



City of Seattle

Department of Planning and Development
D.M. Sugimura, Director

**FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE
WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD 3**

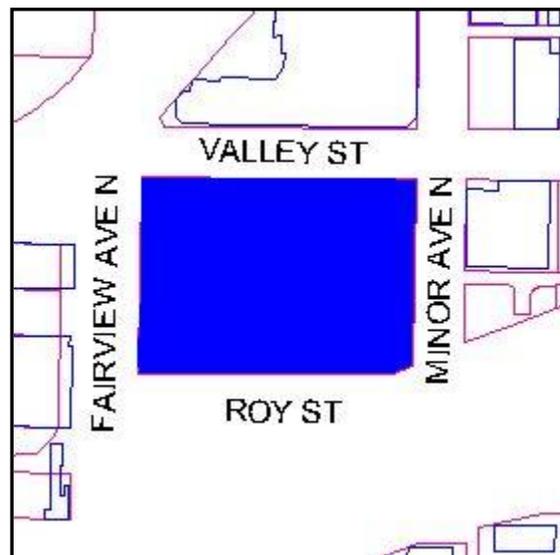
Project Number:	3011169
Address:	700 Fairview Avenue North
Applicant:	Marilyn Brockman, Bassetti Architects, Public Storage, Owner
Meeting Date:	September 19, 2012
Board Members Present:	David Delfs, Chair Mindy Black Jill Kurfirst
Board Member Absent:	Jacob Connell Lipika Mukerji
Staff Members Present:	John Shaw

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Site Description

The development site occupies a full block (approximately 92,160 square feet of land area) with street frontage along Valley Street to the north, Minor Avenue North to the east, Roy Street to the south, and Fairview Avenue North to the west. The subject lot is zoned Commercial 2 with a height limit of 65 feet (C2-65), in the South Lake Union neighborhood. Other overlays found at the site are the South Lake Urban Center and South Lake Union Urban Village. The development site has been designated a historic landmark because of the existing Ford Assembly Plant building located on the north portion of the subject site. Additionally, the site is within an identified archaeological buffer area.

The site is fully developed with two buildings, surface parking and perimeter landscaping. The five-story building on the site's north half is a



designated landmark building. The (Fuller Paint) building to the south is a one-story structure; both buildings host mini storage use (Public Storage). Primary vehicle access is taken from Fairview with secondary access off Valley Street. Loading and surface parking occupy the area between the two structures.

The development site is cut into a moderate upward sloping topography, from its northwest corner to the southeast property line. The abutting streets are fully developed rights-of-way with asphalt roadway; curbs, sidewalks and gutters.

Area Development

The site is located within a small C2-65 zoning band that fronts the east side of Fairview Avenue North. To the west across Fairview Avenue the zone changes to Seattle Mixed with a height limit of 40 feet (SM-40) south of Valley Street. To the south across the I-5 off-ramp the height limit increases to 75 feet within the SM zone (SM-75). To the east across Minor Avenue is where Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (FHCR) campus begins within a C2-85 zone. Surrounding the development site are office, storage, and hotel uses. Access to the development site is channeled through two principal arterials, Fairview Avenue North and Mercer Street (to the southwest of the site). Interstate 5 and its off- and on-ramps at Mercer Street are designated Scenic Routes that provides views of the downtown skyline, the Space Needle, and Lake Union.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE: September 1, 2010

The Early Design Guidance (EDG) packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design Review Program/Project Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design%20Review%20Program/Project%20Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The EDG packet also is available to view in the 3011758 EDG file, by contacting DPD's Public Resource Center at 700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000, P.O. Box 34019, Seattle WA 98104-4019, or at PRC@seattle.gov.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

The design team presented three alternative design schemes. The Mercer Street realignment project was presented to provide context to the proposal and how the improvements have been incorporated into the proposed schemes. The existing one-story building on the lot's south half would be demolished to allow for new development to occur. The south half of the development site would host a five- to six-story mini warehouse use (in the approximate location of the existing structure) that would increase Public Storage's gross floor area by approximately 125,000 square feet. The schemes include a small retail storefront use along Fairview Avenue. All options maintained the two existing vehicle access to surface parking set between the existing building to north and the proposed new structure to the south. With nearly 360 feet of street frontage along Roy Street, vertical landscaping elements are proposed to soften the proposed structure's south facade. Each scheme would incorporate design characteristics to respect the historic design of the existing Ford Assembly Plant (landmark) building. The architect stated that exterior building materials and color palette will be influenced by buildings in the greater South Lake Union area with greater sensitivity to the adjacent building. Where possible sustainable features will be incorporated including materials and design program to reduce the building's carbon footprint. Under all schemes no development departures are being sought at this time.

