



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3011917

Address: 600 Elliott Avenue West

Applicant: Brenda Barnes, Clark Design Group

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Board Members Present: David Delfs
Mindy Black
Jacob Connell
Jill Kurfirst

Board Members Absent: Lipika Mukerji

DPD Staff Present: Lisa Rutzick for Bruce Rips

SITE & VICINITY

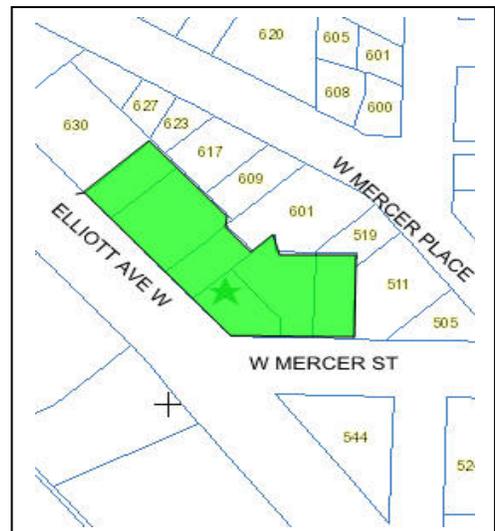
Site Zone: Commercial Two with a 40 foot height limit (C2 40).

Nearby Zones: North: C2 40 north along the east side of the Elliott Ave. corridor.

South: C2 40 south along the east side of the Elliott Ave. corridor.

East: Multifamily Midrise (MR) directly to the east.

West: Industrial Commercial with a 45 height (IC 45) limit on the west side of the Elliott Ave. corridor.



Lot Area: Five parcels total 37,137 square feet

Current Development: Vacant

Access: Current access occurs on Elliot Ave. W and W. Mercer St.

Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character: On the west side of the Elliott Ave corridor, industrial and shipping related development represent predominate land uses with the exception of several, new office buildings. Buildings and uses in the vicinity include Elliott West CSO Control Facility, SDOT Temporary Storage facility, Port of Seattle Terminal 86 (including rail yards and a grain elevator), and Myrtle Edwards Park. To the east of Elliott Ave. W. are small retail and commercial businesses and multifamily residential structures south of the project site along 6th Ave W. and Elliott. As the slope ascends to the east, a series of multifamily buildings line W. Mercer Place. Kinnear Park lies to the northeast of W. Mercer Place.

Elliott Ave. demarcates Industrial Commercial (IC 45) zoning to the west and Commercial Two (C2) on the east. Further to the east on the hillside and above the site, Midrise (MR) and Lowrise Three (LR3) multifamily zoning predominate.

Elliott Ave serves as a major arterial with considerable truck traffic. It also accommodates bike and bus routes. W. Mercer St. and 6th Ave. W. provide residential access.

ECAs: The site lies within mapped steep slope, known slide and liquefaction zones.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes a five-story building with ten live-work units, a parking garage (74 spaces) at grade and four floors of apartments above (114 units) the garage and live/work areas. Pedestrian access to the live work units and the apartment would occur from Elliott Ave. W. Vehicular access to the parking garage would occur from W. Mercer St.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The massing of the three schemes presented to the Design Review Board mimics the unusual obtuse angle formed by the intersection of West Mercer Street and Elliott Avenue West. Each scheme or concept has live/work units fronting Elliott Ave., the primary residential entry at or close to the intersection of the two streets, garage access on W. Mercer and four floors of apartment above the live/work and service areas. The schemes distinguish themselves from one

another based on the relationship of the building mass to the property lines and the placement of open space along the two streets. Scheme A sets back farthest from the east property line. A vertical notch at the intersection of the Elliott Ave. and W. Mercer St. facades signals the lobby and vertical circulation. Live/work units front onto Elliott Ave at street level with apartment units on three floors above them. Scheme B pushes the W. Mercer elevation back away from the street leaving an open space bisected by the driveway and a much narrower rear setback at the east property line. The residential entry occurs at the vertex formed by the angle of the two streets. Unlike Scheme A, the entrance occurs close to the street without an entry court or modulation physically marking the entry. Similar to the previous scheme or option, the live/work units line Elliott Ave. The significant change in the massing for Scheme C occurs along Elliott Ave. A narrow, linear open space separates the avenue from the majority of live/work units. At the W. Mercer street level, garage access along with storage areas occurs near the sidewalk.

By the Recommendation meeting, the applicant refined the basic parti presented at the Early Design Guidance meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Seven members of the public affixed their names to the Recommendation sign-in sheet. The public raised the following issues:

- Slope stability and geotechnical issues represent a major issue.
- Drainage issues are a major concern.
- Noise generated from rooftop mechanical equipment will disturb the neighbors.
- Rooftop lighting should be oriented away from the neighboring units to the east.
- The proposed potted trees located in the roof deck will block views.
- Ensure a secure perimeter to the site.
- Decks should not be used for storage.
- Clarify Mercer Street circulation.
- Construction traffic should not impede neighborhood traffic.

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 applicable) of highest priority for this project.

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

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent

intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown new developments should, to the extent possible, be sited to further contribute to the neighborhood's pedestrian character.

Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas encourage outdoor dining areas utilizing sidewalks and areas adjacent to sidewalks. Outdoor dining is especially encouraged for sites on block faces with southern exposure.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown developments that respond outward to the public realm are preferred.

- Site outdoor spaces in accordance with the location and scale of adjacent streets, buildings, and uses.
- Locate plazas intended for public use at or near grade to promote both a physical and visual connection to the street.
- Define outdoor spaces through a combination of building and landscaping, and discourage oversized spaces that lack containment.

Throughout Uptown site identity features such as art, signage or major public open space at gateway locations as identified on the map. Seek opportunities for welcoming signage that is specific to the Uptown Urban Center at gateway locations. Architecture should also reinforce gateway locations.

Within the Uptown Park character area, streetscape improvements should include where feasible a consistent park-like landscaped strip in the planting strip, as consistent with the historic pattern in the area.

In the Uptown Park character area, when retail and offices are located within the neighborhood, they should be designed to acknowledge and blend with the predominantly residential environment.

The north elevation is a highly visible blank façade that should be treated with building signage or other creative signage/mural/vintage sign or other treatment that breaks down the scale of the expansive façade.

- A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, major entrances to developments should be prominent. The use of distinctive designs with historical references is strongly encouraged. Design, detailing, materials and landscaping may all be employed to this end. Building addresses and names (if applicable) should be located at entrances, tastefully crafted.

- A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

A top priority within the Heart of Uptown character area is to promote active, customer-oriented retail storefronts at street level.

Major retail spaces are encouraged on streets designated Large Scale Commercial Corridor as shown on the map.

Throughout Uptown encourage outdoor dining.

- 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.**

In order to ensure the privacy of the neighbors to the east, the Board made the following recommendations: 1) consolidate the rooftop mechanical equipment to the greatest extent possible on either side of the stair penthouse so that the penthouse itself becomes the screening; 2) minimize all exterior rooftop ductwork where possible; 3) orient all exhaust vents towards West Mercer Street; 4) all rooftop exterior lighting should be low impact and fully shielded away from the east; and 5) ensure that Juliette decks and guard rails along the east elevation are not habitable or usable spaces.

The Board supports the proposed rooftop landscape design which will provide visual separation and a privacy buffer for the neighbors.

- A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street. For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Front Setbacks

Where feasible, new development in the Uptown Park character area should consider landscaping any setback from the sidewalk. Landscaping within a setback should provide a transition from public to private space and define a boundary between these.

Where the incorporation of decorative gates and fencing may be necessary to delineate between public and private spaces, these features should be softened by landscaping where feasible.

A-7 **Residential Open Space.** Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.

A-8 **Parking and Vehicle Access.** Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown the preferred location for surface parking lots is in the rear of the building or away from or otherwise screened from the street and sidewalk.

Preferred Alley Access

Access to new development is preferred via alleyways, if feasible. Throughout Uptown encourage all parking for residential uses to be located below grade.

A-10 **Corner Lots.** Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Corner Lots in Uptown

Generally, buildings within Uptown should meet the corner and not be set back. Building designs and treatments as well as any open space areas should address the corner and promote activity. Corner entrances are strongly encouraged, where feasible.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 **Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility.** 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 creates a

step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, a departure would be supported for 3' of additional height for projects that step back the top floor of the structure a minimum of 6' from the street.

In the Heart of Uptown character area, break facades into smaller massing units.

In the Uptown Urban character area, larger massing units and less modulation are appropriate, provided they are carefully designed, with quality materials.

The proposed front modulation is satisfactory given the speed at which vehicles travel on Elliott.

The Board also addressed the extent of mechanical equipment on the rooftop. See recommendations for A-5.

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 pattern of neighboring buildings.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

In the Uptown Park character area, extensive landscaping, the use of brick and inlaid tile as building materials and designs with an appearance of substance and quality are recommended to promote Uptown Park's desired character.

The Uptown Park character area emphasizes the notion of historic continuity—the relationship of built structures over time.

The Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character districts prefer an architecture that emphasizes human scale and quality, detailing and materials, and that remains compatible with the existing community.

Supplemental Guidance Scope

The Uptown Urban character area embraces high quality urban infill, and responds to special relationships with nearby civic institutions.

- C-2 Architectural Concept and 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 form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, buildings and landscaping should strive to create projects with an overall neat and cohesive appearance.

- C-3 Human Scale.** The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown human-scaled architecture is strongly preferred. Proportion should be provided by such components as the detail of windows, doorways, and entries. Appropriate scale and proportion may also be influenced by the selection of building materials.

Architectural designs that create an impression of reduced size consistent with a pedestrian-oriented environment should be encouraged, especially in the Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character areas.

Throughout Uptown size signs, exterior light fixtures, canopies and awnings to the scale of the building and the pedestrian. Signs that add creativity and individual expression to the design of storefronts are encouraged.

- 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 are encouraged.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Within the Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character areas, the use of historic-looking brick and tile facades are strongly encouraged to create a more consistent, unified, and historic appearance throughout the district.

