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'ORTLAND, MAINE
: PRESERVATION BOARD

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TO: Chair Boepple and Members of the Planning Board
FROM: Scott Benson, Chair, Historic Preservation Board
Deborah Andrews, Historic Preservation Program Manager
DATE: December 14, 2016
SUBJECT: Historic Preservation Board Finding and Recommendation re:

a) Conformance of 58 Fore Street Master Development Plan with Review Standards of Historic Preservation Ordinance
b) Amendment of Portland Company Historic District Boundaries

I. Introduction

On December 7, the Historic Preservation Board held a public hearing on CPB2's proposed Master Development Plan for its property at 58 Fore Street, within which is located the Portland Company Historic District. Although master development plans are addressed in the site plan ordinance and formal review authority rests with the Planning Board, the Historic Preservation Board's role in the review of the 58 Fore Street Master Plan was two-fold:

First, the Historic Preservation Board was charged with making a finding as to whether the scope and nature of development proposed in the master development plan--in particular proposed alterations, additions and new construction within or abutting the Portland Company Historic District--is in conformance with the review standards of the historic preservation ordinance.

Second, the Historic Preservation Board was charged with making a recommendation to the Planning Board regarding amending the boundaries of the Portland Company Historic District, as proposed by CPB2. Amending the district boundaries would make it possible to relocate Building 12 to another location on the property, just outside the current district boundary. As the relocation of Building 12 is an integral part of the proposed master development plan, the question of amending the historic district is be taken up in conjunction with the master development plan review. The process for amending historic district boundaries is the same as for district designations. That is, the Historic Preservation Board makes a recommendation on the boundary change to the Planning Board. The Planning Board, in turn, makes a recommendation to the Council, which has final authority to amend the district.

II. Background – Outstanding Issue Identified at November 16 Workshop

As Planning Board members will recall, the one aspect of the master development plan that raised significant concerns at the HP Board's November workshop was the proposal for

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be constructed along Fore Street, some of which were proposed to be built on :ing historic structures within the Fore Street alleyway. These concerns : impact of the townhouses on the current view of the Portland Company ore Street and on the existing scale and historic character of development in low.

During discussion, Historic Preservation Board members noted that the Portland's Company's location below the grade of Fore Street has historically allowed for views of the complex below. From Fore Street, one can appreciate the retainage required to create the site, the linear alignment of buildings required by the manufacturing process, the industrial nature of the complex, as well as the architectural character and scale of the individual historic structures within view. With the introduction of connected townhouses as shown in the proposed plans, this view of the complex would be virtually eliminated. (Board members did not find the provision of one 50' view corridor within the proposed townhouse row to be adequate in preserving this key view of the complex.).

Board members also expressed concern about the effect of the proposed townhouse construction on the historic scale and character of the alleyway adjacent to Fore Street. As viewed from the alley, plans called for a one-story rooftop addition adjacent to the vault tower (Building 24), new 5-story townhouses built on a portion of the footprint of Building 14 and the footprint of Building 15 (existing structures are 2 stories), and a 3-story addition built on top of Building 16 (the 2-story brass foundry). Immediately abutting the end wall of Building 16 and projecting further into the alleyway were proposed to be additional 5-story townhouses. In the Board's view, the fundamental change in scale, the absence of any building setback to distinguish the historic scale of development from the new and the total obstruction of the Fore Street retaining wall were found to fundamentally alter the historic character of the alleyway. Standards #1, 2 and 9 of the historic preservation ordinance's Standards for Review of Alterations were found applicable to this finding.

Based on drawings presented at the workshop, it was the consensus of Historic Preservation Board members that the townhouse construction along Fore Street (specifically, the townhouses proposed along the length of the existing alleyway development, up to and including Building 16) failed to meet the historic preservation ordinance standards as the construction would materially diminish both the visibility and integrity of the historic district. In summarizing the Board's discussion, Chair Benson indicated that an alternative solution for this area of the historic district would be necessary in order for the Board to forward a positive finding on the master plan's conformance with historic preservation review standards.
In addition to this threshold concern, Historic Preservation Board members identified a number of other general issues and/or observations based on the elevations and renderings provided. Recognizing the preliminary nature of a master development plan and the fact that the drawings provided may be subject to change, these issues and observations were identified for the purpose of establishing a record to inform current or future applicants and Historic Preservation Board members when applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are reviewed in the future. *These observations and concerns were reiterated at the 12/7 public hearing and are listed in the following section of this report.*

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er 7 Public Hearing – Potential Revisions Presented for Consideration, esponse

th, representatives of CPB2 presented two alternative design proposals for the nhouse component of the master plan in hopes that one or both of the options would resolve the Historic Preservation Board's concerns about the impact of the Fore Street townhouses. While Board members noted that each option included measures that improved upon the previous proposal (for example, a building setback was provided to distinguish the historic scale of development along the alleyway from the new), neither proposal adequately resolved the concerns expressed at the November workshop. Ultimately, the Historic Preservation Board concluded that the extent and scale of proposed building additions and new construction along Fore Street--specifically, the portion of the Fore Street wall extending from the tower (Building 24) in easterly direction up to and including Building 16-- unduly diminished both the visibility and the historic integrity of the Portland Company Historic District.

