



## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Design Review Board

**From:** Angela Ruggeri, AICP, Senior Planner

**Date:** November 30, 2009

**Subject:** **DESIGN RESPONSE CONFERENCE #10**  
**TOUCHSTONE (PARKPLACE)**  
**FILE DRC09-00002**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Touchstone's proposal is for design review of a 1.8 million sq. ft. mixed-use project that includes 1.2 million sq. ft. of office space and an additional 300,000 sq. ft. of retail. Other uses include a hotel and athletic club.

The approved Master Plan has established the building and open space locations, access points and grid for the internal road system. The Zoning specifies building heights, setbacks and other development parameters. The Design Review Board is now in the process of working with the applicant on the design of the buildings and open spaces. The approved Design Guidelines for Parkplace will be used by the DRB to guide this process.

*\*\*Please bring your copy of the Master Plan and Design Guidelines for Parkplace to the meeting on 12/7/09. We will be working with them in reviewing Buildings B and C.*

### **II. PREVIOUS DESIGN RESPONSE CONFERENCES**

At their November 16, 2009 meeting, the DRB approved a motion indicating preliminary approval of the design of Building A as it was presented that evening (including massing and building shape & size). The Board determined that the revisions to Building A as presented on 11/16/09 were acceptable if a shadow box effect was used for the returns on the eastern bump-out (if the returns were made transparent). The details for Building A (signs, colors, artwork, lighting, etc.) will be reviewed when all the buildings have gone through the Design Response Conference process so that these details can be looked at for the project as a whole.

In the meantime, the DRB will begin review of Buildings B & C. The applicant presented massing drawings for these buildings at the 11/16/09 meeting (see Attachment 1), but the Board did not discuss them. The discussion, including a comparison to the adopted Design Guidelines, will

occur at the 12/7/09 meeting. When the review of Buildings B & C is completed, all three buildings (A, B & C) will be looked at together before progressing to the review of the other buildings on the site.

### **III. ISSUES RELATING TO BUILDINGS B & C FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Board spent time reviewing the design proposal for Buildings B & C at their meetings last spring and summer. The discussion of their relationship to the Policy Overview and General Design Guidelines at the 8/31/09 meeting is included below. *The Board should continue this discussion and also review the Design Guidelines for the Central Retail HUB where Buildings B & C are located at the meeting on 12/7/09 (see pages DG-28 and DG-29).*

The key compliance issues addressed by the DRB were related to design guidelines for mass and scale and the gateway/portal into the site. The following is a summary of the main issues addressed at the meeting on 8/31/09. The DRB discussion and direction on these issues are shown in italics.

#### **Page PO-5: 8. Design Intent**

2. Site Planning “Connections” – Create strong emphasis on streetscape and provide clear and inviting public access.
4. Enhance the Pedestrian Environment – Create visual interest along the street.
7. Appropriate Massing and Scale – Consider scale, massing and detail of individual buildings and express human-scale, detailed street level building facades.

#### **Page DG-15: All Districts: Site Planning**

1. Streetscape – c. Ground floor level separate storefronts, pedestrian-oriented signs, etc. to add interest and give human dimension to street-level facades.

#### **Page DG-19 All Districts: Building Design**

1. Orientation to the Street
  - a. Frequent entrances for walk in traffic
  - c. Principal building entry should be visible (*obvious*) from the street.

#### **Page DG-20: – All Districts: Building Design**

2. Massing /Articulation:

Intent: to create a variety of form and massing through articulation and use of materials to maintain a pedestrian scale.

  - a. Break down scale and massing of buildings into smaller and varied volumes.
  - b. Responsive to context of surrounding environment.

*Need more information on this. Don't see how buildings are responsive to surrounding environment and buildings. Buildings can respond to the context in a*

*different way without directly emulating. This is still an issue, but not one of the most critical. It is difficult because there is not one existing style in the area. Need to speak the same language – not necessarily the same vocabulary. May not be about the materials, may be about the massing.*

- d. Buildings should distinguish building base.

*The gasket addresses this, but is still a concern in some areas.*

- e. Provide clear pattern of window openings.

*Is order important? Classical or more abstract? BIG PICTURE: What's important? Order & scale, base, roof edge.*

- f. Use of ribbon windows.

