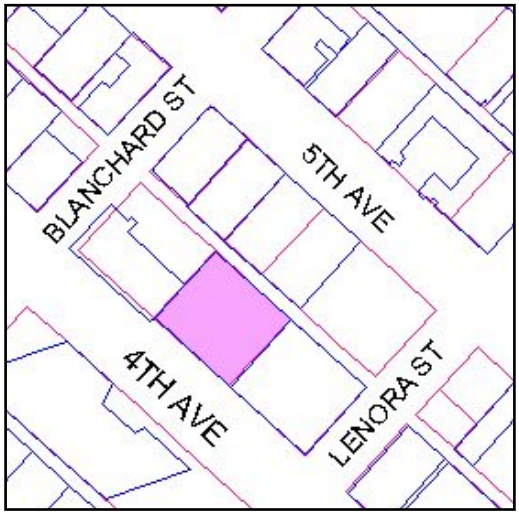
City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Department of Planning & Development
D.M. Sugimura, Director

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
OF THE
DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Numbers:	**3009145**
Addresses:	**2116 4th Avenue**
Applicant:	**Dan Foltz, Weber Thompson Architects** **For HAL Real Estate Investments**
Meeting Date:	**September 9, 2008**
Report Date:	**September 22, 2008**
Board members present:	**Jim Falconer** **Marta Falkowska** **Bill Gilland, Chair** **Kelly Mann**
Board members absent:	**Dana Behar, Recused**
DPD staff present:	**Lisa Rutzick, Land Use Planner**

SITE & VICINITY



The proposed development site is located mid-block between Lenora Street and Blanchard Street, on 4th Avenue in the Belltown neighborhood of downtown Seattle. The site is on the east side of 4th Avenue and contains a single story automotive repair building. The rectangular site measures 120 feet long and 108 feet deep. A two-foot alley dedication will be required. Fourth Avenue is a Class 1 pedestrian corridor and principal transit street. No Green Street or View Corridor designations exist for this project.

The site is zoned DMC 240/290-400. The height limit for this zone is 240 feet, however if a residential tower is

proposed that participates in the creation or funding of low income house under SMC 23.49.015, and if the building is designed and built to at least a silver LEED level, it is eligible for up to 400 feet in height. An additional 40 feet, or 10% of the maximum height limit, is available for screened rooftop mechanical equipment.

The site is 120' long in the north/ south direction and 108' in the east/ west direction. The alley is currently 16' feet wide, making it substandard, requiring a setback on the alley of two feet to a minimum height of 26' above the alley. The sidewalks on Second Avenue and Virginia Street meet the Land Use minimum dimensional requirements.

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

The proposed development at 2116 Fourth Avenue is for a 40 story, 360 unit residential tower with 2,400 sq. ft. of retail commercial use at ground level. Parking for 335 vehicles will be located both below and above grade.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

A presentation of graphics, photos and computer modeling showing the allowed zoning envelope for the project and massing of in relationship to the surrounding built environment. The presentation materials included three separate concepts for each project, including massing diagrams, location of parking, pedestrian and vehicular access and possible departures. No specifics concerning materials were provided due to the early stage of design development and the overall purpose of this meeting.

The first scheme (Option 1) showed a simple box shape tower extruded from the same sized podium base. Due to glazing constraints of fenestration of 25% when located at or near the property lines, this option includes three evenly spaced narrow vertical bands of glazing on the north and south tower elevations. The east and west facades would be predominantly glazing.

The second scheme (Option 2) showed an H-shaped tower above a rectangular podium base. By including notched out areas on the north and south facades, the glazing increases up to 75%.

The third and preferred scheme (Option 3) includes a rectilinear base with a plus-sign shaped tower above. By eroding the corners inward, the glazing allowance and distribution can be more effectively located to enhance the corner design and articulation. This alternative was further developed to form the vertical façade sections into angles that emphasize views to and from the site.

The residential lobby entrance is proposed on the north end of the building and retail frontage extends for the remainder of the street frontage. All access to parking is shown from the alley. The parking would be distributed between four above-grade parking levels within the podium (starting at the third floor) and 8 levels of below grade parking. The above grade parking would be screened at the ends by work studio units and directly abut the façade for a width of

approximately six stalls. The common recreation area would be located at the seventh level and at the rooftop in both exterior and interior spaces.

The architect presented a conceptual plan for the right-of-way improvements along Fourth Avenue which included widened sidewalks, emphasis at the entry points, special paving, landscaping, street trees, seating and overhead weather protection.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately four members of the public attended the Early Design Guidance meeting. One additional comment letter was received. The following comments were offered:

- Concern about fitting the allowable height into relatively small lot, resulting in four floors of above grade parking, minimal open space at ground level and little to no flexibility to respond to future buildings across the alley.
- Proposed building massing does not appear to respond to the approved Martin Building or other context.
- Community supports installation of benches on 4th Avenue.
- Residential entrance should be identifiable with public art.
- Design of the podium element is acceptable.
- Unclear about the relationship between the proposed entry and that of the King County Building to the south.

