

**Mary Davis - Re: 65 Munjoy St.**

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**From:** Mary Davis  
**To:** Matt Thayer  
**Date:** 9/19/2014 3:22 PM  
**Subject:** Re: 65 Munjoy St.  
**CC:** Margaret Hazlett  
**Attachments:** Agenda Item # 3 09.19.14 65 Munjoy St Lot.pdf

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Mr. Thayer: Attached is the 65 Munjoy Street agenda item for the HCDC meeting on September 24th.

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Planning & Urban Development Department  
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>>> Matt Thayer <mthayer777@gmail.com> 9/19/2014 11:37 AM >>>

Hi Mary --

We recently received a postcard from the City suggesting you can provide us with more info about a possible RFP for the sale of 65 Munjoy St. My wife and I own one of the houses across the street (62 Munjoy St), and although we recently moved to PA for now, we remain very interested in the possible redevelopment of that property and would very much appreciate you keeping us in the loop about any possible move to re-develop it, or even consider how to re-develop it.

I was co-chair of the Adams School Reuse Committee and remain very interested in what happens across the street from our home.

Thanks so much.

Matt

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Matt Thayer  
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## Mary Davis - Re: 65 Munjoy St. - Status

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**From:** Mary Davis  
**To:** Matt Thayer  
**Date:** 4/21/2015 4:24 PM  
**Subject:** Re: 65 Munjoy St. - Status  
**CC:** <mhazlett@fandm.edu>; Kevin Donoghue

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Matt: If you follow the link mentioned in my previous email, you will see the development proposal for the site, including renderings of the project.

The proposal for the sale of the parking lot parcel located at 65 Munjoy Street to the developer will need City Council approval. I anticipate that happening in May or possibly June. We are currently working with the developer to define the terms of sale. In addition, the project will need to complete the development review process through the Planning Board.

In 2014, as directed by the Housing and Community Development Committee, the City contracted with Bluestone Planning Group to provide physical alternatives and financial feasibility that would maximize the affordable housing options for this site. They were asked to provide development alternatives that would blend in with the size and scope of the surrounding buildings while minimizing shadow impacts on the neighborhood playground and green space. The report and recommendations from Bluestone Planning Group were incorporated into the 2014 Request for Proposals for this site. In addition, the design considerations/criteria in the 2014 RFP were created from the original 2008 RFP For the Sale and Reuse of the Former Adams School Site. I believe the proposal submitted by Adams Apple LLC meets these requirements.

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>>> Matt Thayer <mthayer777@gmail.com> 4/21/2015 3:20 PM >>>  
 Hi Mary --

Thanks so much for the note. Can you also please provide a status of and next steps for this proposal or project at this point, and indicate whether the planned project is responsive at all to the City's Adams School Re-use Committee's recommendations for this site in terms of scale and mass, etc. of any infill development? After all, the City's Re-use Committee stressed the importance of infill development respecting or taking a cue from surrounding historic architecture, with the aim of "knitting the neighborhood back together" with similarly sized and styled infill development. These are the same architectural considerations or questions that I raised in my

earlier note to Kevin.

From what we've heard about this project, it is unresponsive to the vision of the City's Re-use Committee with respect to massing, architecture, kind/quality of materials, etc., though we certainly hope that what we've heard is incorrect.

Also, do you have any recent renderings of this project you can share that would help to reassure us that this project is being guided by the public vision articulated by the City's Re-use Committee?

Thanks so much.

Matt

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 21, 2015, at 2:14 PM, Mary Davis <[mpd@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:mpd@portlandmaine.gov)> wrote:

Matt: Below is the link to the Housing and Community Development Committee's Agenda Center. The HCDC reviewed the response to the 65 Munjoy Street RFP at their February 11, 2015 meeting. If you download the pdf of the packet for that meeting, you can review the proposal for 65 Munjoy Street.

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/AgendaCenter/Housing-Community-Development-Committee-18>

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>>> Kevin Donoghue <[kjdonoghue@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:kjdonoghue@portlandmaine.gov)> 4/21/2015 1:47 PM >>>

Can you send appropriate links?

