

Historic Preservation Application

50 India Street Portland, Maine

04.19.17

Project Description

The project comprises a four-story mixed-use building, with a rooftop deck, proposed landscaping, and several sidewalk improvements at the small 2,400 SF lot on the western corner of the India St. and Middle St. intersection. The structure's first two floors are commercial space for a cPort Credit Union branch, while the third and fourth floors will be a single, luxury residential unit with rooftop access. The building's total area is 6,880 SF and, although its 1,720 SF footprint covers most of the site, two narrow alleys remain to the north and west. These alleys are enhanced via landscaping and controlled with a 6' high lockable, ornamental, aluminum fence. In addition, there are three (3) proposed 15 minute on-street parking spaces, one (1) street light, and one (1) street tree.

Architecture

Listening to our client has always been the beginning of our design process for Gawron Turgeon Architects. During our first initial design meetings with cPort Credit Union, it was clear that this building should and would be designed to fit the fabric of the India Street Neighborhood urban environment. The project is located on the corner of India and Middle Streets and the predominant building material is red brick with traditional detailing incorporating cornices, granite bases and entablatures. Most of the surrounding structures have flat roofs and there is a blend of older style wood storefront windows and newer aluminum storefronts. The location of the property also lends itself to great exposure and visibility from multiple points of view. The design intent of cPort's building is to compliment the Middle Street elevation in keeping with a similar granite base, brick and lighting design that is being used on the adjacent property. The height of materials and the banding along middle and India Street will follow the heights of the existing adjacent building as well creating a clean visual sight line.

cPort Credit Union is not a new credit union. They were founded in 1931 and have a rich history in the Portland area and throughout the State of Maine. To symbolize this history, we chose the Royal River Series brick which has an irregular shape and is an extruded material. This type of brick has "old world charm" and represents the style that would have been installed in the time period of the surrounding historic buildings.

In the same respect, cPort Credit Union is continually evolving and adapting as a credit union to better suit the needs of their members. They are advancing their banking methods with technology and are at the forefront of leading edge solutions. The Alucabond metal panels, Nichiha metallic series horizontal siding and aluminum storefront system underscores cPort credit Union's contemporary image and ability to adapt

to modern day trends. The expanse of glass throughout the first and second floor also allows cPort Credit Union to be visible to the community.

The responsible and thoughtful design of the building at 50 India St. captures the history of cPort Credit Union while also representing a significant commitment to the city and the surrounding community.

Site

The project's site component can be divided into two parts: the sidewalks and the alleys. Being a corner lot, each sidewalk has its own character. The proposed Middle St. sidewalk condition takes its cues from the neighboring Ribolita's. The building's ATM and main commercial entrance along the façade dictate a clean sidewalk condition, suitable for ample pedestrian circulation. Wall-mounted building fixtures light the sidewalk in this area. The India St. sidewalk borrows from the new development to the North by continuing the established street tree and street light pattern. This helps suggest a more urban residential feel. All of the proposed sidewalk will be constructed from Pine Hall Pathway Paver Brick in accordance with city standards.

The treatment of remaining alleys also borrows from contemporary projects in the neighborhood. A small expanse of brick, wrapping around the northeast corner of the building, provides a small area for a city standard bike hitch. The entrance to the India St. alley is controlled with a 6' black aluminum fence and lockable gate. There is no programmed use beyond this point except for the occasional utility service and emergency access. The fence runs perpendicular from the cPort building and then turns to follow the lot line, ending just before the abutting structure. The minimal proposed vegetation acknowledges the neighboring project, creating a shared landscape bed. With plantings to either side, much of the fence will be obscured. Except for a small concrete pad, the entire surface of the alleys is paved with turfstone, a permeable paver. The fence and gate at the Middle St. alley is offset from the façade only slightly and restricts all public access. Because of its narrow shape and sun exposure, no plants are proposed in this area.

While there are no parking provisions within the property itself, removing two existing curb cuts and installing a city standard brick sidewalk with vertical granite curb provides adequate space for three (3) on-street 15 minute parking spaces – one along India St. and two on Middle St.

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