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 siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review Guidelines for Downtown Development* of highest priority to this project, as well as the Belltown Neighborhood Guidelines.

A. Site Planning

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-specific supplemental guidance: (a) Develop the architectural concept and arrange the building mass to enhance views. This includes views of the water and mountains, and noteworthy structures; (b) The architecture and building mass should respond to sites having nonstandard shapes. There are several changes in the street grid alignment in Belltown, resulting in triangular sites and chamfered corners; and (c) The topography of the neighborhood lends to its unique character. Design buildings to take advantage of this condition as an opportunity, rather than a constraint. Along the streets, single entry, blank facades are discouraged. Consider providing multiple entries and windows at street level on sloping streets.

The Board discussed the street grid at this location and complimented the proposed massing for responding with angles to maximize views to and from the site.

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

The Board recognized that the proposed tower will be highly visible against the downtown skyline. They also mentioned they would like to see greater contextual analysis that extends far enough to show other towers potentials (existing and proposed) in the vicinity, as well as show what the permitted zoning would allow in the area. The Board encouraged the design to relate the top and the base to each other to form a cohesive whole.

B. Architectural Expression

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-specific supplemental guidance: (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; and (d) Employ design strategies and incorporate architectural elements that reinforce Belltown's unique qualities. In particular, the neighborhood's best buildings tend to support active street life.

The Board agreed that the proposed massing responds well to the existing neighborhood context, which is undergoing dramatic changes. The Board noted concern that the proposed work studio units proposed on either ends of the four floors of above grade parking be highly functional and not become storage rooms. The Board suggested that the condo rules incorporate language to this effect.

B-2 Create a transition in bulk and 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.

The Board discussed the shape of the proposed tower and was pleased with the tall, slender tower proportions under consideration. They noted to avoid the tendency to make the design overly fussy, but rather keep the design simple. Of the three massing alternatives, the Board agreed that Option 3 is preferred in terms of addressing glazing opportunities on the north and south elevations.

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-specific supplemental guidance: (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; and (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.

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 Board emphasized that the tower design needs to be well integrated into the design of the podium base. The measures used to screen the above grade parking levels are a critical component of this integration. The Board noted that the proposed frame elements may not be necessary and risk becoming overly busy.

C. The Streetscape

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, and open to the public.

Belltown-specific supplemental guidance: Sidewalks should (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 the adjacent public realm and in open spaces around the building: unique hardscapes, pedestrian-scale sidewalk lighting, accent paving, seating, water features, art and landscape elements; and (d) Building corners are places of convergence.

The Board applauded the proposed substantial amount of retail and wide sidewalks shown at the entrance and located at the street frontage. The Board noted that this guideline and the details of the pedestrian level will be critical considerations in future reviews. The Board also cautioned against excessive building scale in the podium portion; rather the building forms should be simple. See also D-3 and E-2.

C-3 Provide Active, Not Blank Facades. Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalk.

The Board was pleased with the proposed efforts to minimize blank walls along the north and south facades and encouraged further development of this objective.

C-4 Reinforce Building Entries. To promote pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation, reinforce the building's entry.

The Board noted a desire for continuous overhead weather protection along the street facing facade.

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

The Board was very supportive that all service functions are proposed from the alley. The Board noted that the alley façade will be quite visible and great care should be taken to further develop this elevation, especially given the tower separation rules and likelihood that the east elevation will continue to be visible from the surrounding area.

D. Public Amenities

D-1 Provide Inviting and 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 principle area of the open space should be especially emphasized.
Belltown-specific supplemental guidance: 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 buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered: courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden, entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway, decks, balconies and upper level terraces, play areas for children, individual gardens; and location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight and views.

The Board encouraged the landscape design to allow for and enhance the pedestrian experience of those standing in lines associated with the next door Cinerama theatre

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

Belltown-specific supplemental guidance: Mixed-use developments are encouraged to provide useable open space adjacent to retail space, such as an outdoor café or

restaurant seating, or a plaza with seating. Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating useable, attractive, well-integrated open space.

The Board was pleased with the streetscape concepts presented at this meeting and supported the more linear designs.

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-specific supplemental guidance: Art and History are vital to reinforcing a sense of place. Consider incorporating the following into the siting and design:(a) vestiges of Belltown Heritage, such as preserving existing stone sidewalks, curbs;(b) art that relates to the established or emerging theme of that area; and (c) install plaques or other features on the building that pay tribute to Belltown history. 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.

