
The comments of this pre-application are preliminary in nature and subject to change based upon the submittal of additional or different information. The Planning Commission or City Council are the final decision-making authority of the City and are not bound by the comments made by the Staff as part of this pre-application.

ASHLAND PLANNING DEPARTMENT **SITE:** 27 North Main Street
PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE **APPLICANT:** Alessandro Circiello
COMMENT SHEET **OWNER:** Sam & Amy Wong Tung Ball Trustee
May 8, 2024 **REQUEST:** Commercial Site Design Review

PLANNING STAFF COMMENTS:

This pre-application conference is intended to highlight significant issues of concern to staff and bring them to the applicant's attention prior to their preparing a formal application submittal.

Summary: Staff are generally supportive of historically compatible alterations to commercial buildings intended to enhance the viability of the business environment. The key is incorporating a roll-up door in a way that is respectful to the existing historic building considering the Historic District and Downtown development standards.

- The site is within the Basic Site Review Zone, Detail Site Review Zone, Downtown Historic District and Downtown Design Standards Zone. The proposal to modify the ground floor windows of the front façade of the building requires a Site Review approval for modifications to a Historic Contributing building (Ashland Improvement Building, a Primary Contributing Resource in the Downtown Historic District). However, a Physical and Environmental Constraints permit (P&E) is not required for the façade modifications as the building is existing.
- Because the project does not constitute a “substantial improvement” as provided in AMC 15.10 the building official has determined that no elevation certificate will be required and none of the flood protection provisions of AMC chapter 15 apply. Because the property is located within the Ashland Modified Floodplain and there is historical knowledge of flooding the applicant may want to consider portable flood barriers to protect from flood waters at the entry and at the stand-up bar with accordion window.
- The primary issue with the proposed modifications are whether they would meet the [Historic District Development](#) and [Downtown Design Standards](#) (see AMC 18.4.2.050 and .060). Here are a few key standards that likely will come under consideration:
 - [AMC 18.4.2.060.C.2 Setback](#).
 - a. *Except for arcades, alcoves, and other recessed features, building shall maintain a zero setback from the sidewalk or property line as illustrated in Figures [18.4.2.060.C.2](#), 5, 6 and 10. Areas having public utility easements or similar restricting conditions shall be exempt from this standard.*

- b. *Ground level entries should be recessed from the public right-of-way and have detailing and materials that create a sense of entry as illustrated in Figures 18.4.2.060.C.2, 5, 6, and 10. Avoid treatment shown in Figure 18.4.2.060.C.3.*

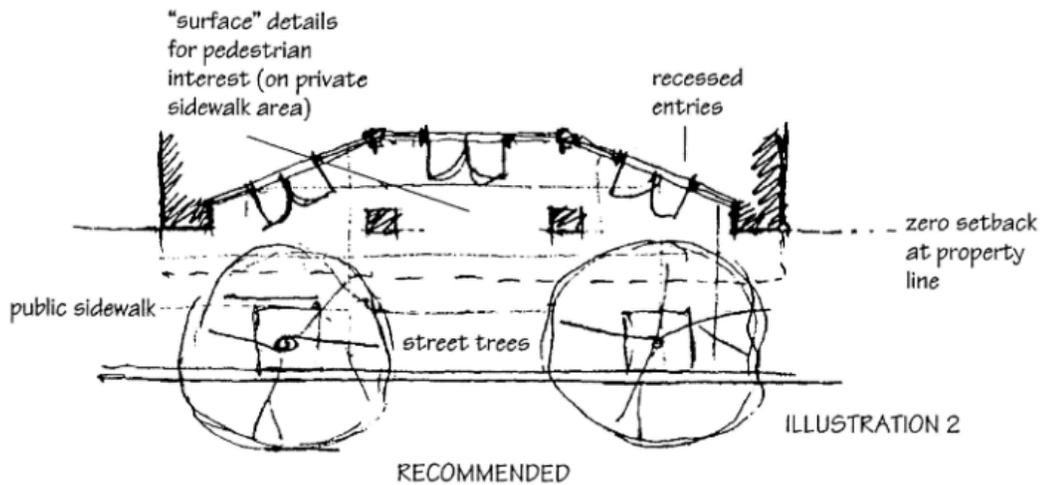


Figure 18.4.2.060.C.2.