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Matt Thayer" <[mthayer777@gmail.com](mailto:mthayer777@gmail.com)>  
Date: Apr 20, 2015 1:05 PM  
Subject: 65 Munjoy St. - Status  
To: <[kjdonoghue@gmail.com](mailto:kjdonoghue@gmail.com)>  
Cc: "Margaret Hazlett" <[mhazlett@fandm.edu](mailto:mhazlett@fandm.edu)>, "Alex Jaegerman" <[AQJ@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:AQJ@portlandmaine.gov)>

Hi Kevin --

Any chance you can give me a quick update on what's happening with 65 Munjoy St? I'm hoping that whatever is developed there is done at a scale and in a way that respects and takes its cue from surrounding historic architecture and is done using quality materials, so that it respects the

recommendations of the original Adams School re-use committee. We are hoping that this portion of the Adams School site redevelopment is done in a way that "knits the neighborhood back together," as was recommended by the committee for any redevelopment of that site.

The view from our living room, and of course local property values, are among our concerns.

We are still temporarily living out of state, so following developments with respect to this project has proven tough, but we remain very interested in it.

Thanks so much. And hope you are doing well.

Matt and Margaret

Matt Thayer and Margaret Hazlett  
Owners, 62 Munjoy St.

Sent from my iPad

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.

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## Mary Davis - Re: 65 Munjoy St -- Design Considerations, Public Process

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**From:** Mary Davis  
**To:** Alex Jaegerman; Jeff Levine; Kevin Donoghue; Matt Thayer  
**Date:** 5/11/2015 3:06 PM  
**Subject:** Re: 65 Munjoy St -- Design Considerations, Public Process  
**CC:** Margaret Hazlett

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Matt:

The issue of design was discussed and studied extensively as part of the RFP process. The RFP included a massing study that looked at alternative designs for the site, and while there was one preferred alternative in that study, that did not rule out other designs. The RFP also had a section (Section F) devoted to "Design Compatibility." That section includes requirements for high quality and compatible design.

The Housing and Community Development Committee, in potentially selecting a proposal, will ultimately determine if it meets the requirements of the RFP. However, detailed design review is usually the responsibility of the Planning Board.

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>>> Matt Thayer <mthayer777@gmail.com> 5/8/2015 12:55 PM >>>  
 Hi Mary / All --

Thanks so much for the note. Couple quick follow-up questions for you or whomever can best field them.

We're curious, since you didn't address specific design considerations in your response, is the City's plan to punt on those until after Council reviews the possible sale of the property, and leave those entirely to the planning review phase? It would seem that as Owner of a key ingredient to the successful re-use of this site -- the site itself -- the City would be in the position to ensure that at least minimum standards -- if not maximum standards -- of a high quality design are met as part of agreeing to sell the lot to the developer. So I'm curious, does the City -- as current Owner of #65 Munjoy -- plan to use it's leverage as Owner to encourage the developer to -- or ensure that the developer does -- a high quality design for the site?

On a related note, in other situations like this -- when the City is selling land to be developed -- how often does it mandate high quality design standards or do anything to ensure that the affected neighborhood ends up with a high quality design, other than make the developer meet "minimum" standards by running his/her project thru the standard planning review process? I can't imagine the City always takes such a "hands off" approach when it's holding the property owner "card" for a highly visible project and site, does it?

Our hope is -- in part since we the Re-use Committee, and Avesta, and the City -- weren't able to get everything we all had hoped for in terms of a high quality infill design for Adams Re-use Phase I (the Avesta project) -- perhaps due to the economy and recession at the time -- that -- in part since the economy is now much improved -- we will be able to secure a truly high quality infill design -- of reasonable scale -- in Adams Re-development Phase II, and we hope the City will be doing everything it can to make that happen.

We look forward to hearing back from you. Thanks so much.

Matt

On Fri, May 1, 2015 at 9:01 AM, Mary Davis <[mpd@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:mpd@portlandmaine.gov)> wrote:

Mr. Thayer: Thank you for your inquiry, and our apologies for the delay in providing a follow-up response.

