

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE PRIORITIES
OF THE
DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Meeting Date: November 6th, 2007
Report Date: November 8th, 2007

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3006557

Address: 2612 3rd Avenue

Applicant: Douglas Hofius of Hewitt (architects)
for Harbor Properties, developer

Board members present: Wilmot Gilland, Chair
Dana Behar
Jim Falconer
Marta Falkowska
Kelly Mann

Board members absent: Matt Allert, excused

DPD staff present: Shelley Bolser, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

The 12,960 square foot corner site is located on 3rd Avenue and Cedar Street. Three mid-century single story office buildings occupy the site, with surface parking located at the alley. The buildings were constructed in 1958.

The site is located in the Belltown neighborhood east of the downtown core in a pedestrian-oriented area with frequent transit service. The area exhibits a variety of buildings, with newer residential mixed-use development to the east and west, and older office buildings and surface parking lots nearby.

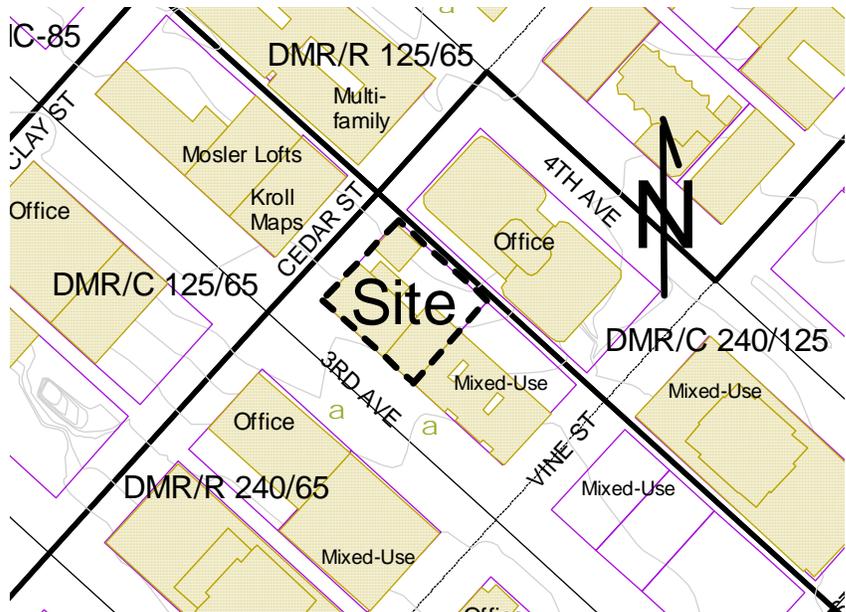


Figure 1
For illustrative purposes only

The subject property is located on the corner of 3rd Avenue and Cedar Street. Cedar Street is a designated green street per the Seattle Land Use Code. Green streets should include a combination of design features that favor the pedestrian environment over the automobile environment. These design features may include increased traffic calming, wider sidewalks, higher quality landscaping, pedestrian-scaled light fixtures, retail at the street front, overhead pedestrian weather protection, and sidewalk furniture such as benches and sculptures.

The proposed development would be placed over the quarter-block sized development parcel. The zoning in this area has higher maximum zoning limits than many nearby properties. To the west, north, and northwest of the subject property, the maximum height limit is 125'. At the subject property and continuing to the southwest and east, the maximum height limit is 240'.



Figure 2
For illustrative purposes only

Due to the diagonal platting patterns, 3rd Avenue in this area primarily includes a 125' height limit, with the exception of two blocks, including the subject property site (see Figure 2; black square is subject property). This 5 ½ block area is at the northern end of the Belltown Height Crescent.

The site is essentially flat, with slight sloping to the southwest toward Elliott Bay. Surrounding development consists of older office buildings and older and newer mixed-use residential and commercial structures. Architecture of adjacent buildings varies based on age. The office buildings on site are mid-century single story structures with brick facades. The 1975-constructed office building across the alley to the northeast is finished in mirrored glass with rounded corners. Single story concrete office structures and a newer 125' tall building under construction are located on the other side of Cedar St. 3rd Avenue exhibits a variety of one to two story concrete block, brick, and stucco buildings from the early to mid 20th century. The building to the southeast of the subject property is a two story brick clad early 20th century building with raised stoops adjacent to the sidewalk. Smaller businesses and residents occupy these row house style structures. Newer mid-rise and high-rise mixed-use structures reflect a variety of materials and a high degree of transparency.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes the construction of one mixed-use residential and retail building with two levels of below grade parking and one level of parking between the street level retail and the residential levels above. The proposed project consists of a tower centrally located on a retail

base (total height of 160'). The central location of the tower would preserve some existing views of Elliott Bay for the office building to the east and would provide a setback from the southeast property line.

