



# City of Seattle

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



## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012431

Address: 416 John Street

Applicant: Greg Allwine, architect for Johnson Braund Inc.

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Board Members Present: David Delfs (Chair)  
Mindy Black  
Patrick Doherty (substituting)  
Boting Zhang (substituting)

Board Members Absent: Jacob Connell  
Magda Hogness  
Jill Kurfirst  
Lipika Mukerji

DPD Staff Present: Bradley Wilburn

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed (SM) 85  
within the Uptown Urban Center

Nearby Zones: (North) Neighborhood Commercial  
Three (NC3) 85  
(South) Downtown Mixed  
Residential/Residential (DMR/R) 125/65  
(East) SM 85  
(West) NC3 85

Lot Area: 16,966 square feet



Current Development: Surface parking lot.

Access: Broad Street, 5th Avenue North, John Street & alley running parallel to 5th Avenue North.

Surrounding Development: The general area is located at the south edge of the Uptown Urban Character Area district and is home to a number of iconic structures including the Seattle Space Needle, Experience Music Project, and the Pacific Science Center, all on the campus of Seattle Center. One block south of the subject site, is the six-story Fischer Plaza complex that visually dominates the 5th Avenue streetscape south of Broad Street. Across 5th Avenue to the east the buildings are smaller in scale with large pockets of surface parking lots. The monorail train runs within the 5th Avenue right-of-way adjacent to the development site's street frontage. The monorail's Y-shaped columns supporting pairs of concrete beams, which span the length of the development site. The typical concrete beams are approximately 70ft in length and are supported by columns approximately 30 feet above street grade.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: The area is made up of blocks with a rich variety of uses surrounding the south edge of Seattle Center made accessible by connections to major roadway corridors. Seattle Center hosts year round attractions and events attracting hundreds of thousands of people annually. Board Street and 5th Avenue generates heavy traffic as people access the Seattle Center Campus. Except for the Fischer Plaza complex, development along 5th Avenue, within a two block radius, is varied with surface parking lots and undersized buildings. The iconic structures currently define the sense of place as people pass through to various destinations points.

The area offers high levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic with excellent access to transit and amenities.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicants propose a seven-story building with 46 residential apartment units on the top two floors, 126 hotel rooms on floors two through five, and lobby and restaurant use on the ground floor. Parking for 74 vehicles would be provided underground.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: December 19, 2012

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3012431) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019

Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments, issues and concerns were raised during public comment:

- Liked evening lighting scheme as depicted in the oral presentation and recommendation packet.
- In favor of the treatment and arrangement of material reveals on exterior facades.

## 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.

### DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

**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.**

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

**A. Solar Orientation**

**B. Stormwater Management**

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

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Architectural Diversity**
- B. Older and Historic Buildings**
- C. Wider Sidewalks**
- D. Ground Level Residential**
- E. Streetscape Improvement**

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

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

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Outdoor Dining**
- B. Individualized Storefronts**

**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:**

- A. Celebratory Entries**
- B. Defensible 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.

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Parking on Queen Anne Avenue**
- B. Access to Parking**
- C. Preserving Existing Sidewalk Areas**
- D. Widening Narrow Alleys**

**A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts.** Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.

- 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:**

- A. Visual Openness Encouraged at Street Level**
- B. Synergetic Connection to Surrounding Iconic Structures**

- 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.**

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- C. Features Especially Encouraged**
- D. Small Local Businesses**

- 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.**

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Individualized Storefronts**
- B. Highlighting Distinctive Features**
- C. Screening Rooftop Systems**
- D. Sustainable Building Features**

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

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Pedestrian Orientation**

- 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.**

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Building for the Long Term**
- B. Cladding Materials**
- C. Ground-floor Façade Materials**
- D. Colors**
- E. Renewable Materials**

**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.

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Building Setbacks for Wider Sidewalks
- B. Creating Pedestrian Open Space
- C. Recessed Retail Entry Areas
- D. Avoiding Dark, Unusable Spaces
- E. Pedestrian Weather Protection
- F. Operable Storefront Windows
- G. Retail Use and Open Space at Sidewalk Level
- H. Pedestrian Amenities and Street Furniture
- I. Bus Waiting Facilities in Buildings
- J. Residential Entries

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

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- A. Avoid Recesses that are not Defensible
- B. Enhance and Protect Alley

**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.

**Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:**

- C. Preferred Pedestrian Lighting
- D. Pedestrian lighting considerations

**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-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.

Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:

- A. Uniform Street Tree Plantings
- B. Landscape Maintenance and Irrigation
- C. Street-level Landscaping
- D. Visible Landscaping
- E. Art in the Pedestrian Environment

- 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.

Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:

- A. Green Factor Focus on Ground-level Plantings
- B. Recommended Landscape Enhancements
- C. Evergreen Plantings
- D. Quality Landscaping Materials
- E. Recommended Plants
- F. Planted Containers

- 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.

Queen Anne Supplemental Guidance:

- A. Creative Usable Spaces

#### **INITIAL RECOMMENDATION DESIGN GUIDANCE:**

1. **General Board Comments.**

The Board expressed their collective opinion that the design team responded well to their comments from the previous EDG meeting. A vast improvement at the corner of Broad Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue was noted. One major obstacle preventing a full evaluation of the proposal's addition to the neighborhood was the noticeable lack of improvements

occurring in the right-of-way. The applicant could not verify required street improvements including landscaping at the time of the meeting.