• **AMC 18.4.2.060.C.4 Openings.**

- a. Ground level elevations facing a street shall maintain a consistent proportion of transparency (i.e., windows) compatible with the pattern found in the downtown area as illustrated in Figures 18.4.2.060.C.1, 5, 6, and 10.
- b. *Scale and proportion of altered or added building elements, such as the size and relationship of new windows, doors, entrances, column, and other building features shall be visually compatible with the original architectural character of the building as illustrated in Figures 18.4.2.060.C.5 and 6. Avoid treatments shown in Figure 18.4.2.060.C.4 and 9.*

• **AMC 18.4.2.060.C.5. Horizontal Rhythms.**

- c. Buildings shall provide a foundation or base, typically from ground to the bottom of the lower window sills, with changes in volume or material, in order to give the building a sense of strength as illustrated in Figures 18.4.2.060.C.1, 5, and 10. Avoid treatments shown in Figure 18.4.2.060.C.4 and 8.

• **AMC 18.4.2.060.C.6 Vertical Rhythms.**

- b. Storefront remodeling or upper story additions shall reflect the traditional structural system of the volume by matching the spacing and rhythm of historic openings and surface detailing as illustrated in Figure 18.4.2.060.C.6. Avoid treatments shown in Figure 18.4.2.060.C.4 and 9.

- 4.b. Scale and proportion of altered or added building elements, such as the size and relationship of new windows, doors, entrances, column, and other building features shall be visually compatible with the original architectural character of the building.
- 5.c. Buildings shall provide a foundation or base, typically from ground to the bottom of the lower windowsills, with changes in volume or material, in order to give the building a sense of strength.
- **AMC 18.4.2.060.C.8. Materials.**
 - a. Exterior building materials shall consist of traditional building materials found in the downtown area including block, brick, painted wood, smooth stucco, or natural stone.
- **AMC 18.4.2.060.C.9. Awnings, Marquees, or Similar Pedestrian Shelters.**
 - a. Awnings, marquees, or similar pedestrian shelters shall be proportionate to the building and shall not obscure the building's architectural details. If mezzanine or transom windows exist, awning placement shall be placed below the mezzanine or transom windows where feasible
 - b. Except for marquees, similar pedestrian shelters such as awnings shall be placed between pilasters
 - c. Sidewalk coverings along storefronts shall have prominent horizontal lines at similar levels
- **AMC 18.4.2.060.C.10. Other**
 - b. Visual integrity of the original building shall be maintained when altering or adding building elements. This shall include such features as the vertical lines of columns, piers, the horizontal definition of spandrels and cornices, and other primary structural and decorative elements as illustrated in Figure [18.4.2.060.C.6](#). Avoid treatments shown in Figure [18.4.2.060.C.4](#) and 9.

The final application would need to clearly identify proposed materials consistent with the downtown district and Ashland Improvement Building, and any changes to the marquee or signage proposed.

- **AMC 18.4.2.050.B.7 Rhythm of Openings. Recommend:** Pattern or rhythm of wall to door/window openings on the primary façade or other visually prominent elevation is maintained. Maintain compatible width-to-height ratio of bays in the façade. **Avoid:** A pattern or rhythm of window/door openings that is inconsistent with adjacent historic buildings.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (HPAC): The HPAC's weekly Review Board reviewed the proposal and had the following comments, "This is the Ashland Improvement Company Building. Frank Clark was the architect for the 1904 building which was remodeled in 1964 for use as a restaurant. The Ashland Downtown Historic District's National Register survey document notes that 'While the storefronts of the Ashland Improvement Company Building have been serially altered, the elaborate detailing of the second-floor exterior remains essentially as it did upon the building's 1904 completion...(and) successfully relates both its original design and the associations for which it is significant.' In the Review Board's assessment, the two storefronts of the building are essentially identical and a key consideration for the project will be how to execute proposed improvements in a manner which does not put the two storefronts in conflict with each other or the upper floors. Ideally any work done would be similar and compatible across the

