



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

Project Number: 3012418

Address: 400 9th Ave N

Applicant: Jodi Patterson-O'Hare, Permit Consultants NW for City Investors LLC.

Date of Meeting: November 2, 2011

Board Members Present: David Delfs (Chair)
Mindy Black, Business
Lipika Mukerji
Jacob Connell

Board Members Absent: Jill Kurfirst

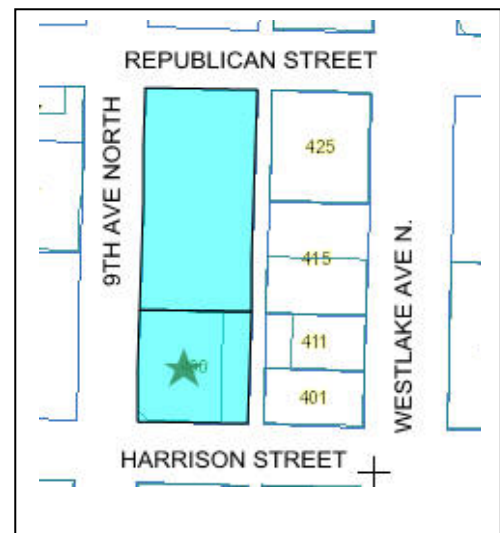
DPD Staff Present: Scott Kemp

SITE & VICINITY

The site is located within the South Lake Union Urban Center in the Seattle Mixed 85' zone. This project is within the Westlake Commercial Core.

Site Zone: The South Lake Union Urban Design Framework has identified "Through Block Connections" and "Street As Open Space" as desirable Framework recommendations.

Nearby Zones: (North) SM-65
(South) DMC 240/290-400



(East) IC-65
(West) NC-3-85

Lot Area:	The site is on the west side of the block bounded by Ninth and Westlake Avenues North, and Republican and Harrison Streets. The site slopes from elevation 53.94' in the southwest corner down to elevation 45.6' in the northeast corner with an overall elevation difference of approximately 8 feet.
Current Development:	Existing uses on the site consist of a surface parking lot and a one-story commercial building.
Access:	Access by Alley off Republican St.
Surrounding Development:	The neighboring development around the site consists of a mix of commercial, retail and residential uses. On the same block to the east of the alley is the two story brick building housing the Tesla automobile dealership as well as three two- level retail structures along Westlake Avenue. Across Westlake to the east are the six-story Tommy Bahama office building and the Firestone Tire dealership. To the west of the site is the 6-story Veer Lofts residential condominium constructed in 2009. To the northwest is the five-level University of Washington School of Medicine Research Laboratory. To the south of the site is the one- level City Hardware building.
ECAs:	No Environmentally Critical areas are mapped or known to exist on the site.

Adjacent zoning consists of Seattle Mixed with a 65-foot height limit to the north of Republican Street and Industrial Commercial with a 65-foot height limit to the east of Westlake Avenue.

With respect to views from the site, there are views to the north and northeast to Lake Union above level 2 and views of Belltown to the south as well as to the space needle to the southwest. There is also a partial territorial view of the Seattle Center to the west above level 3 as well.

Neighborhood

Character:

With respect to views looking to the site, the north façade of the project would be visible from Republican Street as well as from one block north from Mercer Street. The east façade above level 2 would be visible from Westlake Avenue and the south façade above level 2 could be seen from Ninth Avenue south of Thomas Street. The view of the west façade would be partially constrained by the Veer Lofts located on the west side of Ninth Avenue; however, there would be a good view of a portion of the west façade at the corner of Ninth Avenue and Republican Street.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project a six-story office/laboratory building with approximately 195,000 square feet of office space and 3,200 square feet of retail at ground level. Parking (approximately 275 stalls) would be provided within a 3-level below-grade garage accessed from the alley (off Republican Street).

The applicant requested two departures:

1. To allow the west façade of the building to be set back approximately 22 feet from the street property line for a distance of 170 feet and for the northwest and southwest corners of the building to be set back from than 20 feet from the corner of the site. This departure would allow a public green space along the south end of the building.
2. To permit the south wall of the building to run vertically straight up to a height of approximately 85' and to not set back. This departure will enable the width of the south building façade to be reduced from 120 feet to approximately 93 feet to enable a wider public garden along Ninth Avenue, bring more light to the garden and decrease the overall height and bulk of the building along Harrison Street.

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include 5-6 Stories of Office with Retail at the Ground Floor.