The proposal includes approximately 150 residential units, 5,000 square feet of retail area at the street level, and 125 parking stalls.

DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES:
EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING (July 10th, 2007)

At the Early Design Guidance meeting held on July 10th, 2007 and after visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance and identified by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Downtown Development*" and "*Belltown Urban Center Village Design Guidelines*" of highest priority to this project:

- A-1 Responding to the Physical Environment
- A-2 Enhance the Skyline
- B-1 Respond to the Neighborhood Context
- B-2 Create a Transition in Bulk and Scale
- B-3 Reinforce the positive urban form & architectural attributes of the immediate area
- B-4 Design a well-proportioned & unified building
- C-1 Promote pedestrian interaction
- C-2 Design facades of many scales
- C-3 Provide active—not blank— facades
- C-5 Encourage overhead weather protection
- C-6 Develop the alley facade
- D-1 Provide inviting & usable open space
- D-2 Enhance the building with landscaping
- D-3 Provide elements that define the place
- E-2 Integrate parking facilities

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE SUMMARY (JULY 10TH, 2007)

On July 10th, 2007, the Downtown Design Review Board convened for a Design Recommendation meeting. Display boards including perspective sketches, design departure requests, site plans, sections, pedestrian environment details, elevations, materials and colors, floor plans, and landscape plans were presented for the Board members' consideration.

After consideration of the above items, the Design Review Board members provided design guidance and noted that the next stage of review should be one of two courses:

1. If the proposed lot size departure is determined to be departable by DPD, then the applicant may proceed to MUP intake and design recommendation stage
2. If the proposed departure is determined not to be departable, the applicant should return to the Downtown Board for a second EDG meeting

Summarized and paraphrased from the July 10th, 2007 EDG Report, guidance included the following:

- The proposed 3 departures would lead to a denser and taller structure than those nearby. Demonstrate how the proposed departures would better meet the intent of the adopted design guidelines, and look the option of obtaining development rights from the adjacent property
- The proposed design should respond to the massing of the adjacent building to the south and other nearby development
- The top of the proposed development should visually enhance the skyline, since it would be taller than several nearby buildings on 3rd Ave
- Respond to positive examples of architectural context in the area, including historic brick structures and newer development
- Include human scale street level development and a variety of scales in the facades
- Enhance the pedestrian experience, including wrapping the Green Street development onto 3rd Avenue, include sidewalk related uses, and architectural reinforcement of the corner
- Avoid blank walls where possible, and treat blank walls where unavoidable
- Provide continuous overhead weather protection on all street fronts; use varied heights and treatments to provide articulation (as opposed to breaks in the canopy)
- Design open spaces to meet design guidelines
- Full development of the Green Street
- If any parking is proposed above grade, it should be fully screened (with active uses, if possible) and architecturally integrated into the facade

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE PRESENTATION NOVEMBER 6TH, 2007

The applicant requested a second EDG meeting after revising the proposed development since the first EDG meeting. The applicant also wanted additional design guidance regarding the proposed development and the requested design review departure. The proposed changes since the first EDG meeting include:

- Removal of the proposed office space; replacement with residential units and one level of above grade parking (previously total of 140 units, now 150 units) – the applicant noted that the Floor Area Ratio maximum of 1 in the Land Use Code didn't allow 2 floors of usable office space and one floor of office wasn't financially feasible
- The proposed above grade parking level would be sheathed in a high quality material such as brick and architecturally integrated into the facade
- Modified north façade to meet Green Street setback requirements
- Modified to meet lot coverage maximums; proposed lot coverage is now:
 - 90% for the first 30' of building height (code allows 100% coverage to 65')
 - 64% coverage above 30' building height (code allows 75% in 65-85' height and 65% in 85-125' height)
 - 60% in 125' to 165' height (0% allowed above 125' for a lot less than 19,000 s.f.)

