

AC MARRIOTT PORTSMOUTH HOTEL
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE, USA
2017

Boston-based developer Carthartes is the owner of plots 225 and 299 Vaughn Street, as well as an adjacent riverside plot in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Fifty miles away from Boston, the city of Portsmouth is located in the mouth of the Piscataqua River, – a short and wide river that divides New Hampshire from Maine –, and is part of a prosperous metropolitan region.

The proposed gf+5 storey ac Marriott hotel will have 140 guestrooms, with amenities including restaurant, bar and a small Spa with indoor pool.

As a contribution to the city and the landscape around the hotel and the adjacent 3S Artspace, the developer will implement a small riverside park that will serve the local community as part of a wider city programme, to create a riverside pathway for sports, recreation and cultural activities.

The proposed design aims to focus street-life on Vaughan Street, by locating the hotel on the street side and aligning it with the neighbouring buildings, in particular with the 3S Artspace.

The location of the swimming pool, slightly raised on the nw corner, was also devised as part of a mitigation strategy to reduce the visual impact of this parking deck towards the river, whilst offering guests privacy and views over the North Mill Pond and the Riverside Park.

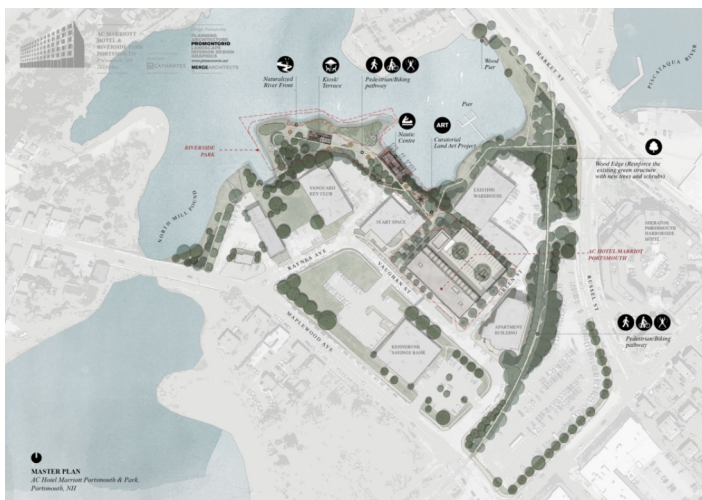
The slim volume that results from the interpretation of this hotel's brief is a simple yet elegant double-loaded building. With all its public amenities with a direct (visual) connection to the street, it will contribute to a hectic atmosphere. The entrance to the hotel is proposed on the opposite corner of Vaughan Street, next to Green Street, and acts as a focal point for anyone arriving from Portsmouth, via Mapplewood Avenue.

The hotel ground floor has a footprint of 15,047 sq. ft, and the deck parking structure a footprint of 19,969 sq. ft. The hotel public spaces are all located on the gf in a L-shape configuration. The operator's concept is to provide a sequence of interconnected open spaces that bring flexibility and ease the operational support to the hotel activities. Back-of-House areas are also on ground floor and are economically and efficiently laid out in order to reduce their size to the minimum needed to support these functions. These service areas are conveniently adjacent to the parking deck, facilitating loading and unloading operations.

With double-loaded corridors, the proposed layout maximizes the number of guestrooms. This provides great views from the rooms to the residential quarters and the well-preserved North Mill Pond banks on the sw side, as well as the Piscataqua river and its bridges on the ne side.

The 2nd-storey guestrooms, facing the ne side, have small private terraces with green fencing, enhancing the guestroom range and amenities for this hotel unit. Guestroom sizes follow ac Brand Standards, which advise an ideal room module of 12'-6" w x 27'-1" l.

Inspired by the post-industrial context of the area, the design is a contemporary reinterpretation of the dark brick warehouses and customs houses characteristic of the port and shipyard areas, wherein a brick volume sits on a fully glazed podium with concealed mullions. This contrasting volume in dark brown or black brick is then punctuated by large and protruding casement windows, which can be in either timber or bronze-tinted aluminium, creating a play of light and shadows, colour and materials in line with the operator's large window concept. A subtle shifting of the windows within the room modules between floors creates a vibration in the facade, which is further emphasized by a weaved brickwork that creates a simple ornament.



Location: 225 and 299 Vaughn Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, USA

Client: Cathartes Group

Associate Architects: Merge Architects, Boston

Scope of Services: Architecture

Project Brief: 140 keys 4-star hotel and riverside park

Plot Size: 56,073 sq.ft.

Gross Built Area: 77,292 sq. ft

Parking: 110 cars

Project Status: 2017 (concept design)