



January 28, 2015

Christine Grimando, Senior Planner
City of Portland Department of Planning and Development
389 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101

Re: 58 Fore Street – Review of “3d Massing” Model prepared by Whitten Architects on behalf of Soul of Portland

Dear Christine:

On behalf of CPB2 LLC, Woodard & Curran has reviewed the “3d Massing” model prepared by Whitten Architects on behalf of Soul of Portland and submitted to the City of Portland Planning Office via email on January 13, 2015. We reviewed the Google Earth (*.kmz) file provided to the City along with information presented on the www.soulofportland.org website.

Our review of the model identifies numerous locations where the model incorrectly depicts allowable building heights based on the 2004 Eastern Waterfront Height Study, the associated proposed B6 Building Height Overlay figure, and the City’s verified methodology for measuring building heights city-wide.

The inaccuracies that we identified in the model likely stem from four primary errors in methodology: (1) incorrect interpretation of how the City measures height; (2) incorrect interpretation of the height study/proposed overlay; (3) utilizing inaccurate ground elevation data; (4) projecting inaccurate height masses.

We have identified the following inaccuracies in Whitten Architects’ model:

- The grouping of 35’ x 35’ squares utilized within the model implies a large building mass, as each square directly contacts each adjacent square. The City’s methodology for measuring height dictates that when multiple buildings share walls or are connected, they are considered a single building when calculating building height; we have confirmed this determination in multiple meetings with the City’s Zoning Administrator and Planning Staff. As such, it is inaccurate to show an interconnected mass of squares with each square projecting to a height allowable only for that single, stand-alone square.
- The model applies height extensions to all 35’ x 35’ squares, ignoring the restrictions placed on these extensions in the proposed height overlay. Per the 2004 Eastern Waterfront Height Study and the associated proposed B6 Building Height Overlay figure, for Buildings located East of Hancock Street, no building mass higher than 45 feet shall be wider than 70 feet measured parallel with the waterfront, nor longer than 140 feet measured perpendicular with the waterfront. The 70 foot wide building extension allowed above must be at least 90 feet apart, measured parallel with the waterfront, and if abutting Mountfort Street (extension) must be set back 25 feet from any street. According to the description on the Soul of Portland website, the limiting factors of the height extensions were intentionally ignored.
- There are numerous 35’ x 35’ squares in the block between Atlantic Street and St. Lawrence Street that are shown well above a 65’ height from average grade, or even from highest existing grade at those locations. The line of 35’ x 35’ squares set one or more rows back from Fore Street are shown higher than 65’ above existing grade. The Google Earth elevation information used by the Architect appears to be highly inaccurate in this area, likely due to vegetation cover. The heavily vegetated slope has elevations listed in google earth that are significantly higher than the topographic survey performed for the site, as Google Earth lists the top of trees and shrubs as the ground surface elevation in this area.



- The model images on the Soul of Portland website that depict height as measured from floodplain incorrectly imply that the buildings would rise above the Fore Street grade in the block between Atlantic Street and St. Lawrence Street. Our analysis shows that the buildings in this block could only crest 2' above the Fore Street grade at the edge of the St. Lawrence Street view corridor, and all other building heights in this area would be below the adjacent Fore Street grade when measured from floodplain.

The CPB2 LLC team has been working closely with City staff for the last year and a half to review potential heights in the area based on the 2004 height study, to understand and verify how the City measures height, and to collect on-the-ground survey data to help inform the figures that we have prepared and submitted to the City Planning Office. We believe that the Fore Street Section prepared by CPB2 LLC provides an accurate, thorough, and well informed projection of allowable building heights along the Fore Street corridor, and we have heard agreement from City Staff that the figures and methodologies used by the CPB2 LLC team are correct and accurate.

CPB2 LLC and the civil engineering team at Woodard & Curran are concerned that the model developed by Whitten Architects for Soul of Portland is both highly inaccurate and misleading to the public. CPB2 LLC has reached out to Soul of Portland on multiple occasions to request a meeting with Soul of Portland and Whitten Architects to review and discuss their model assumptions prior to its public release. CPB2 LLC has received written response from Soul of Portland denying these requests to meet.