The result is a taller thinner building with approximately 1.3% more volume than would be allowed in a shorter broader building that would be compliant with the Code. The proposed height of 160' would also provide a reasonable transition between the existing nearby 240' tall buildings and the 125' tall buildings. The lower building base (30' instead of 65') would also be more consistent with the existing street wall of the adjacent building to the south.

Setbacks of 16' at the south façade would allow the proposed development to include openings and transparency at that façade. The thinner configuration of the tower as viewed from the east and west also provides view corridors between the properties to the east and Elliott Bay to the west. This arrangement also allows the proposed east facing units wider views, instead of only direct views of the adjacent office building.

Shadow studies provided by the applicant demonstrated the difference in shadowing on Cedar St between the code compliant option on this site, a code compliant option if the entire ½ block were developed, and the proposed development. The shadow studies indicated minimal difference between the ½ block development and the proposed development.

The applicant noted that the project would still include market rate apartments, the Green Street development on Cedar St would be enhanced with street level setbacks and a curb bulb at 3rd Ave & Cedar St. The primary street level design is intended to provide a strong connection north on Cedar St to Tillicum Place.

The applicant explained that since the first EDG meeting, the group has met with the Belltown Community Council (a Belltown neighborhood residents' group) and DPD. The Belltown Community Council provided feedback showing 1/3 of those present were in favor of the proposal and 2/3 neutral.

In addition to the packet materials, the applicant provided supplementary page 24. This page listed the focus and summary of the proposed development, including:

- Proposed departure results in less than 2% increase in building massing beyond the result of zoning compliant option
- Reduced mass at pedestrian street level
- Additional 8' setback at street level for Green Street development, with intent to fully develop the Green Street frontage
- Street wall relates to adjacent historic building
- More slender tower at upper levels (viewed from east and west), helps to preserve views through the site
- 160' proposed height provides transition between 125' zone and existing 240' buildings nearby
- Above grade parking would be clad in high quality material
- Proposal has community acceptance
- Proposed departure is possible, per feedback from DPD

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The Board had the following questions and clarifying comments, with responses from the applicant:

- What is the difference in square feet between the code compliant option for this site and the proposed option?
 - Little if any difference; the proposed departure would allow a different building extrusion but with essentially the same area
- The applicant explained that there is existing soil contamination below the site, which drives the desire for one level of above grade parking. Please explain why the third level of parking can't be placed below ground with the other two.
 - The contaminated ground water is located 30' below grade. Two parking levels can be placed below grade without displacing this water table. If a third level

were placed below grade, the structure would displace ground water and it would have to be routed to the City drainage system. Since it is contaminated water, the applicant would then be responsible for treatment of and disposal. If they don't displace the ground water, they aren't responsible for cleanup of pre-existing contamination.

- How does the proposed departure result in a proposal that better meets the intent of the adopted design guidelines? What specific guidelines does the applicant feel are better met by the proposal?
 - Additional setbacks at the Green Street street level and above allow better use of the sidewalk on that façade and the potential for a sidewalk cafe
 - The overhead weather protection would wrap the corner of 3rd and Cedar
 - Additional planting area at the street level would provide better Green Street development
 - The proposed 30' tall street wall relates better to existing context
 - The thinner tower allows openings at the south façade and views through the site from properties to the east
- Has the applicant approached the neighbors to the south about purchasing development rights for their site?
 - The adjacent property is owned by a family from Taiwan. They have been difficult to contact and were unwilling to place any encumbrances on the property.
- How many residential units would the proposed departure allow in the building?
 - Because the volume of the structure would mostly be redistributed, the net gain is only 1 or 2 units
- How many floors of below grade parking are proposed?
 - 2 floors
- Would the proposed departure increase the parking in the proposed development?
 - No, the redistribution of building volume would not mean any additional parking. The proposed parking ratio is about 0.7 spaces/unit
- What is the swath of blank area on the north façade shown on the preliminary rendering on page 20?
 - This is a preliminary rendering, but it is an indication of some areas of the building that might not be transparent, due to energy code requirements
- On page 9, the massing diagrams indicate that perhaps the upper levels should have a lot coverage of 55% and 45% instead of 64%
- The proposed departure would not set “precedent,” since each proposal is reviewed in a site-specific manner, independent of the outcome of previous applications. Previous applications may add to context of the area, but do not set precedent that must be followed in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Six members of the public attended the Early Design Guidance meeting. The following comments were offered:

- From an urban design standpoint, the proposed design is better than the code compliant option – a more slender tower is appreciated
- 3rd Avenue is an important corridor for Belltown and quality development is needed to enhance the streetscape
- The Board should review this proposal assuming the property to the south is developable and would not be designated an historic landmark

- The Board shouldn't grant departures based on a rationale of building volume – the proposed departure would result in a taller building height than otherwise allowed on this size site, and the upper units would rent for proportionally more. If design review justifies an increase in financial yield, the Board should also be justified in reducing the financial yield of other projects to require better design
- Assumption the upper building levels are 8,000 square foot floorplate sizes, not 8,400 square feet
- If the proposed departure is approved, there should be compelling benefits to the neighborhood such as full development of the Green Street on both sides of Cedar St for this block.
- Concerns about the proposal change to above grade parking – instead of placing parking above grade in response to the groundwater contamination, the applicant should reduce the size of the project.
- Design review shouldn't be permitted to modify the bulk standards found in the Code.

DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance and identified by letter and number those guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Downtown Development* and *Belltown Urban Center Village Design Guidelines* of highest priority to this project.

"Hot Buttons" are items initially discussed by the Board and include items of top importance for the design. For this project, the Board determined the hot button was:

1. **Proposed departure.** Departure from 23.49.153
 - There are pros and cons to the proposed departure:
 - Pros:
 - More slender tower
 - Additional setback at south façade means glazing on that side
 - Lower street wall
 - Additional space at the street level
 - Provides better transition between the strange zoning changes along 3rd Avenue
 - Cons:
 - The addition of above grade parking to provide the applicant's preferred parking ratio for additional units
 - The purpose of the code requirement was to limit building height on small lots, and is linked to the 'tower spacing' requirement found in other Downtown zones
 - The departure seems to be a response to the existing soil contamination. The applicant was aware of this at property purchase and should have designed the project in response to that existing condition.
 - The applicant should fully demonstrate which guidelines are better met by the proposed design departures, and how those guidelines are better met by the proposed design departures.
 - The Board felt that the proposed departure may better meet the intent of some of the design guidelines, including B-2, B-3, C-1, C-3, C-4, D-3, and D-6

- At the MUP stage of review, the applicant should provide:
 - More information demonstrating the proposed departure
 - How the proposed departure better meets particular design guidelines
 - Plans and sections demonstrating the proposal
- 2. **Above-grade parking.** The Board expressed concern about the change in the proposal from all below grade to a combination of above and below grade parking. The Board advised the applicant to carefully design the above grade parking, possibly using a veneer of active uses, at least at the corners of the building. Any treatment of the parking should be architecturally integrated into the building, relate well to the older structure to the south, and include active uses at the 3rd story deck above the parking to enhance activity at the streetscape. The applicant should provide at the MUP stage of review:
 - More information about the specifics of the existing contamination on site and how it affects the proposed design
 - Plans and sections demonstrating the above and below grade parking, retail level, and residential above

The applicant should address **all** design guidelines, Hot Buttons, and Board guidance regarding priority guidelines below during the next stages of design review.

A. Site Planning (see Belltown design guidelines for full text)
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A-1 Respond to the physical environment. Develop an architectural concept and compose the building’s massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found beyond the immediate context of the building site. Belltown Guidelines (augmenting A-1).

- a. **Develop the architectural concept and arrange the building mass to enhance views. This includes views of the water and mountains, and noteworthy structures such as the Space Needle;**

The proposed building massing should respond to the context of massing found in nearby buildings such as the adjacent two story brick building to the south and the office building to the east. Proposed tower massing should respond to the views of Elliott Bay to the west.

The Board noted that the graphics shown on page 13 and page 20 do not appear to reflect the same information about building massing. The Board encourages the applicant to enhance the slender tower appearance as exhibited with the upper setbacks shown on page 13.

A-2 Enhance the skyline. Design the upper portion of the building to promote visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline.

If the departure is approved, the residential tower could be up to 160’ tall. This area of 3rd Avenue is characterized by buildings up to 125’ tall due to the zoning along most of 3rd Avenue in Belltown. The subject property is on the edge of two blocks of 3rd Avenue that could contain taller towers. The proposed tower would be a prominent element in the existing streetscape and in any future development of the area. The applicant should design the proposed tower to enhance the skyline of this area.