The first scheme (Alternative 1) showed a 5 –story office/laboratory building massing built out to all property lines.

The second scheme (Alternative 2) showed a six-story office/laboratory building with a modulation on north and south facades with the west façade setback from sidewalk to provide a widened street experience.

The third scheme (Alternative 3) showed a six-story office/laboratory building articulated as two separate volumes when viewed from Ninth Avenue and across the alley. The north volume’s width aligns with the existing brick Tesla Building and the south volume is expressed as a narrow bar of approx. 90 feet in width. The building entry occurs at the building break on Ninth Avenue between the two volumes and could serve as a future mid-block connection. This scheme allows for better daylighting than Alternatives 1 and 2 due to the narrow east/west depth of the proposed office floors. In addition, this alternative provides an opportunity for a generous public street garden along 9th Ave N facing the Veer Lofts Condominiums.

The Street Garden would provide a human-scaled experience, with islands of plant material and artful seating elements reflecting the residential character of nearby properties. The Garden takes advantage of the sunniest frontage of the property and creates a spot for the neighborhood and for building tenants to relax and enjoy to create street level landscaped space.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 5 members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Member of the Public was concerned about overall length of building and the number of “pancaked” structures that have been built over the last few years in SLU. Additionally, this neighborhood would appreciate an exterior design for this project that was something more unique and extraordinary than recent projects.
- Monty Holmes, Athletic Awards, stated that the UW School of Medicine exits onto Republican Street. He was concerned about additional vehicles adding to traffic on Republican. He also wanted to know whether the bus stop would be moved. The Team responded that the bus stop would stay in place and that access to the garage would be from the alley (The applicants have since indicated the referenced bus stop was not a public Metro bus stop, but a stop for a private shuttle system, and will likely be removed).
- Member of the Public was concerned about the impact to the view corridor of this proposed building.
- A Member of the Public wanted to ensure that the sidewalks were wide (13’ right of way on Republican and 11’ right of way on Harrison) and welcoming. He commented that Thomas and Harrison are green streets. He added that the setback requirement along Harrison and other streets provide view corridors and he didn’t support allowing a departure to eliminate the required setback.

- Jill Morelli, UW School of Medicine, requested more attention to detail at the north end of building. There was so much focus on the south end of the building across from Veer Lofts that the north end could get short shrift.
- Veer Lofts resident commented about the office or laboratory façade facing the Veer Lofts and the increased number of office buildings in the neighborhood. Possible ways of dealing with both the provision of sun screens on this west-facing building and increasing privacy for Veer Lofts would be to angle the windows in a saw-tooth design along the south volume.
- Member of the Public was concerned about lights/glare at night if lights are left on in the office building, or are turned on and remain on when janitorial staff is cleaning the building.
- Member of the Public was concerned with location of the mechanical unit on the roof, would like the unit pushed to the east to be furthest away from Veer Lofts.

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 (http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Overview/).

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

The very long site along the 9th Ave. N. street frontage was stated to provide a necessity for a change in character both at the street level and in the upper building levels to provide a variety of expressions. The Board endorsed the three part scheme presented with a highly transparent building entry dividing two different building expressions, one north and one to the south.

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).

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of context with this site. The fact this office or laboratory building is facing a residential building places particular importance on developing a sensitive and imaginative design whose fenestration would provide some privacy for Veer Lofts residents and be pleasurable to look at. The Board indicated the character of the immediate area transitions from a residential character across from the Veer Lofts to a more commercial one further north. The building should respond to both contexts. The north building portion should have a significantly different character and it can have a more open color palate.

The Board stated that the length of the block was a massing challenge and appreciated the fact that the preferred scheme divided the volume of the building into two parts. They said that it was important that the break between the two parts be articulated clearly and be potentially accessible to the public.

The board would like to see development of greater detail at street level than what was shown on the massing model. In the presentation, there was a greater focus on the south end and its relationship to Veer Lofts, but the Board wants additional focus on the north end of Ninth Avenue, and also along Republican Street, at the north edge of the building.

The Board said that the first departure, to allow the west façade of the building to be set back approximately 22 feet from the street property line for a running distance of 170 feet, would likely be supported. This departure would allow a public green space along Ninth Avenue at the south west portion of the building.

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

The Board underlined the importance of designing the main entry as a prominent, dramatic entry in the “volume break” of the building. They also wished to see additional entrances along the facades and how they would be expressed.

