

# Planning and Urban Development Department

## Planning Division

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**Subject:** R-6 Small Infill Design Review – 107 Monument Street

**Written by:** Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer

**Date of Review:** Thursday, July 23, 2015

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On Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, a design review according to the *City of Portland Design Manual* Standards was performed for the proposed new construction of a single-family dwelling at 107 Monument Street. The review was performed by Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer, Planning Division 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).

### Design Review Criteria:

The project was reviewed with the Alternative Design Review which has the following criteria:

- A. 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.

### Findings of the Design Review:

The proposed design **does not pass** all of the criteria of the Alternate Design Review – please refer to comments below. The applicant may either revise the design according to the review comments and resubmit or appeal the decision of the design review to the Planning Board.

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

*Principle A Overall Context* – Met – the scale and height of the proposal is consistent and compatible with the surrounding residential context. The form is more contemporary with an asymmetrical roof but building form, proportion, and orientation are similar to the residential context. The two-story front portion of the building sits proud at the street with the taller, contemporary roof line setback, therefore mitigating the visual impact.

- *A-1 Scale and Form*: The scale of the project is in keeping with the existing context. The form of the roof shape is not typically found with the predominant character-defining architectural features of the neighborhood but is set back from the street so as to be recessive.

- *A-2 Composition of Principal Facades:* The front façade composition is contemporary but retains similar characteristics, proportion, size, fenestration patterns, and orientation to the surrounding context.
- *A-3 Relationship to the Street:* The building has a similar orientation and placement to the street as the house being replaced. The front façade is right at the property line creating a street wall consistent with the block and the front entry is oriented to the street/sidewalk.

*Principle B Massing – Met –* while the roof pitch and form do not reflect and reinforce the traditional building character of the neighborhood, all other aspects of the building reflect the principle and the majority of the Standards are met by the proposed design.

- *B-1 Massing:* The proposed mass is harmonious with the massing of the existing buildings in a two block radius.
- *B-2 Roof Forms:* The proposed roof form does not refer to the architectural forms found within a two-block radius which are predominantly front-end gable and flat roofs.
- *B-3 Main Roofs and Subsidiary Roofs:* Met – there is a clear main roof form.
- *B-4 Roof Pitch:* The standard requires that gable roofs shall be symmetrical and have a pitch between 7:12 and 12:12. The roof pitch was not provided but looks to be less than 7:12.
- *B-5 Façade Articulation:* The project employs three (two required) of the required architectural elements: a balcony, a recessed entry, and a covered porch.
- *B-6 Garages:* Not applicable

*Principle C Orientation to the Street – Met –* The project appropriately reflects the private/public relationship of residential buildings in this neighborhood.

- *C-1 Entrances:* The main entry faces and is directly accessible to the street, is recessed, and is well-emphasized with the canopy, stoop, and material articulation.
- *C-2 Visual Privacy:* Visual privacy is adequately addressed; all ground floor windows appear to be higher than 48" above adjoining sidewalk grade.
- *C-3 Transition Spaces:* The stoop and recessed entry provide a transition space from the street.

*Principle D Proportion and Scale – Met –* The proportion and scale of the building overall are harmonious and human-scaled.

- *D-1 Windows:* The majority of windows are rectangular and vertically proportioned.
- *D-2 Fenestration:* The applicant did not provide dimensions to verify the 12% fenestration requirement. However, in a rough estimate, the standard appears to be met. Windows and doors are appropriately scaled to the building.
- *D-3 Porches:* Not applicable

*Principle E Balance – Met –* The building façade composition creates a sense of balance with good use of overall and local symmetry and articulation of façade materials.

- *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 Symmetry:* Primary window compositions are arranged symmetrically around discernable vertical axes.

*Principle F Articulation – Met – The project employs visually interesting and well composed facades.*

- *F-1 Articulation:* It is a little bit difficult to discern the trim and window details of the project however, if there is a little bit of a shadow line created with these details, as it appears there would be, then the standard is met.
- *F-2 Window Types:* The project uses more than two window types.
- *F-3 Visual Cohesion:* The change in material contributes to the façade composition and overall remains cohesive. However, the material choice itself is problematic (See comments below regarding materials).
- *F-4 Delineation between Floors:* Floors are delineated with trim details, overhangs, and changes in material.
- *F-5 Porches, etc.:* The stoop and canopy are well integrated into the overall design.
- *F-6 Main Entries:* The main entry is emphasized well, with prominent placement facing the street, the use of a canopy and stoop.
- *F-7 Articulation Elements:* The project incorporates the following architectural elements:
  - Eaves and rakes with a minimum 6” projection
  - Trim, where used, is 4” or greater
  - Building offsets are greater than 12”
  - Eave overhang

*Principle G Materials – Not Met – The use of large composite panels is not found in the residential neighborhood context and determined not appropriate for a single-family building.*

- *G-1 Materials:* The clapboards are in keeping with the residential context. Panels are not a building material found in the neighborhood and lack the scale, texture, and visual interest of a smaller-scale material choice. Predominant and contextual materials choices include clapboard (which may differ in scale), shingle, vertical siding (tongue-in-groove, board and batten).
- *G-2 Material and Façade Design:* The materials are appropriately placed according to their nature. The exception is the use of clapboard on the parapet/balcony edge at the front of the house. A lighter material, such as a rail should be considered. The use of shingles, a solid wall, and a rectilinear line creates a heavy form at the roof lines of the two-story mass.
- *G-3 Chimneys:* Chimney not indicated on elevation drawings. Presumed to be metal.
- *G-4 Window Types:* More than two window types are used.
- *G-5 Patios and Plazas:* Not applicable

We have noted some areas where the current design does not comply with the design standards, and have offered suggestions for modifications that would bring the design into compliance. We would be happy to speak with you and your architect to further explain these specific suggestions and to explore other solutions in keeping with your design intent.