

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE S.E.
SEATTLE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
TO DPD DIRECTOR**

August 7, 2007

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3001242

Address: 1400 S. Dearborn St.

Applicant: Darrell Vange, Ravenhurst Development

Board Members Present:
Ann Beeman, Chair
Robert Mohn
Mona Campbell
Michele Wang
Steve Sindiong

DPD Representative:
Scott Kemp, Senior Land Use Planner
Vince Lyons, DR Manager

BACKGROUND:

The proposal was the subject of Early Design Guidance (EDG) Public Meetings on August 9, 2005 and September 27, 2005 at which time early design guidance was given to for developing the proposed design. A record of that guidance can be found in the MUP file for this application. The applicant has applied for a Master Use Permit. On June 26, 2006, February 27, 2007, June 5, 2007 and July 10, 2007, July 24, 2007 Design Review Board meetings were convened for the purpose of making Design Review Recommendations to DPD. At these meetings site, floor plans, elevations, landscape plans and computer based modeling of the proposed mixed-use building were presented. Records of these meetings are available in the MUP file for this application.

This meeting was held for further consideration of the configuration of the proposed loading dock on S. Weller St. and the related request for a development standard departure to allow a 40 foot wide curb cut for it. Also, at this meeting a listing of the

conclusions and recommendations made at the prior Recommendation Meetings was supplied by DPD for the Board to review and confirm.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a six-story building containing 645,000 sq. ft. of retail, 45,000 sq. ft. of administrative office, 51,000 sq. ft. of warehouse and 565 residential units (in five residential structures above the commercial bases). Parking for 2,200 vehicles (a reduction from that proposed at the EDG phase) would be provided within the structures. Project includes demolition of all structures on site and 260,000 cu. yds. of grading. Seattle Goodwill Industries would be relocated on site in the new facility.

The proposal requires a contract rezone from IC-65' to NC3-85' and a related request to vacate portions of S. Lane St., Dearborn Pl. S. and Corwin Pl. S. A Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement has been prepared.

For this meeting the design of the S. Weller St. loading dock and garage entry was updated to combine both of them into a single curb cut and driveway near the western extent of the project site. This single entry point would provide be one-way access into the site with the right two lanes entering the parking garage and trucks able to use the full driveway width as they turn leftward to enter the loading dock area. Both the loading dock exit and one of the routes out of the parking garages would continue to exit at the former Corwin Pl. S. exit location.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was received. A summary of the comment received follows.

Merging the two driveways is an improvement as it creates a better pedestrian environment with a longer, uninterrupted length of storefronts and less total driveway length, but, the issue still remains of placing truck traffic on S. Weller St. when it should be on Dearborn.

Keeping a loading dock on S. Weller St. continues to be incompatible with the character of development expected and desired in the future on the other side of that street.

In EDG guidance the applicants were directed to incorporate an “Asian character” into the proposal which has yet to appear either in function, colors or materials.

Many elderly have been observed walking in the neighborhood and the presence of a 40 foot wide curb cut with auto and truck traffic is inconsistent with their mobility needs.

The proposed Dearborn Ave frontage, at 1,000 feet plus in length, remains markedly devoid of pedestrian elements. There are a couple entry points to buildings and a stairway into the interior areas and that is all.

The DSEIS was stated to call for special elements of Asian character which have not been delivered.

A statement was made that the residential open space does not show code complying open spaces, especially in quantity.

Personal safety and security remains a concern in the internal parking garages.

The change of the auto access driveway on Weller St., it was stated, will result in increased traffic leaving the site along the former Lane St. drive.

The fact that a departure is necessary for a 40 foot wide driveway on S. Weller St. indicates that the entire project is too large and is out of scale with the surrounding context and underlying zoning.

The largest of signs in Little Saigon is 20 feet and the smallest of signs proposed for the project was stated to be 30 feet tall. This is too large for the context.

DELIBERATIONS:

The Board discussed at length the latest approach to access to the S. Weller St. loading dock area. All five members acknowledged the combination of the garage entry and the loading dock entry into a single drive and the uninterrupted length of storefronts which result to be an improvement. Three of the Board members voted in favor of the departure with recommended conditions and two voted against it.

Conditions recommended to accompany an approval of the departure to allow a 40 foot wide curb cut and driveway on S. Weller St. are:

1. The curb cut shall be used to eliminate the need for a separate parking garage entry on S. Weller St. in the manner shown in materials presented at the August 7, 2007 meeting.
2. A paving change and signage at the driveway area beyond the sidewalk shall differentiate the route to be followed by autos from that leading to the loading dock.
3. The pedestrian entries along S. Weller St. shall be expressed architecturally in a manner to be approved by the DPD Land Use Planner.
4. Exterior finish materials shall wrap into the driveway/loading dock an appreciable distance the amount of which will be approved by the DPD Land Use Planner.
5. The length and depth of retail spaces along S. Weller St. shall remain at least as large as shown on materials presented at the August 7, 2007 meeting; approximately 103 and 56 feet long and approximately 26 and 41 feet deep.

The Board then reviewed a summary of recommendations they have taken at previous recommendation meetings as reflected in the records of those meetings and affirmed the accuracy of that record.

NEXT STEPS AND STAFF COMMENTS

No further Design Review Board meetings are contemplated. A Recommendation Report will be issued by the Department of Planning and Development followed by a Public Hearing before the City Hearing Examiner and subsequent City Council Action on the Applicant's requests to change the zoning designation on the property from IC 40' to NC2 85' and on the petition to vacate street right of ways within the site. There will be public notice of each to all parties of record of these steps.