
Section 0

Architectural Design Narrative



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24 St. Lawrence Street

Architectural Narrative

Project Summary:

The project is located at 24 St. Lawrence Street, Portland, Maine, in the R-6 zone. The existing two-unit building will be demolished to allow a new 5-unit building to be constructed. The Lower Level will consist of a private (tenant only) parking garage with 5 parking spaces and 1 ADA accessible parking space. The 2nd and 3rd floors will have two condominium units on each floor and the 4th floor will have one larger condominium unit. The building will have two fire-rated stair tower exits and an elevator to service all floors. A rooftop deck will be above the 4th floor and will be available only for the 4th floor unit.

The building will be a 3B Construction Type (IBC) and will be fully sprinkled.

HVAC units will be placed towards the center of the roof as to minimize visual and noise impacts.

Materials:

The exterior materials will mostly consist of dipped cedar shakes or fiber cement shake panels. There are also areas of fiber cement clapboard siding and fiber cement panel trim. The base level will have a dimensional stone veneer for an increase in durability of the lower level (see elevations). See renderings for preliminary color selections

Zoning Analysis and R-6 Design Standards

Zoning Analysis:

City of Portland Zoning Codes: (See bold type for project specific information)

The project will meet all city of Portland zoning codes (listed below) as well NFPA and IBC.

Minimum lot size: 2,000 sf **Actual 4,661 SF**

Minimum lot area/dwelling unit: 725 sf **6 Units Possible, 5 units proposed**

Minimum front yard setback (principal structure): 5 ft

Neighboring properties are closer than 5'. Per the average of the two neighboring properties, the front setback is reduced to 3'-6" (see civil drawings).

Minimum rear yard setback (principal structure) : 10 ft **See attached civil drawings.**

Minimum side yard setback (principal structure): 5 ft **See attached civil drawings.**

Structure Step backs: Portions of a structure above 35ft shall be no closer than 10ft from the side property line and no closer than 15 ft from the rear property line when such property line abuts a residential zone.

See Elevations and plans, This requirement does not apply to Circulation elements (Stairs, Elevators, Lobbies).

Maximum lot coverage: **60% 2,797 SF allowed Proposed 2,795 SF**



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Maximum height: (Principal and attached accessory structure): 45ft **Proposed 44'-11 3/8"** (see elevations for average grade and height calculations).

Landscape open space: 20% not include parking areas or other impervious surfaces. **Approximate landscape open space: 1,508 sf (32.3%).**

Maximum garage opening: (front facades) not to exceed the greater of 9 ft or 40% of the front façade, not to exceed 20' (max). **Front façade is 57'-6" (40% = 23'), actual garage door opening is 10'.**

ADA/Pedestrian Access

Current proposed plan and design will meet all ADA requirements as per HUD Fair Housing and Maine Human Rights Act. See civil drawings for ADA ramp to main entry.

City of Portland R-6 Design Standards

Principle A - Overall Context

Scale and Form: The proposed project meets the current City of Portland R-6 height Limit of 45' from average grade. Existing buildings in the surrounding area are mostly between 3-4 stories (see photos at the end of this report). The proposed project is a total of 4 stories including the garage level.

Composition of Principal Facades: Existing buildings in the Area consist of a mixture of typical Portland Regional Architecture, and modern contemporary buildings. There is a very similar project (designed by this office) at 31 Fore Street (corner of Fore and Waterville, see photo). The proposed building incorporates regional design and materials with a contemporary design standard. Large, modern windows/doors, as well as the decks on the rear façade, will take advantage of Casco Bay views and are similar to buildings neighboring the proposed site.

Relationship to street: The proposed project respects the rhythm, spacing and orientation of existing buildings in the neighborhood. The garage entrance and main entrance are on the street façade. Signage and a covered entry assist in main entrance hierarchy. The windows sizes address the street frontage, while still affording the privacy required.

Principle B - Massing

Massing: The buildings massing of the proposed building meets the massing of existing buildings in the area (Rectilinear shapes)

Roof Forms: Roof Forms within a 2-block radius include Gables Pitched roofs as well as flat roofs. The proposed building will have a flat roof.



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Main Roofs and Subsidiary Roofs: The proposed building has a clear roof form (flat) that is accentuated by the simple cornice band. There is a small subsidiary roof over the main entrance that is also flat with a smaller simple cornice.

Roof Pitch: Not Applicable

Façade Articulation: A recessed main entry, covered by a flat roof is on the street façade. The garage entry is also recessed on the front façade. Covered porches and balconies are incorporated in the proposed design on the rear façade. These porches take advantage of the views of Casco Bay and are visible from Waterville Street.

