Diversity and Accessibility

Value: The project's programming of uses and the design of building's and open spaces should promote Diversity and Accessibility:

Diversity Value:
Being open and inclusive to all aspects of the Portsmouth city community are important. The citizens of the city each have an “ownership” stake once the building and property are conveyed though the development agreement.

Translation into design:
- The economic uses should be open and available two persons of all economic backgrounds.
- Promote building uses that are good for local people and not just tourism economy through the promotion of local businesses as part of the economic development program as opposed to expensive “luxury” retail and other parts of the development.
- The economic uses in terms of residential development should also not just cater affordability to the top 10% of Portsmouth wage earner values as the current rent values are priced. the housing development within the McIntyre should have a broader cross section of opportunity for people to have access to the rental housing. Perhaps a rental housing pro forma could be developed based upon the income percentages of the most recent census data.

Accessibility Value:
The principles of universal design regardless of physical or other disabilities should be followed both to comply with the American with Disabilities Acts (ADA) as well as other civil rights. People should feel that the design of a new McIntyre neighborhood can be inclusive for all people through the uses that are developed.

Translation into design:
- Physical features that promote handicapped access as part of the integrated design and not just an add on feature to “meet code”.
- Major entranceways in corridors of circulation should not have stair obstacles except where topography makes that impossible.
- Corridors of circulation that have elevation changes should avoid “handicap ramps” with all the code requirement landings and handrails - and instead should seek lesser sloped walkways that can be more unified in design with public spaces.
- Street frontages should also promote Accessibility and the project will need to comply with “community space “ design requirements in the city's downtown district four widen sidewalks with street trees, and the era of COVID-19 suggests a bit more space for social distancing but the existing sidewalks on both Daniel St and Penhallow are extremely narrow at about 5 feet or less.

Design that is respectful of history and optimistic about the future:

Context:
While Portsmouth is largely considered a historic city, there are many parts of the downtown and neighborhoods that are more of a dynamic timeline of neighborhood and architectural development. Such is the case with the McIntyre neighborhood in its evolution from a 19'th century working class neighborhood of the city near the waterfront - classic 1960's era Urban Redevelopment made a modernist federal complex that erased that past.

There is no historical mandate to copy the past to get an inspiration for the future of McIntyre, but at the same time it does appear that there is a sensitivity and perhaps a lack of confidence in Portsmouth's public that new buildings could look beautiful on the site even though they aren't mimicking historical reproductions. There are many anecdotes about the undesirable scale and character of some of Portsmouth's recent "city building" development. but there are plenty examples of historical cities around the world whose richness in urban character is because of architectural diversity with a mutual eye of compatibility.

Value:
The next chapter of McIntyre could be to a future design that has the potential to include elements of this changing past to inform a future and promote designs that are historically compatible but not "fake history".

Translation into design:
- There is no specific appropriate "time" that would be historically correct for the McIntyre neighborhood. Therefore, the presumption that the buildings should look like all the old buildings in Portsmouth does not have a historical foundation, although it may have some public confidence.
- Because the context of the McIntyre neighborhood is one that has changed over time, it is equally viable that the projects designed of renovated 1960s federal architecture as well as new architecture could present a picture of architectural diversity and interest.
- Previous McIntire listening sessions identified a pretty ambitious intention to have "challenging architecture that speaks to the future" but somehow that did not get translated into the project's current design.
- In accepting the brutalist McIntyre building itself, the building should be transformed as much as possible to be more open and transparent to the public then the barriers of the current major facades.
- New building uses, including the inclusion of the post office could be a part of that increased transparency to the streetscape.
- New buildings do not need to clash just to look new but they could be designed with historical compatibility but clearly be of the 21st century. The popovers building downtown is probably one of the best examples in the downtown. The library could be another public building, and additions to the middle school a contrasting but highly compatible modern intervention.
- The design of the site has opportunities to "tell a story" with authentic historical foundations interpreted in a new way – like the African burial grounds memorial which achieved just that success.