

# MUSE ARCHITECTS

Architecture and Interior Design

## *Principals*

Stephen Muse FAIA  
William Kirwan AIA

## *Associates*

Kuk-Ja C. Kim AIA  
R. Warren Short AIA  
Joshua O. Hill AIA

23 June 2016

Ms. Kate Bolinger, AICP  
Planning Specialist I  
Howard County Government  
Department of Planning and Zoning  
3430 Courthouse Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

## **Re: Design Advisory Panel Application for A New Bell Tower for the Columbia Lakefront**

Dear Ms. Bolinger,

Muse Architects is pleased to submit this Design Advisory Panel application for consideration on behalf of Columbia Association. The proposed project is A New Bell Tower for the Columbia Lakefront to be located at the lakefront plaza in the town center. This application includes proposed design drawings and photographs as prepared by D.S. Thaler and Associates, Inc. and Muse Architects, working under the direction of Columbia Association and is submitted as a bound booklet. This project is intended to ultimately be a redline revision to the currently approved site development plan for the lakefront.

We believe we have addressed the requirements for submission as provided for in Howard County's Design Advisory Panel Rules of Procedure revised on January 8th, 2010. I, as the registered Architect representing Muse Architects and the project team, will lead the formal presentation to the Design Advisory Panel. The booklet explains the proposed project through narrative and illustrations, and photographs appropriate for the preparation of a Site Development Plan application.

## **Background**

The plaza on Lake Kittamaquidi, in Downtown Columbia, is the most intensively used outdoor space in Columbia Association's open space system. It is the site of community gatherings large and small. In Columbia's very early years a 50 foot tall timber flag tower was constructed on a pier extending into the lake from the plaza. Flags were displayed at the top of the tower. In 1977, the Rouse Company, Columbia's developer, arranged to have 14 cast bronze bells installed on the tower in celebration of Columbia's 10th anniversary. The bells, dedicated in July 1977, played Westminster chimes and hour

strikes. The electronic components, housed in a nearby building, included a manual keyboard console and a digital player, which operated the bells at pre-selected times. The tower was dismantled in 2010 due to the deteriorated and unsafe condition of the timber structure. The bells were placed in storage, where they await a new home. The tower was a memorable and impressive landmark in Columbia and many Columbians remember fondly the sound of the bells.

## **Vision**

Muse Architects was hired in 2015 to develop plans to bring the bell tower back to the Town Center. The proposal that follows provides for the new bell tower to be located at the water's edge of the terrace area between the fountain plaza and outdoor pavilion and dining terrace leased by Clyde's Restaurant. This location was determined to be the most preferred due to its prominence, visibility from multiple vantage points, integration into the geometrical fabric of the existing hardscapes and planted areas, and the location's quality of not crowding other important features, structures, site sculptures and spaces that already exist along the lakefront. This location also allows for the visibility of the new tower from Route 29 during the winter months, as well as views from multiple locations along the lakefront, parking areas, and Little Patuxent Parkway.

## **Site Improvements**

The proposed renovated terrace area, as further developed by D.S. Thaler and Associates, will be a series of terraced lawn panels with concrete border steps that continue the theme from the semicircular lawn terraces above. Additional planted areas will be provided along the edge of the ramp to the north to soften its edge, along the new lakefront paths, and around the Rouse Brothers statue. The overall goal is to provide an improved experience for casual reflection and viewing of the lakefront and the new bell tower. The tower has been positioned on the axis of the statue of the Rouse brothers, that currently sits midway down the terrace, in order to reinforce the new tower's significance in commemorating the founding of Columbia. This location was also selected as it terminates the stepped sidewalk that begins at the top of the fountain terrace, around the fountain and continues to the water's edge, creating a direct connection between the tower terrace and the top of the fountain plaza.

The introduction of the lawn panels will reduce the amount of impervious paving that currently occupies much of the terrace area. This will allow for more green space, will reduce the heat island effect from the absorption of solar radiation by paved surfaces, and improve storm water infiltration into the lawn and planting areas before surface storm water reaches the lake.