## 2. Parking and Access.

The Board supported the direction to provide vehicle access from the alley to open up uninterrupted pedestrian activity along the site's street frontages; John Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Broad Street (A-8, A-9).

## 3. Massing

The design featured two building forms with a "gasket" separating the north segment from the south. Additional refinement in materials, colors, etc. is needed to strengthen the building's form and design composition in its relationship to adjacent structures at the southeast corner of the Uptown Urban Center. The Board is in favor of the design direction (A-1, A-2, A-10, C-1 & C-2).

## 4. Facade

The Board appreciated the design development of the "north" building better than the "south" building. But refinements are still needed:

- a. Remove reference in this building's façade treatment to the "south" building's Mondrian-esque multicolor panel scheme. It's not necessary as a device to "tie in" the two building masses (other elements do that and the reference should be slight anyway), and it appears messy. This also applies to the base ("jumping kickplates"), at the "faux window" storefront areas and in the eroded corner treatment (A-1, C-2, C-4, & D-11).
- b. In general, where possible, the entire façade should be simplified (C-1, C-2, & C-4).
- c. In addition to removing the multicolor panels from the eroded corner element, the introduction of a more playful color or different material might pull off or finesse this element even more was suggested, especially given the applicant's intention of illuminating this feature at night (A-10, C-1, C-2, & C-4).

## 5. Street Level Façade

The Board indicated the pedestrian realm along John Street needed a stronger "base" element. This can be accomplished by:

- a. Expressing a stronger "cap" to the ground floor through materials, colors, and use of overhead weather protection/canopies (A-1, A-2, C-1, C-2, C-4, D-1 & D-12).
- b. The resulting ground-floor base should be "calmer" and simpler in its design. The multicolor metal panel treatment should be left for the body of the building mass, but not reintroduced into the base element. For example, the "jumping kickplates" below the storefront system should be eliminated, in favor of a more standard, even, calmer treatment (C-1, C-2, C-3, D-1 & E-1).



- c. One suggestion was to set back the ground-floor a foot or two to enhance the sense of base (A-1, A-2, C-1, & D-1).
  - d. Similarly to “c” another recommendation was to extend the entry “wedge” sequence from the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and John to the entryway, creating a graduated entry setback along 5<sup>th</sup> Ave (A-1, A-2, A-4, A-10, C-4, D-1).
  - e. The John Street elevation should reconsider faux windows where no view of internal activity is possible or feasible. Either rediscover opportunities for actual views into the building at those locations or design creative, artistic or otherwise pedestrian-friendly treatments in those locations to provide the façade interest (even if that requires a minor design departure, which the Board would support) (A-1, A-2, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, & D-1).
6. The entries on both 5<sup>th</sup> and Broad are good, but could be further enhanced as follows:
- a. Use of more human-scaled façade materials. There was concern that continued use of the large metal panels at the entry sequence was not appropriate. Metal could still be used, if desired, but perhaps in smaller units. Or other, smaller-unit, human-scaled materials could be employed to enhance the entry experience (A-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, D-1 & D-12).
  - b. Potentially the light-colored “gasket” tower that joins the two building masses could potentially be continued aesthetically (either via use of the same materials, colors, etc.) into the entry sequence area in both locations (C-2, C-3, C-4, D-1 & D-10).
  - c. Develop and detail streetscape elements experienced by pedestrians demonstrating desirable spatial characteristics in the right-of-way (A-2, D-1, E-1 & E-2).

## 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 Recommendation meeting, three departures were identified and requested:

- 1. Blank Façade Limits (23.48.018.B.3):** The Code requires blank facades shall be limited to segments of 30 feet in width. The applicant proposes at the suggestion of the Board, to remove street-level faux windows lacking active uses of any visual interest behind the glass.
- 2. Loading Berth requirements and Space Quantity (23.54.035.C.2):** The Code requires each loading for low- and medium uses, shall be a minimum of 35 feet in length, except as provided in subsection 23.54.035.C.2.c. The applicant proposes two 25 feet loading stalls running parallel to the alley with encroach in alley.

- 3. Parking Space Standards (23.54.030.B.2.c):** The Code requires when 20 or more parking spaces are provided, a minimum of 35% of the parking spaces shall be striped for small vehicles. The minimum required size for small vehicles shall also be the maximum size. A maximum of 65% of the parking spaces may be striped for small vehicles. A minimum of 35% of the spaces shall be striped for large vehicles. The applicant proposes to provide 21% spaces for large vehicles.

The Board supported all three Design Review departures requests.

## **BOARD DIRECTION**

**At the conclusion of the Recommendation meeting, the Board recommended the project should return to the Board for an additional Recommendation meeting**

## **RECOMMENDATION MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Included in the architect's response to the Board's recommendation are the following:

- Outcomes from SDOT's 30% SIP meeting.
- Fully evolved landscape plan.
- Detailed lighting plan.
- Materials details.
- Enlarged renderings of building's entries and the 5<sup>th</sup> and Board Street.
- Pedestrian realm street experience, especially at the corner of Broad Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.