Throughout Uptown, decorative exterior treatments using brick, tile, and/or other interesting exterior finish materials are strongly preferred. Quality exterior finish materials should be incorporated at all levels and on all exterior walls.

The materials should be carefully detailed, especially at the corners.

- C-5 **Structured Parking Entrances.** The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

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.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown entries should be designed to be pedestrian friendly (via position, scale, architectural detailing, and materials) and should be clearly discernible to the pedestrian.

Throughout Uptown special attention to the pedestrian experience and street right-of-way should be given along pedestrian corridors as identified on the map (pg. VI).

Throughout Uptown the use of a pedestrian-scaled streetlamp within all character areas is encouraged. In addition, streetscape features such as street clocks and benches are encouraged in Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas.

Including amenities for transit riders in a building's design rather than the traditional use of curbside bus shelters generates a safer and more active street. In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas the elimination of curbside bus shelters is encouraged in retail areas as appropriate.

- D-2 **Blank Walls.** Buildings 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.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Within the Uptown Park character area landscaping (e.g., trellised climbing plants and other urban greenery) is the preferred treatment for walls.

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas artwork and decorative surfacing may provide an alternative wall treatment to landscaping in some locations.

The windowless northwest façade should have greater articulation and/or more signage than illustrated in the design review packet. The Board recommended creative

signage/murals/vintage signage or other treatment that reduces the scale of the expansive wall.

- D-3 Retaining Walls. Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where higher retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscapes.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown retaining walls should be constructed of materials that will provide substantial pattern and texture. Rockery, stone, stacked stone or concrete, or brick are preferred. Poured concrete or other smooth treatments/materials are strongly discouraged, unless treated to provide textural or design interest.

- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures. The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown designs that lessen the visibility of parking structures are preferred. Garages and parking structures should, where feasible, incorporate landscaping to reduce their visual impact.

Parking structures are discouraged in the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas.

- D-9 Commercial Signage. Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown tasteful signs designed for pedestrians (as opposed to passing vehicles) are preferred. Backlit signs, animated reader boards and similar signs are discouraged. Blade signs, wall-mounted signs, signs below awnings, and similar signs are preferred.

A conceptual signage program that outlines the sign standards for the building tenants should be developed to create a consistent approach to the signage. Signage banding for the ground level live/work units should be installed. Either blade signs or hanging signs are acceptable.

- D-11 Commercial Transparency.** Commercial storefronts 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.
- D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions.** For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

E. Landscaping

- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites.** Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Within the Uptown Park character area, streetscape improvements should include a consistent landscaped planting strip between the sidewalk and the street as consistent with the historic pattern in the area.

Throughout Uptown, streetscape landscaping as per guidelines A-2 and D-1 is encouraged.

- 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.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, but especially within the Uptown Park character area, landscaping should be substantial and include a variety of textures and colors, to the extent possible. Landscaping should be used to enhance each site, including buildings, setbacks, entrances, open space areas, and to screen parking and other less visually attractive areas. Encourage planted containers at building entries.

The Board recommended the following changes to the landscaping program: 1) the corner entry plaza space should have less hard surfaces and more plantings; and 2) redesign the area abutting the live/work units to emphasize residential uses and include granite markers (also found at the corner entry) at each entrance, paving pattern

changes and increased landscaping that provides a physical buffer to further shield the ground level units. The added landscaping should include vegetation with greater height to buffer the pedestrian environment and the ground level units. This is intended to activate the street life with an enhanced safe and comfortable pedestrian environment.

- E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions. The landscape design 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.**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No departures were requested.

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the April 18, 2012 meeting. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented in the plans and other drawings available at the April 18, 2012 public meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). The Board recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

1. Consolidate the rooftop mechanical equipment to the greatest extent possible on either side of the stair penthouse so that the penthouse itself becomes the screening. (A-5)
2. All exterior rooftop duct work should be minimized where possible. (A-5)
3. All exhaust vents should be oriented towards West Mercer Street. (A-5)
4. All rooftop exterior lighting should be low impact and fully shielded away from the east. (A-5)
5. The Juliette decks and guard rails along the east elevation should not provide habitable, usable spaces. (A-5)
6. The materials should be carefully detailed, especially at the corners. (C-4)
7. Reduce the amount of hard surface at the corner entry plaza space by adding plantings interspersed within the hard surface area. (E-2)
8. A conceptual signage program that outlines the sign standards for the building tenants should be developed to create a consistent approach to the signage. Signage banding for the ground level live/work units should be installed. Either blade signs or hanging signs are acceptable. (D-9)

9. Redesign the area abutting the live/work units to emphasize residential use. Changes should include the installation of granite markers (also found at the corner entry) at each entrance, paving pattern changes, and more landscaping that provides a physical buffer to shield the ground level units. The added landscaping should include vegetation with greater height to buffer the pedestrian environment and the ground level units. This is intended to activate the street life with an enhanced safe and comfortable pedestrian environment. (E-2)
10. The north elevation is a highly visible blank façade that should be treated with building signage or other creative signage/mural/vintage sign or other treatment that breaks down the scale of the expansive façade. (A-2)

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