The three existing trees along the lakefront will be replaced by two rows of three trees bordering the new path from the dock, the species of which will be selected for color, shape, and height that will not visually compete with the tower

## **Site Accessibility**

Columbia Association assigns great importance to providing handicap accessibility to indoor and outdoor facilities in Columbia. As part of the scope of this project, ADA access will be improved to the dock areas as well as across more of the lakefront than currently exists. Access will be provided from the dock to the pier through a new accessible route across the lower terrace through the bell tower site.

## **Design of the Tower**

The proposed bell tower design recalls the original tower but reinterprets it in a contemporary way through the employment of modern materials to create a more permanent steel super-structure. The tower is proposed to stand 52 feet tall from its base and will utilize 18" wide steel "C" channels bundled in pairs to form the four corners of tower. The height, while based on the original tower, was also carefully considered so to be visible from the upper parking lot while not overwhelming the views to lake and the horizon line of the trees across the lake. The proposed tower will also be taller than the Clyde's outdoor dining pavilion by about 18 feet so that an appropriate hierarchy is created among the prominent lakefront features of the plaza. The structure will be protected with an epoxy paint to allow a long lasting-durable finish, and the color is proposed to be dark bronze so that the tower is visually prominent but does not create a contrast against the lake and tree line beyond.

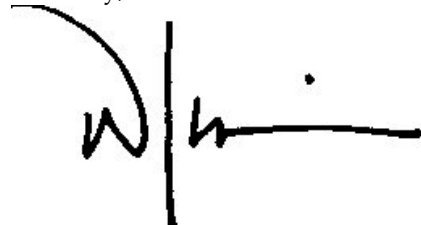
The original 14 bells, that were a gift from the Jim Rouse to the Columbia, will be reinstalled in the new bell tower. The bells will be grouped in four tiers of four bells each, which will allow for two additional bells to be added to the collection to complete the optimum tonal range. The bells will hang within the open structure spanning between the four supporting corners so they are clearly visible and silhouetted against the sky. The tower is topped with four optional flagpoles to allow for flags to be flown representing the United States, the State of Maryland, Columbia, and one of Columbia's sister cities. Lighting will be designed at the base of the tower to up-light the overall tower structure as well as lighting placed in the tower structure to light the bells.

The tower will sit upon a new brick terrace base that will utilize the same Glen-Gery "Old Smokie" paver brick, with repressed chamfered corners, that has been installed on the plaza. The tower terrace will be bordered on three sides by a 24" seat wall of the same brick and capped with a cast stone or concrete cap. The East side of the tower terrace will feature a series of concrete steps that connect it to the terraced lawn area, and will allow for additional opportunities for seating and viewing.

The tower bells will be controlled by a digital automated control system, which will allow for pre-programmed bell ringing throughout the day as well as allow for the manual control of the bells by a musician during special events.

We look forward to presenting this important public project to the Design Advisory Panel on July 13th, 2016. Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Kirwan". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "W" and a vertical line separating it from the rest of the name.

