



August 26, 2025

RE: Comments on Oakland Peace Center Housing Project

Dear Aubra and Vivian,

Thank you for meeting with us yesterday. Below is a set of comments on your base proposal with a truncated church front. We also are including photos of adaptive reuse projects. These range from complete reuse to partial structures wedded to new construction.

Comments Base Facade-Reuse Study

Create a unified site: Integrate the re-used area and the new construction. Avoid separating them and tie the tower in more firmly. The connection between the buildings can be done with a variety of materials, including glass, but the idea is to create a cohesive plan.

Focus on design of new north building: It would also benefit greatly from a better design approach to the northern part of the project. Dark color is problematic, but so is the starkness of the flat roof.

Roofs: What about doing something to pitch the roof or create a mansard at least on the northern structure?

Materials: Use of a stucco-like material and color scheme that relates to the 1920s building would help reduce the jarring effect of an extreme juxtaposition.

Windows: The striped effect of the tall rectangular columns of windows with spandrels should be rethought. Consider a compatible style which reflects that of the church. Separate punched windows would be fine! The highly vertical emphasis of those striped window stacks seems out of place. We applaud the regular placement of those windows, though, and appreciate that it keeps the facade from being jumpy.

A question: why is the wall along 29th so very blank, with almost no windows? That would be a fairly forbidding and unfriendly face to present to the neighborhood. It is not a heavily sun-exposed direction—why no apertures?

Trees: Save the large oak along 29th St., which is a key contributor to that corner and looks to be healthy.

Design Ideas

Roofline: Here's a very crude attempt at a shallowly pitched roofline.



Tall Windows: Below is a possible way to treat tall windows. Church in the Netherlands. Note double height variant on left and split variant on the right.



Local Examples of Church Reuse

Rose On Bond: Reused the entire church for units with new construction adjacent. Melrose District Oakland. This one has some stylistic similarities to 1st Christian.



Brooklyn Presbyterian Church: Reused the entire church for units with new construction adjacent.



Methodist Church: Shattuck, north Oakland.



Buena Vista Terrace: San Francisco, four stories, 42 units within the shell of former Christian Sci. church. Note treatment of tall windows.

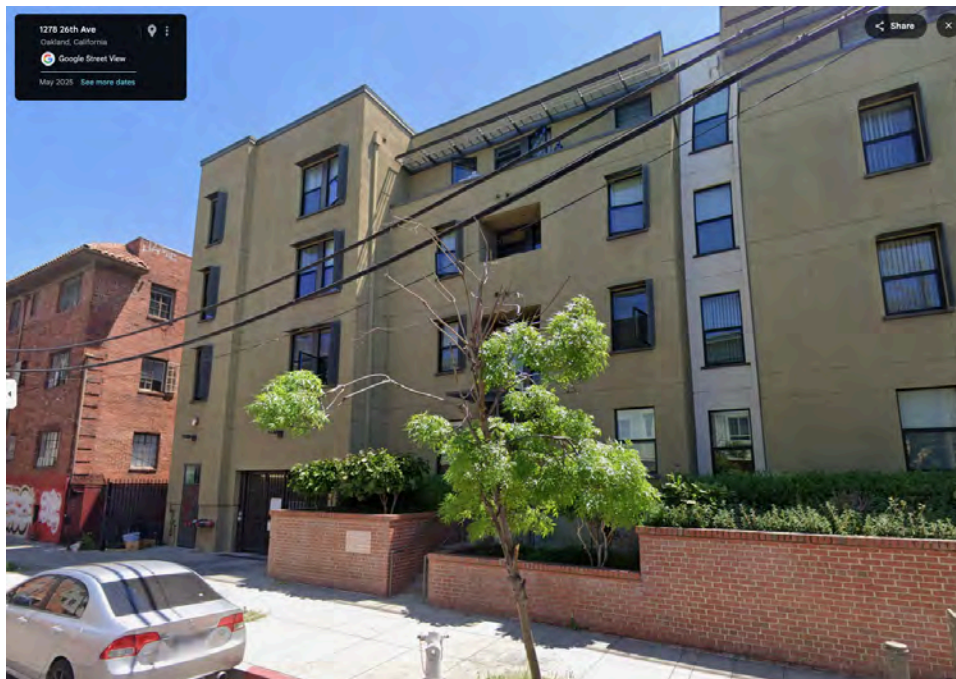


Examples of Contextual Design

Brooklyn Basin: the last two or three bays retained from the historic Ninth Ave Terminal building became sheltered outdoor space. The building envelope was referenced in the park.



St Joseph: Affordable family housing next to St. Joseph's on E. 14th.



Ave Vista: Grand Avenue in Oakland. Affordable housing for families.



Jordan Court: Senior housing, Berkeley, new construction



Altenheim: This is a modern addition, new construction, at Altenheim around 2010. Affordable senior housing.

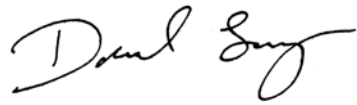


Fox Oakland Theater: 2-story new additions to the old 1-story-high parts of the wings on each side.



Thank you for reading and we appreciate you working with us on this historic asset.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Levy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Daniel" and last name "Levy" clearly distinguishable.

Daniel Levy
President
Oakland Heritage Alliance