



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012408

Address: 756 John Street

Applicant: Brian Lloyd of Beacon Development Group

Date of Meeting: July 11, 2012

Board Members Present: Mindy Black
Jill Kurfirst
Lipika Mukerji

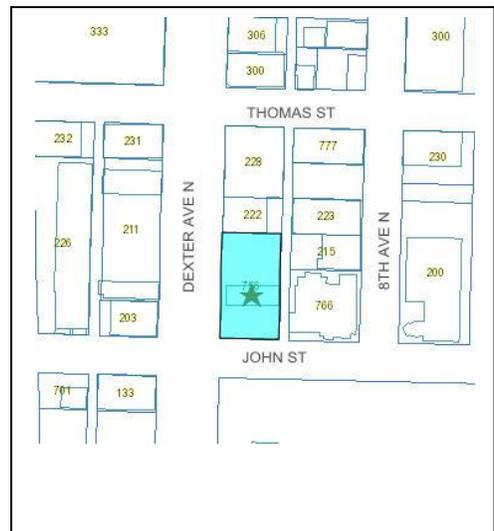
Board Members Absent: Jacob Connell
David Delfs

DPD Staff Present: Bruce P. Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed with an 85' height limit (SM 85)

Nearby Zones: North SM 85 extends from the site to Republican St.
 South: SM 85 extends from the site to Denny Way.
 East: At the alley between Westlake Ave N. and Terry Ave N, the zone changes to Industrial Commercial (IC)
 West: SM 85 extends from site to Broad St. West of Broad St. zoning shifts to Neighborhood Commercial 3 with a 65' height limit.



Lot Area: The rectangular shaped parcel totals 18,000 sq. ft. The site's declension begins at the southwest corner and decreases by approximately ten feet to the northeast corner. The property has approximately 120' of frontage on John St. and 180' on Dexter Ave.

Current Development: The site houses a one-story wood frame structure (1949) and surface parking lot.

Access: Alley access for vehicles

Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character: The site lies at the northeast corner of John St. and Dexter Avenue N. directly north of Denny Park. To the east and across the alley lies the Denny Park Lutheran Church. Two parcels to the north of the church, project proposal # 3013251 is under review by the City and the Queen Anne Design Review Board. Surrounding uses include retail, office and residential. The properties to the west, across Dexter Ave N., house a Holiday Inn Express and Winston Wachter Fire Art gallery. The vicinity with its close proximity to South Lake Union, Queen Anne, downtown and Seattle Center neighborhoods has witnessed considerable development activity in recent years.

The site's location has transit advantages due to its proximity to several arterials including Aurora Ave N. two blocks to the west, Dexter Ave. N., Ninth Ave. N., Denny Way. and Westlake Ave, three blocks to the east provides. Dexter Ave. also functions as a significant north/south bike route

ECAs: No mapped environmentally critical areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes a six-story mixed-use structure with 70 apartment units above 5,600 square feet of commercial space and below grade parking for 25 vehicles. The existing structure would be demolished.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Commonalities to the three massing options presented to DPD and the Design Review Board include the desire to create street walls on Dexter Ave and John St., consistent height, vehicular entry from the alley, ground floor office uses at the northern end of the site and a large area devoted to residential amenities facing Dexter Ave. Option One forms a central courtyard beginning at the second level. Dwelling units wrap around a continuous hallway facing the open

space. The building mass closely approaches the four surrounding property lines with modest setbacks at the north property line and then steps back from the south boundary at the second level.