William Kirwan, AIA, LEED® AP  
MUSE ARCHITECTS, PC

Attachment



# **A New Bell Tower for the Columbia Lakefront**

## **Design Advisory Panel Application**

June 23, 2016

Submitted by:  
Muse Architects, PC

### **Development Team**

Client:  
Columbia Association

Architect:  
Muse Architects, PC

Civil Engineer/Landscape Architect:  
DS Thaler & Associates, Inc



## A New Bell Tower for the Columbia Lakefront

### Background

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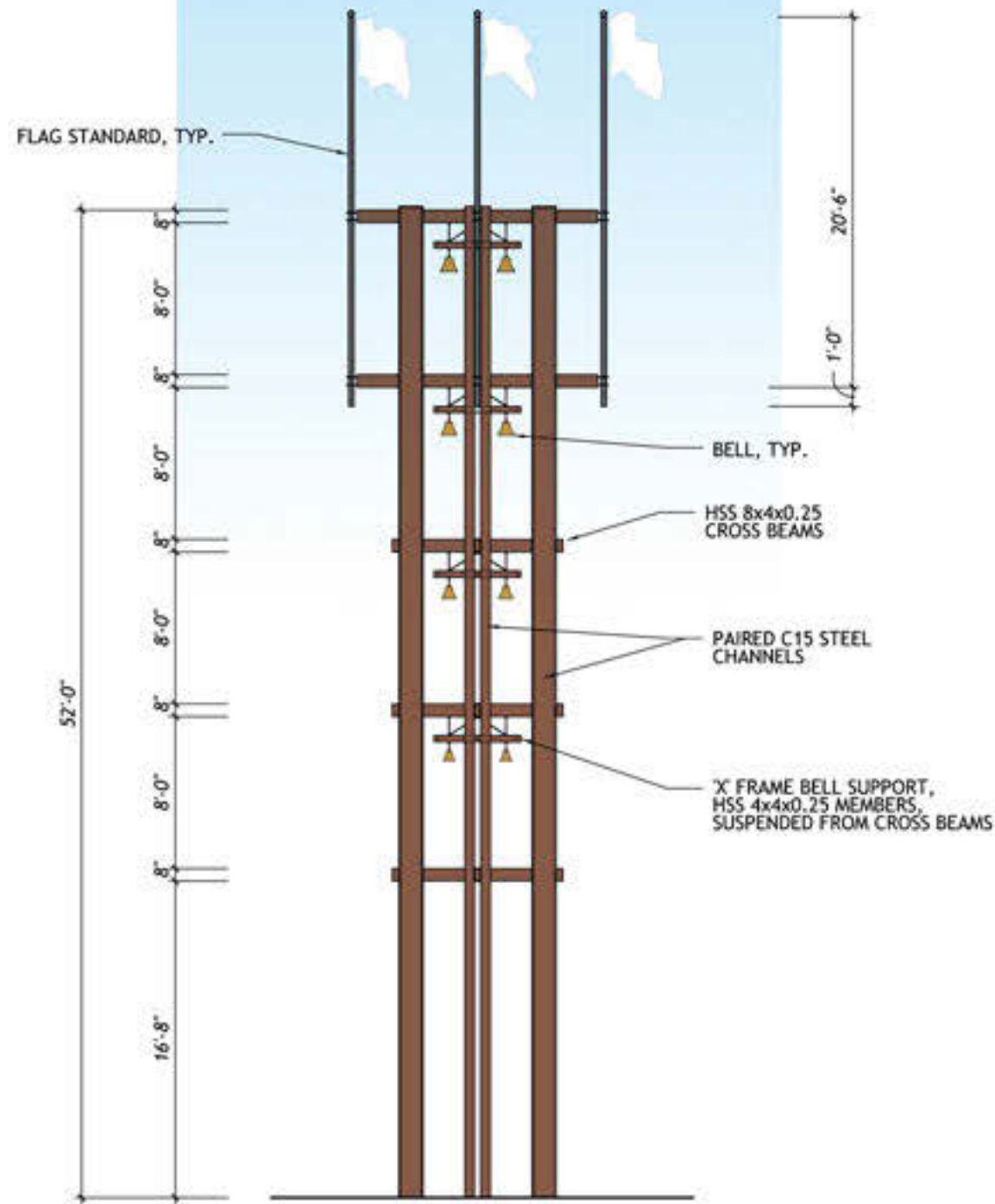






