, including the apartment buildings. An alarming amount of priority seems to be given from business derived from the hospital at lunch time. The Applicants are ignoring their closest neighbor and more consideration needs to be made for them. President Rickenbach agreed. Commissioner Hensley believed the only way to solve that problem with the proposed orientation would be to make the footprint smaller. This lot was originally zoned for less than half of the square footage proposed, so asking to make the building smaller is not outlandish and would still be a huge upgrade from the current location.

President Rickenbach moved the Astoria Design Review Committee continue the review of Design Review DR17-03 by Garry Vallaster to June 7, 2018 and reopen the public hearing for further review of the building orientation on the site. Seconded by Commissioner Hensley. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: President Rickenbach, Vice President Gunderson, Commissioners Hensley, Phelps, and Bardy. Nays: None.

#### STATUS REPORTS:

Planner Ferber noted a pending permit will require back-to-back meetings with the DRC and HLC, so the DRC could have two meetings in June.

#### REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Vice President Gunderson requested that the June 7<sup>th</sup> agenda included welcoming Commissioner Bardy.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were none.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

#### **APPROVED:**



Community Development Director