Sincerely,

WOODARD & CURRAN INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Senus".

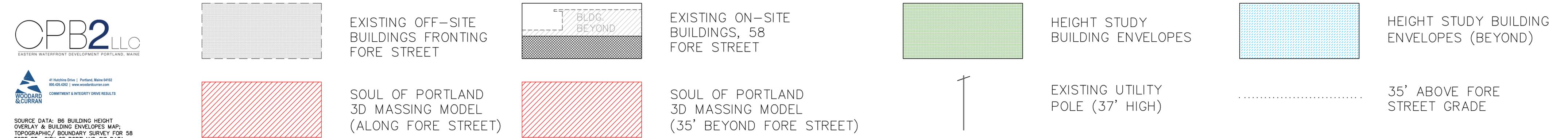
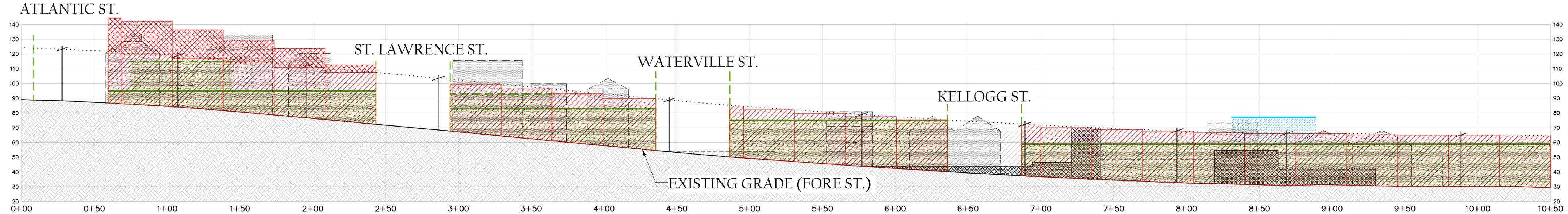
David Senus, P.E.
Project Manager

227007

Attachment: Figures – Fore Street Section with Overlay Approximation of Soul of Portland Model

cc: CPB2 LLC (via email)
Mary E. Costigan, Bernstein-Shur (via email)