**B. Architectural Expression – Relating to the Neighborhood Context
(see Belltown design guidelines for full text)**

B-1 Respond to the neighborhood context. Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.

Belltown Guideline (augmenting B-1).

- a. Establish a harmonious transition between newer and older buildings. Compatible design should respect the scale, massing and materials of adjacent buildings and landscape.
- b. Complement the architectural character of an adjacent historic building or area; however, imitation of historical styles is discouraged. References to period architecture should be interpreted in a contemporary manner.
- c. Design visually attractive buildings that add richness and variety to Belltown, including creative contemporary architectural solutions.
- d. Employ design strategies and incorporate architectural elements that reinforce Belltown’s unique qualities. In particular, the neighborhood’s best buildings tend to support an active street life.

The Board noted that the applicant has primarily provided massing studies at this stage, which include a mix of residential, office, and commercial uses. The proposed design should respond to nearby newer architectural context and the adjacent older two-story brick building to the south.

Comments also reflect those found in Hot Button #2.

B-2 Create a transition in bulk & scale. Compose the massing of the building to create a transition to the height, bulk, and scale of development in neighboring or nearby less intensive zones.

Belltown Guideline (augmenting B-2).

- New high-rise and half- to full-block developments are juxtaposed with older and smaller scale buildings throughout the neighborhood. Many methods to reduce the apparent scale of new developments through contextually responsive design are identified in other guidelines (e.g., B-1: Respond to the neighborhood context and B-3: Reinforce the positive urban form & architectural attributes of the immediate area). The objective of this guideline is to discourage overly massive, bulky or unmodulated structures that are unsympathetic to the surrounding context.

The Board supported the applicant’s modifications to the project in order to meet the lot coverage and Green Street setbacks. As noted in the response to A-2, this site is located at the edge of a zoning height change and the proposed design should also provide a good transition in height, bulk and scale between the lower height areas and the areas with permitted higher building heights.

The applicant should work to ensure that the proposed development responds to nearby context of recent green street development, recent and historic building massing and modulation, human scaled street level entries, and includes a variety of scales responding to the transition.

B-3 Reinforce the positive urban form & architectural attributes of the immediate area. Consider the predominant attributes of the immediate neighborhood and reinforce

desirable siting patterns, massing arrangements, and streetscape characteristics of nearby development.

Belltown Guideline (augmenting B-2).

- a. Respond to the regulating lines and rhythms of adjacent buildings that also support a street-level environment; regulating lines and rhythms include vertical and horizontal patterns as expressed by cornice lines, belt lines, doors, windows, structural bays and modulation.
- b. Use regulating lines to promote contextual harmony, solidify the relationship between new and old buildings, and lead the eye down the street.
- c. Pay attention to excellent fenestration patterns and detailing in the vicinity. The use of recessed windows that create shadow lines, and suggest solidity, is encouraged.

The applicant should distinguish between examples of positive urban form and architectural attributes in the area, and those that are less positive. The recommendation stage should include an analysis of these examples, and describe how the proposed design responds to the examples. One example of positive additions to the streetscape can be found in the appearance of 2-story tall retail spaces in the Mosler Lofts building to the north.

Comments also reflect those found in Hot Button #2.

- B-4 Design a well-proportioned & unified building. Compose the massing and organize the publicly accessible interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.**

The proposed design should include massing that responds to the variety of uses in the building. The massing approaches for the various uses should create distinct spaces that architecturally relate to each other as a unified structure.

The applicant should provide additional design studies demonstrating the proposed east and south facades at the design recommendation stage. Comments also reflect those found in Hot Button #2 and the response to guideline A-1.

C. The Streetscape – Creating the Pedestrian Environment (see Belltown design guidelines for full text)
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- C-1 Promote pedestrian interaction. Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should be open to the general public and appear safe and welcoming.**

Belltown Guideline (augmenting C-1).

