

**Neighborhood Advisory Statement
On the Block 100 Foundation's Redevelopment Proposal
For the 100 Block of State Street
January 26, 2012**

The following statement is divided into two parts, one for State Street and one covering Fairchild and Mifflin streets. This reflects the nature of the development proposal itself. Each section starts with general statements of neighborhood sentiment, followed by steering committee comments on specific aspects of the proposal.

State Street

It is the sense of neighborhood residents that:

1. Historical accuracy should be maintained as much as possible. Where that is impracticable, reconstructed facades should have an historically accurate look.
2. High quality materials be used and great attention to detail be paid to the reconstruction of period facades.
3. First floor retail spaces be kept small to encourage leasing to unique, local businesses.
4. The development team has made changes to their design based on steering committee input.

Steering Committee comments:

1. 117-119 State - Haswell building: The steering committee supports the proposed redevelopment of this building as the state historic preservation office has judged it to be a non-contributing structure to the proposed national historical district due to the facade and interior reconstruction in 1996. The steering committee lends its support with the understanding that the facade will be reconstructed to original building design. The steering committee encourages the reuse of remaining period exterior fixtures.
2. 121-123 State - Buell building: The steering committee supports the proposed redevelopment of this building with the understanding that the existing façade will be preserved. Most steering committee members accept the impracticality of retaining the rest of the building due to the need to remove interior load bearing walls to open space on the second and third floors. The entry indentations may need to be removed to increase retail space and to lower the first floor for accessibility.
3. 125 State - Castle & Doyle building: The steering committee supports the proposed preservation of the State Street façade, sides, interior, and Fairchild facade.
4. 127-129 State - Vallender building: The steering committee supports the redevelopment of this building due to the poor material condition of the building and the limited usability of the second and third floors.
5. It is the consensus of the committee that the 4th floor addition to the 121-123 State - Buell building be designed to minimize its visual effect on the buildings of State Street.
6. At the combined meeting of the Landmarks Commission and Urban Design Commission on November 14, 2011, an Urban Design Commissioner requested the development team provide a contemporary design concept for the 117-119 State - Haswell and 127-129 State - Vallender buildings. The development team complied. The steering committee reviewed these designs and, while some members liked them, all agreed that contemporary design is inappropriate for the 100 Block of State Street. The contemporary designs were not widely disseminated, so no sense of the views of the broader neighborhood can be provided. However, there was no call for contemporary design on State Street at either of the neighborhood meetings.

Fairchild and Mifflin Streets

1. There is very strong agreement among neighborhood residents that the primary goal for this area is to make it more pedestrian friendly and inviting by eliminating the "backdoor" appearance of the Fairchild facades.

2. Neighborhood opinion is divided as to whether the proposal would achieve that goal.
3. The division of opinion centers on the treatment of the corner of Fairchild and Mifflin. On the one hand there are those who favor the creation of the proposal's "civic node" with its open garden area. They like the design, believe it will achieve the goal of improving Fairchild, and feel the potential benefits outweigh the loss of the Fairchild and Schubert buildings. On the other hand there are those who feel the Fairchild and Schubert buildings should be retained because of their landmark and historical significance and that, with restoration and adaptive reuse, they would be better able to achieve the goal of improving this area.
4. The discussion of the neighborhood meeting of 1/23/2012 centered on the Fairchild and Mifflin corner with a wide range of opinions being expressed. A sampling of those opinions follows to help provide a sense of the range of views:
 - a. Alternate proposal good use of Fairchild / Mifflin corner
 - b. Vitality better than so-so old buildings
 - c. Retain historical aspects of Fairchild / Mifflin
 - d. New design complements Overture and proposed museum
 - e. Want to keep historic character
 - f. Important to balance historic with new
 - g. Open / green space adds to area
 - h. Open space softens impact of new buildings
 - i. Don't create a private blank space – garden will be dead space ½ of the year
 - j. The MTHP vision is authentic, honest, and historically significant.
5. Steering Committee comments:
 - a. It is the consensus that, if possible, the 120 W Mifflin - Schubert building and 122-124 W Mifflin - Fairchild building should be retained and incorporated into the design.
 - b. The committee is divided whether the benefits of this proposal are sufficient to justify the demolition of the 122-124 W Mifflin - Fairchild building.
 - c. A consensus of the committee felt that the development team should reconsider the possibility of incorporating the 120 W Mifflin - Schubert building, in some form, into the proposal's design.
 - d. A majority opinion is that the 120 W Mifflin - Schubert building should remain, with a minority stating that the proposal should proceed even if the Schubert building is removed.
 - e. Some members feel that the proposed creation of the civic node does not achieve the desired goal of increased pedestrian activity on Fairchild Street. These members believe that creation of commercial space at the corner of Fairchild and Mifflin Streets would better achieve this goal.