

Planning and Urban Development Department

Planning Division



Subject: R-6 Small Infill Design Review – 9 Moody Street

Written by: Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer

Date of Review: Friday, March 9, 2018

A design review according to the *City of Portland Design Manual* Standards was performed for the proposed new construction of a two-family dwelling at 9 Moody Street. The review was performed by Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer, Christine Grimando, Senior Planner, and Jeff Levine of the Department of Planning & Urban Development. The project was reviewed against the *R-6 Small Infill Development Design Principles & Standards* (Appendix 7 of the Design Manual).

Findings of the Design Review:

The proposed design, as revised, **passes** all the Alternative Design Review criteria. The Planning Authority under an Alternative Design Review may approve a design not meeting one or more of the individual standards provided that all of the conditions listed below are met:

- A. The proposed design is consistent with all of the Principle Statements.
- B. The majority of the Standards within each Principle are met.
- C. The guiding principle for new construction under the alternative design review is to be compatible with the surrounding buildings in a two block radius in terms of size, scale, materials, and siting, as well as the general character of the established neighborhood, thus Standards A-1 through A-3 shall be met.
- D. The design plan is prepared by an architect registered in the State of Maine.

Design Review Comments (*red text denotes principles or standards that are not met*):

- Staff support the design direction as presented by the applicant on Tuesday, February 6th provided that zoning dimensional standards, especially lot coverage, setbacks, and stepbacks, are met.

Principle A Overall Context – Met – see below.

- *A-1 Scale and Form*: This residential context predominantly includes simple forms with either vertical or horizontal proportions. **The form was revised to integrate the fourth floor into the overall form as perceived from the street, and providing a clear primary roof form. Material placement and façade plane changes emphasize a three-story, vertically proportioned form at the street that relates in scale and form to the predominant one and two-family residential context.** See B Massing for further comment.
- *A-2 Composition of Principal Facades*: The composition of the street-facing façade was revised to **have a vertical relationship between the floors as expressed through the window alignment, material placement, and creation of a “bay” that ties the fourth**

floor into the front façade. Composition now emphasizes a vertical proportion by integrating the fourth floor into the “bay.” The ground floor continues to have a tall base to differentiate the ground floor garage from the upper floor living spaces.

- *A-3 Relationship to the Street:* The building placement is consistent with the spacing of the residential fabric – slightly setback from sidewalk to allow for stoops and provide privacy.



Principle B Massing – Met – Forms in this neighborhood are discernably vertical or horizontal with occasional four square buildings. **The proposed massing and material placement now emphasize vertical proportions at the street of a scale similar to traditional buildings in the context.**

- *B-1 Massing: Relationship of the 4th floor to the overall massing was revised to better knit the four floors together, provide a clear vertical orientation to the forms. The façade planes were also revised to emphasize the three-story form at the street with a proportion and scale similar to one and two-family traditional homes surrounding. The “bay” and 4th floor roof form are referential of the traditional triple decker forms.*
- *B-2 Roof Forms:* Flat roofs are found within the context. **Simple roof forms are the predominant form – the project does include two levels of roof, though was revised to better meet the overall intent of the Principle B.**
- *B-3 Main Roofs and Subsidiary Roofs:* **The project was revised to make the 4th floor roof more clearly the main roof form and have a relationship with the lower floors.**
- *B-4 Roof Pitch:* The project has complex (rather than simple) roof forms. **Monopitch roof is only allowed if attached to the wall of the main building and is less than 7:12.**
- *B-5 Façade Articulation:* The project employs two of the required articulation elements – covered entry, recessed entry.
- *B-6 Garages:* Garage door is less than 40% building width and is on a plane recessed from front façade with living space above.

Principle C Orientation to the Street – Met – The project is oriented to the street with a street-facing door; tenant door is legible from the street with a walkway, canopy. Privacy is adequately addressed. Because the ground floor does not include active living space the street level façade is solid with only a sidelight and door for activation. Stoop and landscaping provide some opportunity for human-scale and activation.

- *C-1 Entrances:* The entry is street-facing and emphasized with a canopy and recess.
- *C-2 Visual Privacy:* Visual privacy is adequately addressed; ground floor windows are higher than 48" above adjoining sidewalk grade.
- *C-3 Transition Spaces:* The project uses a canopy at the entrance and a recessed entry, the building is slightly set back.

Principle D Proportion and Scale – Met – The façade design was revised to reference proportions found in the existing building context. The

- *D-1 Windows:* The majority of windows are rectangular and have a vertical proportion; **window proportions and sizes more contemporary than found in the context.**
- *D-2 Fenestration:* The 12% fenestration requirement appears to be met.
- *D-3 Porches:* The third floor deck meets the standard and is at least 6' deep and 48 sf feet.

Principle E Balance – Met – The building façade was revised to provide clearer regulating lines and vertical relationships between the floors creating an overall balanced front façade.

- *E-1 Window and Door Height:* The majority of window and door head heights align along a common horizontal datum.
- *E-2 Window and Door Alignment:* The majority of windows shall stack so that centerlines of windows are in vertical alignment.
- *E-3 Symmetricality:* Primary window compositions arranged symmetrically around discernable vertical axes, local symmetry.

Principle F Articulation – Met – The project employs some articulation elements as enumerated below.

- *F-1 Articulation:* Surface articulation provided with window reveals, entry canopies, deck railings. Detailing is consistent.
- *F-2 Window Types:* More than two window types and sizes are used.
- *F-3 Visual Cohesion:* The visual cohesion of the façade
- *F-4 Delineation between Floors:* The floors are delineated with material and massing changes, fenestration pattern.
- *F-5 Porches, etc.:* Project has two deck levels – each competing
- *F-6 Main Entries:* The main entry is street-facing, emphasized with a recess and canopy. **Tenant entry lacks this level of emphasis. Both entries would benefit being highlighted with lighting and building numbers.**
- *F-7 Articulation Elements:* Contemporary eave created at 4th floor; no trim; offset of building face at "bay," garage, and 4th floor are greater than 12"; no cornice.

Principle G Materials – Met – The residential context is predominantly clapboard with a masonry foundation, occasional use of shingle or brick siding. Predominant in this context is simplicity of materials – generally a masonry foundation, one siding material above with occasional panel or trim to accentuate features such as a bay window or to delineate certain proportions or forms. Staff concerns regarding number and placement of materials are addressed by the revised design. Staff agree with the applicant that a lighter value on the clapboard is contextual and prevents the building becoming too dark overall.

- *G-1 Materials:* The proposal uses three materials – brick, clapboard, and metal shingle. Metal shingle can be considered acceptable as long as the finish is not highly reflective

and the scale of the shingle is fine grain to evoke the scale of materials found in the context.

- *G-2 Material and Façade Design:* Materials are placed appropriate to their nature.
- *G-3 Chimneys:* Not applicable.
- *G-4 Window Types:* More than two window types are used.
- *G-5 Patios and Plazas:* Not applicable.