Option Two's "C" shape has its courtyard (beginning at the second level) face the alley and the neighboring church. This scheme has a larger setback from the alley and equivalent setbacks as Option One at the north and south property lines. The design of the ground floor spaces appears nearly identical to Option One. Option Three modifies the parti developed in Option Two by shifting or pushing the mass along John St. away from the alley and the church at the upper levels, creating approximately a 30 foot gap between the church and the upper floors of the proposed building.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- One member of the public asked about the location of the garage.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Encourage provision of "outlooks and overlooks" for the public to view the lake and cityscapes. Examples include provision of public plazas and/or other public open spaces and changing the form or facade setbacks of the building to enhance opportunities for views.**
- **Minimize shadow impacts to Cascade Park.**

- New development is encouraged to take advantage of site configuration to accomplish sustainability goals. The Board is generally willing to recommend departures from development standards if they are needed to achieve sustainable design. Refer to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* (LEED) manual which provides additional information. Examples include:
 - Solar orientation
 - Storm water run-off, detention and filtration systems
 - Sustainable landscaping
 - Versatile building design for entire building life cycle

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

The vision for street level uses in South Lake Union is a completed network of sidewalks that successfully accommodate pedestrians. Streetscape compatibility is a high priority of the neighborhood with redevelopment. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming and open to the general public.

- Provide pedestrian-friendly streetscape amenities, such as: tree grates; benches; lighting.
- Encourage provision of spaces for street level uses that vary in size, width, and depth. Encourage the use of awnings and weather protection along street fronts to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Where appropriate, consider a reduction in the required amount of commercial and retail space at the ground level, such as in transition zones between commercial and residential areas. Place retail in areas that are conducive to the use and will be successful.
- Where appropriate, configure retail space so that it can spill-out onto the sidewalk (retaining six feet for pedestrian movement, where the sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

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

The residential entrance on John St. does not align with the vertical reveal to the left of it. In the concept massing illustration presented at the EDG meeting, the relationship appears awkward. However the execution of the reveal and the entrance will likely evolve as the design develops.

Echoing the front of the Denny Park Lutheran Church, the wide entry steps on John St. and the porch at the amenity room acknowledge the park across the street and the importance of enhancing the streetscape.

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Create graceful transitions at the streetscape level between the public and private uses.
- Keep neighborhood connections open, and discourage closed campuses.
- Design facades to encourage activity to spill out from business onto the sidewalk, and vice-versa.
- Reinforce pedestrian connections both within the neighborhood and to other adjacent neighborhoods. Transportation infrastructure should be designed with adjacent sidewalks, as development occurs to enhance pedestrian connectivity.
- Reinforce retail concentrations with compatible spaces that encourage pedestrian activity.
- Create businesses and community activity clusters through co-location of retail and pedestrian uses as well as other high pedestrian traffic opportunities.
- Design for a network of safe and well-lit connections to encourage human activity and link existing high activity areas.

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.

The extra massing diagram provided at the meeting illustrates a change in materials between the second and third floors intended to reinforce the roofline of the lower of the two volumes that comprise the church façade along John St. and the frieze above the three doors. However, the material of the base extends to the second floor ceiling line only at the reveal. This lack of emphasis diminishes the relationship between the project’s two story base and the strong datum line established by the church. In spite of its wide projecting bays, the two story base on Dexter Ave has a stronger visual presence.

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.

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.

Depending upon the future detailing of materials and fenestration at the Dexter and John corner, the Board accepted the notion that the large bay could anchor the corner.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Address both the pedestrian and auto experience through building placement, scale and details with specific attention to regional transportation corridors such as Mercer, Aurora, Fairview and Westlake. These locations, pending changes in traffic patterns, may evolve with transportation improvements.
- Encourage stepping back an elevation at upper levels for development taller than 55 feet to take advantage of views and increase sunlight at street level. Where stepping back upper floors is not practical or appropriate other design considerations may be considered, such as modulations or separations between structures.
- Relate proportions of buildings to the width and scale of the street.
- Articulate the building facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that relate to the existing structures or existing pattern of development in the vicinity.
- Consider using architectural features to reduce building scale such as: landscaping; trellis; complementary materials; detailing; accent trim.

