# City of Seattle

**Department of Planning & Development**
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE**
**SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

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| Project Number: | 3012125 |
| Address: | 1400 S. Lane St. |
| Applicant: | Mithun Architecture for Seattle Goodwill Industries |
| Date of Meeting: | Tuesday, June 14, 2011 |
| Board Members Present: | Bret Conway (Chair)<br>Tony Chase<br>Amoreena Miller<br>Stephen Yamada-Miller |
| Board Members Absent: | Sam Cameron |
| DPD Staff Present: | Scott Kemp |

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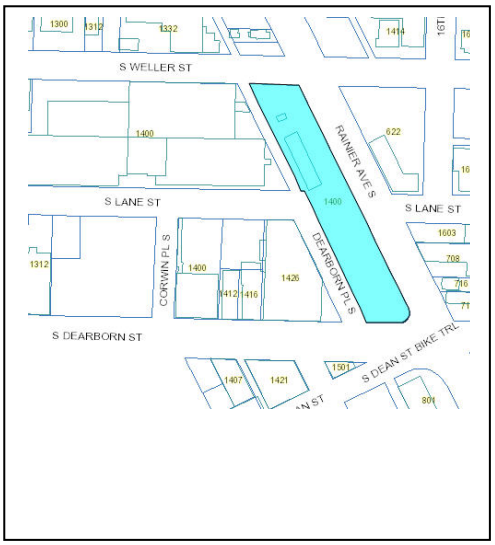
**SITE & VICINITY**

Site Zone: IC 65




Current Development: Surface Parking

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| Access: | Potential access from three adjacent streets. |
| Surrounding Development: | Goodwill site on two sides. Commercial uses across Rainier Ave S. to east and across S. Dearborn St. to south. |
| ECAs: | ECA Steep Slope area along Rainier Ave. S. |
| Neighborhood Character: | Commercial and industrial. |

**PROJECT AND VICINITY DESCRIPTION**

The proposal site is located on the corner of Rainier Ave. S. and S. Dearborn Street and is further bounded by Dearborn Pl. S. The grade rises approximately 7.5 feet from north to south along Dearborn Pl. S. Grade drops approximately 11 feet from north to south along Rainier Ave. S. Grades within the Goodwill Industries campus were altered during a period of time when a "brick pit" with associated mining of materials occupied the site. The proposal site is 94 feet wide between the two rights of way and it is 339 feet long along Dearborn Pl. S.

A mature Bartrum Oak Tree (a mix of red and willow oaks) in the sidewalk portion of the S. Dearborn St. right of way, with its canopy extending approximately 20 feet onto the subject site, is proposed to be retained and incorporated into an onsite plaza element adjacent to the primary building entry.

The block west of the proposal site is also owned by Goodwill Industries, and is being redeveloped as on-grade vehicle parking for Goodwill semi trucks and private vehicles. At some future date this area might be redeveloped with new buildings. Twice in the past 15 years Master Use Permits have been issued for private development on this site wherein a portion would have been Goodwill Industries facilities.

The program goals for the building would have it containing 30,600 sq. ft. of office, 16,000 sq. ft of classrooms and basement parking to meet part of the parking needs of the building with the remainder needs to met elsewhere on the Goodwill Campus.

Three alternative development schemes were presented. Each of them incorporated a partially below grade parking level which was fully below grade at the south and emerged along S. Dearborn Pl. at the north end of the site. In the schemes the program spaces were arranged in two, three and four story configurations. Scheme 1 was identified as the preferred scheme because it allowed the classroom space to occupy the ground level with office space occupying the next two. The other configurations compromised the optimal space arrangement, one by putting some of the classroom space on the second level and the other by putting a portion of the office space on the main level, along Rainier Ave. S. where much of it would be well below sidewalk level.