The Board was pleased with the conceptual streetscape improvements studies and encouraged the streetscape design to allow opportunities for the retail use to spill over onto the sidewalk, create a wider sidewalk than shown (to take advantage of the western solar exposure), include street furniture and potentially create discreet separate area for pedestrian interaction. Of the six streetscape studies presented, the Board felt that the curvy lines were too distracting and preferred the more linear designs. Also, there are two existing street trees and some discussion of whether to add a third tree in front of the proposed residential entrance. The Board feels that the either a tree or piece of artwork to signify and reinforce the entry point is desirable. The Board was pleased with the early concepts for the proposed amenity spaces – both interior and exterior.

E. Vehicular Access & Parking

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 EDG, the Board discussed the proposed above grade parking levels and how this use can be most effectively screened through the building's architecture. Four alternative screening methods were presented including a metal or stone scrim element that is layered in front of the above grade parking levels, a channeled glass applied in a similar fashion as the scrim elements, art glass using glass material with embedded patterns or designs to screen the parking use or colored glass to achieve the same purpose. Several versions of the screen element itself were also considered including a simple stone frame element in-filled with the above described glass, a solid metal panel with a random pattern of different shaped cut outs, filled with the a

glass material or metal panels applied with open joints and exposed supports, also in filled with glass material. All three of these options could be shifted to one side or the other of the podium façade.

The Board applauded the studies of various design approaches to minimize the presence of parking along these facades. The Board felt the first screen option was too stiff and they expressed a preference for the second and third alternatives. There was concern with the placement and dimensions of the screen element with relation to the above grade parking. Dividing the screen directly in half appears awkward. The Board stressed that the screen should both reinforce the residential entry with a strong vertical announcement and relate to the mass at the building top to help integrate this element into the overall building architecture. The Board warned against drawing too much attention away from the tower and towards the screening of the above grade parking uses. As shown, there is too stark of a contrast between the tower and the screening element.

The Board encourages further exploration of the materials and screening design and noted that consideration of how the screening appears both during the day and night is important, especially as it relates to the overall building design.

E-3 Minimize the Presence of Service Areas. Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment and the like away from the street where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.

The Board was very pleased that the access has been proposed from the alley. The Board reiterated that accommodating the dumpsters within the buildings is strongly encouraged, so as to leave the alley less constrained. See also C-6.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

Three departures from the Code were requested at this time. The Board indicated that they would consider all three of the departure requests. However, the Board's recommendation on the requested departures will be reserved until the final Board meeting and will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure.

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	ARCHITECT'S RATIONALE
TOWER WIDTH SMC 23.49.058. D2	Above 85', the max tower width is 96'. Exception, tower width up to 120' allowed if no more than 50% of the area within 15' of street property line is	Tower width of 100' (78.5%) of the area within 15' of street property line.	Allows for more modulated expression to reduce perceived sense of tower massing and scale.

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	ARCHITECT'S RATIONALE
	occupied by the tower.		
STRUCTURAL BUILDING OVERHANG SMC 23.54.035	Width of bay window over property line allowed to project up to 9' with 45-degree angles for max of 3' depth.	Increase bay window length and angle shape for two types of bay projections.	The shapes and dimensions of the proposed bay windows allows for a better architectural solution to the code-prescribed design, while also maintaining a less evident projection.
OVERHEAD WEATHER PROTECTION SMC 23.49.018.B	Lower edge can be a max of 15' above sidewalk level.	Proposed at height of 18' above the residential lobby.	Attempt to give emphasis to the main building entrance.

NEXT STEPS

MUP Application:

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please call Lisa Rutzick (at 206-386-9049) 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. Verbal and visual response to high priority guidelines and guidance from EDG (See attachment B, CAM 238).
5. Additional analysis of the architectural and urban character of the existing and evolving context and how the design responds to the context.
6. Provide clear representations of the entire tower – its modulation, layering and relation of base to tower and top. Carefully consider the scale elements of the tower and how they are perceived from different distances. Also convey the residential use.
7. Provide information and study of alley elevation and visual interest when viewed from the east.
8. Continue detailed development of the base, scrim façade elements (relationship pf glass, horizontal lines, and background elements), canopies and entrance.
9. Provide images of whole building in context as well as of the pedestrian experience along 4th Avenue and the alley.
10. Provide more detail of the roof top design.
11. Continue to provide building sections in context.
12. Continue development and representation of landscaping.
13. A physical study model of the building in context should be presented.

14. Please submit a color and materials board.
15. Please also prepare a conceptual signage plan.
16. Please submit a conceptual lighting plan.

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/