

Planning and Urban Development Department

Planning Division



Subject: R-6 Small Infill Design Review – 70 Anderson Street

Written by: Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer

Date of Review: Wednesday, September 7, 2016

A design review according to the *City of Portland Design Manual* Standards was performed for the proposed new construction of a multi-family dwelling at 70 Anderson Street. The review was performed by Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer, Nell Donaldson, Planner, and Shukria Wiar, Planner, all within the 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).

Findings of the Design Review:

The proposed design **does not pass** all of the criteria – 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.

Principle A Overall Context – **Not Met** – see below.

- *A-1 Scale and Form:* The scale the project is larger than most buildings on this small street, but the height is three stories and does not overshadow the neighboring 2.5 or 3 story residential buildings. The form is mostly defined by the gabled roof which is a traditional New England roof form.
- *A-2 Composition of Principal Facades:* The compositions of the street-facing facades are consistent with context in terms of using symmetrical bays (two or three bays).
- *A-3 Relationship to the Street:* The building placement is consistent with the spacing of the residential fabric – slightly setback from sidewalk to allow for stoops and provide some privacy. **The ground floor does not appear to have been raised on Lancaster and the building entrances do not seem to have been subsequently raised. The primary entrances for the rowhouses should be consistently oriented to Lancaster Street but only two entrances now remain facing the street. The design is confusing – where are the primary entrances – why are they not all facing the same street?**

Principle B Massing – Met – The roof pitch and height of the gable roofs now reflect and reinforce the traditional building character of the neighborhood.

- *B-1 Massing:* The proposed mass is wider on the street than the typical building context but the use of row houses mitigates that massing.
- *B-2 Roof Forms:* **The gable roof was revised to have an 8:12 pitch and the trim details revised to create a more vertical proportion from the Anderson Street view.**
- *B-3 Main Roofs and Subsidiary Roofs:* Met – there is a clear main roof form.

- *B-4 Roof Pitch:* The standard requires gable roofs to have a slope between 7:12 and 12:12.
- *B-5 Façade Articulation:* The project revision employs two of the required articulation elements – covered entries and bays. **Bays were added to both Lancaster and Anderson Streets to meet the standard.** However, the bays on Anderson are out of proportion to the overall façade and should either be enlarged or removed altogether (for this project Anderson is the “B” street). The previous canopy profile was preferred over the one now proposed which is incongruous in character with the building architecture. The connected “porch” canopy interior to the block is not appropriate for individual rowhouses.
- *B-6 Garages:* Not applicable.

Principle C Orientation to the Street – Not Met – The project is oriented to the streets, however, the privacy associated with private residential architecture is not created – ground floor living spaces too low.

- *C-1 Entrances:* The entry to each unit is well-emphasized with the canopy.
- *C-2 Visual Privacy:* Visual privacy was addressed by shortening ground floor windows to be higher than 48” above adjoining sidewalk grade; **the street-facing ground floor is not adequately raised above sidewalk grade appropriate for private residential buildings with living space on the ground floor (at least 24” is required by the standard).**
- *C-3 Transition Spaces:* The project uses a canopy at each entrance but very little transition space is provided – **ground floor living spaces still have not been elevated on Lancaster Street.**

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

- *D-1 Windows:* The majority of windows are rectangular and have vertical proportion; **window proportion was changed to better reflect the context.**
- *D-2 Fenestration:* The project appears to meet the 12% fenestration requirement and appropriately scaled to the massing of 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 Symmetricality:* Primary window compositions are arranged symmetrically around discernable vertical axes.

Principle F Articulation – Met – Based on the information given, it appears 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:* Two window types

- *F-3 Visual Cohesion:* The visual cohesion of the façade is good **with the exception of the canopy profile and “porches” – the designs are incongruous with the rest of the buildings. Porches should be replaced with individual canopies.**
- *F-4 Delineation between Floors:* The first floor is delineated through trim and change of clapboard reveal.
- *F-5 Porches, etc.:* The stoop and canopy are well integrated into the overall design.
- *F-6 Main Entries:* The main entry is emphasized with prominent placement facing the street, the use of a canopy.
- *F-7 Articulation Elements:* It appears the rake of the roof meets the 6” requirement; the trim details are not clear; there do not appear to be offsets in the principal façades.

Principle G Materials – Met – The material choices are well-placed and clapboard is contextual for residential architecture in this neighborhood.

- *G-1 Materials:* The residential context is predominantly clapboards with occasional shingle or brick – **base should be brick, not tile.**
- *G-2 Material and Façade Design:* The materials are appropriately placed according to their nature **with the exception of the fake bricked-in doors on Anderson which should be removed and returned to clapboard.**
- *G-3 Chimneys:* Not applicable.
- *G-4 Window Types:* Two window types.
- *G-5 Patios and Plazas:* Internal plaza space uses stone steps and a concrete brick paver with rain garden and planting areas.