

# COX ARCHITECTS

**Date: July 20, 2009**

**To: Deanna Rhodes**

**From: Dave Cox AIA**

**Re: Portland Town Place Architectural Design Review**

We have reviewed the revised plans submitted on July 09, 2009. The revisions have clearly responded to our request for information memos of March 24, 2009 and June 10, 2009.

For the past 45 years Cox Architects has been a strong proponent of historic preservation. Because of this we cannot support the Portland Town Place application. The following are our observations and concerns.

- ⊕ The existing site and buildings are historically significant as defined by the Secretary of Interior's Standards and as documented by The Portland Historical Society, The Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, The New Haven Preservation Trust, The CT Trust for Historic Preservation, The Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, and The National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- ⊕ The property is listed on the Historic Resources Plan in the Portland Plan of Conservation and Development. It should be noted that the property is not a "Registered State Historic Place" as indicated on the Plan. The proper listing should be under "Other Historic Places".
- ⊕ While an attempt has been made by the developer to preserve, rehabilitate, restore, and reconstruct site elements and buildings the application does not meet the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- ⊕ Site access is limited to a single vehicular entry and exit point. This prevents it to be designed as a traditional mixed use development with a defined street grid. The connection to the adjoining Portland Town Center Village District is limited to a narrow pedestrian path passing through a portal between the drive-in of a chain pharmacy and the kitchen loading docks of a restaurant.

In conclusion we feel that the developer has not made an attempt to truly preserve the historic importance of this site and its structures. We would be supportive of a proposal that reached out to the Department of Culture and Tourism for their guidance in the use of the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

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