*Be careful spandrels don't look like ribbon windows.*

- g. Use major architectural expressions for important gateways & intersections.

*Buildings B & C need more of this.*

- h. Building modulation.

*Same discussion as e above.*

- i. Roof Silhouettes.

*Scale & massing comes first and then roof solution will follow.*

- j. Rooftop equipment – *to be discussed later.*

Attachment 1: Applicant's drawings of Buildings A, B and C presented at 11/16/09 DRB meeting

# **Building A Proposed Final Design**

## **Building A - Outstanding items from last meeting (10/19/09):**

1. Vertical Reveal
2. Northwest Corner Articulation
3. Northeast corner glazing (frit)
4. South Elevation Articulation
5. Roof Edge Articulation

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 1: Vertical Reveal**

DRB comment:

Study expression of vertical reveals between projected NE corner and body of building.



**design presented on 10/19**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 1: Vertical Reveal**

Response / resolution:

Reveal walls (perpendicular to building mass) have floor-to-ceiling glazing with glass spandrel panels. This creates a clear break between the 'floating' corner and the main body of the building.



**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 2: Northwest Corner Articulation**

DRB comment:

Study glazing pattern and materiality of north-west building corner. There is an opportunity for this element to be further distinguished from the NE corner, and to be more expressive of its solidity and connection to the ground.

