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J. David Hunt to Doug Wright

David J. Hunt

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THE CITY OF
PORTLAND



OREGON

March 20, 1979

DEPARTMENT OF
DEVELOPMENT AND
CIVIC PROMOTION

PORTLAND
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION


Allison Logan Belcher
Jerry G. Jones
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J. David Hunt
Executive Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Doug Wright, Director, Bureau of Planning

FROM: J. David Hunt, Executive Director, P.D.C. 

SUBJECT: April 3, 1979, Planning Commission Agenda:
Pioneer Square

Attached is the Pioneer Courthouse Square Report of Project Status for Public Review prepared for the Development Commission by Donald J. Stastny, Project Manager, based on recommendations of the Citizens' Advisory Committee. This transmittal for your review and action is in follow through to Council direction of October 12, 1977, Resolution 31971, directing the Portland Development Commission to prepare "in cooperation with the Portland City Planning Commission, a design process and work program, to be approved by the Portland Development Commission and the City Planning Commission and presented to the City Council".

The program is essentially the same as that presented at your December 5, 1978, meeting. However, the desired additional funding sources have not been secured, and it appears that at this point the City should proceed with the development of the best possible design program for the site and then use that to help develop the necessary financing. This, and the additional design time, made available by the delay in completion of the East Garage, should provide a more comfortable and flexible design process.

Requested Action

1. Adoption of, or modifications to, the basic design program and designer selection process elements.

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2. General comment and advice.
3. Additional steps, areas of study, or coordination which should occur in preparing final recommendations to City Council on the design program and designer selection process.
4. Recommendation that the Council proceed with the acquisition of the full block with H.C.R.S. assistance and proceed with the designer selection process and design process to allow construction to proceed as soon as possible upon the completion of the East Garage.

Action of the Design Committee and Historic Landmarks Commission this month will be available for consideration by the Planning Commission at its April 3rd meeting. Representatives of the Development Commission staff, Don Stastny, Project Manager, and representatives of the Citizens' Advisory Committee and the Project Design Advisory Committee will be on hand to answer any questions the Commission may have. Please let me know what additional presentation materials and information should be made available to your Commission to assist in addressing the above areas where recommendations are requested.

JDH:MAC/ew

cc: Rod O'Hiser - Design Committee
Leo Williams - Historical Landmarks Commission
Mike Lindberg
Doug Bridges
Commissioners' Assistants

PIONEER COURTHOUSE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND AND CURRENT STATUS

Coordination

The report has been prepared with the advice and assistance of a Design Advisory Committee made up of representatives of the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Metropolitan Arts Commission and the American Institute of Planners; a Technical Advisory Committee made up of representatives of Trimet and those bureaus affected by the development and operation of the facility; and a Staff Coordinating Committee made up of staff representatives of the Development Commission, Bureau of Planning and Bureau of Parks. The Bureau of Planning organized a staff task force to address the Pioneer Square program.

In addition, progress reports have been made and comment solicited from those groups and individuals who would have a particular interest in the development of the Square. These include: Downtown businesses, realtors, Downtown Community Association, City Club, Metropolitan Youth Commission, Commission on Aging, Junior League, Portland Beautification Association, League of Women Voters, Rose Festival Association, Chamber of Commerce, Building Owners and Managers, Rotary Club, Urban Tour Group, Downtown Kiwanas Club, Metropolitan Parks Foundation, Federal Circuit Court, Portland State University - School of Urban Affairs, Portland Hotel Association, Folk Fest, Art Quake, Retail Employees Union, Gray Panthers, Institute on Aging, Oregon Architecture Barrier Council, Portland Garden Club, Wasington Park Zoo, American Rhododendren Society, Japanese Garden Society and Portland Federation of Garden Clubs. Staff has made progress reports to the Historical Landmarks Commission, Planning Commission, Design Committee and Street Tree Committee.

Public Hearing

On December 4, 1978, the Citizen Advisory Committee made a progress report at a public meeting in the City Council Chambers. The minutes of that meeting and related correspondence are on file with the Development, Landmarks and Planning Commissions. Comments there focused on an interest in seeing flexibility in the design program, sufficient time allotted for the design process, and support for the idea of a quality plaza on this site. The hearing itself stimulated media coverage and generated public awareness of the project and the proposals.

Program Decisions

In developing the proposal, the Citizens' Committee has been guided by the following criteria:

1. That the site should be used primarily for a single major function.

2. A major portion of the Square should be covered.
3. The use should be a positive attractor rather than solely a passive addition to the esthetic environment of the core area.
4. It should be the kind of quality that will attract the major contributions from the private sector that will be required.
5. The final design must be complimentary to both transit mall and surrounding structures.
6. A budget should be structured that can be reasonably met.

Other major factors included the generation of income to offset potential operating costs, concern about creating any element which might serve as an attractive nuisance or a detriment to an inviting shopper atmosphere in the downtown, and Department of Interior policies requiring that any uses on the block be secondary to and supportive of the intended open space and recreation orientation of the site. These criteria tended to preclude a large, uncontrolled, sheltered space or emphasis on retail commercial facilities.

Project Funding

The Development Commission and the Committee have attempted to develop a financing package to meet the \$7,432,000 budget. This involved requests to major foundations, discussions with potential contributors and grant requests to the Departments of Transportation and Interior. To date, no additional funds have been raised over and above the original commitment of \$2,500,000 from the Department of Interior, May Company and HCD.

Timing

The delay in the completion of the East Garage provides an extension of the design period to Spring of 1980. If a design program is decided upon in the near future, this would allow for the suggested six month competition period and adequate design time, and still avoid vacating the existing garage, leaving a boarded up structure in the center of the City.

To meet the June 30th deadline in the City's option agreement with May Company and Grant Agreement with the Department of Interior, the City Council is scheduled to consider the acquisition of the full block by late April. The purchase of the full block, with the assistance of Department of Interior Funds, carries with it regulations which currently preclude the construction of a major shelter. Regulations provide, however, that at some future time the City could trade a portion of the block for other equivalent open space in the downtown so that such a facility could be built, if the Council, through this review process, determines it appropriate and is able to generate the necessary public and private funds.