two storefronts and replacing the existing rockwork with brick across the full building frontage (i.e. both storefronts) may be worth exploring." The Review Board meets bi-weekly on Thursday afternoons, with appointments beginning at 3:15 p.m., to provide design feedback as the project moves forward. For commercial projects, it is also advisable to take the near-final proposal to the full Historic Preservation Advisory Committee for pre-application comments at one of their monthly meetings prior to submitting a formal Site Design Review application. You can call the front desk at (541) 488-5305 or e-mail planning@ashland.or.us to make a Review Board appointment or reserve a time on the HPAC agenda.

SHADE FOR CALLE GUANAJUATO SEATING: Calle Guanajuato is city property and is located within the Ashland Creek floodplain corridor. Permitting for both restaurant seating and Saturday Market operations is administered through the Parks Department and is subject to Physical & Environmental Constraints and Conditional Use Permits through the Planning Department for the improvements and uses currently in place. Any alterations would need to first receive City/Parks permission, and depending on details of the final proposal may require modification of existing land use permits in addition to required Building Department permits. Generally, anything which could raise floodwater levels, catch flood debris, or float away impacting downstream properties could be a concern. Planning staff would be happy to discuss options to address these issues as the proposal is further explored.

SITE DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL CRITERIA:

The approval criteria and standards in **blue** below are taken directly from the Municipal Code; staff comments are in **black**.

18.5.2.050 Approval Criteria

An application for Site Design Review shall be approved if the proposal meets the criteria in subsections A, B, C, and D below. The approval authority may, in approving the application, impose conditions of approval, consistent with the applicable criteria.

A. Underlying Zone. The proposal complies with all of the applicable provisions of the underlying zone (part [18.2](#)), including but not limited to: building and yard setbacks, lot area and dimensions, density and floor area, lot coverage, building height, building orientation, architecture, and other applicable standards.

B. Overlay Zones. The proposal complies with applicable overlay zone requirements (part [18.3](#)).

C. Site Development and Design Standards. The proposal complies with the applicable Site Development and Design Standards of part [18.4](#), except as provided by subsection E, below.

- The application would need to address the relevant [Historic District Development](#) and [Downtown Design Standards](#) mentioned above. A number of [the Site Development and Design standards](#) won't apply due to the limited scope of the proposal.

D. City Facilities. The proposal complies with the applicable standards in section [18.4.6 Public Facilities](#), and that adequate capacity of City facilities for water, sewer, electricity, urban storm drainage, paved access to and throughout the property, and adequate transportation can and will be provided to the subject property.

E. Exception to the Site Development and Design Standards. The approval authority may approve exceptions to the Site Development and Design Standards of part 18.4 if the circumstances in either subsection 1, 2, or 3, below, are found to exist.

1. There is a demonstrable difficulty meeting the specific requirements of the Site Development and Design Standards due to a unique or unusual aspect of an existing structure or the proposed use of a site; and approval of the exception will not substantially negatively impact adjacent properties; and approval of the exception is consistent with the stated purpose of the Site Development and Design; and the exception requested is the minimum which would alleviate the difficulty;

2. There is no demonstrable difficulty in meeting the specific requirements, but granting the exception will result in a design that equally or better achieves the stated purpose of the Site Development and Design Standards; or

3. There is no demonstrable difficulty in meeting the specific requirements for a cottage housing development, but granting the exception will result in a design that equally or better achieves the stated purpose of section 18.2.3.090. (Ord. 3147 § 9, amended, 11/21/2017)

- The application would need to address the Exception criteria above if any of the details of the proposal do not comply with the applicable design standards.

Neighborhood Outreach: Staff always recommends applicants approach the affected neighbors to discuss proposals and try to address any concerns as early in the process as possible. Notices will be sent to owners of neighboring properties within a 200-foot radius, signs posted on the site and advertised in the local newspaper once an application is deemed complete. In many cases, it is better if neighbors hear of the proposal from the applicants rather than by a formal notice from the city.

