



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

**Department of Planning & Development**

D.M. Sugimura, Director

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**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE  
OF THE  
CAPITOL HILL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Project Number: **3009127**

Address: **1614 South Jackson Street**

Applicant: **Todd Smith, Johnston Architects, PLLC**

Meeting Date: **May 19, 2010**

Report Date: **June 10, 2010**

Board Members Present: **Sharon Sutton, Chair**  
**Evan Bourquard**  
**Dawn Bushnaq**  
**Joe Gianpietro (substitute)**  
**Wolf Saar**

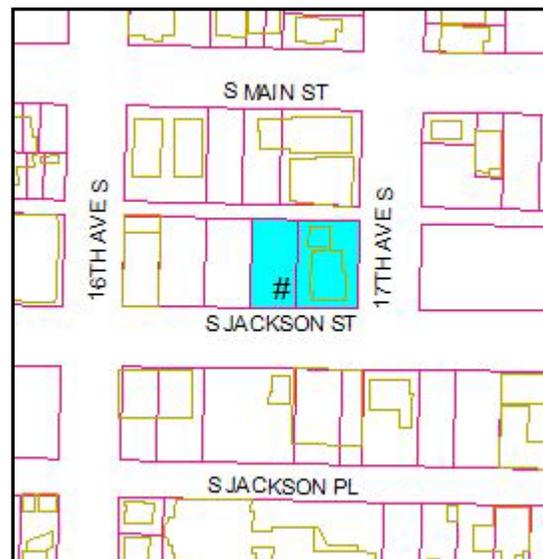
Board Members Absent: **Lisa Picard**

DPD Staff Present: **Bradley Wilburn**

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**SITE & VICINITY**

The subject site is a corner lot located within a Neighborhood Commercial Three zone with a 40-foot height limit (NC3-40) and the 23<sup>rd</sup> & Union-Jackson Residential Urban Village. This zoning extends east and west of the site, as well as across the street to the south. Across the alley to the north is a Multifamily Lowrise Three zone (L-3). The development site is nearly square in shape, occupies a land area of approximately 11,288 square feet. The site currently has two, two-story buildings located in its east half. The site's west half, slated for redevelopment, is



currently used for parking and open space. The subject site is bounded to the south by South Jackson Street, to the east by 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and an alley to the north.

Along the Jackson Street corridor recent development has impacted the streetscape experience with larger structures extending to the height limit of the underlining zones. Across the partially improved alley, development consists of single family and multifamily structures within the L-3 zone.

Across 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the east, a once vacant parcel and the former site of Wonder Bread bakery, now features large residential and commercial developments which have changed the physical character of the area. The new structures are visually interesting with the alignment of modulated wall segments, color, and fenestration. To the south across South Jackson are modest one and two story commercial structures with an assortment of uses. The abutting parcel of land to the west of the subject lot is a vacant lot with shrubbery and wild grass.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a three-story office building to allow Casa Latina, a social service provider, to better serve its clientele base. Two existing structures will be retained and their uses will be integrated into the new proposal. All of the parking stalls for the proposed development are to be provided on a surface pad in the rear and accessed from the alley. The proposal will be required to dedicate 2 feet of land abutting the alley to accommodate alley right-of-way improvements.

### **DESIGN PRESENTATION**

The architect presented three alternative design schemes. All of the options showed a pedestrian pathway connecting the street to the alley with internal connections to existing and proposed structures. Parking will be accessed from the alley under all schemes. In addition, the applicant proposed incorporating green elements including green roofs previous surface parking lot, and sunshades with all schemes. The design includes a three-story office building with street level use either as office or retail. The second and third floors would house administrative office with accessory auxiliary rooms to accommodate training classrooms. Exterior building materials will be influenced by the material and color palette of the two existing structures (metal and hardi-panel). No development departures are being sought at this time.

The first scheme (Option A) proposed a two-story terraced mass stepping up from South Jackson Street. In Option B, the massing includes a one-story mass at the first terrace level then stepping up to three floors on the site's rear half. Option C (preferred scheme) the design included loading a three-story mass adjacent to the street with the rear half remaining open to accommodate surface parking and outdoor event spaces.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Approximately 11 members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting with only four filling out the sign-in sheet. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Supports preferred scheme with building mass loaded along Jackson. Street level uses within the proposed building should be retail to activate this portion of Jackson.
- Serious consideration should be made to installing and maintaining pervious surface materials for the parking area. With the adjacency of the residential zone across the alley, the design should be incorporate greening elements to soften the often neglected rear of the development site.
- Would like to see the pedestrian access through the site be maintained as proposed, but would encourage at least an eight foot wide width to allow gathering space while people pass through.
- Architectural features from the surrounding area should influence the proposed building design.
- The proposed building at street level should step back from the property line in alignment with the existing structure at the project site, to maintain the greater openness of the sidewalk width.

## **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 siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's "*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*" of highest priority to this project.

<b>A. Site Planning</b>
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**A-3 ENTRANCES VISIBLE FROM THE STREET**

**Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.**

**A-4 HUMAN ACTIVITY**

**New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.**

**A-5 RESPECT FOR ADJACENT SITES**

**Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.**

**A-8 LOCATION OF PARKING ON COMMERCIAL STREET FRONTS**

**Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.**

The articulation of pedestrian entries should visually announce entries. Emphasis should be directed towards making the building readable, directing pedestrians within the

development site to the appropriate destinations with the number of uses proposed. The two street fronts should be as welcoming as possible.