- a. reinforce existing retail concentrations;
- b. vary in size, width, and depth of commercial spaces, accommodating for smaller businesses, where feasible;
- c. incorporate the following elements in the adjacent public realm and in open spaces around the building:
 - unique hardscape treatments
 - pedestrian-scale sidewalk lighting

- **accent paving (especially at corners, entries and passageways)**
 - **creative landscape treatments (planting, planters, trellises, arbors)**
 - **seating, gathering spaces**
 - **water features, inclusion of art elements**
- d. **Building/Site Corners. Building corners are places of convergence. The following considerations help reinforce site and building corners:**
- **provide meaningful setbacks/ open space, if feasible**
 - **provide seating as gathering spaces**
 - **incorporate street/ pedestrian amenities in these spaces**
 - **make these spaces safe (good visibility)**
 - **iconic corner identifiers to create wayfinders that draw people to the site**

The presence of the Green Street at Cedar Street requires particular attention in the context of this guideline. The nearby bus stop south of the site on 3rd Avenue is a pedestrian generator. The green street development should wrap the corner onto 3rd Avenue, providing pedestrian amenities, sidewalk-related uses, and forms that reinforce the corner. The building corner itself should be designed to indicate the significant corner, turning onto a Green Street.

The pedestrian level development should reflect the items listed in this guideline, including seating opportunities.

- C-2 Design facades of many scales. Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and materials compositions that refer to the scale of human activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.**

Comments reflect the guidance found in item B-2 and C-1.

- C-3 Provide active—not blank— facades. Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.**

The applicant noted in the design presentation that the prescribed zoning and building code requirements could result in blank walls at the south façade, or one of the other proposed mix of uses may result in blank facades at above grade parking. The proposed design should not include any blank facades. Potentially blank facades should be treated appropriate to the context of each façade.

Comments also reflect those found in Hot Button #2.

- C- 5 Encourage overhead weather protection. Encourage project applicants to provide continuous, well-lit, overhead weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.**

Belltown Guideline (augmenting C-5).

- a. **the overall architectural concept of the building (as described in Guideline B-4);**
- b. **uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections);**
- c. **minimizing gaps in coverage;**

- d. a drainage strategy that keeps rain water off the street-level facade and sidewalk;
- e. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
- f. relationship to architectural features and elements on adjacent development, especially if abutting a building of historic or noteworthy character;
- g. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection;
- h. use of translucent or transparent covering material to maintain a pleasant sidewalk environment with plenty of natural light; and
- i. when opaque material is used, the illumination of light-colored undersides

The proposed development should include continuous overhead pedestrian weather protection on both street fronts. Varied heights or depths of weather protection may be used to create visual interest and respond to architectural façade changes.

The proposed break in the overhead weather protection on Cedar St should be replaced with continuous overhead weather protection. As described, a variety of shapes and depths can visually signify the change from retail to residential entry, without interrupting the weather protection function.

- C-6 Develop the alley facade. To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, develop portions of the alley façade in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.**

Belltown Guideline (augmenting C-6).

Spaces for service and utilities:

- a. Services and utilities, while essential to urban development, should be screened or otherwise hidden from the view of the pedestrian.
- b. Exterior trash receptacles should be screened on three sides, with a gate on the fourth side that also screens the receptacles from view. Provide a niche to recess the receptacle.
- c. Screen loading docks and truck parking from public view using building massing, architectural elements and/or landscaping.
- d. Ensure that all utility equipment is located, sized, and designed to be as inconspicuous as possible. Consider ways to reduce the noise impacts of HVAC equipment on the alley environment.

Pedestrian environment:

- a. Pedestrian circulation is an integral part of the site layout. Where possible and feasible, provide elements, such as landscaping and special paving, that help define a pedestrian friendly environment in the alley.
- b. Create a comfortably scaled and thoughtfully detailed urban environment in the alley through the use of well-designed architectural forms and details, particularly at street level.

Architectural concept:

- a. In designing a well-proportioned and unified building, the alley façade should not be ignored. An alley façade should be treated with form, scale and materials similar to rest of the building to create a coherent architectural concept.

In addition to the guidance found in C-3, the applicant should respond to the existing alley conditions. The two-story brick building to the south includes entrances and landings adjacent to

the alley. The office building across the alley includes informal areas where workers take breaks outside. The proposed development should respond to the existing activity in the alley and enhance this usage. The proposed street level treatments at Cedar St should partially continue into the alley to enhance this pedestrian experience.

Potential enhancements include pedestrian connectivity to the sidewalk areas, glazed façades wrapping the corner to the alley, green walls at the alley façade, and visually interesting façade treatments.

**D. Public Amenities – Enhancing the Streetscape and Open Space
(see Belltown design guidelines for full text)**

D- 1 Provide inviting & usable open space. Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

Belltown Guideline (augmenting D-1).