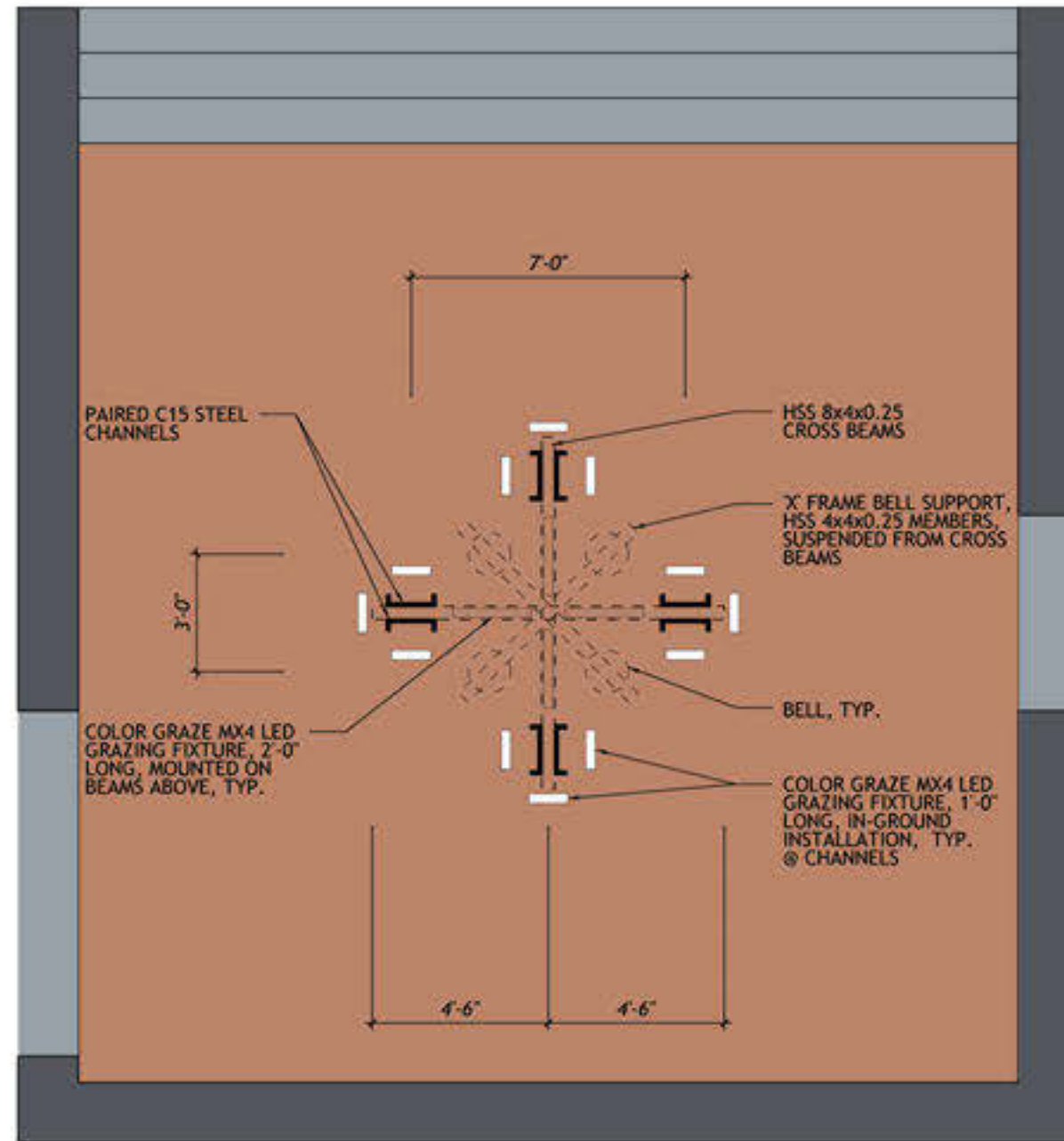






ELEVATION

0 5 10 20 FT



NOTE: STEEL FABRICATION TO FOLLOW REQUIREMENTS OF ARCHITECTURALLY EXPOSED STRUCTURAL STEEL (AESS); CATEGORY 1 AESS FOR STEEL WITHIN 10 FEET VERTICALLY OF THE GROUND SURFACE, CATEGORY 2 AESS FOR STEEL ABOVE 10 FEET VERTICALLY OF THE GROUND SURFACE

