



September 22, 2017

VIA EMAIL

Ms. Denyse McGriff, Chair
City of Oregon City Planning Commission
221 Molalla Avenue, Suite 200
Oregon City, Oregon 97045

RE: City of Oregon City Planning Files CP-17-0002, DP-17-0003, NR-17-0004

Dear Chair McGriff and Members of the Oregon City Planning Commission:

Hill Architects is the Architect for the Abernethy Place Masterplan project which is being developed by Hackett Hospitality, LLC ("Hackett" or "the Applicant").

We would like to address the issues related to the design of the hotel and specifically compatibility with the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive center and the Hackett House, which were raised at the planning commission hearing on September 11, 2017.

The applicable design regulation which applies to the design of the hotel is OCMC 17.62.050.A.3 which provides the following:

OCMC 17.62.050.A.3 Buildings structures shall be complimentary to the surrounding area. All exterior surfaces shall present a finished appearance. All sides of the building shall include materials and design characteristics consistent with those on the front. Use of inferior or lesser quality materials for side and rear facades or decking shall be prohibited.

As we explained during our presentation to the planning commission, as we developed the design of the hotel we consulted with the board of directors for the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, and the Oregon City Historic Review Board to seek advice and recommendations regarding the design of the hotel. The specific recommendations which have been incorporated into the hotel design include the following:

- 1 Orient the Hotel perpendicular to Washington Street to present a narrower and less massive façade facing the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive center.
- 2 Increase the height of the hotel to allow the size of the building footprint to be reduced allowing the Hackett House to remain in it's original location without being surrounded on two sides by the new hotel.
- 3 Use natural materials such as Stone quarried in the state of Oregon, and wood siding.
- 4 Use a traditional architectural form with a clearly differentiated base, shaft and top.
- 5 Incorporate traditional architectural elements into the design such as simple rectangular punched window openings reminiscent of historic structures in downtown Oregon City.

6 Incorporate artwork which relates to the historic nature of the site.

We believe we have clearly met the requirements of OCMC 17.62.050.A.3. The hotel exterior finishes are all high quality architectural finishes such as native Oregon stone, wood finish siding, and plaster siding. These high quality materials are used on all four facades of the hotel.

Mr. James Nicita has argued that OCMC 17.62.050.A.3.(a) which provides the following should also apply to the design of the hotel:

OCMC 17.62.050.A.3.(a) Alterations, additions and new construction located within the McLoughlin conservation District, Canemah National Register District, and the Downtown Design District and when abutting a designated Historic Landmark shall utilize materials and design that incorporates the architecture of the subject building as well as the surrounding district or abutting Historic Landmark. Historic materials such as doors, windows and siding shall be retained or replaced with in kind materials unless the community development director determines that the materials cannot be retained and the new design and materials are compatible with the subject building and District of Landmark. The community development director may utilize the Historic Review Board's Guidelines for New Construction (2006) to develop findings to show compliance with this section.

We have designed the hotel to comply with this design standard even though we have been advised that this standard does not apply to the hotel since the proposed project is not located within one of the Historic Districts.

To address this design standard we considered the following:

- 1 We have designed the hotel to leave the site of the adjacent Hackett House unchanged with landscaping providing an appropriate historic setting without moving the house to a new site or wrapping the new construction around two sides of the house.
- 2 The new hotel which is located behind the Hackett House will be screened with a backdrop of large native evergreen trees.
- 3 The Style and building form and composition have been designed to be consistent with the Historic Review Board's guidelines including the following:
 - a. The building style is compatible with the historic building.
 - b. The hotel building uses *"simple and well proportioned building forms and rooflines, especially at the primary façade when new is viewed alongside the historic. Avoid complicated non-rectangular forms and "busy" compositions."* The hotel provides a compatibly designed backdrop screened with evergreen trees to accentuate the historic house.
 - c. The hotel building design is a *"classic timeless design which will not become dated in a short time."*
 - d. The hotel design utilizes traditional window sizes and configurations and traditional floor to floor heights.
 - e. The design is not an *"overly plain, unattractive building with minimal texture."*
 - f. The hotel design *"utilizes materials and design that conveys a sense of quality and craftsmanship."*
 - g. The hotel will incorporate interpretive artwork related to the historic location.

After considering Mr. Nicita's comments and suggestions, we have explored alternative approaches to the design of the hotel which might incorporate additional design features which reference the Hackett House without becoming to "cute". We are attaching a revised rendering of the hotel as viewed from Washington Street showing a new circular window and narrower wood siding on the Tower element facing Washington Street. These elements provide additional architectural connections between the Hackett House and the

Hotel design with the Street facing tower with a round element as the most prominent feature of both the Hotel and the Hackett House. These design changes will be subject to be review and approval by Hilton Hotels.

In conclusion, we believe that the proposed hotel design is consistent with the requirements of OCMC 17.62.050.A.3. as outlined above. You have heard testimony in support of the project design from members of both the End of the Oregon Trail Board, and the Oregon city Historic Review Board. We believe that the proposed design which incorporates high quality materials, and classic design elements and features as outlined above will compliment both the Hackett House and the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center.

For the reasons contained in this letter, the Planning Commission can find that the design of the hotel is in compliance with applicable approval criteria. The applicant requests that the Planning Commission approve the application with reasonable conditions of approval.

Sincerely,

Hill Architects



Lloyd W. Hill AIA

Enclosures

Cc:

Mr. Alkesh Patel
Mr. Dan Fowler
Mr. Michael Robinson
13647/15708 /CF



