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Planning Board
Planning and Urban Development Department, City of Portland
389 Congress St
Portland, ME 04101

Re: 30 Merrill Street

17 October 2016

To the Members of the Planning Board and Planning Division Staff:

Since I can't attend the upcoming meeting, I'd like to offer my response both to the re-jiggering of the rendering and the process.

On process, I find it disturbing that Tom Landry chose to send a revised rendering less than twenty-four hours after the Hearing. This is simply not enough time for the architect to have given serious consideration to depth of concern expressed by neighbors and the Board.

I sent Evan Carroll an email expressing this concern. He responded with an assertion of his familiarity "*with the vocabulary and tools*" of design. "*As much architecture (sic) is an artistic pursuit,*" he wrote, "*it is also a scientific one, as we are restricted by the real world of human occupancy.*" Scientific, not artistic -- indeed.

Still, in "the real world of human occupancy": how will he defend the slightly altered, but unimproved, "front door"? Or the now-vertical windows that don't appear to function -- i.e., open and close? Would double-hungs, much more in keeping with the neighborhood, really break the bank?

My opinion: The revised rendering is even worse than the original design. The blank middle with its sad square portholes is too wide to balance the boxy bump-outs on either side. The side view is, from what I can see, as bricklike as it was in the earlier iteration.

We're talking about construction that threatens to diminish the character of Munjoy Hill, setting a dangerous precedent for future development. I sincerely hope that the developers will take our concerns seriously, and give Evan time and flexibility to work out a thoughtful response.

Thanks.



Carolyn Swartz