

DJCOREGON

BUILDING INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 266 NUMBER 35

Part of the BRIDGETOWER MEDIA network

MAY 2, 2022 \$2.00

23 new construction bidding opportunities PAGE 4



21 new public notices and calls for bids PAGE 12

A DENSE DEVELOPMENT FOR NORTHWEST PORTLAND

After lauding the design of an initial eight-building project, the Design Commission says expansive portion needs work



Building 13 is one of five additional buildings planned for Northbound 30 Collaborative. The first eight previously received the Portland Design Commission's approval. *Leeb Architects, Jones Architecture and Waechter Architecture*

Refinement ahead for growing multifamily project

BY CHUCK SLOTHOWER

cslothower@djcOregon.com

Design commissioners on Thursday suggested significant changes to a developer's proposal for a mass-timber multifamily project near Forest Park in Northwest Portland.

Noel Johnson, an independent local developer, is proposing to build 13 structures containing 219 total multifamily units at Northwest 29th Avenue and Nicolai Street. Each building would have 16 to 19 units.

The development, known as Northbound 30 Collaborative, would be a companion to Johnson's adjacent Wilson Forest Park Townhomes; construction of its final units is nearly complete. Both developments feature low-slung residences made from cross-laminated timber, but they have distinct investors and are separate legal entities.

Eight of the Northbound 30 (NB30) buildings were previously approved, with designs by Waechter Architecture and Jones Architecture. On Thursday, Johnson sought design advice for five additional buildings designed by Leeb Architects. The site gained room for more buildings after the Northwest Children's Theater and School found a downtown location that better suited the organization's needs, Johnson said.

The Design Commission awarded the previous design for NB30 a citation for design excellence. The newly proposed buildings still need some work, commissioners said Thursday.

"I don't think the design of the new buildings fits in with the design of the previous buildings," said Commissioner Jessica Molinar. "I think it's just too many moves."

Commissioner Don Vallaster agreed. "This thing doesn't work for me," he said. "This thing has to be simplified. ...



Leeb Architects, Jones Architecture and Waechter Architecture

Northbound 30 Collaborative is expected to have 13 separate buildings with 16 to 19 units apiece.

It's too dense, it's confusing and it muddles the whole concept."

The site has a base 3:1 floor-area ratio, and a height limit of 65 feet. Materials were chosen to echo Forest Park and the industrial sanctuary to the north, Johnson said.

Commissioners criticized a pedestrian walkway that they said leads to little except a leasing office and interacts too much with vehicle traffic. They also criticized a column holding up one of the building corners.

NB30 Collaborative would furnish 98 vehicle parking spaces, including 12 surface spots. Bicycle parking would total 345 spaces, including 219 in-unit spots.

There was some disagreement Thursday about whether the development met bike parking requirements when calculated separately with the five new-

est buildings, or overall. There are also limits to how many bike parking spaces can be provided in units, and even how far from the door they can be, Bureau of Development Services planner Grace Jeffreys said.

"We believe we fully meet code," Johnson said.

Johnson told commissioners he and Leeb Architects would work to address their concerns.

"You've given us a lot of changes that we can incorporate to show respect for your opinions," he said. "We will go back and attempt to do so."

Most of the suggested changes were minor and could be accomplished, Johnson said.

"I thought this was a pretty purely design-driven discussion, and that's something I respect," he said.

The massing scheme of separate

buildings means the project is not subject to inclusionary housing requirements, which apply only to buildings of 20 units or more. Johnson, who has criticized the affordable housing policy, said the site lent itself to the broken-up massing.

"It's the right massing for the neighborhood to have multiple small buildings," he said. "It's just the right design response."

"Separate from that - I don't think our inclusionary housing program is working."

The NB30 Collaborative project team is scheduled to return before the Design Commission on June 2.

Johnson said he expects to use I&E Construction as general contractor. The Wilsonville firm built the Wilson Forest Park Townhomes.