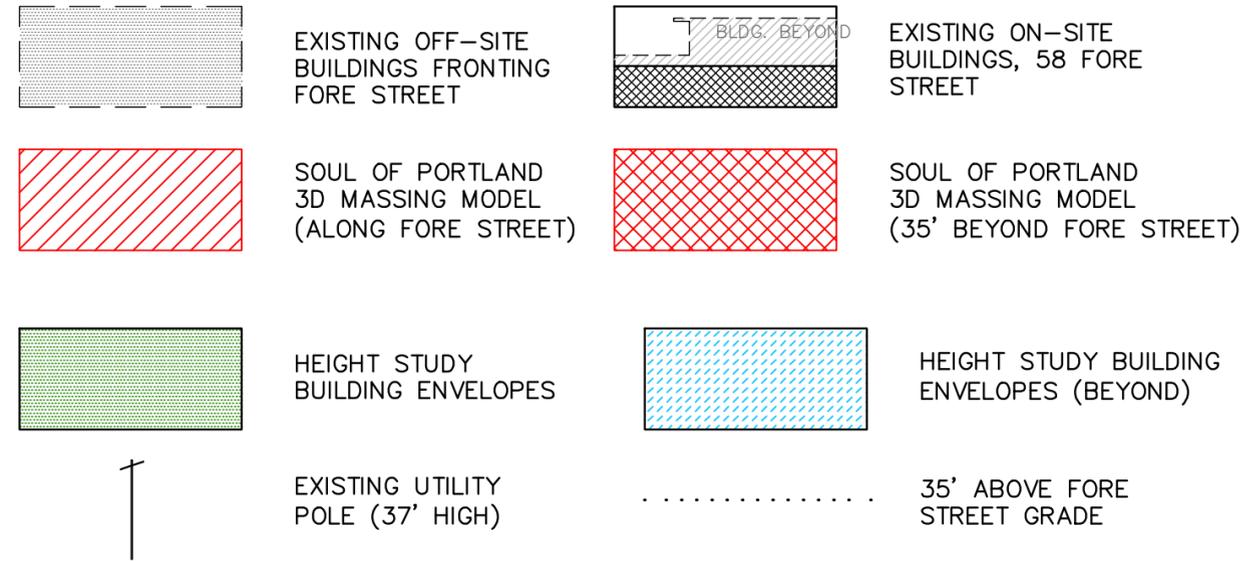
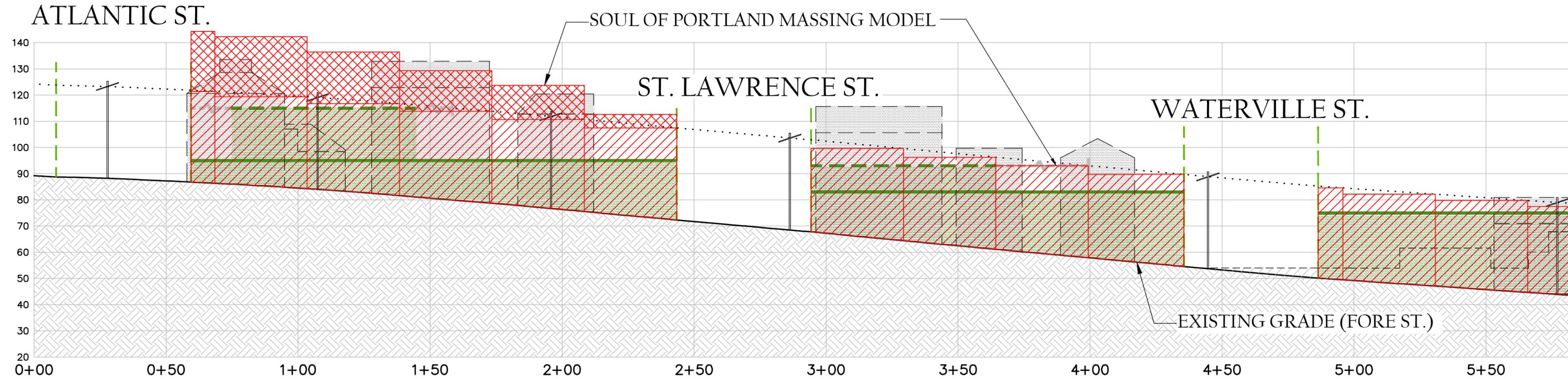
FORE STREET SECTION WITH B6 HEIGHT OVERLAY & SOUL OF PORTLAND MASSING MODEL



SOURCE DATA: B6 BUILDING HEIGHT OVERLAY & BUILDING ENVELOPES MAP; TOPOGRAPHIC/ BOUNDARY SURVEY FOR 58 FORE ST.; CITY OF PORTLAND GIS DATA