The decision to issue this RFP followed several rounds of public input. Notices were mailed to property owners within a 500 foot radius of 65 Munjoy Street on three occasions. The notices were sent for the August 27, September 24 and November 12, 2014 Housing and Community Development Committee meetings. I believe we spoke by email in the fall after you received one of these notices. On September 12, 2014, flyers were hand delivered to each property on the surrounding streets. Jeff Levine and I attended the October 13, 2014 Munjoy Hill Neighborhood Association meeting to discuss the proposed RFP and the design concept from Bluestone Planning Group before the RFP was issued. Many nearby residents have attended these meetings to date, or commented via email.

This response to the RFP was reviewed by the Housing and Community Development Committee (HCDC) at their February 11th meeting. This was an opportunity to present the proposal/concept to the committee and for the committee to provide staff with direction on next steps. We anticipate bringing this item back to the HCDC for additional discussion and action in early June.

You may provide your input to staff or to the members of the HCDC via email, or at an HCDC meeting. A public notice will be mailed out to neighbors to notify them when the proposal will be presented to the HCDC. HCDC agenda information is available after 4:00 pm on the Friday before each meeting. The HCDC meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month. The link to the HCDC web page on the city website is <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/582/Housing-Community-Development-Committee>. You will find the agenda information under "Most Recent Agenda." To receive notices when agenda information is posted you should register on the "Notify Me" page on the City's website (<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/list.aspx>) and sign up to be automatically notified when HCDC agendas and packets are available.

The proposal for the sale of the lot at 65 Munjoy Street to the developer will also need full City Council approval. At this point, we anticipate that happening in late June or early July. We are currently working with the developer to define the terms of potential sale.

In terms of design review, the RFP stated the consistency with zoning as a necessary parameter. As would any other project of this scale, this project will need to complete the development review process through the Planning Board. We would expect that would follow Council approval of the potential sale. Information about the Planning Board process can be found on the City's website at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/551/Development-Review>

The R-6 zoning district for this area is in the process of being amended after considerable public outreach. Proposed changes can be reviewed on the City Council's website at this link: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/AgendaCenter> under the April 6th agenda packet. The item is expected to be voted on at the May 4th Council meeting.

The project will be reviewed for site plan and subdivision at which time it will be subject to the applicable design standards, which are the R-6 small lot infill standards. We provide a link to those standards here:

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3415>. The R-6 Infill Development Standards appear on page 103, appendix 7 of that document. Generally, information on all development review is available on the city website at <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/551/Development-Review>. While this area is not in a historic district, the Historic Preservation Ordinance is found here: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3411>

I hope this is helpful information.  
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>>> Matt Thayer <[mthayer777@gmail.com](mailto:mthayer777@gmail.com)> 4/29/2015 12:00 PM >>>  
Hi Alex, Jeff, Mary and Kevin --

We are checking back in quickly as we still haven't heard from anyone in response to the concerns raised and questions asked in the below e-mail to you all last week. Alex, perhaps you're just digging out post vacation, but in any event, we would appreciate hearing back from you, Alex, or someone soon with a comprehensive response to our note.

On a related note, I have had several neighbors approach me over the past few days asking if I know what's going on at #65, and whether as the former Co-Chair of the City's Re-use Committee I was being kept in the loop about your plans, and the prospective developers' plans, for over there, and I've had to say that despite my e-mail to you all, and to the developer, a week ago, I've heard very little about your thoughts on the proposed developers' design, about your response to our thoughts on it, about the public process and opportunities for public input, the status of the negotiation process, etc.

By the way, have you all considered that any building that goes up at #65 has two public faces, the face fronting Munjoy St., and the face that looks out over the park and pedestrian corridor? I would think you all would have any prospective developer looking to create building designs that are attractive to both "fronts" of the parcel.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks so much.

