



February 7, 2023

Kathleen Bradley Colwell
City of Methuen
Planning Division Director
City Hall
41 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844
RE: 269 Broadway & 2 Osgood

To the Planning Division Director:

i3 Architects, PLLC has reviewed the following documents and plans provided to the City of Methuen and provided responses as shown as **CD 2/7/23:___** above the previous comment sections.

- Letter Response 2/2/23
- Plans: Architecture and Site Plan Set 01/31/23

The planning division for the city of Methuen has requested a review of the updated project submission regarding the proposed new building for **269 Broadway & 2 Osgood**. The existing vacant lot is located within the Searles Tenney Nevins Historic District. The city of Methuen has requested a review and recommendations due to its location to the historic district and regarding the 40R Ordinance #92 Design Guidelines so that project might complement the existing historic fabric that the City of Methuen is enriched with.

The following are my questions, concerns, observations, recommendations, and request for additional information in the review of the documents provided to the city of Methuen as applicable.

Architectural Plans:

The new building's massing, scale, and proportions of the building per their proposed elevations and renderings both in the MCSGOD Application package and Historic District Commission package/presentation align mostly with the Design Guidelines of the 40R District Ordinance with the following exceptions/concerns.

- **CD: 2/7/23 This is not addressed in the current set of plans dated 1/31/23. The letter dated 2/2/23 makes note of additional design elements that they have provided such as fencing, plantings and**

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change in windows in an elevation however it does not show the scale to the two story historic structure.

The scale of the miscellaneous two-story homes that are adjacent or in the surrounding area. There should be further investigation/ information provided to show scale and proportion from the adjacent housing and that the balance between the building height/ story height, and massing of the new building is appropriate to residences especially the historic homes and not just the larger size buildings that are in the area. As the historic homes contribute to the historic character to the district as well.

- **CD 2/7/23: The elevations have been updated and slightly modified from the previous submission to HDC and CDB and still appropriately use the materials, windows, doors etc. However, with the changes the HDC will have to do a review prior to approval as they were modified since their last submission to the commission.**

The project details as shown in the elevations and renderings appropriately use materials, windows, doors, and overall building articulation such as the use of the bay windows on Broadway. There should be further detailing provided as the architectural plans are developed on building material transitions etc.; however as shown in the plans is nicely detailed with the historic district in mind.

- **CD 2/7/23: There is a story discrepancy based on the renderings/ street section provided on the plan set 1/31/23. The adjacent structure is a 2.5 story structure and the proposed is a 4 story structure which is a 1.5 story difference. Therefore, it should be looked at for alternatives or further study to confirm that the new building is sensitive to its context.**

Under Architectural Guidelines; 1. Building Mass, Scale and Proportions; f; it states the following; **"If there is a discrepancy greater than one-story between the proposed building height and the height patterns of the adjacent existing buildings, design alternatives should be considered for context sensitivity based upon articulation of façade, building mass, scale, bulk and proportions, or other building massing considerations."** After reviewing the plans and location of this historic home there is concern that there is more than one story discrepancy with historic home located 8 Ditson Place and that further design alternative and/ or review to this context should be considered.

- **CD2/7/23 (No comment)** The architect/ developer did take in consideration the concern of overall height and did bring down the height of the building down using roofline strategies within the residential units within the current application with historic district commission. This lessened their overall unit square footage but proved to provide a positive for overall massing, proportion and scale to the buildings within the historic district.

Review of Building Orientation & Entrances:

- **CD2/7/23 (No Comment)**

The building is orientated with primary facades located on Broadway and Osgood street locations. With Commercial and Residential entrances clearly visible.

- **CD 2/7/23 A letter dated 2/2/23 with additional elevations were provided with modifications to provide additional privacy due to the concern of the abutters. However, the overall context of this area within this part of the historic district is not shown/ represented therefore it is difficult to make a determination if these modifications provide a resolution to the concerns. The applicant has only provided a street section of Broadway which has not been the concern for scale, proportion or privacy.**

There is a concern without a rendering included with abutter context that there isn't enough privacy between residential abutters and the proposed mixed use building. There should be adequate context shown to resolve this concern which is under the guidelines letter g.

In summary, after reviewing the updated proposed building due to its location within the Searles Tenney Nevins Historic District and requires review under the 40R Ordinance 924; the project's design still successfully uses design elements such as overall massing, fenestration, building location, and exterior details. However, studying/ reviewing the massing, overall height as stated previously and privacy/ scale with residential abutters to meet the design guidelines is still a concern.

Sincerely,



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