PLAN DETAIL

0 5 10 FT

COLUMBIA LAKEFRONT  
 BELL TOWER

15,18

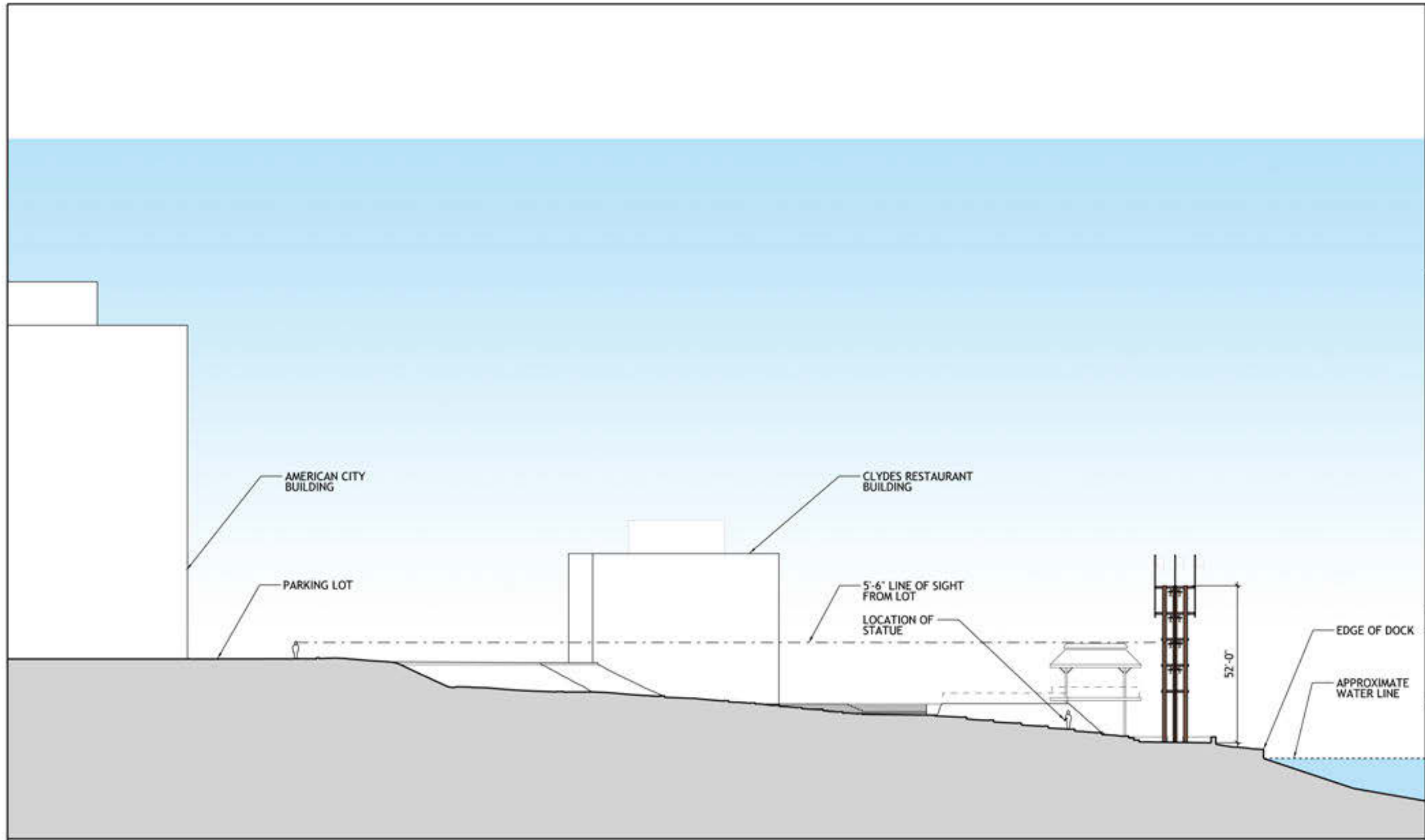
23 JUNE 2016

ELEVATION AND PLAN DETAIL

SCALE: AS NOTED

SHEET NO.

1 of 4



 EAST-WEST SITE SECTION FACING NORTH  


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**COLUMBIA LAKEFRONT**  
**BELL TOWER**