Matt

On Wed, Apr 22, 2015 at 3:41 PM, Matt Thayer <[mthayer777@gmail.com](mailto:mthayer777@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Hi Alex, Mary and Kevin --

My wife and I would like to register our deep concern with and objection to the proposed design of 65 Munjoy St, an infill development project that would complete the re-development of the former Adams School site and a proposal that was presumably -- but NOT apparently -- designed to be in keeping with

the site re-development recommendations of the City of Portland's Adams School Re-use Committee. We also have a number of questions for each of you, listed below, and would appreciate your responses to them.

By the way, we are writing to you all in several capacities. First, we write as concerned neighbors and adjacent property owners and taxpayers (our house is at 62 Munjoy St.), so our livingroom and bedroom windows look right out at this site, as does our front yard and entry. In addition, we and our kids use the Adams Park and Pedestrian Corridor, which would also be impacted as an adjacent use on the other side of 65 Munjoy Street from our house.

We are also writing as veterans of the City of Portland's Adams School Re-use Committee process; I was a Co-chair of the City's Re-use Committee, and Margaret very closely followed the Committee's work, so we had the opportunity to work very closely with Alex Jaegerman as we developed our recommendations. I'm sure he remembers all this good work, and these recommendations, quite well.

Anyway, the shortcomings in the design include but are not limited to the following:

- size, scale, mass, bulk; let's face it, it's simply a "big box" design;
- articulation, or lack thereof;
- permeability from Munjoy St and the Adams Pedestrian Corridor, or lack thereof;
- interplay with the sidewalk and street, or lack thereof (no front porches or steps to the two buildings to promote communication and social engagement with neighbors; no pocket gardens like you find beside many sets of old front steps on the Hill, all of which promotes social engagement);
- covered parking that unnecessarily boosts overall building height, when surface parking could be substituted instead; in addition to the normal concerns raised by unnecessarily boosting the building height, this problematic design feature also creates "dead" or empty rather than "live" first floor window space, or no first floor window space in the rear of the proposed project;
- quality of materials, or lack thereof;
- presumably sizeable and unbroken afternoon shadows cast on the Mirada Adams Park and Pedestrian Trail.

The above list of concerns is by no means complete, it just gives you an initial sense of the range and depth of our concerns with the design of this project.

Please also note that NO buildings adjacent to the proposed project are as tall as three stories, whether along Munjoy St adjacent to this site, or across Munjoy St from this site, or across the pedestrian trail from this proposed project. This fact is highly relevant when considering overall building heights.

This project, quite simply, does nothing to "knit the neighborhood back together" with quality infill development, a primary recommendations of the City's Re-use Committee, and a recommendation that Alex Jaegerman will recall from his days supporting the City Re-use Committee's good work.

So we have a number of questions for you at this point:

- Do any of you, or other City of Portland staff, have concerns about the proposed design, and have you, or do you plan to, provide design feedback to the bidders? If so, what are your concerns, and what was or do you think will be your feedback?
- Have you sought any public input on this project to date, re the design or other aspects of this project? If so, how have you sought it?
- Has there actually been any public vetting of this project to date? Has anyone provided any



comments about the proposed design or other issues, and if so, what have been the concerns?

- Where are the city's design standards for infill projects like this? Can you pls point us to them? We would be interested in learning of infill design standards applicable in historic areas, and in regular neighborhoods on the peninsula.
- Are there any pending zoning or related changes of any kind that are currently being considered, or that might soon be considered, that could affect this project, the design or otherwise?
- What, more specifically, is the process, and the public process, at this point? How do we and others most effectively provide our input?
- Is there any other information that you think we should have as adjacent property owners and neighbors as we provide input on this project? Anything else you think we should know?

We are not architects, but one doesn't need to be a trained architect to see that this project is un-inspired and un-inspiring, as well as -- from a design standpoint -- detrimental to the neighborhood, and we hope that you will get it back on a solid design track, if you have not already provided robust design guidance to the bidders.

We look forward to hearing from you both about our concerns and our questions.

Thanks so much.

Matt and Margaret

Matt Thayer and Margaret Hazlett  
Owners, 62 Munjoy St.  
Co-Chair, City of Portland's Adams School Re-use Committee (Matt)  
Participant and Follower, City of Portland's Adams School Re-use Committee (Margaret)  
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