

257 Thayer Street

DESIGN OVERVIEW - June 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ **The updated design breaks the long repetitive mass into individual, “legible” parts according to the street they front on.**
 - Frontage at Thayer Street responds to commercial scale and tradition of 2 to 4 story mercantile buildings.
 - At major vehicular entry to block, create “hyphen” that breaks down long frontage on Euclid Street and acknowledges the break in the building pattern. Reduce the expressed building scale here to 2 stories.
 - At eastern end of block which is purely residential, create a residential scale referencing local traditions.
- ▶ **Redesign floor plans at Brook Street frontage which creates the look and feel of two separate buildings and allows an opening in the building frontage with a visual connection to the courtyard.**
- ▶ **Reduce scale and monumentality of corner entrance at Thayer.**
 - The scale at Thayer Street has been reduced by inverting the “turret” theme and expressing the corner as a glassy void.
- ▶ **The facades now vary scale of individual parts of the frontage between 3 and 4 stories within a legible rhythm.**
 - 3 story volumes clearly expressed with terminating cornice. 4th story expressed as attic with setback and change in materials.
 - Alternate these with 4 story gable fronted volumes which terminate in peaked roof and give interest to the skyline. Expressing full four floors ironically reduces the overall scale by providing contrast with lower 3 story bays.
- ▶ **The new material choices are logical and consistent throughout.**
- ▶ **The updated design for 257 Thayer improves the composition and proportion by:**
 - Reducing number of architectural “phrases” being employed,
 - Simplifying window patterns,
 - Consolidating individual openings into larger groupings.



BROOK STREET ELEVATION



VIEW FROM THAYER STREET

REDESIGN OVERVIEW

The façades have been redesigned to make the building more “legible” and understandable as a grouping of smaller buildings or parts of buildings and to ground it more firmly in the particular context of College Hill. The building has been bifurcated into a few clear parts, each with their own logic and identity. The Thayer Street frontage has been expressed as a single building with the simple logic and proportions of the traditional mercantile buildings found throughout Providence as well as Thayer Street. A strong retail-scaled base supports upper floors that display simple window patterns and a residential scale. Separating that “building” from the purely residential tail of the building extending to Brook Street is a “hyphen” which acknowledges the entrance to the parking and offers the opportunity to create a visual break in the long façade.

A reorganization of the facades along Euclid and Meeting Street and the introduction of pitched roofs and cornices create a more interesting rhythm of residentially scaled bays that, while literally 4 stories, to the pedestrian will feel more like 3 stories. With direct reference to local precedents found on Bowen and Thayer Streets as well as a more general invocation of the Collegiate Gothic style these facades now feel more firmly grounded in local and institutional traditions. Finally, by breaking the façade along Brook Street into two separate buildings framing a view into the courtyard we have attempted to respond to concerns for a more “open” and inviting expression of the building offering the public, visual, if not actual access to the interior of the block.