15.18

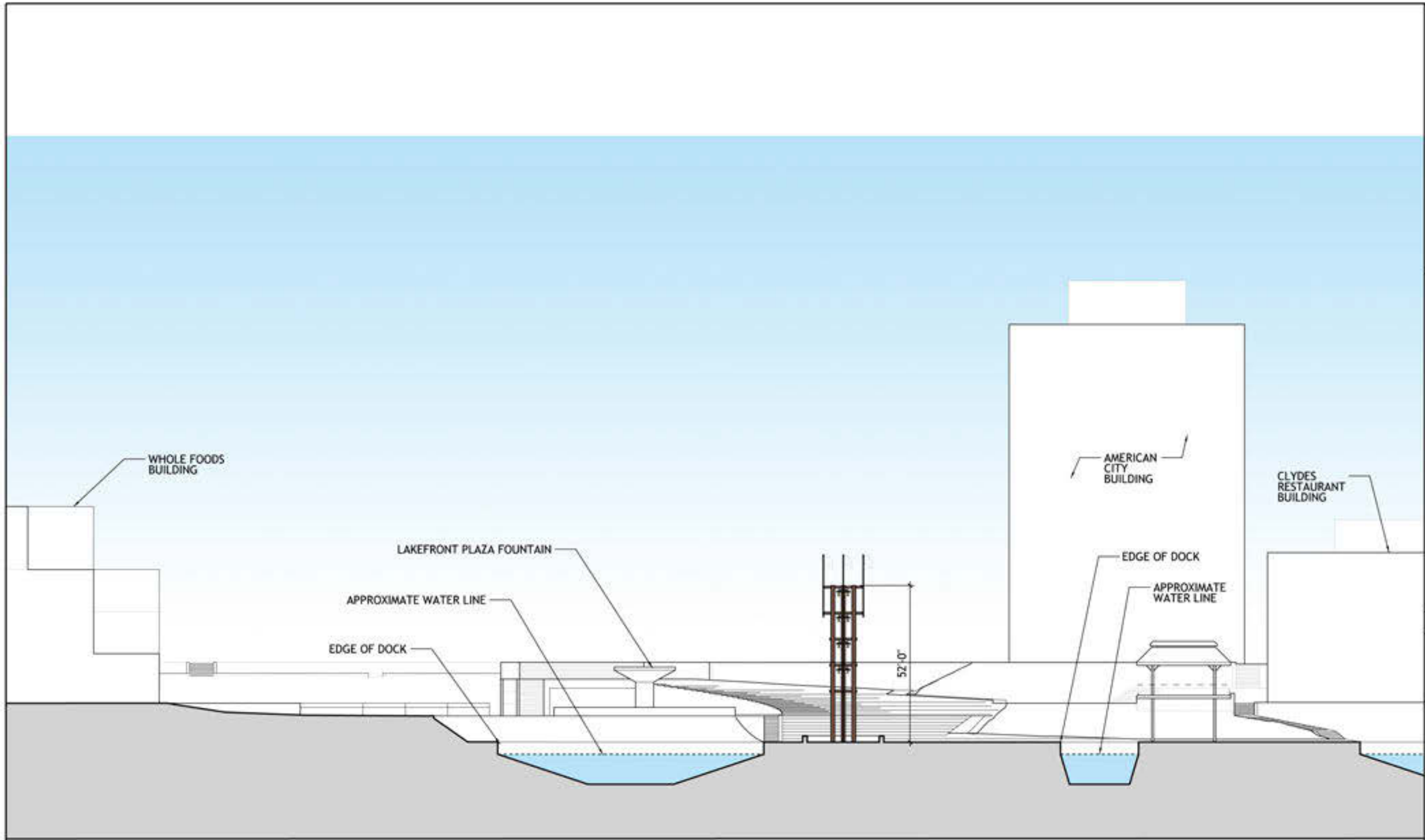
23 JUNE 2016

EAST-WEST SITE SECTION FACING NORTH

SCALE: AS NOTED

SHEET NO.

