



April 16, 2020

Portland Historic Landmarks Commission
1900 SW 4th Ave
Portland OR 97204
Via EMAIL to Tanya.Paglia@portlandoregon.gov

Re: Mann House

Dear Chair and Commissioners:

The Laurelhurst Neighborhood Association (LNA) strongly supports the proposed affordable housing project by Innovative Housing Inc (IHI) on the Anna Mann Old People's Home (Mann House) property at 1031 NE 33rd St, as shown in the site plan and renderings supplied to us by Emerick Architects.

Specifically, we support the overall project site plan; the proposed density of housing units; the scale, siting, architectural style, appearance, and exterior materials of the proposed new building on the northeast corner of the property; and the proposed on-site parking, play areas, and outdoor spaces.

Context. The Mann House, in addition to being a National Register landmark, is significant in the history of the Laurelhurst Historic District and the Laurelhurst neighborhood. The property was originally the northwest corner of William Ladd's Hazel Fern Farm, which became the Laurelhurst development. In 1909, as development of the farm was starting, Anna Mann directed the purchase of this portion of the farm for an "old peoples' home" intended to house elderly Portlanders regardless of their financial means.

Laurelhurst was at the same time being marketed as a "neighborhood of distinction" with the latest improvements and architectural styles, with many notable Portlanders building impressive houses in the new development. Newspaper articles of the period indicate that the Old People's Home was equally celebrated, with no perceived incongruity in the location of housing for elderly and indigent Portlanders adjacent to the fashionable new development.

Over a century later, older Laurelhurst residents still remember the Mann House as our neighborhood's "old folks' home", with large green spaces where they played as children, and where elder neighbors lived.

The Laurelhurst neighborhood of today looks forward to welcoming the revived Mann House and the families living there, as did the Laurelhurst of 1911.

With that context, we would like to explain our support of the project in more detail.

Density. The Mann House project will create higher-density housing with over 100 units through the adaptive re-use of a historic property – a more sustainable approach than one involving demolition. We would like to see more such projects in Portland and welcome this one.

Scale and Siting. The proposed new building is, appropriately, moderately lower in height than the original building. It will not obscure the original building, as it is located adjacent to the 1950s addition rather than the original 1911 structure. The new building's long side will be screened by large mature trees and tall hedges, which IHI has indicated will be retained to the greatest possible extent. We believe the scale and siting are compatible with the historic structure and suitable for this property.

Style, Appearance, and Materials. The new building will, we feel, co-exist in harmony with the historic structure, with compatible architectural features but with new and old sufficiently differentiated. We particularly appreciate the rhythm of the windows and gables in the new building.

Outdoor Spaces. We support, indeed desire, the planned amount of on-site parking. We were particularly pleased to see multiple children's play areas included in the site plan. It has been many decades since playing children were heard on this property.

We also conceptually support a future new building on the southern end of the property, but will not have specific comments until more details are available.

It is the desire of the LNA that the Mann House project, as presently conceived by IHI, be permitted to proceed as expeditiously as possible. I hope the LNA's support will be of assistance in the HLC's review. Please contact the LNA if you have any questions of us.

I am the President of the LNA and sign this letter pursuant to a vote of the LNA Board on April 14, 2020.

Sincerely,



Jeff Martin
President, LNA

laurelhurst.president@gmail.com