

Planning and Urban Development Department

Planning Division



Subject: B6 Design Review – 158 Fore Street

Written by: Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer

Date of Review: Thursday, May 19

On Monday, April 25, a design review according to the *Design Guidelines for the Eastern Waterfront Standards* was performed for the proposed redevelopment at 158 Fore Street. The review was performed by Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer, Nell Donaldson, Planner, and Deb Andrews, Historic Preservation Program Manager, all within the Department of Planning & Urban Development.

B. Buildings/Architecture: Guidelines

1. Contextual Design – The project is proposed in an eclectic and underdeveloped area on the waterfront providing less architectural context as other parts of the neighborhood. The hotel is contemporary in design and is of similar scale as the Residence Inn and Ocean Gateway garage. The building orientation respects the mid-block permeability found in the India Street Form-based Code zone (which was not applicable at the time of the application) and therefore places its longest dimension on the “B” street of Hancock and the interior alley will be created through the site keeping physical and visual connections to the waterfront.

2. Building Composition:

a. Placement – The building has three street frontages and creates a street wall by placing the building at the property line on all three streets. This helps to establish the more urban street wall sought to be built up in the neighborhood and on the waterfront as it develops. The primary entrance faces directly onto Thames Street.

b. Height – The Eastern Waterfront Master Plan recommended 3-5 stories for this section of the neighborhood. Building height meets zoning and is similar to surrounding new construction. Much of the surrounding context is unbuilt at this time.

c. Massing – The project places its largest massing on the “B” street of Hancock to mitigate the impact of the building length. Scaling elements such as material and façade plane changes, canopies, and fenestration are used to make the scale more comfortable at the street for pedestrians. The building corners on Hancock at Thames and Fore Street are curved for emphasis of entries and in acknowledgment of the surrounding buildings in the context.

d. Proportion - The long proportion of the building is oriented to Hancock Street in order to mitigate the scale of the building from the waterfront approach.

e. Articulation – The reviewers find the use of “traditional” lintels and headers on the brick portion of the building to be out of context with the contemporary nature of the building as a whole. Articulation in these sections of the building should be provided

with details such as punched windows, soldier course, or texture, for example. *This item has been addressed.*

f. Materials – Please provide material samples. There are too many material types and colors without an apparent relationship to each other. The reviewers propose that the Hancock/Fore Street corner material be revised, possibly in color to grey, to be more subtle and provide a visual cohesion for the building as a whole. *This item has been addressed.*

3. Pedestrian Environment – The project is intended to foster a walkable and enjoyable pedestrian environment through the addition of street trees and pedestrian lights, active street wall in key locations, outdoor dining, and a mid-block pedestrian passage. The building architecture attempts to add pedestrian comfort through articulation and scaling details.

4. Primary Entrances and Service Entrances – This project has frontage on three public streets and one internal street. The building is oriented towards Thames Street with the principal façade of the project facing the water and having the most visual exposure as people approach from the ferry, cruise ships, and trail. A prominent entrance faces directly onto Thames with hotel pick-up and drop-off situated interior to the block in the alley which will include a pedestrian-friendly alley accessible to pedestrian traffic from Thames and the Ocean Gateway garage. The service entries are on “B” streets (Hancock and the block interior). An additional public entrance faces Hancock at the community room.

5. Parking Structures – N/A Parking is provided off-site in the Ocean Gateway Garage.

6. Infill and Small Scale Development – N/A

7. Historic Structures – N/A

8. Civic Structures – N/A

9. Marine Development – N/A

C. Open Space and the Public Realm: Guidelines

1. Public Open Space and Plazas – N/A

2. Private Open Space and Plazas

a. Internal Open Space – The project provides internal open space in the form of a mid-block alley accessible to pedestrians from Thames and Fore Streets and for vehicles from Fore Street. The space is designed as the pick-up and drop-off for the hotel and also serves as a welcome mid-block permeable break in the large block providing visual and physical connection through the block to the waterfront. The amenities include landscaping, bollards, benches, potentially an art installation, and high quality paving – the intention is to make the space inviting for pedestrian travel.

b. Internal/External Interplay – The project will also include outdoor dining spaces on Thames Street with the intention of activating the street.

c. Passageways – See a. above – mid-block passage is included in project and is open air and publicly accessible.

3. Historic Sites – N/A

4. Public Art – N/A

5. View Protection – N/A