
Fwd: Comments re: MMC 22 Bramhall site plan

jmy <jmy@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Dec 17, 2018 at 3:56 PM

To: Helen Donaldson <hcd@portlandmaine.gov>

Saved to the project file and posted to web and google drive.

On Saturday, December 15, 2018 at 5:37:17 PM UTC-5, Christian MilNeil wrote:

To the planning board and staff,

Thanks for all your work in improving the MMC site plan over the past couple of months, and I'd also like to express my appreciation to MMC for what appears to be an earnest commitment to quality design.

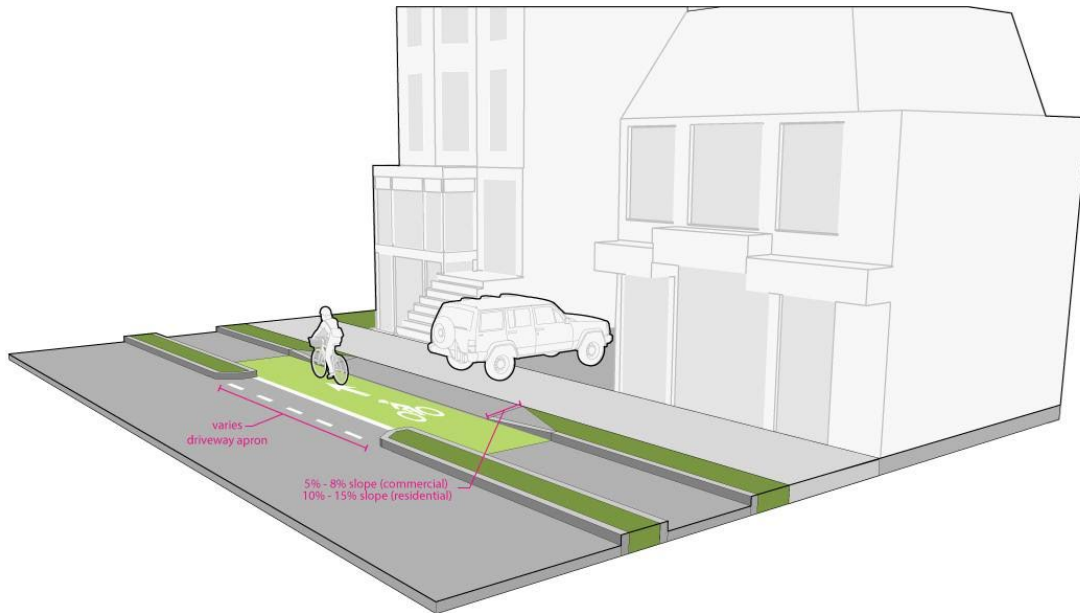
I support this project but I have a couple of comments and suggestions about the application, mostly with respect to maximizing the project's potential to replace excessive car traffic with more pedestrian, transit and bike trips instead:

- Overall I think this proposal will be a strong net positive to the lower Congress Street area, replacing a dark and looming garage with an attractive, engaging building and an inviting, pedestrian-oriented entrance plaza.
- I'd like to take note two details in the TDM plan: first, that currently under 3% of the hospital's 4,400 employees walk, bike or ride the bus to work; however, 8% of employees live under a mile away, and 27% of employees (over 1,500 workers) live under 3 miles (a reasonable biking distance) away.

So there's a strong potential for MMC to invite more employees to get to work by alternative means and remove dozens of cars from the neighborhood's streets during rush hours here.

- I appreciate and agree with the planning staff's insistence on making sure Gilman Street has sidewalks on both sides of the street – with the new addition, Gilman will be a busy pedestrian route and deserves to be as complete as other city streets in the neighborhood.
- I also strongly endorse the addition of a climbing bike lane up Congress Street. This is a very frequently used bike route – essentially the main entrance to the peninsula for cyclists arriving from the west, including from the Portland Transportation Center.
- However, I am concerned about the bike lane's interactions with potentially high volumes of right-turning traffic entering and exiting the main entrance loop and the visitors garage. These conflict points raise the possibility of right-hook crashes, where turning cars don't look for bikes using the lane to their right.

In those driveway crossings, I'd like to suggest the city and the applicant look into using high-visibility conflict zone markings, similar to markings that have been installed on Park Avenue, at the Exit 6 ramps and on Commercial Street at the Beach Street intersection (this image is from the [City of Seattle's Right-of-Way Improvements Manual](#)):



- The signage and wayfinding plan seems predominantly focused on motorists – in contradiction of the MMC's TDM goals to encourage more pedestrian, transit and bike trips. Perhaps the signage plan should include more wayfinding ideas to direct visitors and staff to/from the METRO bus shelters and the on-site bike parking areas.

Ideally, the City of Portland should also think about implementing its own bike route wayfinding plans throughout this neighborhood, especially now that the city's made significant improvements to bike routes in the area.

Christian MilNeil

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