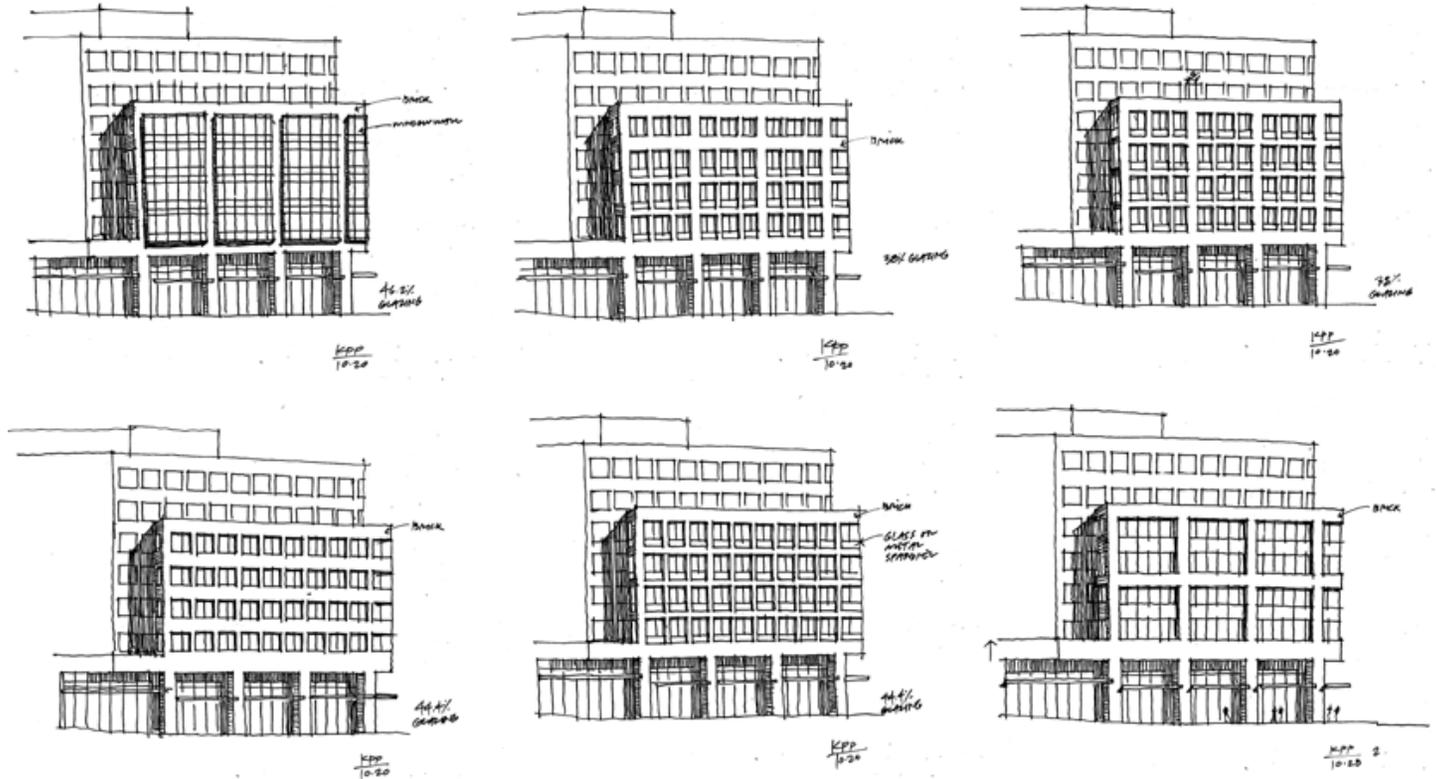


**design presented on 10/19**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 2: Northwest Corner Articulation**

Response:

We studied a number of options that reduced the amount of glass and increased the masonry material.



**elevation studies**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 2: Northwest Corner Articulation**

Resolution:

The preferred option strikes a balance between glassiness and solidity and relates to the pattern utilized on Buildings B & C. It also gives this element a more substantial visual weight.

The contrast between the lightness of the northeast corner and the solidity of the northwest corner further reinforces the diagrammatic clarity of the design.



**preferred option**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 3: Northeast Glazing**

DRB comment:

Consider reintroducing frit pattern on northeast glass element for scale and visual interest.



**design presented on 8/31**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 3: Northeast Glazing**

Response:

In the design presented on August 31, Building A had an all-glass and metal skin. The north-east corner element was envisioned as a very flat, abstract, screenlike surface, consistent with the hard-edged design of the building. The idea of a fritted pattern lent this concept scale and texture, like an image projected on a screen.

In the current proposal, the northeast corner is conceived as a more articulated, detailed element, whose window mullions and glazing pattern create the sense of scale and texture that the frit provided in the earlier design. The current design incorporates masonry elements and less metal for a warmer, more tactile surface quality.

We feel that the imposition of the abstract screen element from the earlier design on the more textured, articulated current building design would be out of place, since the revised design achieves its scale and texture through different means.

The frit pattern also has raised potential concerns about leasability of the office space behind the frit; it might have to be minimized to the point where it was almost imperceptible.

This study illustrates how the frit pattern overlaid on the current design would unnecessarily complicate the design.

For these reasons, we are proposing Building A for approval without the fritted glass.



**elevation study**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 4: South Elevation Articulation**

DRB comment:

Study south elevation to increase visual interest.



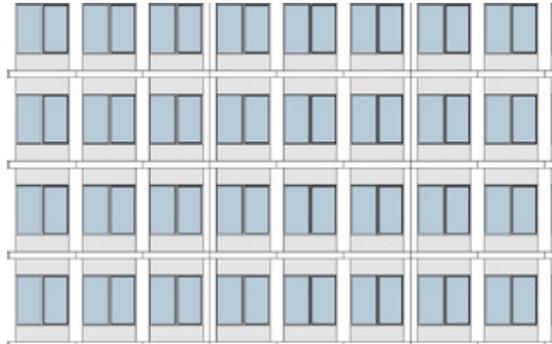
**design presented on 10/19**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 4: South Elevation Articulation**

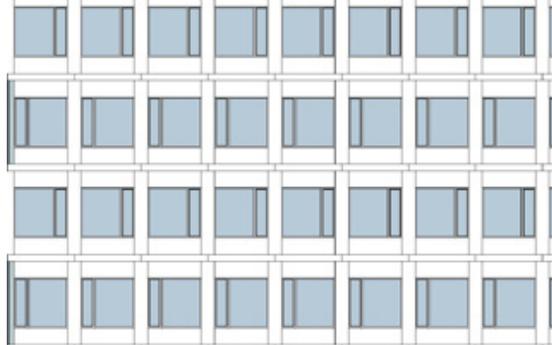
**Response:**

This facade system is intended to be relatively understated to form the background for more sculptural elements of the building, so we did not investigate major massing changes on this elevation.

