

June 17, 2014

Ms. Barbara Barhydt
Development Review Services Manager
City of Portland
389 Congress Street, 4th Floor
Portland, Maine 04101

**Re: Bishop Street Apartments
72 & 78 Bishop Street
Request for Zoning Map Amendment**

Dear Barbara:

On behalf of Avesta Housing, we are pleased to submit the enclosed Zone Map Amendment application for the property located at 72 & 78 Bishop Street, Map 293, Block C Lots 2 & 3. The applicant is proposing to amend the current zoning designation (a combination of IM, R-3 and R-5) of the property to a B-2 zone with the intent to develop a 30 unit efficiency apartment building.

Housing Objective of the Project

Avesta Housing proposes to develop the combined lots of 72 & 78 Bishop Street to create 30 efficiency units at 72 Bishop Street in Portland for chronically homeless individuals, using a “housing first” approach. As was the case at Logan Place and Florence House, Avesta’s two prior ‘housing first’ projects, Avesta anticipates partnering with Preble Street for the provision of 24-hour, on-site support services and Portland Housing Authority for project-based rental assistance. In addition to the 30 apartments, the property will include common space for residents as well as office space for Avesta and Preble Street staff. Bishop Street Apartments will provide housing and support services for those chronically homeless individuals who are currently most vulnerable due to their significant medical conditions. The project will likely include a partnership with a health care provider, to both address specific health concerns and ensure that residents have access to the health and/or personal care services that medically compromised individuals typically benefit from in their homes.

The proposed facility is in close proximity to employment opportunities, public transportation services, retail and amenities, yet beyond the high paced downtown urban environment. Avesta’s vision for the property is to create a high quality housing resource for the neediest population within the City of Portland that combines the best features of affordable housing and quality design.

The Site

72 & 78 Bishop Street consists of a single family residence (lot 3) and a vacant lot (lot 2). Lot 3 has 50 feet of frontage on Bishop Street and is 8,125 SF; Lot 2 is a 42,419 SF vacant lot with no road frontage and lawn and mixed primary and secondary growth vegetation. The combined property is 52,383 SF (1.203 acres) and are zoned a combination of I-M (Industrial-Moderate Impact), R-3 and R-5 zones.



Abutting properties include a single story 3 unit professional office building to the east at 68 Bishop Street and a Masonic Hall to the west. A car repair garage (Portland Collision) is located across the street. To the south, the parcel abuts property owned by the University of New England. Bishop Street has many large industrial, metal clad buildings with varied businesses including a dog kennel, printing services and home healthcare services.



Professional Office Building

72 Bishop Street

Masonic Hall



Bishop Street Businesses



Residences on Mayfield Street

Bishop Street connects to Riverside Street to the west and Forest Avenue at Morrill's Corner to the east. While there are no residential properties on Bishop Street besides 72 Bishop, approximately ten single family residences are located towards the Forest Avenue end of Bishop Street on a small dead end street (Mayfield Street) that bisects Bishop Street.

Building Program

Bishop Street Apartments will consist of a single, new, 3 story building. The main entrance vestibule and reception is accessed from the first floor with building services including community rooms and offices. In addition, six efficiency units are located on the first level along with laundry, staff rooms and mechanical and electrical facilities. The remaining 24 efficiency units are located on the upper second and third levels. The complex will contain 30 total efficiency units.

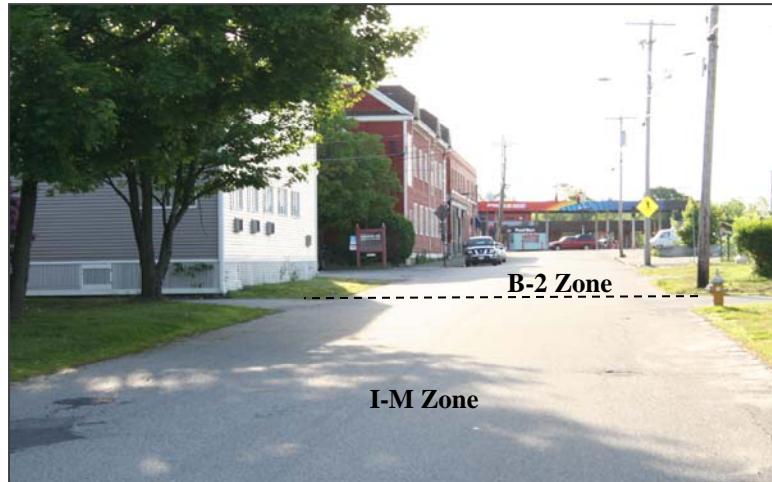
The site will accommodate a 12 space surface parking lot and dumpster pad. Outdoor recreation space will be located on the west side of the building and a landscaped seating area will be located on the eastern side of the building near the main entrance.

Zoning

The combined lots 2 and 3 (72 & 78 Bishop Street) fall within the I-M, R-3 and R-5 zones. The portion of the property along Bishop Street is defined as Industrial-Moderate Impact (IM) while the southern /rear portion of the properties are defined as Residential-3 (R-3) and Residential-5 (R-5). Avesta Housing is requesting a Zone Map Amendment to change the entire parcel created by the combined lots 2 & 3 to the B-2 Zone.

The proposed project intends to align with the city's desire to have a greater density of housing along the Forest Avenue corridor. The current zoning within the I-M zone prohibits residential uses while the R-3 and R-6 zones are primarily for medium density residential. The B-2 zone is located approximately 500 feet

from the property towards Forest Avenue. The B-2 zone supports moderate to high density residential development close to arterials.



View from 72 Bishop St towards Forest Avenue- Zoning

We believe that affording this property B-2 zoning status will provide desirable residential opportunities and support services for a population that is in great need of assistance. The location of the facility will provide residents with easy access to public transit with numerous entry level employment opportunities within walking distance.

Implementing Portland's Vision

Bishop Street Apartments supports many of Portland's goals as stated in the Land Use Ordinance and *Housing: Sustaining Portland's Future*. The purpose of the B-2 zones (sec 14-181) states to provide moderate to high density housing in urban neighborhoods along arterials. Avesta Housing has developed numerous highly successful housing projects throughout Portland and will continue, with this project, to provide excellent housing options for our community.

Housing Replacement Ordinance

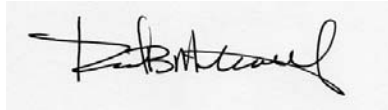
The 30 housing units proposed at Bishop Street Apartments will replace the housing units lost as a result of the demolition of the single family residence.

This submission includes the following information:

1. Zoning Map Amendment Application Fee
2. Application Booklet
3. Plan Set: Sheet L1.0 Existing Conditions
Sheet L1.1 - Concept Site Plan

We look forward to the opportunity to meet with the Planning Board to review this request. Should you have any comments and or questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,
Mitchell & Associates

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Metcalf", is centered below the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Robert Metcalf, Principal
Maine Licensed Landscape Architect

Enclosure

cc. Greg Payne, Avesta Housing
Ben Walter, CWS Architects