

Note to Landmarks Commission:
129 W Gorham Street / 120 W Johnson Street
Mansion Hill Local Historic District and Landmark Site

10/28/2009

Re: Proposal for a new 5-story apartment building on the site of the Holy Redeemer R.C. Church and School. The site of the proposed apartment building is currently used as a parking lot, and will not require any demolition of historic structures.

Requested action:

The developer is seeking only a provisional Landmarks Commission approval for the General Development Plan (GDP). This provisional approval would be for the general building bulk, massing, scale and placement of the building on the site. The GDP also needs approval from the Urban Design Commission, Plan Commission and the Common Council. The applicant must return to the Urban Design Commission, Plan Commission and the Common Council for the approval of the more detailed Specific Implementation Plan (SIP) before anything is built. **The applicant must also return to the Landmarks Commission for approval of final building details, and issuance of the final Certificate of Appropriateness before any building permits are issued.**

Applicable criteria:

This building proposal shall be reviewed against both the criteria for alterations to existing Landmarks and Landmark Sites and the Mansion Hill Local Historic District Criteria. Staff has attached a visually related area map and photos of associated buildings for the Commission's review against the Mansion Hill Historic District Criteria.

1. **Section 33.19 (5)(b)(4a and 4b): Regulation Of Construction, Reconstruction and Exterior Alteration to Landmarks and Landmark Sites:**
 4. Upon filing of any application with the Landmarks Commission, the Landmarks Commission shall determine:
 - a. Whether, in the case of a designated landmark or landmark site, the proposed work would detrimentally change, destroy or adversely affect any exterior architectural feature of the improvement upon which said work is to be done; and
 - b. Whether, in the case of the construction of a new improvement upon a landmark site, the exterior of such improvement would adversely affect or not harmonize with the external appearance of other neighboring improvements on such site; and
2. **Mansion Hill 33.19(10)(e) Guideline Criteria for new Development in the Mansion Hill Historic District.**
 1. The gross volume of any new structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related (visually related area).
 2. In the street elevation(s) of a new building, the proportion between the width and the height in the facade(s) shall be visually compatible with the buildings and the environment with which it is visually related (visually related area).
 3. The proportions and relationships between width and height of the doors and windows in new street facade(s) shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related (visually related area).
 4. The rhythm of solids to voids created by openings in the facade of the new structure should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related (visually related area).
 5. All new street facades should blend with other buildings via directional expression. When adjacent buildings have a dominant vertical or horizontal expression, this expression should be carried over and reflected.

Staff Comments:

At this general level of plan development, the project appears to meet the applicable criteria of the Landmarks Ordinance. However, it should be noted that only two building elevations were submitted at this time, and many of the architectural details have yet to be resolved, as is common with a GDP application. The proposed building also conforms to the 50-foot height limit of the current R6H zoning district.

Commission members should also use this opportunity to note any potential design concerns so that they may be addressed before the applicant submits more detailed plans for a final Certificate of Appropriateness. Some such issues identified by staff include:

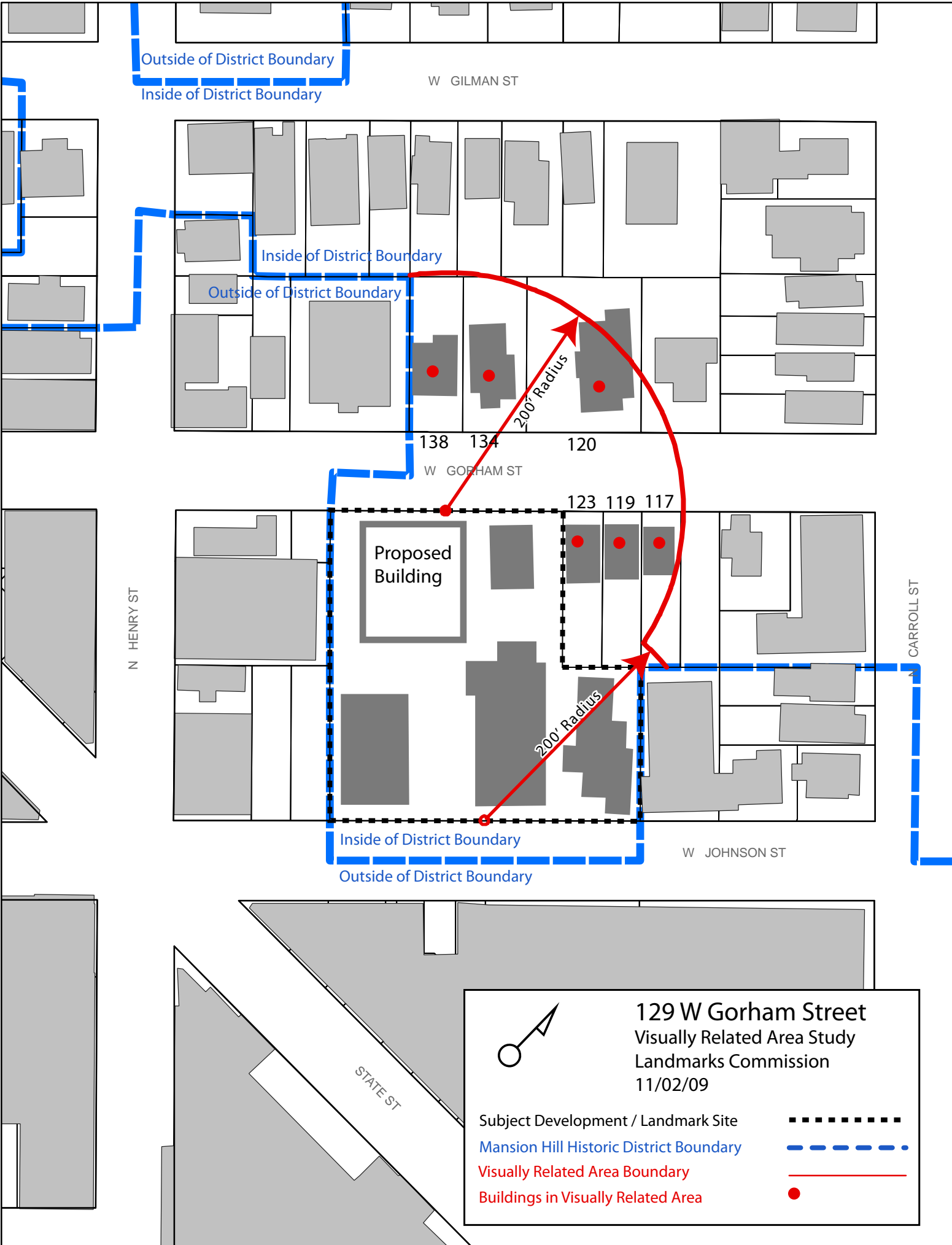
1. The rear (south) façade should have a more modulated façade instead of a flat façade, considering that it will be clearly visible from both of the two landmark buildings and West Johnson Street.
2. High quality building materials should be used on all sides of the building. Consider replacing the EIFS with brick, stone, cement fiber board, or other durable materials.
3. A more complete and integrated landscape plan is needed to help resolve the relationship between the new building and the existing church and school. This should include additional plantings along the back side of the building that faces the school.


Staff recommends that a GDP level Certificate of Appropriateness be approved subject to:

- A final Certificate of Appropriateness must be granted approving all building, site and landscaping design details prior to any building permits being granted.

If the Commission gives approves for the bulk, massing, scale and location of the building on the site, the Commission will lose its ability to request any significant changes to these issues when the project returns in front of the Commission for a final Certificate of Appropriateness. ***Any issues regarding bulk, massing, scale or location should be resolved before initial approval is given, as the Commission will no longer be able to re-visit these issues with the applicant.***

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Cnare and Bill Fruhling
10/28/09




129 W Gorham Street
 Visually Related Area Study
 Landmarks Commission
 11/02/09

Subject Development / Landmark Site	-----
Mansion Hill Historic District Boundary	- - - - -
Visually Related Area Boundary	—————
Buildings in Visually Related Area	●

Buildings within Visually Related Area
(not including buildings on the redevelopment site):

11/02/09

117 W Gorham Street:



119 W Gorham Street:



120 W Gorham Street:



123 W Gorham Street:



134 W Gorham Street:



138 W Gorham Street :