The Board encouraged the applicant to design a building possessing sensitivity to the unique conditions of its three sides: (with the abutting vacant lot to the west) the west facing facade will be highly visible for east approaching traffic for the foreseeable future; multi-family residential zone to the north whose views of the building and surface parking area are significant; and to the south alignment of the façade if design gracefully could encourage a strong pedestrian friendly streetscape along Jackson.

The Board would like to see a high-quality right-of-way design and a landscape plan that endeavors to enhance the pedestrian streetscape. See also E-2.

The surface parking lot should be made of pervious materials and designed in a manner to visually enhance this environment that will also double as a periodic social gathering space (outdoor room) for outdoor functions. The Board would like to see the design of this space and understand how it addresses visual, noise, and security impacts to its neighbors.

The Board supported the preferred design scheme with the building mass shifted towards the Jackson street frontage. However, the massing at street level should align with the adjacent structure to the east to create continuity in defining the street edge along Jackson.

## **C. Architectural Elements and Materials**

### **C-1 ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

**New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting patterns of neighboring buildings.**

### **C-2 ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT & CONSISTENCY**

**Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit forms and features identifying the functions within the building.**

### **C-3 HUMAN SCALE**

**The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.**

### **C-4 EXTERIOR FINISH MATERIALS**

**Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing area encouraged.**

The Board encouraged the design team to move away from replicating the existing structure along Jackson. Take cues (“riff-off”) from the existing structure to inform a new design language. The proposed structure should be designed to gracefully fit within a development site with two existing buildings in a manner that spatially integrates social spaces.

The Board emphasized exploring opportunities of providing sustainable design elements including cross ventilation and daylighting.

At the next meeting, the applicant should provide well-detailed materials and color palette - Use of high quality, durable and well-detailed materials are critical elements to the overall success of the project. They look forward to reviewing a permanent, well-detailed material and color palette. The Board suggested that a design approach to green-up with an emphasis on pedestrian amenities in and around the proposed parking/outdoor room would work well, adjacent to the residential zoned properties (north) across the alley.

## **D. Pedestrian Environment**

### **D-1 PEDESTRIAN OPEN SPACES AND ENTRANCES**

**Convenient and attractive access to the building’s entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.**

### **D-6 SCREENING OF DUMPSTERS, UTILITIES AND SERVICE AREAS**

**Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located (cont.) away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

### **D-7 PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY**

**Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.**

### **D-8 TREATMENT OF ALLEYS**

**The design of alleys entrances should enhance the pedestrians’ street front.**

### **D-11 COMMERCIAL TRANSPARENCY**

**Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians and the activities occurring on the interior of a building.**

The Board discussed the importance of the sidewalk street experience by maintaining the setback from the front property line of the existing structure along Jackson Street for the proposed structure. By stepping the structure back from the property line, the design will visually open up the proposed pedestrian stair access to the street - creating a stoop-like appearance.

The Board expects the stair climb set between the proposed and existing buildings will be designed with safety in mind. The stair access should accommodate people who both want to linger and who want to pass through. In the evening this area should be well illuminated if it is to remain open. The stair access is an important design element in the overall design composition and should be treated as such, with an eye on detail.

The Board was pleased that all of the proposed parking will be located in the rear and accessed off of the alley. The surface parking lot may double as a public outdoor room on special occasions. The Board stressed the importance of connecting this dual use area with existing and proposed structures; the success of this space will be dependent on placing individuals first and designing accordingly.

The specifics of garbage and recycling service areas were not detailed. This area should be screened or located in a manner to lessen its impact upon neighboring properties. The Board would like to know specifically where the compacter and waste dumpster will be located and how it will be managed on pickup days.

Designing the ground level commercial space to create a vibrant retail use is critical. The ground level should have large transparent storefront windows. The upper level fenestration should differ from that of the base in pattern and size.

<b>E. Landscaping</b>
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**E-2 LANDSCAPING TO ENHANCE THE BUILDING AND/OR SITE**

**Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.**

The Board looks forward to reviewing a well-detailed landscape plan that includes a green roof and dense vegetation. At grade, the Board encouraged using landscaping to soften the transition between the site and the residential zone to the north.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

No departures are currently being requested.

**NEXT STEPS**

**MUP Application:**

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please call Bradley Wilburn (at 206-615-0508) when you have scheduled your MUP intake appointment.

2. Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG. Per Attachment B of Client Assistance Memo 238, plan on embedding four 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape and right-of-way improvement plans and three-dimensional street level vignettes into the front of the MUP plan set (4 per sheet) as Design Review sheets.
3. A parking and traffic study will be required as part of the MUP process.

**Recommendation Meeting:**

4. The Board would like to review three-dimensional drawings showing how the ground level uses, details and design relate to the sidewalk.
5. Please provide a shadow study showing solar access opportunities to the proposed open spaces and effects on neighboring properties at the extreme seasons.
6. Please submit a color and materials board.
7. Please also prepare a conceptual signage plan.
8. Please submit a conceptual lighting plan, particularly along the alley, pedestrian stair climb, and all proposed open spaces.
9. The Board would like to see the detailed rendering of this outdoor room with pedestrian connections to understand how it addresses visual, noise, and security impacts to the neighbors.
10. Sections through the site and into the L-3 zone, showing the grade change, sidewalks, curbs, overhead weather protection and all relevant dimensions.

**Please note that per Client Assistance (CAM) memo 238, updated March 13, 2008, it is now the responsibility of the applicant to submit a .pdf file of the 11x17 design proposal packet to DPD 5 days prior to the public Design Review meeting.**

**Please see the instructions in CAM 238 and as detailed on the Design Review webpage:**

**[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Overview/](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Overview/)**