Based on the massing of the three options, the Board expressed its satisfaction with the third option.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Support the existing fine-grained character of the neighborhood with a mix of building styles.
- Re-use and preserve important buildings and landmarks when possible.
- Expose historic signs and vintage advertising on buildings where possible.
- Respond to the history and character in the adjacent vicinity in terms of patterns, style, and scale. Encourage historic character to be revealed and reclaimed, for example through use of community artifacts, and historic materials, forms and textures.
- Respond to the working class, maritime, commercial and industrial character of the Waterfront and Westlake areas. Examples of elements to consider include: window detail patterns; open bay doors; sloped roofs.
- Respond to the unique, grass roots, sustainable character of the Cascade neighborhood. Examples of elements to consider include: community artwork; edible gardens; water filtration systems that serve as pedestrian amenities; gutters that support greenery.

- 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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

Design the “fifth elevation” — the roofscape — in addition to the streetscape. As this area topographically is a valley, the roofs may be viewed from locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, views from outside the area as well as from within the neighborhood should be considered, and roof-top elements should be organized to minimize view impacts from the freeway and elevated areas.

See Board guidance for A-3 and A-5. In addition, the Board encouraged the architect to consider the fenestration patterns (in particular the lancet windows) established by the church.

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

In concept diagrams, the articulation of the building facades suggests the architect’s consciousness of human scale. As the design develops, detailing of materials and their composition should provide further refinement.

- 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.

Board members discussed the merits of using brick at the two-story base. Use of the material would convey a visual connection with the neighboring church and along with the church establish a sense of continuity as a back drop to the park.

- 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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- New developments are encouraged to work with the Design Review Board and interested citizens to provide features that enhance the public realm, i.e. the transition zone between private property and the public right of way. The Board is generally willing to consider a departure in open space requirements if the project proponent provides an acceptable plan for features such as: curb bulbs adjacent to active retail spaces where they are not interfering with primary corridors that are designated for high levels of traffic flow; pedestrian-oriented street lighting; street furniture.

The idea of a raised porch or terrace along John St. found received praise from the Board.

- 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.**

The projection of the north elevation will have considerable exposure from Dexter Ave. The design and detailing of this blank façade should be given considerable attention.

- 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.**

- 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 away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

The location of the solid waste storage and how it functions should be prepared by the Recommendation meeting.

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Enhance public safety throughout the neighborhood to foster 18-hour public activity. Methods to consider are: enhanced pedestrian and street lighting; well- designed public spaces that are defensively designed with clear sight lines and opportunities for eyes on the street; police horse tie-up locations for routine patrols and larger event assistance.

See Board guidance for D-10.

- D-8 Treatment of Alleys. The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.**

The Board welcomed the proposed landscaping along the alley and the manner in which the building sets back along this right of way to allow natural light into the courtyard.

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.

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 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.

A concept lighting plan will be needed for the Recommendation meeting. Lighting along the alley will be of particular importance.

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.

Due to the change in grade along Dexter Ave. N., the Board requested diagrams illustrating how the proposal meets land use code transparency requirements.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Support the creation of a hierarchy of passive and active open space within South Lake Union. This may include pooling open space requirements on-site to create larger spaces.
- Encourage landscaping that meets LEED criteria. This is a priority in the Cascade neighborhood.
- Where appropriate, install indigenous trees and plants to improve aesthetics, capture water and create habitat.
- Retain existing, non-intrusive mature trees or replace with large caliper trees.
- Water features are encouraged including natural marsh-like installations.
- Reference the City of Seattle Right Tree Book and the City Light Streetscape Light Standards Manual for appropriate landscaping and lighting options for the area.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.**

The Board expressed its satisfaction with the landscape concept and looks forward to receiving more detail as the plan evolves.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) 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(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the applicant requested the following departure:

- 1. Structural Overhang:** The Code (23.53.035) has specific size limitations. The applicant proposes to exceed the allowable area of a structural overhang on Dexter Avenue.

More information about the size, amount and detailing of departure for the proposed bays along Dexter Ave N. will be required before the Board consider the departure request. The applicant will need to show how exceeding the code requirement better meets the design guidelines.

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.