- **Mixed-use developments are encouraged to provide useable open space adjacent to retail space, such as an outdoor cafe or restaurant seating, or a plaza with seating.**
- **Locate plazas intended for public use at/or near street grade to promote physical and visual connection to the street; on-site plazas may serve as a well-defined transition from the street. Take views and sun exposure into account as well.**
- **Define and contain outdoor spaces through a combination of building and landscape, and discourage oversized spaces that lack containment.**
- **The space should be well-buffered from moving cars so that users can best enjoy the space.**
- **Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building’s setting.**
- **Examples of desirable features to include are:**
 - **attractive pavers;**
 - **pedestrian-scaled site lighting;**
 - **retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably “spill out” and enliven the open space;**
 - **areas for vendors in commercial areas;**
 - **landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;**
 - **pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and**
 - **site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks.**
- **Residential open space: Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:**
 - a. **courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;**
 - b. **entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;**
 - c. **decks, balconies and upper level terraces;**
 - d. **play areas for children;**
 - e. **individual gardens; and**
 - f. **location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight and views.**

The applicant described the potential for street level outdoor gathering areas at Cedar Street and a second story balcony at the southwest corner of the building. The proposed design should demonstrate that all public open space areas meet this guideline. Comments also reflect those found in Hot Button #2.

- D- 2 Enhance the building with landscaping. Enhance the building and site with substantial landscaping—which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.**

Belltown Guideline (augmenting D-2). Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping — which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material. Landscape enhancement of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below, where appropriate:

- a. emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;
 - b. use landscaping to make plazas and courtyards comfortable for human activity and social interaction;
 - c. distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation, such as entry courtyards;
 - d. provide year-round greenery — drought tolerant species are encouraged to promote water conservation and reduce maintenance concerns; and
 - e. provide opportunities for installation of civic art in the landscape; designer/artist collaborations are encouraged (e.g., Growing Vine Street).
- D- 3 Provide elements that define the place. Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable “sense of place” associated with the building.**

Belltown Guideline (augmenting D-3).

- **Art and Heritage. Art and History are vital to reinforcing a sense of place. Consider incorporating the following into the siting and design:**
 - b. **Art that relates to the established or emerging theme of that area (e.g., Western, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Avenue street specific character.**
 - **3rd Avenue: new installations on 3rd Avenue should continue to be ‘civic’ and substantial and be reflective of the role the street plays as a major bus route**
 - c. **Install plaques or other features on the building that pay tribute to Belltown history**
- **Transit Streets: 1st, 3rd, and 6th Avenues; Cedar and Broad Streets from Denny Way to 1st Avenue. Street Furniture/Furnishings:**
 - **Green Streets: Green Streets are street rights-of-way that are enhanced for pedestrian circulation and activity with a variety of pedestrian-oriented features, such as sidewalk widening, landscaping, artwork, and traffic calming. Interesting street level uses and pedestrian amenities enliven the Green Street and lend special identity to the surrounding area.**
- **Promenade Streets: 1st Avenue, 2nd Avenue, 3rd Avenue, 5th Avenue, Alaskan Way. Street Furniture/Furnishings:**

- **1st , 2nd and 3rd Avenues. Sidewalks should be wide and pedestrian amenities like benches, kiosks and pedestrian-scale lighting are especially important on promenade streets.**

The preliminary landscape plan indicates that there is potential for a good landscape palette and quality Green Street development at this site. The Belltown supplemental guidelines list details that are appropriate for the pedestrian development of 3rd Avenue and the Green Street (Cedar Street).

In addition to the guidance described in C-6, the applicant should continue to work with DPD staff to develop the Green Street and the overall landscape plan to meet these guidelines.

E. Vehicular Access and Parking – Minimizing the Adverse Impacts

E-2 Integrate parking facilities. Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.

At the first EDG meeting, the Board noted that they were strongly in favor of the mix of uses that allows all parking to be placed below grade. The proposed parking would now be located in two levels of below grade parking and one level of parking above the retail level. Comments reflect those found in Hot Button #2.

The Board noted that possible treatments include two story retail space at the corner of the building, using the ‘dead space’ in the corners of the above grade parking as leasable studio spaces, and/or giving the appearance of two story retail areas with façade treatments and glazing.