Garages: The garage entrance is located on the street frontage façade (St. Lawrence) of the property. It has been recessed slightly from the main frontage.

Principle C - Orientation to the Street

Entrances: Main Entrance is clearly articulated to the front façade of the building on St. Lawrence street. A recessed and covered entry, along with a main stair (and ramp), and a building signage wall will assist in defining the main entry. Downlighting at the main entrance and sign lighting will help to define the entry at night.

Visual Privacy: Visual privacy is met on main living spaces with the building being raised a story above public pedestrian paths. Privacy is also achieved by placing the stair towers, elevator, and lobbies on the street, with the units towards the rear of the property.

Transition Spaces: Landscape features create transitions from Public to private. The main entry is also recessed and situated up several steps (or ramp) above the sidewalk. This helps to separate the entrance from the sidewalk and provide the necessary transitional space.

Principle D - Proportion and Scale

Windows: Windows are rectangular and vertically proportioned. Accent windows are square or also vertically proportioned.

Fenestration: Doors, Windows and other openings are scaled appropriately per the buildings massing and exceed 12% of the total façade area (see elevations for actual percentages of openings).

Porches: Not applicable, no porches proposed on front façade.

Principle E - Balance



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Window and Door Height: The window and door heights remain consistent (or are centered) within each floor. Also, the floors remain consistent and similar.

Window and Door Alignment: The floors are fairly consistent which lends itself to vertical stacking of elements. Where floors are not consistent, they are similar to adhere to the alignment principle.

Symmetry: While the overall building is not symmetrical, the windows, doors, and balconies are grouped together to provide several axis lines, rather than only one overall axis line. This reflects the general façade treatments in the neighborhood.

Principle F - Articulation

Articulation: Building trim will be kept simple to reflect the contemporary nature of the structure. However, use of the building trim will be at the traditional locations: at windows/doors, at balconies/decks, at the cornice, and above the first level (to separate materials and to provide a vertical break of the facades).

Window Types: There are two window sizes on the front façade, but they are also grouped together in different configurations to provide visual interest and discourage repetitiveness. The windows on the rear elevation reflect the additional fenestration surrounding the doors for the rear decks. There is a third window size on one of the side elevations due to the expected placement of the interior millwork.

Visual Cohesion: There are three materials on the facades of the building. The heavier material of dimensional stone is on the base level, while the shake shingles and clapboard siding are on the other levels above.

Delineation between Floors: The delineation between floors is achieved through the use of materials (lower level to upper levels), the use of a cornice line (lower level to upper levels), vertical separation of windows (upper levels), and porch/balcony roofs and trim (upper levels).

Porches ect...: The front entry is integrated into the design by the use of massing and the windows above that provide vertical alignment. The multi-level balconies/decks on the rear of the building are stacked as to provide the same vertical alignment and massing. The rail/baluster systems will adhere to all codes, while providing a thin profile (cable rail balusters) to keep the focus on the building.

Main Entries: The main entry is recessed, raised above the sidewalk, is covered, lighted and has adjacent signage. It is also emphasized vertically with the massing and windows above. In addition, the only other door on the front façade (for the adjacent stair) has been de-emphasized.

Articulation: Eaves are greater than 6". Window trim is greater than 4". The massing offsets in the front façade are approximately 48", while the offsets for the rear decks are in excess of 6'. There are



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two pronounced cornices on the building. The main cornice at the top of the building is reflected in a smaller cornice at the first level.

Principle G - Materials

Materials: The proposed materials mainly consist of Dipped Cedar Shakes, clapboard siding, dimensional stone veneer (lower level only) and Hardie Board or AZEK Trim. Existing buildings in the area materials consist of wood cladding, vinyl siding, cedar shakes, Hardie Board and brick masonry.

Material and Façade Design: The materials are consistent with façade design. The heavy stone veneer is on the lower level, while the clapboard siding and cedar shakes are on the upper levels. There are no small stone areas. Instead, the stone covers the entire lower level to give the structure a visual “base”.

Chimneys: Not applicable as none are proposed.

Window Types: Windows are consistent in style and kept to a few sizes between facades.

Patios and Plazas: The only patio that is proposed is the main walkway at the front entrance. The front sidewalk will be constructed of brick pavers, and the entrance walkway, steps, ramp and entrance patio is expected to be concrete.



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St. Lawrence Street



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St. Lawrence Street



Monument Street



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Waterville Street



Waterville Street



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Fore Street (at Waterville)



Munjoy Street