Written Findings/Burden of Proof: Applicants should be aware that written findings addressing the ordinance and all applicable criteria are required, and are heavily depended on in the decision making process for a planning action. In addition, the required plans are explained in writing below. The burden of proof is on the applicant(s) to ensure that all applicable criteria are addressed in writing and that all required plans, written findings, and other materials are submitted even if those items were not discussed in specific, itemized detail during this initial pre-application conference.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS' COMMENTS:

FIRE: See attached. Please contact Mark Shay from the Fire Department for any Fire Department-related information at 541-552-2217 or via e-mail to mark.shay@ashland.or.us.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT: No specific comments at this time. Please contact the Building Division for Building Codes-related information at (541) 488-5305.

CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT: No comments at this time. For more information on currently available Conservation programs, please contact the City of Ashland Conservation Division at (541) 552-2062 or e-mail Dan.Cunningham@ashland.or.us .

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: No comments at this time. For any further information, please contact Karl Johnson at (541) 552-2415 or via e-mail to: karl.johnson@ashland.or.us .

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT: The applicant will need to contact Rick Barton in the Electric Department at (541) 552-2082 to discuss service requirements and fees for any changes to the electrical services.

WATER AND SEWER SERVICE: Please Contact 541-488-5353 with any questions regarding water utilities.

PROCEDURAL HANDLING:

The application is subject to a ‘Type I’ procedure, which provides for an administrative decision with notice to neighbors and the potential for appeal to the Planning Commission. If appealed, the Planning Commission hearing would be ‘de novo’ and the Commission’s decision would be the final decision of the city.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Application Form and Fee.** Applications for Type I review shall be made on forms provided by the Staff Advisor. One or more property owners of the property for which the planning action is requested, and their authorized agent, as applicable, must sign the application. The application shall not be considered complete unless the appropriate application fee accompanies it.
2. **Submittal Information.** The application shall include all of the following information.
 - a. The information requested on the application form (see https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/Zoning_Permit_Application_FY23-24.pdf).
 - b. Plans and exhibits required for the specific approvals sought (see below).
 - c. A written statement or letter (“written findings”) explaining how the application satisfies each and all of the relevant criteria and standards in sufficient detail (see below).
 - d. Information demonstrating compliance with all prior decision(s) and conditions of approval for the subject site, as applicable.
 - e. The required fee (see below & https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/Planning_Fees_FY23-24.pdf).

The Ashland Land Use Ordinance, which is Chapter 18 of the Municipal Code, is available on-line in its entirety at: <https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse>

Written Statements

Please provide a copy of a written statement explaining how the application meets the approval criteria from the sections of the Ashland Municipal Code listed below. These written statement provides the Staff Advisor or Planning Commission with the basis for approval of the application:

- **Site Design Review** [**AMC 18.5.2.050**](#)
 - **Non-Residential Site Design Review** [**AMC 18.4.2.040**](#)
 - **Historic District Development Standards** [**AMC 18.4.2.050**](#)
 - **Downtown Design Standards** [**AMC 18.4.2.060**](#)

Plans & Exhibits Required

Please provide one digital set of exhibits (plans or drawings) addressing the submittal requirements from the sections of the Ashland Municipal Code listed below. These exhibits are used to copy the Planning Commission packets and for notices that are mailed to neighbors. Please provide either digitally or on paper no larger than 11-inches by 17-inches a copy of the plans that are reproducible and are drawn to a standard architect’s or engineer’s scale.

- **Site Design Review** **AMC 18.5.2.040**

FEES*: Commercial Site Design Review \$ 1,271.25 + ½ % of valuation

***NOTES:**

- *Applications are accepted on a first come-first served basis.*
- *All applications received are reviewed by staff, and must be found to be complete before being processed or scheduled at a Planning Commission meeting.*
- *Applications will not be accepted without a complete application form signed by the applicant(s) and property owner(s), all required materials and full payment.*
- *Applications are reviewed for completeness in accordance with ORS 227.178, and the first COMPLETE applications submitted are processed at the next available Planning Commission meeting.*

For further information, please contact: May 8, 2024
 Veronica Allen, Associate Planner
 Phone: 541-552-2042/ E-mail: veronica.allen@ashland.or.us