

November 10, 2014



Phillip Brown
Majestic Realty
13191 Crossroads Parkway North, Sixth Floor
City of Industry, CA 91746

King Neighborhood Association
4815 NE 7th Avenue
Portland, OR 97211

Dear Mr. Brown,

I write today on behalf of the King Neighborhood Association regarding your proposed design for the development of the lot at the Northwest corner of NE Alberta Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Development on this lot presents an exciting opportunity to enhance the livability of our neighborhood. While we are pleased that you so quickly secured another potential grocer to serve as your anchor tenant, we have concerns regarding the design plans proposed at the Portland Development Commission's Martin Luther King Jr Alberta Project Working Group.

The proposed design plan does not activate the corner of NE Alberta Street and Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. The main entry should be on NE Alberta Street. The entrance in your design is currently placed to face the parking lot, while the walls of the back end of the store present to the street corner. This orientation values car traffic in a manner that is inconsistent with the character of NE Alberta Street and fails to activate this bustling corner. If your anchor tenant's business model is not adaptable to this setting, perhaps you could carve out space along Alberta for smaller tenants who are able to make better use of orientation to the street.

Proper activation of NE Alberta also involves windows. There should be windows along NE Alberta Street looking into active interior spaces of the business (es). Windows along Martin Luther King Jr Blvd should be clear and should look into the store(s); signs, advertisements, etc should not obscure them. This welcoming feature continues the existing character of NE Alberta Street, fosters safety on the sidewalk, and intimately advertises the business. Walls that have no windows or doors should appear consistent with the feel of a neighborhood where commercial development meets residential use. As one neighbor said of a blank wall, "make it interesting."

We are eager to see a healthy exchange of foot traffic between all three buildings on the two lots. The design of the existing Vanport structures anticipates pedestrian traffic, and the final phase of the project should support that goal.

Development on the lot will subject the four existing homes on the Northwest corner to significant pollutions, including the following: light from the parking lot, headlights, and buildings; noise from customers, deliveries, trash pick up, etc.; trash from littering and inadvertent trash container leakage; rodents attracted by trash, recycling, and accidental spills. We ask that you protect these homes from the effects of this pollution, using

landscaping, sensitive scheduling of noisy truck interactions (trash, deliveries), as well as thoughtful placement of these activities. For example, we ask that you not place trash bins along the property line with these houses.

Portland is a city of cyclists. You should offer more bike parking. This will help prevent customers from resorting to scavenging for posts to which they can lock their bikes. It will also encourage bike use, which will relieve congestion in your parking lot, reduce vehicular congestion at this busy corner, and reduce pollution.

We hold these opinions for good reason. They help make our neighborhoods dynamic, active, and livable. Also, they are shared by the City of Portland, which has Community Design Standards to help you plan this project. These Standards protect the existing character of Portland's neighborhoods, encourage increased pedestrian traffic, and speak directly to the placement of the main entrance of the structure you propose to build. Here are some citations that support our requests:

from Chapter 33.218 COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS

33.218.010 Purpose

Design review and historic resource review ensure that development conserves and enhances the recognized special design values of a site or area, and promote the conservation, enhancement, and continued vitality of special areas of the City.

33.218.140 Standards for All Structures in RH, RX, C and E Zones

C. Reinforce the Corner. On sites within a Pedestrian District or with at least two frontages on the corner where two City Walkways meet:

C.4. A main entrance must be on a street-facing wall and either at the corner, or within 25 feet of the corner

F. Main Entrance.

F.1. Location of main entrance. The main entrance of the primary structure must face the street lot line. Where there is more than one street lot line, the entrance may face either of them or the corner.

Portland also has a Comprehensive Plan, which is being revamped this fall. The new Plan identifies the intersection of NE Alberta and Martin Luther King Jr Blvd as a major civic corridor, and placement of a large grocery store at this corner will contribute to the tone of both NE Alberta, Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, and the surrounding neighborhoods, for years to come.

from Community Design Guidelines

E3. Create a sense of enclosure and visual interest to buildings along sidewalks and pedestrian areas by incorporating small scale building design features, creating effective gathering places, and differentiating street level facades.

E3.D [This guideline may be accomplished by] Locating active indoor uses in areas with ground floor windows adjacent to sidewalks and public places

E3.E Placing display windows along pedestrian paths

E4. Create intersections that are active, unified, and have a clear identity through careful scaling detail and location of buildings, outdoor areas and entrances.

D2. Make the main entrances to houses and buildings prominent, interesting, pedestrian accessible, and transit-oriented.

This guideline may be accomplished by:

D2. G. Orienting the main entrance toward the corner to increase visibility and access.

D4. Integrate parking in a manner that is attractive and complementary to the site and its surroundings. Locate parking in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on the community and its pedestrians.

D5. Use site design and building orientation to reduce the likelihood of crime through the design and placement of windows, entries, active ground level uses, and outdoor areas.

E1. Create an efficient, pleasant, and safe network of sidewalks and paths for pedestrians that links destination points and nearby residential areas while visually and physically buffering pedestrians from vehicle areas.

NE Alberta Street is a dynamic and developing commercial corridor. Notably home of the “Alberta Arts District,” it is an example of that melding of small-business commercial and residential areas that is one of the attractive hallmarks of our city. (If you doubt this, you can easily find that real estate agents gleefully advertise that a house is “within walking distance of the Alberta Arts District.”) With the activation of the corner in question, this commercial corridor will be developing westward in a trend that is likely to continue. This development should adhere to the hallmarks of the existing development that has been so successful and popular.

We encourage you to pro -ctively learn about our neighborhood and our local guidelines, and to make thoughtful and innovative contributions to the development of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Margo Dobbertin, KNA Chair

Irek Wielgosz, KNA Co-Chair

Jeff Scott, KNA Treasurer

Nick LaRue, KNA Secretary

Eileen Kennedy, KNA At-Large Rep

Leigh Rappaport, KNA At-Large Rep

Diego Gioseffi, KNA At-Large Rep

Blaire Ottoboni, KNA At-Large Rep

Andrew Neerman, KNA At-Large Rep

CC:

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