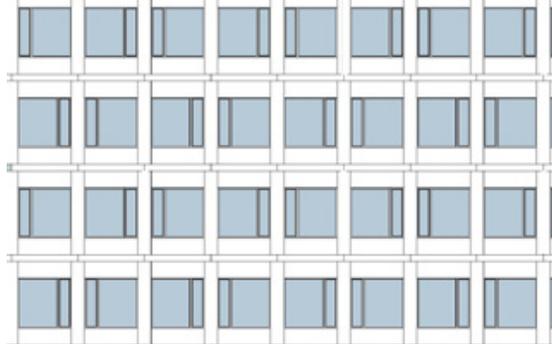
We studied glazing patterns to create additional visual interest. Given the oblique viewing angle of these facades, we felt that a subtle variation would create the right amount of articulation.



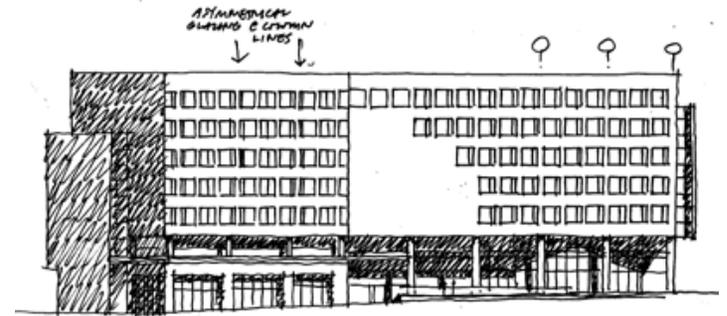
**central mullion**



**alternating R-L by floor**

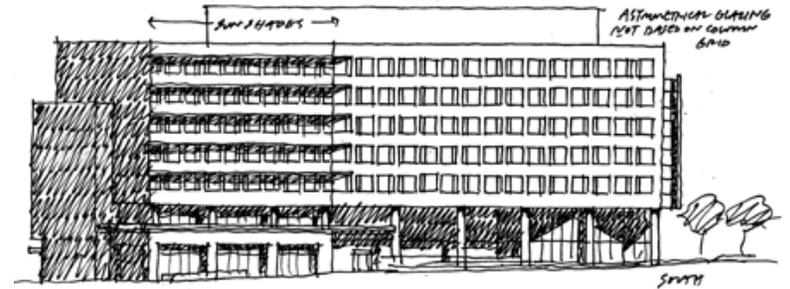


**back-to-back alternating by floor**

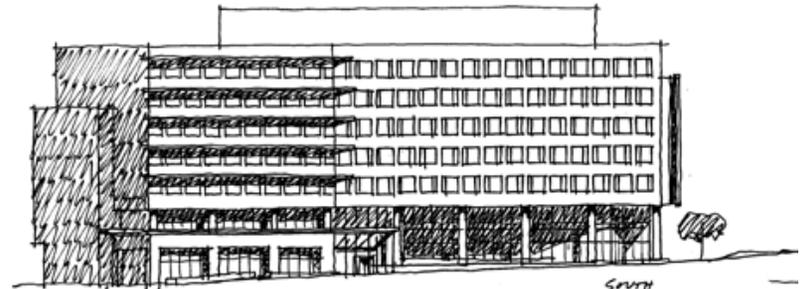


**back-to-back at column lines**

**all to right side**



**back-to-back stacked**



**back-to-back alternating by floor**

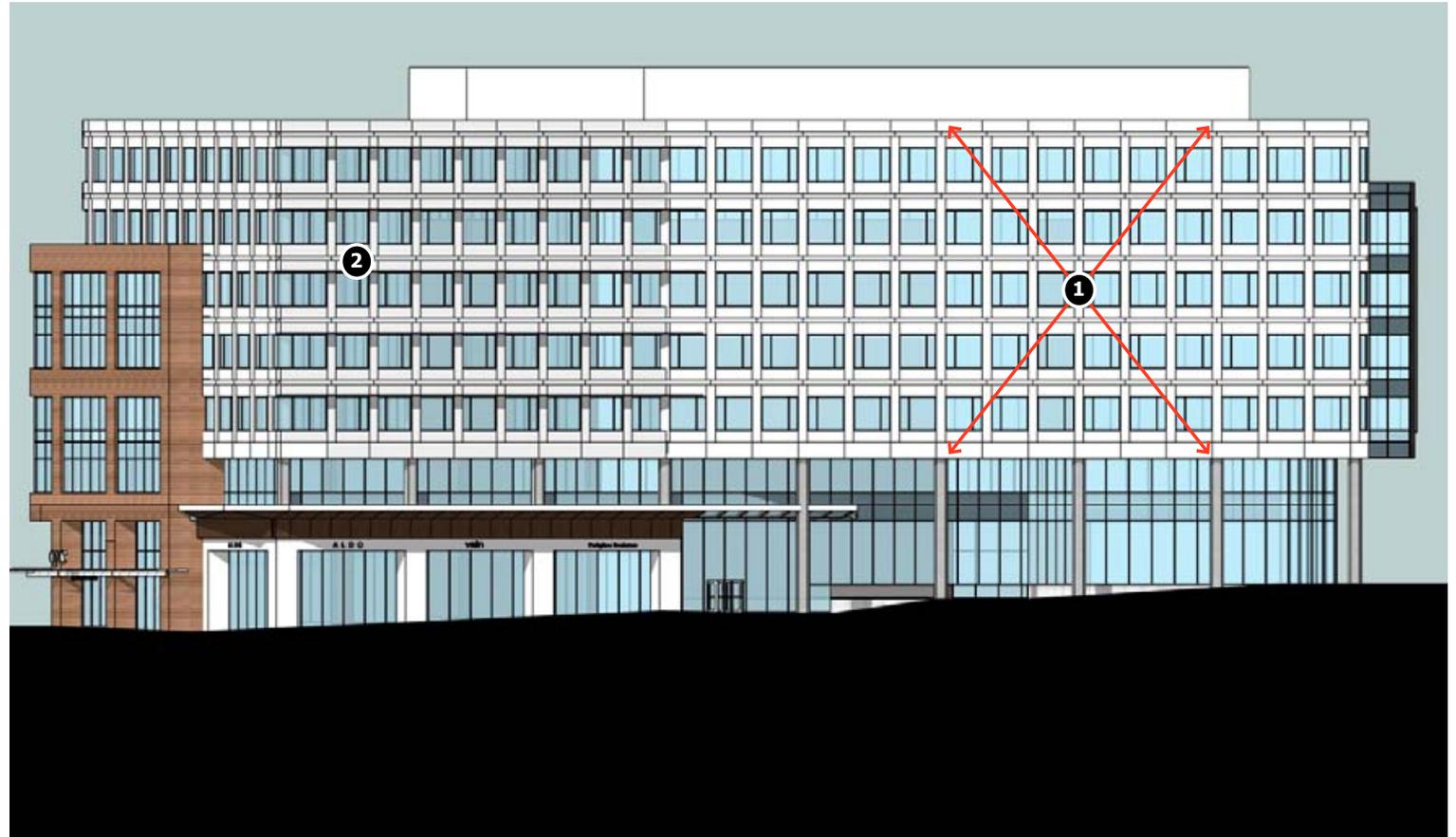
**elevation studies**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 4: South Elevation Articulation**

Resolution:

The preferred option uses an asymmetrical window division to create a diagonal movement in the facades. ❶ In addition, the sunshades on the west portion of the elevation help distinguish this facade. ❷

When seen as a whole, the south elevation of Building A is animated by numerous elements. The pedestrian's view is dominated by the bold sculptural moves in the first two floors, while the upper floors employ more subtle techniques to create movement and variety.



**preferred option**

**DRB Comments from 10/19 Meeting  
Item 5: Roof Edge Articulation**

DRB comment:

Study roof edge detail to add visual interest.