In order to find that the proposed master development plan for 38 Fore Street is in general conformance with the review standards of the historic preservation ordinance, the Board stipulated that the building additions and new construction highlighted in ATTACHMENTS 1 and 2 be removed from the overall development program. Additionally, the Board stipulated that a separation (width to be determined) between the east end wall of Building 16 and the new townhouses east of Building 16 be provided to define the limits of the original complex and provide a view of the Fore Street wall. Note that the Board's decision does not preclude the proposed construction of a one-story rooftop addition adjacent to Building 24's vault tower or the proposed construction of 5-story townhouses east of Building 16 within the boundaries of the historic district.

IV. General Input for Future Reviews

In addition to this threshold issue, the Historic Preservation Board reiterated at the 12/7 public hearing a number of general concerns and/or observations that were first identified at the workshop. They were highlighted to provide early input to the developers and consultant team and to communicate that some level of design modification will likely be required when projects are reviewed for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- Given the limited number of historic buildings that remain to convey the history, visual character and significance of the Portland Company, care should be taken that any additions or infill construction not overwhelm, distract from or visually compete with the historic structures. While it is understood that building additions and added architectural elements may be necessary or desirable as part of the buildings' conversion to new uses, the number of proposed additions and the scale/architectural prominence of some of the additions as rendered in the master plan drawings require further consideration to ensure that the historic character of the remaining buildings is not diminished. In short, additions should be recessive and architecturally compatible with the subject structure, so that the historic form and architectural character of each contributing structure remains prominent.

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examples of additions identified as warranting modification include the ous dormer proposed for Building 2, the proposed stair/elevator core addition ng 6/6A and the rooftop addition adjacent to Building 24 (the vault tower). The d dormers on Building 2 will likely need to be pulled back from the edge of the from the wall plane below so as to be more proportionate to the historic building. The stair/elevator core addition to Building 6/6A will likely need to be reduced in size or footprint so as not to dominate the historic building. The rooftop addition next to the vault will need to be set back from the existing building's wall plane and modified in design to ensure that the vault remains visually prominent.

- The historic structures within the district were built over time in response to changing needs or growth of the company. While the buildings share a common material palette, architecturally there are distinctions from one building to another, reflecting their period of construction and/or particular use. As such, care should be taken to avoid using the same design for added features (e.g. new entrance canopies) for every building.

- The east elevation of the proposed office building on Parcel 1 will face the entrance courtyard and will be surrounded by historic Portland Company structures. Given this close visual relationship, this elevation of the building should take visual cues from the historic structures around it so as to be generally compatible. Also, the point of connection between Building 12 and the new office building it adjoins should be given careful consideration.

- The Portland Company's pedestrian bridges were identified as important character-defining features of the complex. At least one bridge should be maintained over each alley.

- Given the location and alignment of the new building on Parcel 3, the building will have an important visual relationship to the historic structures directly across the access road. A contextual architectural treatment—one that reinforces the Portland Company's industrial design vocabulary-- is encouraged. Also, consideration should be given to shifting this building toward the east to open up the view of the historic district from the water.

- It is important that any future rehabilitation/redevelopment within the Portland Company Historic District include provisions for "telling the story" of the Portland Company, including the history of the company, what it produced and its significance at the local, state and national level. Interpretation should not be left to chance.

- Given the industrial history of the property, the generally spare approach shown for the site treatment within the historic district is appropriate. Trees and other landscaping within the historic core should be limited so as to reinforce the industrial character.

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Finding and Recommendation of the Historic Preservation Board

lic hearing and final deliberations, the Historic Preservation Board voted on follows:

1) The Board voted 6-0 (Sheridan recused) that on the basis of plans, elevations and renderings of proposed development included in the Master Development Plan for 58 Fore Street and information included in the staff report for the December 7, 2016 public hearing, the Board finds that the proposed Master Development Plan for 58 Fore Street, specifically that portion of proposed development located within the boundary of the Portland Company Historic District, is in conformance with Portland's Historic Preservation Ordinance standards **subject to the removal of the proposed rooftop addition above Building 16, the reduction in scale of proposed infill construction on the footprint of Buildings 14 and 15 to a height not to exceed existing building heights, and the provision of an offset separating Building 16 and new townhouses to the east.** *(See ATTACHMENTS 1 AND 2.)*

   Additionally, the Board finds that the proposed development adjacent to or within one hundred feet of the Portland Company Historic District will be developed so as to be generally compatible with the major character defining elements of the landmark or portion of the district in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.

   These findings do not preclude the Historic Preservation Board's authority as part of future reviews of Certificate(s) of Appropriateness to require reasonable adjustments in scale, massing or design of proposed additions, alterations or new construction to comply with ordinance requirements, as identified in the 12/7/16 staff report and as amended during Board discussion.

2) The Historic Preservation Board voted 5-0 (Sheridan recused, Oldham opposed) to recommend to the Planning Board and City Council that the boundaries of the Portland Company Historic district be amended as shown and described in Bernstein Shur's letter of November 10, 2016. (See ATTACHMENT 3.) This recommendation is based on the Board's finding that amending the boundaries of the Portland Company Historic District is necessary to fulfill a key objective of the Master Development Plan, that being the relocation of Building #12 to a position abutting the western edge of the 50' public access easement on site. Additionally, the Board finds that the district boundary amendment will create a single contiguous historic district and allow for the relocation of Building 12 to a position where it will continue to have a visual relationship with the other remaining Portland Company historic structures.

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·up axonometric view from 9/12/16 Master Development Plan showing
s and proposed infill construction required to be removed to satisfy historic
ıtion ordinance standards.

2. Marked up 12/2/16 axonometric view showing same.

3. 11/10/16 letter (with attached map) from Mary Costigan of Bernstein Shur requesting boundary amendment to Portland Company Historic District