The applicant explained that they would also like to look at using this level to provide an architectural transition from the glass tower to the base. The parking would not be visible and wouldn’t be composed of blank walls or a single stretch of cladding. The proposed design intent would be to provide a visual transition and an architectural response to the older masonry building to the south. The Board noted that they are happy to examine all potential methods for treating above grade parking in a way that improves on methods they’ve seen to date.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The following departures from the development standards were proposed at this phase:

Departure Summary Table

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	APPLICANT’S JUSTIFICATION	BOARD RECOMMENDATION
Development Standards based on Minimum Lot Size SMC 23.49.153	Lots less than 19,000 square feet in size are restricted to 125’ building height (lots at least 19,001 square feet may be developed to 240’ height)	Allow building height proportional to lot size. 160’ height proposed for lot size of 12,960 square feet.	The applicant stated that the proposal would result in a tower that fits better with the context of this area.	The Board will continue to entertain this request, provided the applicant can demonstrate proposal would better meet the intent of the adopted design guidelines.

- 1. Development Standards based on Minimum Lot Size (SMC 23.49.153):** The applicant proposes to reduce the amount of common recreation area included in the project.

The Board expressed concern with this departure but would be willing to entertain the request at the design recommendation stage. The applicant should fully demonstrate which adopted design guidelines would be better met through the proposed design departures. The applicant should particularly focus on treatment of the above grade parking and further enhancing the slender appearance of the tower.

NEXT STEPS

MUP Application:

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please contact Land Use Planner Shelley Bolser at 206-733-9067 or shelley.bolser@seattle.gov when you have scheduled your MUP intake appointment.
2. Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG, as noted in CAM 238, Attachment B. Plan on embedding four 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape and right-of-way improvement plans into the front of the MUP plan set (4 per sheet). Label all sheets for design review and provide a table of contents at the front of the plan set. CAM 238 may be accessed at <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/dclu/Publications/cam/cam238.pdf>.
3. Provide a landscape plan including sizes, locations, and species of proposed plant materials, as well as hardscape paving materials. Specifically focus on Green Street development, the 3rd story resident open space, and wrapping enhancements to 3rd Ave.
4. Site plan, including adjacent structures
5. Sections of the project (east-west and north-south), including adjacent structures (existing and proposed) and labeling of building heights at changes in the façade.
6. Elevations of the four facades, rendered to provide a sense of the depth of proposed façade treatments, colors, and materials
7. Landscape plans, including plant species, size, and placement
8. Provide a preliminary signage plan, lighting plan (locations and fixture cut sheets), and indicate location and proposed screening methods for service areas.
9. Other graphics necessary to demonstrate compliance with EDG.
10. A traffic study or memo disclosing trip estimates may be required as part of the next phase of the MUP process.
11. Consult with Land Use Planner regarding timing and method for submitting Recommendation Meeting packet both in hard copy and electronic format.

Recommendation Meeting:

Include the following items in your design recommendation meeting submittal packet (submitted after the Planner notifies applicant of the recommendation meeting date):

1. Written response to the Early Design Guidance
2. Clear response indicating how the proposed departure(s) better meet the intent of the design guidelines
3. Include call-outs on the graphics indicating how the design has been modified to respond to the design review guidelines and the guidance in the EDG report.
4. Additional information regarding parking – parking plans with dimensions, possible reduction in parking ratio, possible placement of all parking below grade, location of existing contamination related to parking location, etc.
5. Site plan, including adjacent structures

6. Sections of the project (east-west and north-south), including adjacent structures (existing and proposed) and labeling of building heights at changes in the façade.
7. Graphics of the four facades, rendered to provide a sense of the depth of proposed façade treatments, colors, and materials
8. Detailed sketches of the street level facades, including canopies, entrances, materials, colors, etc.
9. Detailed graphics of the building top and roof level (mechanical equipment location and screening, amenity space, sculptural elements, etc)
10. Perspective sketches of the proposed development in the larger urban context
11. Perspective sketches of the streetscape experience from the pedestrian's point of view (including the alley)
12. Landscape plans, including plant species, size, and placement
13. Materials and colors board
14. Graphics demonstrating night illumination of the building (light coming from inside and light sources on the outer facades) and lighting fixture information
15. Any 3-dimensional studies and/or models will help the Board in their review
16. Provide an electronic copy of the recommendation packet to the Land Use Planner at the time of recommendation packet submittal.