From the Design guidelines, p. DG-24:

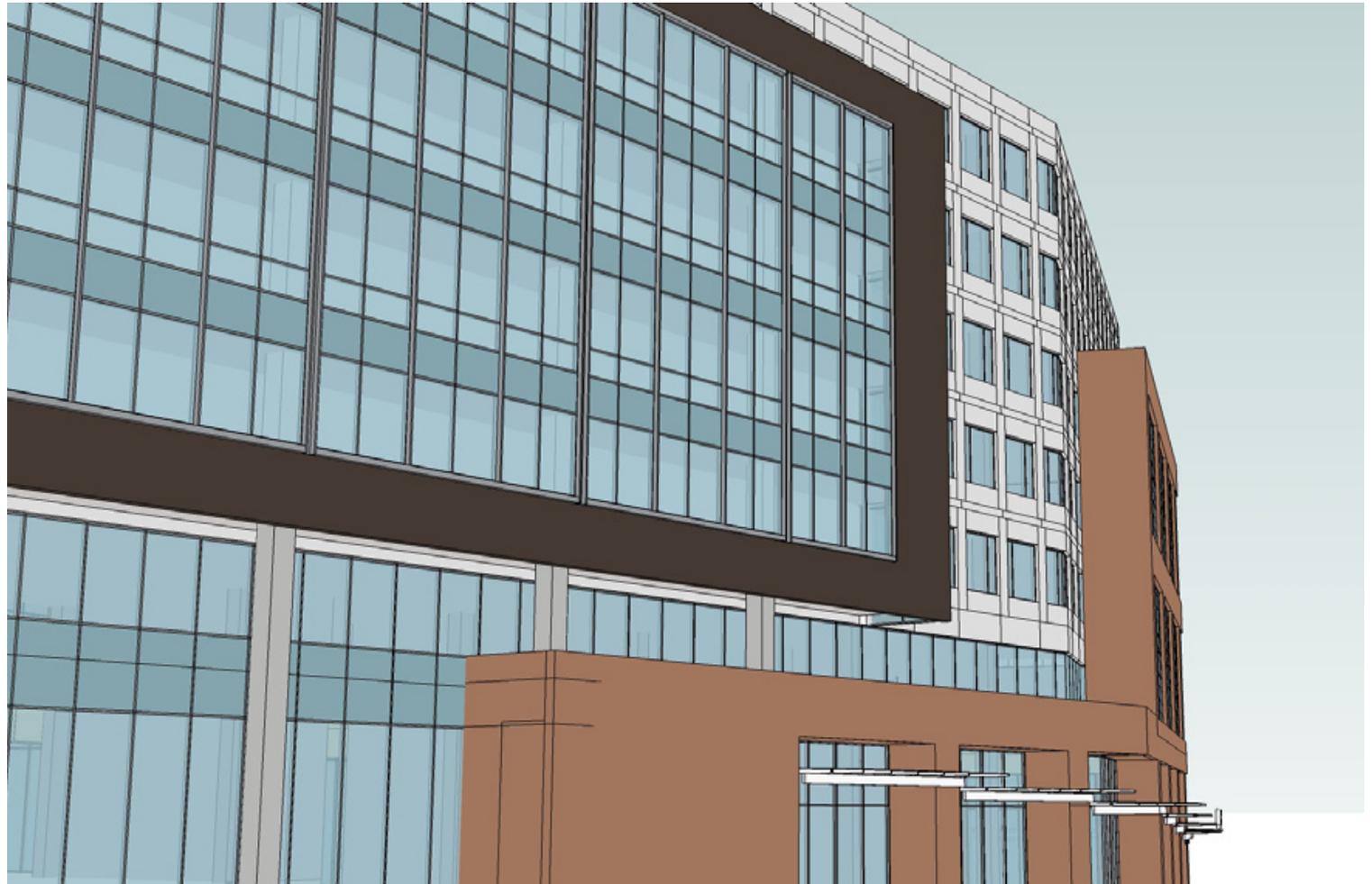
- c. **Top Floor / Roof Edge** - Should have a distinct profile against the sky through elements such as projections, overhangs, cornices, step backs, trellises, changes in material or other elements.

Response:

We studied several options for adding detail to the roof edge. The idea of varying the parapet height, or crenellating the edge, resulted in an over-complicated design. Creating a cornice would be inconsistent with the contemporary architectural language of the building, and accentuating the edge with a band of some kind felt contrived.

In the end, we felt that the massing and articulation of the design are successful, and provide enough variation in materials, surfaces and volumes without the addition of superfluous detail at the roof edge.

Consistent with the Design Guidelines, the top floor(s) of the building, by stepping back and changing material from the lower floors, give the building a "distinct profile against the sky."











