



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

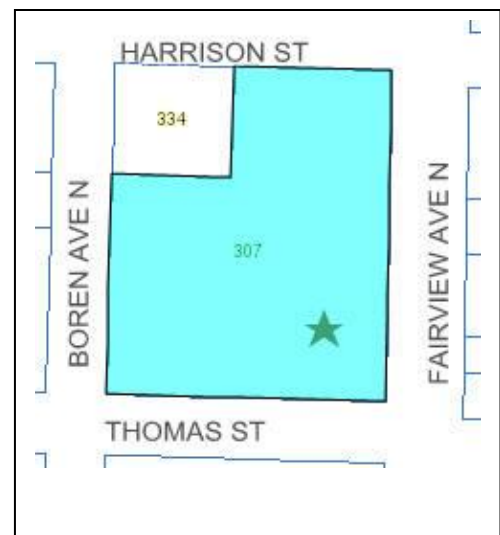
Project Number: 3012675  
Address: 307 Fairview Ave N  
Applicant: Kristin Jensen  
Date of Meeting: Wednesday, November 16, 2011  
Board Members Present: David Delfs (Chair)  
Mindy Black  
Jacob Connell  
Jill Kurfirst  
Lipika Mukerji  
DPD Staff Present: Lisa Rutzick

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Industrial Commercial (IC-65)

Nearby Zones: North: IC-65  
South: IC-85  
East: IC-65  
West: IC-65

Lot Area: 109,129 square feet



Current Development: Troy Laundry Building (a designated historic landmark) and Boren Investment Building (not a designated historic landmark, but listed in the Department of Neighborhoods Historical Sites Inventory)

Access: Several curb cuts to surface and structured parking

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character: Nearby development includes a wide range of uses including older 1-3 story residential and industrial/commercial uses, newer multi-story office and residential uses, and historic landmarks. Recreational opportunities include Lake Union a few blocks to the north and Cascade Playground one block to the west. The area offers frequent transit service, including the Streetcar two blocks to the west and several nearby bus routes.

ECAs: None

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: November 16, 2011

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number 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).

or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Address: Public Resource Center**  
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
Seattle, WA 98124

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

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for two office buildings approximately 12 stories each with below grade and structured parking below the entire site. The buildings would contain retail at street level with technology office space above. The total proposal includes approximately 770,000 square feet of office and retail space with 1100 parking stalls below.

The proposed development would include Landmarks Board review of any proposed modifications to the designated landmark portions of the Troy Laundry Building. A summary of the meetings with the Landmarks Board to date is included in the EDG packet.

The proposal would not meet current zoning on the site. The City has begun work on zoning changes in this area to allow up to 160' tall structures. The zoning would need to be modified prior to MUP issuance, or the applicant may submit an application to rezone the site.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 7 members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- The EDG presentation lacked discussion of neighborhood context; 3-D modeling is needed in comparison with existing development within 3-4 blocks
- The Floor Area Ratio of 7 is a limit, not a guarantee
- Height bulk and scale (Guideline B-1) is particularly important in providing a transition from 160' to IC-65 and IC-85
- Concerns with the proposed garage exits in relation to traffic patterns; internal garage queuing may be needed
- Presentation should have better explained the development standards of the zone
- Unclear if departures are the same for all the alternatives
- Solar studies are unclear regarding building overhangs or deck shadows

## **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.

### **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:**

1. The Board was generally supportive of the preferred massing scheme (Alternative 3), with the guidance listed below.
2. Massing and Context. The applicant should provide additional information and a response to the following guidance at the next EDG meeting:
  - a. Clarify the proposed solar/shadow impacts, especially at the NE corner and on the site across the street to the north. Indicate how the proposed design will minimize those impacts. Arrange the massing to retain sun during times of high usage (ex. Lunch time for office uses).
  - b. Clarify massing impacts, especially to the northeast.
  - c. Erode the massing at the northeast corner to reduce impacts.
  - d. Hold the tower away from the historic buildings.
  - e. Provide information indicating how the proposed massing will respond to the Fairview Ave N street edge.
  - f. Provide information indicating how the proposed design will step down with topography at the north edge.
  - g. Provide conceptual information about how the existing historic materials and the proposed new materials will be handled in a cohesive site design.
  - h. Due to the size of the site and complexity of the massing, provide a physical model to demonstrate the proposed massing in relationship to the existing and adjacent structures.
  - i. Provide several pedestrian level perspective graphics from various points at the edges and interior of the site.
  - j. The Board was supportive of the use of 304 Boren and the applicant's acknowledgement of historic buildings. The Board advised the applicant to seek

expertise from an adaptive reuse expert to adequately integrate the landmarks with the proposed structures.

3. The Board indicated that the massing should shift to the southwest on the site, in order to reduce shadow and bulk and scale impacts to Fairview Ave N and to the northeast.
4. Street Level Development. The applicant should provide additional information and a response to the following guidance at the next EDG meeting:
  - a. Areas of proposed transparency and solid materials
  - b. Building entries' design and details
  - c. Pedestrian circulation patterns
  - d. Indicate uses at street level (office entry, lobby, retail, garage entry, etc.).
  - e. Clarify areas that are intended for the public (the Troy Laundry building should clearly be designed to be open to the public).
  - f. Conceptually indicate how the design would respond to the Green Street designation at Thomas St. This street frontage should include a high degree of transparency.
5. The applicant should provide information about any proposed phased construction, in order to understand how portions of the site may relate to the Guidelines between phases of development.
  - a. The Board noted that construction of the south tower first would be the best option for scale transition and solar impacts.
  - b. The applicant should demonstrate how the second building site would be treated in the lag between phases of construction.
6. Provide graphics indicating the conceptual design of the courtyard.
  - a. Indicate how the courtyard would be activated.
  - b. Indicate how the courtyard activity would be linked to activity at the sidewalks.
  - c. Indicate how the courtyard would be visually linked with other areas of the site and through the site.
  - d. Transparency should wrap the southwest corner into the courtyard.

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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-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.

**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-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.

**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.

**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.

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

**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.

**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-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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

**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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

Landscaping should be designed to take advantage of views to waterfront and downtown Seattle.

## **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. Primary Building Entrances (23.50.051.F):** The Code requires primary building entries shall be no more than 3’ above or below sidewalk grade. The applicant proposes varied building entry elevations in response to the sloping site topography.

The Board was supportive of this departure, but noted that access to the courtyard needs to be designed to be clearly open and accessible to the public.

- 2. Transparency (23.50.051.G):** The Code requires a minimum of 30% transparency for street-level facades. This amount is reduced to 22% if the slope of the street frontage exceeds 7.5%. The applicant proposes less than the required transparency for the landmarks on site. The applicant notes that Boren Ave N is a slope of 7.3%.

The Board indicated that they could be supportive of transparency departures to retain the landmarks, but not for proposed new street-level facades.

- 3. Loading Berths (23.50.035):** The Code requires 7 loading berths for low-demand office use in a development of the proposed size. The applicant proposes less than the required number of loading berths, since the business needs will be unlikely to require this many loading berths.

The Board indicated that they could be supportive of this departure, but the loading berths should be provided in consideration of a variety of uses for the life of the building. The Board was supportive of the proposed loading location on Harrison St. Any loading should be located away from bus stops.

## **BOARD DIRECTION**

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