2 of 4




 NORTH-SOUTH SITE SECTION FACING WEST  

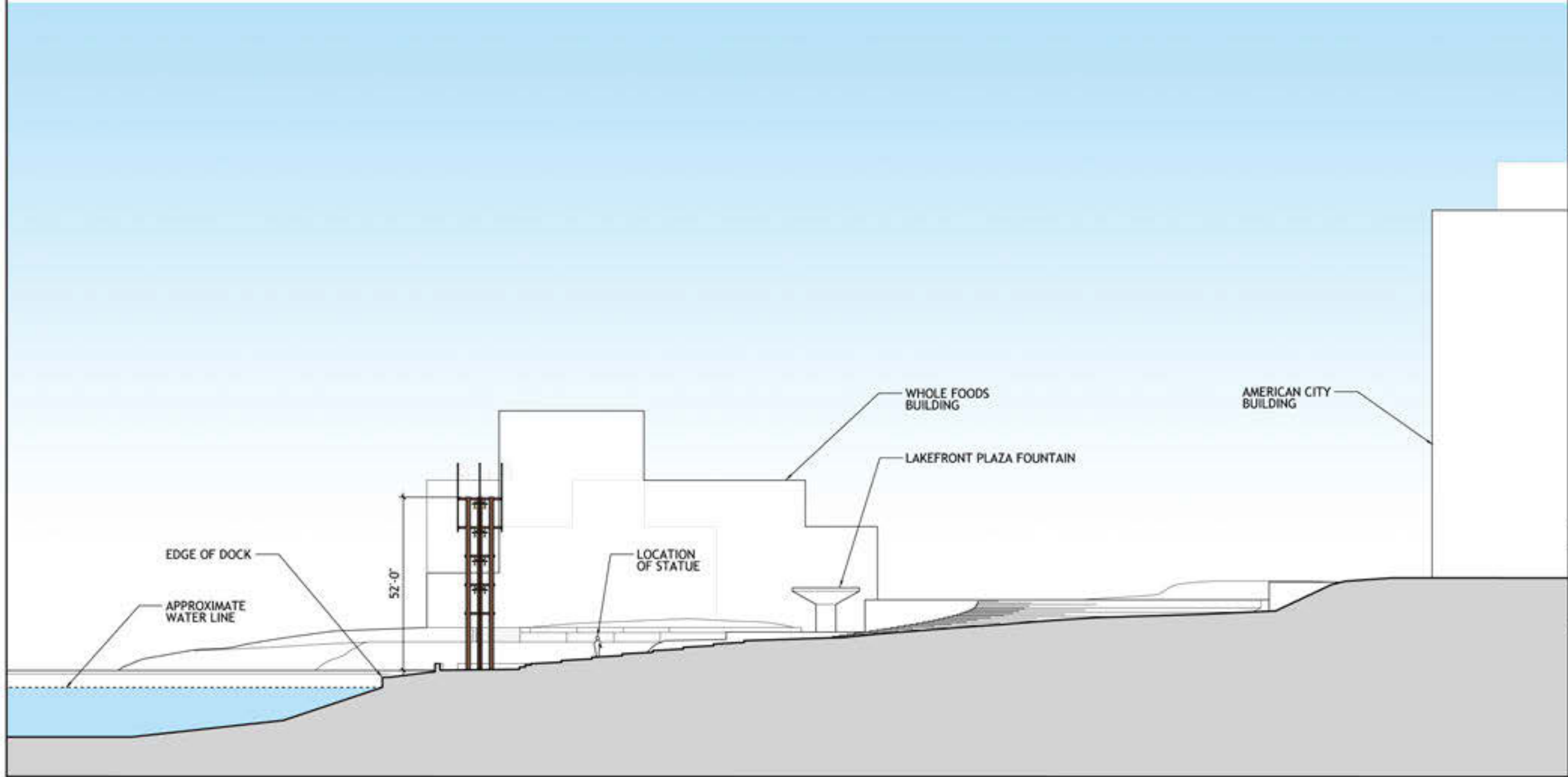

**COLUMBIA LAKEFRONT**  
**BELL TOWER**

15,18

23 JUNE 2016

NORTH-SOUTH SITE SECTION FACING WEST

SCALE: AS NOTED



○ EAST-WEST SITE SECTION FACING SOUTH  
 0 20 40 FT

**COLUMBIA LAKEFRONT**  
**BELL TOWER**

15.18

23 JUNE 2016

EAST-WEST SITE SECTION FACING SOUTH

SCALE: AS NOTED

SHEET NO.

**4 of 4**



View of the new Bell Tower and Lake Kittamaqundi from Northwest



View of the new Bell Tower and Lake Kittamaqundi from Southwest



In Ground enclosure

## ColorGraze MX4 Powercore

RGBW, 60° x 30° Beam Angle, 305 mm (1 ft)

RGBW, 9° x 9° Beam Angle, 305 mm (1 ft)

Exterior premium LED wall grazing fixtures with extended color range.

The new ColorGraze MX4 Powercore family extends the range and flexibility of the popular line of high-performance, full-color LED grazing fixtures from Philips Color Kinetics. These intelligent RGBW or RGBA fixtures offer an expanded palette of intensely saturated full-color light output in a variety of beam angles. Low-profile housing, connectorized cabling, a universal power input range, and direct line-voltage operation make ColorGraze MX4 Powercore fixtures easy to install and operate. Custom lengths, LED channels, beam angles, housing colors, and power consumption levels produce hundreds of possible configurations and light distribution patterns to support virtually any façade or surface illumination application.

Proposed Lighting



Photos of ColorGraze installations