DATE: JANUARY 28, 2015

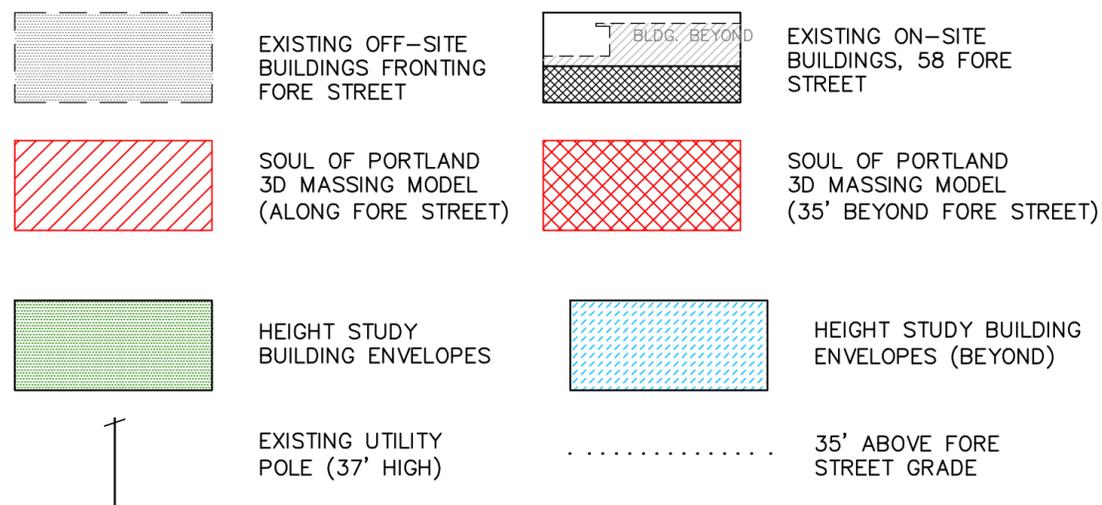
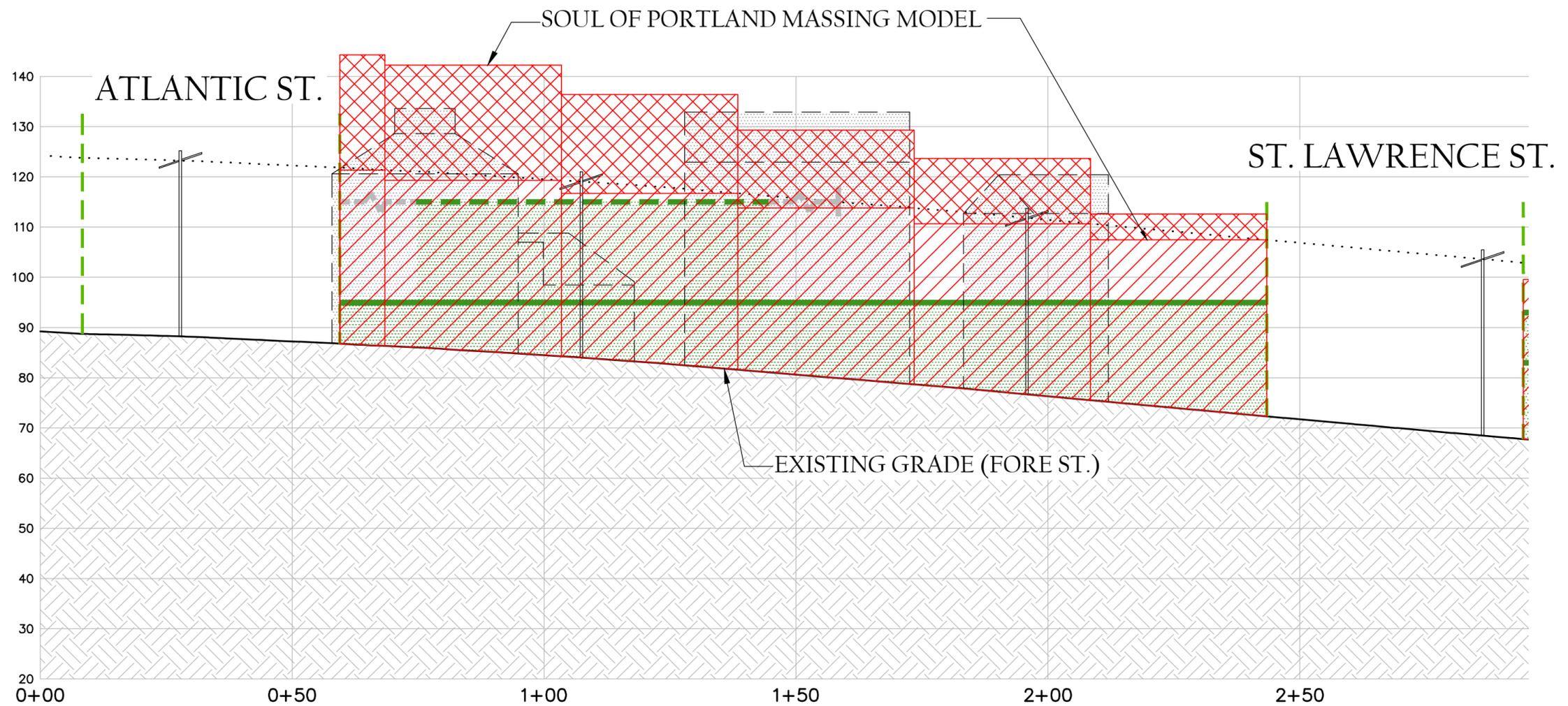
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