# **Buildings B & C**

## **Overview of Design History**

**Buildings B & C  
Overview of Design History**

**Design Response Conference 3  
May 18, 2009**

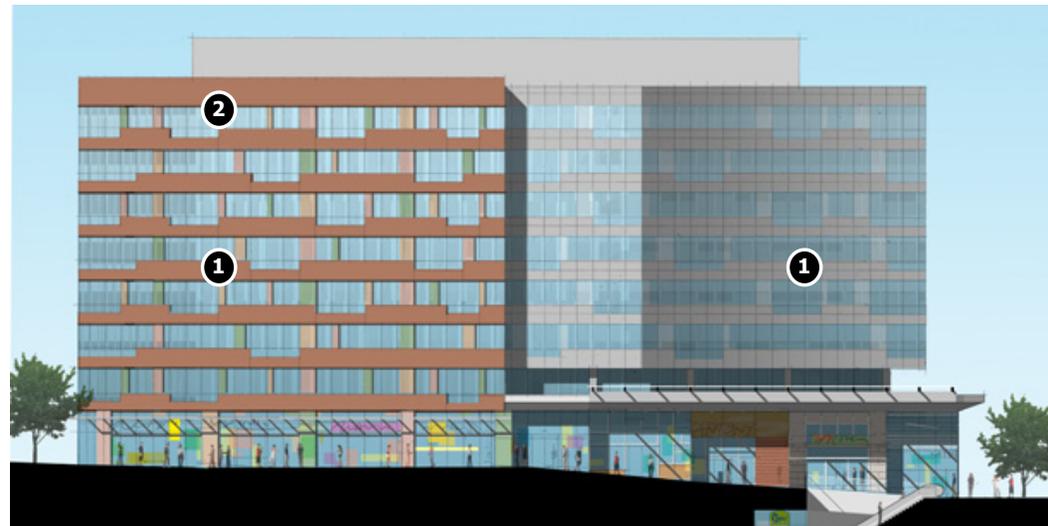
The initial design for Buildings B & C employed rhythmic shifts and color accents to create a varied texture and several scales overlaid on one another. ①

Volumetrically, the buildings were very flat, and the top floors were not articulated separately. ②

The entry point at 4th Ave. was emphasized with glass corners. ③



**Buildings B & C East Elevation**



**Building B North Elevation**

**Buildings B & C  
Overview of Design History**

**Design Response Conference 3  
May 18, 2009**

The west elevations of Buildings B & C were a combination of vision glass **1** metal panels **2** and spandrel glass. **3**

The buildings were strongly differentiated through the use of vertical solar shading on Building B. **4**

The retail base and 'gasket' feature were already in place. **5**



**Buildings B & C West Elevation**



**Building C Enlarged Elevation**

**Buildings B & C  
Overview of Design History**

**Design Response Conference 4  
June 29, 2009**

By late June, the masonry skin on the east side of the buildings had become an asymmetrical grid that grouped the floors in twos to reduce the apparent scale of the buildings. ①

The top floors were differentiated by material, but still relatively flat. ②



**Buildings B & C From Southeast**

**Buildings B & C**  
**Overview of Design History**

**Design Response Conference 4**  
**June 29, 2009**

The west elevations of Buildings B & C had become more similar in rhythm and materials at the DRB's suggestion. **1** In place of the strong vertical sunshades on Building B were inverted L-shaped sunshades. **2**

The gasket on Building B was interrupted at the corner to create a vertical emphasis and break the gasket's monotony. **3**



**Buildings B & C From West**

**Buildings B & C  
Overview of Design History**

**Addendum to  
Design Response Conference 4  
August 25, 2009**

By late August, the masonry skin on the east side of the buildings had been further articulated, gaining depth and solidity per the DRB's suggestion. ①

At the top floors, we recessed the glazing to create deeper shadows ② and this treatment extended down the corners of buildings B & C to strengthen the sense of entry at 4th Avenue. ③

In addition, we pulled back the top floor on the south elevation of Building C to create a roof terrace and scale the building down towards the neighboring building on the south. ④



**Buildings B & C From Southeast**

**Buildings B & C  
Overview of Design History**

**Addendum to  
Design Response Conference 4  
August 25, 2009**

Another image showing the articulation of the masonry **1** and metal **2** skin systems.

This was the state of the design the last time we presented it.

