

August 5, 2019

Nell Donaldson, Senior Planner
City of Portland Planning Division
389 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101



Re: MMC Congress Building | 22 Bramhall St | Level III Site Plan
Response to City Reviewer Comments re: Signage

Dear Nell:

Thank you for coordinating the review of the Maine Medical Center Congress Building project located at 22 Bramhall with frontage on Congress St.. This letter provides a summation of our responses to the comments received from various reviewers as part of the Level III Site Plan process and satisfies

- Condition # 15 of the East Tower & Visitor Garage Approval dated March 29, 2018 which states: “That any new signage relating to the East Tower or Visitors Garage shall be subject to separate site plan review in the context of the Regulatory Framework and IDP Design Standards by the Planning Authority prior to installation”;
- Condition #7 of the St John St Garage Approval dated September 11, 2018 which states: “The applicant shall provide a revised signage master plan for review and approval by the Planning Authority”;
- Condition #5 of the Congress St Medical Building approval dated December 17, 2018 which states: “The applicant shall submit a plan for improving wayfinding to the existing MOB Parking Garage and the Visitor Garage on Congress Street in order to help mitigate sudden stops within this section of roadway for review and approval by the Department of Public Works and the Planning Authority and Planning Authority”;
- Condition #11 of the Congress St Medical Building approval dated December 17, 2018 which states: “The applicant shall submit a revised master signage plan addressing staff comments related to sign size, design, and placement for review and approval by the Planning Authority”.

The original comment is in italics below and our response follows each.

Comments from City of Portland Urban Designer – Caitlin Cameron Dated December 13, 2018

1. *Campus-wide Signage Plan: The draft campus-wide signage plan is included in this submission. Staff had the following comments:*
 - *Signs will not be permitted on properties not owned by MMC – remove the proposed sign on City property at Bramhall Square on page 13. Provide evidence of permission to install sign on property on Bramhall Street not owned by applicant.*

Response: MMC would like to work with the City on a signage solution that provides adequate wayfinding to the Emergency Department. MMC’s Emergency Department is the busiest in the State with over 66,000 patient visits in 2018. Providing adequate wayfinding to this essential element of public health and well-being is critical.

The revised signage plan includes placards that will attach to existing poles on Bramhall Square. These placards will supplement the existing Blue H signs.

The revised plan also includes replacing existing signage in the public right-of-way (signs 9 and 11 on page 11) that MMC believes are critical wayfinding elements for the Emergency Department.

- *Sight line analysis was provided for signs adjacent to driveways – concerns have been addressed.*

Response: Acknowledged.

- *There are concerns about the height of some monument signs - sight lines and pedestrian scale are factors here. Generally, these were reduced in scale except for the sign on Congress Street adjacent to the driveway which will be near 14' tall next to the sidewalk – provide justification for the height of that sign.*

Response: All "ST" type signs are for vehicular use; pedestrian scale message height would not be legible from a vehicle. All "ST" type signs (including ST.4a) have been reduced from the existing size of 11'-6" tall x 5'-0" wide to 11'-0" tall x 3'-10" wide; reducing the signs further will negatively impact the legibility of the sign. ST6.a is a vehicular sign used to identify the parking entry and needs to be seen from a distance (Bramhall St.)

- *Generally, correct discrepancies found in the plans.*

Response: Acknowledged. See revised submission.

2. Individual Sign Design:

- *South parking lot signage: Sign was revised – one sign only as requested.*

Response: Acknowledged.

- *CS.1: Size was reduced, lighting will be internally illuminated letters.*

Response: Acknowledged.

- ## 3. Materials and Finishes: *The materials and finishes include painted aluminum with either plastic push through letters for monument signs or surface applied vinyl copy for signs attached to the building, fences, or walls. In some cases, the existing steel supports are being re-used which is dictating the width and proportions of the signs. These materials and finishes meet the standard. Stone veneer was removed from the palette.*

Response: Acknowledged.

Comments from City of Portland Traffic Consultant – Tom Errico, TY Lin Dated December 13, 2018

- ### 1. *The Applicant shall improve/enhance wayfinding to the existing MOB Parking Garage and the Visitor Garage. Advance directional signage should help to mitigate sudden stops that may have been a contributing factor in crashes. A signage plan shall be provided for review and approval by City staff.*

Response: In conversations with City Staff and consultants, MMC's traffic engineer identified a high-crash area for East-bound traffic on Congress St. near the MOB Parking Garage. Wayfinding for the MOB Parking Garage is an issue for east-bound traffic because the MOB blocks a portion of the sign coming from the East and not the West. As a result, MMC evaluated the following options to improve wayfinding for East-bound traffic to the MOB Parking Garage.

Option 1: Attach a sign to the bridge overhanging Congress Street. This sign would be highly visible to the East-bound traffic on Congress St. prior to the entrance to the MOB Parking Garage. This option was eliminated after conversations with City Staff.

Option 2: Relocate the existing sign for the MOB Parking Garage from its current location, set back from Congress St. on MMC owned property, to a location nearer Congress St. in the public right-of-way. This option was eliminated based on previous comments from City Staff about MMC signage in the public right-of-way. Wayfinding signage to the MOB Parking Garage is not as critical as wayfinding signage to the Emergency Department, so, MMC eliminated this option.

Option 3: Add language to the proposed sign on the corner of Gilman and Congress St. preparing East-bound traffic for the turn into the MOB Parking Garage. This option was eliminated due to a lack of proximity to the garage entrance.

Option 4: Add a sign attached to the MOB building west of the pedestrian bridge crossing Congress Street. This option was eliminated due to concerns related to the proximity of the sign to the garage entrance.

Option 5: Add a sign attached to the MOB west of the garage but east of the pedestrian bridge. Site lines are somewhat compromised by street trees in the right-of-way. However, this location would be proximate to the garage entrance and will improve wayfinding for patients arriving to the MOB and avoid sudden stops on Congress Street potentially causing rear-end crashes.