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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board encouraged the design team to activate human activity not only on Ninth Avenue but also Harrison and Republican. It indicated the applicants will need to show the pedestrian environments in detail at the next meeting. The materials provide should include both landscape plans and drawing which convey the character of the areas.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the design team noted that parking access to the below-grade garage will be from the alley and the Board indicate this would be the best approach.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that the building may be up to 105' tall if the use was biotech. The Board wants to see more setbacks and modulation as a means to reduce apparent scale. The very long length for the sight along 9th Ave. N. provides bulk and scale issues which need to be addressed. The Board indicated it thinks the applicants are on the right track with the three part building shown. Along the two "end streets" the narrowness of the building relative to its height may present some issues of apparent height and the applicants should be wary of this potential problem.

The Board said they did not support the second departure, eliminating the setback along Harrison Street. They would like to see how a setback along Harrison Street would reduce apparent scale though they were sensitive to the applicant's desire to still maximize FAR, especially in light of the volume break to make the building appear as two buildings. They recommended that the architect look at ways to provide additional modulation along Ninth Avenue to break up the length.

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.

The Board also requested more detail in association with existing structures/ neighborhood. The Board requested greater detail to be presented by the applicant at the DRB meeting showing the pedestrian environment along Republican and Harrison Streets. The Board asked for detail of the sidewalk level as it proceeds north and turns right onto Republican. What does the building look like at street level? Show the colors and materials.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed architectural expression of the proposed building. The indicated:

- o It would be good if the breezeway building entry element could be open all the way through or designed so it could be opened at a later date.
- o Show details of the proposed shading elements.
- o A change in materials between the southern and northern building expressions would be appropriate and desirable.
- o The change in buildings on the opposite side of 9th Ave. N. should be responded to in the fenestration patterns, materials chosen, gap location; etc.
- o Show details of all facades at the next meeting with each façade developed to an equally detailed level.
- o Create a pleasant, inviting pedestrian experience.

C-3 Human Scale. 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 requested further detail at street level. The Board also requested detail of what is proposed at green space along 9th Avenue and elaboration on the street experience at Harrison and Republican Streets

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board expressed a desire to see that the north and south portions of the buildings along Ninth Avenue look different from each other. Materials could be of the same palate or system but provide two distinctive appearances. The Board would like to see an expression of the entry and context with consideration of a potential future public passage through to Tesla site. Provide materials and color boards at the next meeting.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board requested more design information on the Street Garden. They also wanted additional details on landscape elements on all streetscapes to include landscape plans and renderings showing the pedestrian experience.

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of limiting light pollution.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the proposed landscape strategy for the Street Garden along Ninth Avenue North and responded positively to the initial concepts proposed by the landscape architect. The Board would like to see more detail in the streetscape concepts.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated there is an integral connection between the quality of the landscape to be provided in the area of setback from 9th Ave. N. and the departure requested to allow that setback. Careful integration of the design guidance found in this E-2 guideline will be important. The landscape should be shown with specificity in a landscape plan and its character further communicated in pedestrian scale drawings.

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 following departures were requested:

- 1. General Façade Requirements/Street Level Setback (23.48.014):** The Code requires building facades to be set back no more than 12 feet back from the property line. Additional setbacks are permitted for up to 30% of the length of the set back street wall provided that additional setback is located a distance of 20 feet or more from a street corner
In order to create a public open space along the east side of Ninth Avenue north of Harrison which meets the intention of the South Lake Union Design Guidelines for creation of pedestrian open spaces, the applicant seeks a design departure to allow the west façade of

the building to be set back approximately 22 feet from the street property line for a running distance of 170 feet and for the northwest and southwest corner of the building to be set back more than 20 feet from the corner or the site.

The Board indicated initial support for this departure request.

- 2. Upper Level Setbacks (23.48.014):** The Code requires a an upper level setback of 1 foot setback for every 2 feet of height up to a maximum setback of 15 feet along Harrison street for portion of the the building façade that is above 45 feet The applicant proposes 23.48.014 Upper Level Setbacks

To enable the public open space along Ninth Avenue while meeting the total target size of the building at a FAR of 4.5, the applicant seeks a departure to permit the south wall of the building along Harrison Street to run vertically straight up to a height of approx. 85' and not be set back 1 foot for every 2 feet above 45 feet to a maximum of 15 feet as required by code. Note that the South Lake Union urban framework plan only recommends upper level setbacks along the south side of Thomas Street to maintain views of the Space Needle, not along Harrison Street.

The Board indicated it was not favorably inclined towards this departure request.

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.