

To: Brisbane Planning Commission  
From: Dana Dillworth  
RE: DP 1-21  
On the agenda 4/8/21

Who likes boxes? Engineered boxes? Skidmore, Owens, and Merrill does.

Seriously, this is a Design Regression. Any attempt to put a positive spin on this boxy design defies the Architectural License it mocks and the guidelines you purport to meet.

Here we go again, discussing something that was never meant to exist on this property, nor in this scale, designed somewhere where boxes are revered, being driven by twenty-year-old design guidelines with inadequate environmental review. It was a failure in 2001, apparently in 2018 because you cite areas that “may not be desirable to employees,” and should be more-so with our newer understanding of global warming and our fragile geologic situation (earthquakes-on-man-made fill). I was hoping to see an improvement.

While you mention public benefits, you fail to mention that receiving the LEED Gold Standard came from the requirement of solar power on the earlier version’s parking structure and the design that incorporated multiple avenues of natural ventilation. By closing off or eliminating the open decking and creating walls of glass panels, you defeat the purpose of design guidelines and the hours that went into earlier approvals.

While there is no mention of this, it appears that you are gaining interior space by hundreds of square feet per floor. Every square inch of newly utilized space creates the need for more parking and environmental impacts to be considered. The earlier design had outdoor decks distributed throughout the building seemed more egalitarian verses the “penthouse balcony” concept you are creating.

I was hoping that by introducing a “sawtooth” design concept, that you embraced natural solar design and chose staggered facades in the manner of Pueblo cliff-dwellings. You may have incorrectly chosen the architectural term as it is normally used on roofs and unless it is designed with a 15-foot wide lower floor, 10-foot wide mid-level floor and 5-foot top, I don’t understand your sawtooth concept. If it is merely overlapping edges of sheets of heavier glass, I wonder about the weight and capacity of the new design “feature” and whether it has been tested in earthquake environments. i.e. How does Japan view this concept of overlapping ceramic embedded glass panels cantilevered over public space? I also believe that these deck areas were part of emergency egress. Has that been considered?

While it may not be desirable to lunch hanging out over 101, you have missed the opportunity to turn the Mountain-facing facade into SOME design opportunity. The broken-up, textured facade was a mitigation for glass reflections to vehicles on 101. I don’t think your architects have fully considered the environmental conditions. Too bad all you have is 20th century plans in your file drawers.