



Allyson Brooks Ph.D., Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

July 2, 2018

Mr. Keith Jones
Senior Planner, Community and Economic Development Department
City of Vancouver
415 W 6th St
Vancouver, WA 98668-1995

In future correspondence please refer to:
Project Tracking Code: 2018-05-03798
Property: Providence Academy; 400 E Evergreen Blvd, Vancouver
Re: New multi-family construction

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for contacting the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). We are providing these comments per your request as a courtesy review in the interest of maintaining the listing status of the National Register listed House of Providence (commonly known as the Providence Academy) in Vancouver. Our review is based upon documentation contained in your communication.

We understand and appreciate the need for the Providence Academy, owned and operated by The Historic Trust, to support their mission to maintain and preserve this National Register listed property by developing the site for mixed-use. How this is accomplished is central to our review and the publicity this project proposal has been receiving in the community. With that being said, DAHP is supportive of building new structures to support the mission to preserve the existing buildings, but we do have some reservations regarding the currently proposed siting of the new buildings as well as their outward appearance and design.

DAHP highly recommends considering an alternative approach to the site plan. We appreciate the effort taken in pulling the new buildings away from the Academy on the west elevation, as well as the creation of a defined open space at the southwest corner of the property. However, siting the new buildings in the north parking lot on the rear side of the property, or clustering the new development closer to the northwest corner of the property should be considered to better preserve viewsheds to the primary (south) elevation and the secondary (west), highly visible elevation.

Regarding height, we highly recommend a design that perhaps includes a larger overall footprint on the site, but limits the maximum height of new construction to be below the roof ridge of the Academy. This allows the roof and bell tower to be clearly prominent in the “skyline” and avoids competing rooftop elements between the existing and the new construction. All new construction should be deferential to the Academy.

Regarding the design for the new multi-family housing, we highly recommend that characteristics of the existing buildings be better represented in the new construction. The



Academy has many prominent design features, such as a large projecting cornice, exterior porches, stone base, accented entry points, and gable end form that calls attention said entry points from roofline down to the ground. The bell tower, as mentioned before, is also a prominent feature, though a contemporary interpretation of it might not be appropriate. Contemporary interpretations of the other design features, however, are important to allow the new buildings to contextually relate and respond to their immediate surroundings. The new construction should have features that speak to the generation in which they are constructed, but one would easily be able to tell that they are similar in character. Also, the color of the brick proposed is also important in relating back to the original building. The overall color scheme should complement the color scheme of the Academy and look intentional in the way it responds to its historic context.

Should this project proposal require consultation and evaluation pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), these comments should be strongly considered.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Vann, AIA
Historical Architect
(360) 586-3079
nicholas.vann@dahp.wa.gov

cc: Jan Bader, City of Vancouver
Mike True, The Historic Trust