A two story glass entry lobby is proposed on the southern plaza area with the large Bartrium tree. The entry element would provide an inspiration for warm building materials with wood finish which might enter the lobby space from the outside. A 15 foot wide "green space" landscaped area is proposed between the building and S. Dearborn Pl. which would incorporate rain garden and bio retention features.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Limited public comment was made with one person asking for clarification of the drawings and another offering the suggestion that a hybrid scheme with a stepped building form might be considered.

## 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.**

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed how the unique site offers challenges and opportunities. The fact that it is the eastern edge of a larger Goodwill Campus should be considered. How will the proposed development connect with, influence and be influenced by future development on the Goodwill properties is an important consideration. To aid in this endeavor a high level planning document or drawing of the entire site needs to be presented at the next DRB meeting.

The Rainier Ave. S. façade presents particular challenges. The property line, like the proposed building, is long. The sidewalk level rises relative to the level floor plates as to the north, away from the building entry at the south. No building entries are proposed

along Rainier Ave. S. The classroom use proposed for the first level might interact awkwardly with pedestrians by on the sidewalk above. A clearly developed approach to the façade along Rainier Ave. S. needs to be developed.

The Board indicated that the location of a two story entry element at a southern plaza was a good scheme. They also indicated that the proposed landscape element along Dearborn Pl. S. provides an opportunity to provide a successful amenity space for persons walking along the site and for those within it.

The proposed development also presents an opportunity to create a pedestrian connection into the site across the north end of the site.

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

The Board indicated that the proposed vehicle entry point from S. Dearborn Place at the north end of the proposal site seemed like an appropriate approach.

## B. Height, Bulk and Scale

**B-1** **<u>Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility</u>. 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.**

The proposed building on a 74 by 339 foot site presents bulk and scale issues to be addressed by incorporation of elements of interest and balance in the architectural expression.

## C. Architectural Elements and Materials

**C-1** **<u>Architectural Context</u>. 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.**

**C-2** **<u>Architectural Concept and Consistency</u>. 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated the area around the proposal site has a strong industrial character which should provide direction for the proposed building design. It also stated there should be a difference between the base and the upper floors and that the strong, two-story lobby element should be incorporated.

The Board indicated it does not support a monochrome, flush building and recommended a design that includes color, texture, and energy.

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of the pedestrian level, especially along Rainier where it will be more challenging to create a successful pedestrian experience.

**C-4** **<u>Exterior Finish Materials</u>. 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that exterior finish materials must be of high quality, with interesting color and texture. The applicants should bring material and color boards to the Recommendation Meeting.

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated they understand the reasons for the proposed location of the vehicle entrance at the north end and that it should be designed so that its appearance and impacts are minimized.

## D. Pedestrian Environment

**D-1** **<u>Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances</u>. 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated the applicants appear to be on the right track here and should further develop the details and character of the southern plaza element and of the building pedestrian entry.

**D-2** **<u>Blank Walls</u>. 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that blank walls should be avoided.

**D-5** **<u>Visual Impacts of Parking Structures</u>. 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that blank sides of the parking structure should be avoided around the perimeter of the building.

**D-6** **<u>Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas</u>. 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 away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that the plan for dumpsters and recycling as well as screening should be shown and the next meeting.

**D-7** **<u>Personal Safety and Security</u>. Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that personal safety and security of persons on the proposal site is a concern and designs should provide elements to ensure personal security.

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

The Board requested that signage elements of the proposal be shown at the next meeting.

**D-10** **<u>Commercial Lighting</u>. Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.**

The Board these elements should be shown at the next meeting.

**D-11** **<u>Commercial Transparency</u>. 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.**

The Board stated that the transparency elements in the building should well meet the design guideline and they should be shown at the next meeting.

## E. Landscaping

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

**E-2** **<u>Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site</u>. 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that the landscape proposed should be shown and it should be demonstrated how the landscape will relate to future development of the Goodwill properties. In general, the landscape is very important to the proposal and needs to be well developed at the recommendation meeting.

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No development standard departures were discussed at the meeting.

## BOARD DIRECTION

**At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.**