The first scheme (Option "A") proposes a five-story, rectangular-shaped building that maximizes available square footage. The brick façade of the existing (Fuller Paint Building) would be retained and integrated into the proposed building to maintain design continuity along Fairview. Along the building's south façade (approximately 360 feet in length) a terraced vertical green wall following the contours of the abutting the right-of-way (Roy Street) would be featured to soften edge conditions. In Option B, the building would be similarly designed to the previous option, except in two areas. Above the historic brick façade, the upper three levels would be stepped back by 20 feet to allow a greater portion of the historic building to be visible from the south. The green wall would be deemphasized with a less dramatic terrace. Five large colorful panels/banners would be introduced on the upper level's south façade to provide opportunities to advertise local events. Under Option C (applicant's preferred scheme) the historic brick façade would be eliminated, the proposed structure would provide a generous setback (60 feet) along Fairview to reveal more of the landmark building's corner facade. An additional story would be added to compensate for the smaller footprint. As viewed from the south the top floor of the landmark building would be lost under this scheme. A two stepped green wall would be featured along the south façade at street level. In addition, a landscaped plaza is proposed between the building and Fairview Avenue to the west.

OTHER DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Sarah Sodt, Department of Neighborhood's Downtown Landmarks Board Coordinator, updated the Design Review Board on the status of the briefing to the Architectural Review Committee of the Landmarks Preservation Board made by the applicant for the proposed building on a site occupied by a landmark building. In addition, the Architectural Review Committee supported

Option B which would be sympathetic to the existing historic character of the development site. If the amounts of blank walls are allowed to move forward they must be designed in a way that respects the adjacent landmark building.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- What is the time frame to develop the project? (Applicant responded that MUP is expected to end in the first quarter of 2011, with doors opening sometime in 2013).
- Special attention must be placed on the existing historic front façade (Fuller Paint Building), it should not be discarded.
- The site is a significant gateway to South Lake Union and Seattle Center, even more so with the Mercer Street improvements, and should be treated accordingly.
- The addition to the existing landmark building does not contribute to the landmark status, was there consideration to remove that portion and reorient the proposed building? (Yes, but traffic patterns, floor plates made pursuing this option unfeasible from the developer's perspective.)
- The topography seems challenging in determining height, how was height determined at the development site? (Applicant responded with clarifying information.)
- How the south façade is treated is absolutely critical to the overall success of the proposal.
- Saving the existing historic front façade is appealing. Would like to see developer retain the historic façade in Option C.
- The existing lighthouse sculpture is fun and should be saved or transported to another location in the area.
- Are there any trucks, RV's or other large vehicles programmed to be stored at the development site? (No, was the response from the applicant.)
- A representative from South Lake Union Committee Council shared with the assembled group that Public Storage has been a good corporate neighbor.
- How many additional square feet will be added to the public storage facility? (Up to 125,000 square feet was the applicant's reply.)

FINAL RECOMMENDATION: SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

The packet includes materials presented at the Recommendation meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.aspx

or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Address: Public Resource Center
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98124

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

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. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood Specific Guidelines (as appropriate) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

Site Planning

A-1 RESPONDING TO SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as nonrectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

A-3 ENTRANCES VISIBLE FROM THE STREET

Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from 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-10 CORNER LOTS

Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

Both pedestrian and vehicle traffic should be considered in establishing readable entries. The design program should anticipate how easily one can navigate points of access from the surrounding street system once the Mercer Street realignment is completed.

The Board would like the developer to preserve the existing historic (Fuller Paint Building) front façade.

The Board supported pulling back the upper level massing of Option B to allow a portion of the landmark building's corner to be visible from the south. This option allows street level engagement in the public realm while respecting the adjacent building.

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

To design something special on the upper level's southwest corner is an important opportunity.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board encouraged the project team to increase the size caliper of trees adjacent to the south façade along Roy Street beyond the 2" shown in the landscape plan.

Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by , less-intensive zones.

Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that created a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between the anticipated developments potential of the adjacent zones.

The Board acknowledged that the five-story option allowed a portion of the top floor of the adjacent landmark structure to be visible from the south. With a highly visible frontage along Roy Street (approximately 360 feet in length) it's important to reduce the scale wherever the opportunity presents itself. The upper level setback along Fairview Avenue provides an appropriate transition in acknowledgement of the landmark structure to the north with views to Lake Union.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended that the scale and bulk of the south façade continue to be broken down; see C (Architectural Elements and Materials) for specific recommendations.

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 pick-up on architectural themes found in the surrounding South Lake Union area to inform the design language. The proposed structures should be designed to gracefully fit within a development site that is sympathetic to the existing landmark building to the north and FHCRC campus to the northeast.

The Board emphasized the need to design the proposed building in a manner that reduces the amount of blank walls. The ability to read the building's program behind large windows would add value to the proposal. All facades should have transparent elements to create a visually the building. See also D-2.

At the next meeting, the applicant should provide well-detailed materials and color palette. Use of high quality, durable and well-detailed materials is critical elements to the overall success of the project. The Board suggested the design should enhance the Fairview and Roy frontages by emphasizing the pedestrian experience. This will determine its overall success at street level.

The Board would like to see a detailed design of the floor plan and building section detail to better understand adaptability of future uses.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended that the project look for opportunities to interrupt the horizontal banding, on both the west and the south façades; this could be achieved by expressing the pilasters more directly. On the south façade, the project should consider adding slightly more cornice detail from the west edge of the building to the second main pilaster, to give more rhythm to the building mass and break up the horizontal plane. The Board also suggested that the south façade parapet height might be different in the middle two-thirds than at the east and west ends. The use of color such as a lighter shade of warm gray might be used for the

horizontal recessed bands and at the cornices, to reinforce a base/middle/top construction.

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-2 BLANK WALLS

Building should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

D-7 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

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

D-9 COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE

Signs should add interest to the street from environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character.

D-10 COMMERCIAL LIGHTING

Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts evening hours.

D-11 COMMERCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Commercial store-fronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.

The Board discussed the importance of the sidewalk street experience along the rights-of-way. Though Roy Street and Minor Avenue North are not particularly heavily used streets, emphasis should be directed towards enhancing the quality of the pedestrian experience. Will pedestrians feel safe walking along these two streets? Integrating architectural elements and landscaping at the street edge is an important design facet in the overall design composition and should be treated as such with an eye on detail.

As previously mentioned, the Board would like the design team to reduce the amount of blank walls on all facades in order to increase upper level readability and visibility. The Board stressed the importance of establishing greater transparency at this gateway location. The applicant should show this is achieved at the next meeting.

The articulation of pedestrian entries should be visually announced. Emphasis should be directed towards making the building readable, so that visitors can easily find the appropriate entries.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended that the blank wall on the south façade continue to be broken down; see C (Architectural Elements and Materials) for specific recommendations.

Landscaping

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.

E-3 LANDSCAPE DESIGN TO ADDRESS SPECIAL SITE CONDITIONS

The landscape should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

The Board looks forward to reviewing a well-detailed landscape plan that emphasizes using green elements on the south elevation. A maintenance plan must be included to assure the green spaces remain vibrant and attractive over the years.

Vertical landscaping found in Option A provided a more refined scale allowing the structure's presence to clearly be articulated along the south façade.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board encouraged the project team to increase the size caliper of trees along Roy Street and the south façade beyond the 2" shown in the landscape plan (see A, Site Planning).

Departures

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the project requested no design departures.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board recommended approval of the proposed design, with the following conditions:

- 1) Increase the caliper of trees adjacent to the south façade along Roy Street.
- 2) On the west and south façades, express the pilasters more directly by breaking the continuity of the horizontal bands.
- 3) On the south façade, add slightly more cornice detail from the west edge of the building to the second main pilaster, to give more rhythm to the building mass and break up the horizontal plane; or change the south façade parapet height in the middle two-thirds from that at the east and west ends.
- 4) On the south façade, use the color palette such as a lighter shade of warm gray for the horizontal recessed bands and at the cornices, to reinforce a base/middle/top construction.