



City of Seattle

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



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012729

Address: 133 14th Avenue East

Applicant: Jeff Bates, Weber Thompson Architects

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, December 07, 2011

Board Members Present: Evan Bourquard (Chair)
Dawn Bushnaq
Lisa Picard
Wolf Saar
Chip Wall

Board Members Absent: None

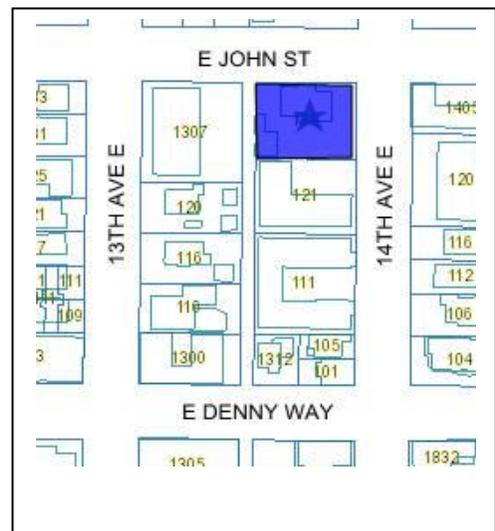
DPD Staff Present: Lisa Rutzick

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC2-40

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2-40
(South) LR3
(East) LR3
(West) LR3

Lot Area: 10,814 sq. ft.



Current Development: Single family residence converted to commercial use.

Access: From the alley to the west.

Surrounding Development: Structures ranging from two to five stories with a mix of single and multifamily buildings, commercial medical uses.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: Varied uses including residential, commercial and institutional with a mix of architectural styles. A historic Anhalt apartment building is across the street to the east. To the northeast is a large Safeway grocery store and surface parking lot. Two sites to the south a traditional garden court residential complex. Across John Street to the north is another single family structure that has been converted to commercial uses.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a mixed use building with approximately 46 residential units located above ground level live/work units. All of the parking (approximately 23 stalls) for the proposed development is to be provided in a below grade garage that is accessed from the alley.

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| EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: December 7, 2011 |
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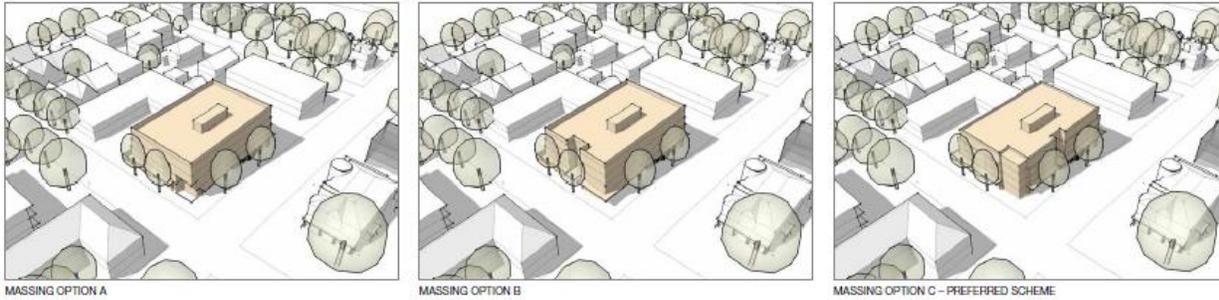
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include access from the alley to the below grade garage.

The first scheme (Option A) showed a rectangular building mass with articulation of the corner base.

The second scheme (Option B) showed a rectangular massing with a vertical notch on the east side facing 14th Avenue and a ground level entry courtyard.

The third and preferred scheme (Option C) showed a rectangular massing with corner articulation and a vertical notch along the John Street facade.



PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Encouraged preservation or salvaging of building materials from the existing building. Would also like to see the character of the existing building kept intact.
- Complained of insufficient meeting notice. Concerned that true commercial space should be included along John Street that will support the walkability of the neighborhood. Noted that the corner location of the proposed development is a great opportunity. Open space at the rooftop should be provided to take advantage of the views. Concerned that the proposed concepts do not appear appropriate to this urban corner.
- Objected to the lack of information regarding the historic nature of the existing building. Felt that the proposed design concept is too timid and should be more dramatic and inventive. Suggested that the residential entry be located on 14th, rather than John Street given the more residential character of 14th Avenue.

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

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Retain or increase the width of sidewalks.
- Provide street trees with tree grates or in planter strips, using appropriate species to provide summer shade, winter light, and year-round visual interest.
- Vehicle entrances to buildings should not dominate the streetscape.
- Orient townhouse structures to provide pedestrian entrances to the sidewalk.

- For buildings that span a block and “front” on two streets, each street frontage should receive individual and detailed site planning and architectural design treatments to complement the established streetscape character.
- New development in commercial zones should be sensitive to neighboring residential zones. Examples include lots on Broadway that extend to streets with residential character, such as Nagle Place or 10th or Harvard Avenues East. While a design with a commercial character is appropriate along Broadway, compatibility with residential character should be emphasized along the other streets.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stressed their concern with the quality of the streetscape and the proposed live/work units. The Board expressed specific apprehension regarding the ability of live/work units and uses to engage with pedestrian activity at street level. The design of the storefront window system, transparency, overhead weather protection, wider sidewalks and streetscape design will all be critical elements for their next review. The Board specified that the ground level units should have the appearance of the full 13 feet (from floor to ceiling) height. The Board also noted that at least the full commercial depth should be provided to maximize the flexibility of future uses and ability for adequate space for commercial and residential uses to co-exist within a single unit.

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the recessed live/work entries appeared too residential and should be designed to communicate a more commercial character. The Board suggested that the building face instead be pushed back, rather than simply the entryways. The presentation packet includes images of this architectural direction. See A-4.

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

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Provide for sidewalk retail opportunities and connections by allowing for the opening of the storefront to the street and displaying goods to the pedestrian.
- Provide for outdoor eating and drinking opportunities on the sidewalk by allowing for the opening the restaurant or café windows to the sidewalk and installing outdoor seating while maintaining pedestrian flow.
- Install clear glass windows along the sidewalk to provide visual access into the retail or dining activities that occur inside. Do not block views into the interior spaces with the backs of shelving units or with posters.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board did not support the proposed units located seven feet above sidewalk and noted that such a configuration creates both blank wall conditions and does not adequately engage with and enhance the pedestrian environment. The Board suggested that the building face be set back or the floor slabs be stepped so that the entries are at grade.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the proximity to the apartment building to the south and recommended against any encroachment into the side setback on this edge of the site. The privacy of the neighboring residential units should be considered in the fenestration design of the proposed 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.

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Incorporate residential entries and special landscaping into corner lots by setting the structure back from the property lines.
- Provide for a prominent retail corner entry.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the corner location is important and that the preferred alternative provides a solid corner expression. The transition between the building mass and the ground level design and proposed live/work uses will be a crucial issue to review at the next meeting. How the corner expression relates to the rest of building body flanking the corner is also essential. The Board also noted that the proposed development should take advantage of the topographical changes of the site's location and views.

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| B. Height, Bulk and Scale |
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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.

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Break up building mass by incorporating different façade treatments to give the impression of multiple, small-scale buildings, in keeping with the established development pattern.
- Consider existing views to downtown Seattle, the Space Needle, Elliott Bay and the Olympic Mountains, and incorporate site and building design features that may help to preserve those views from public rights-of-way.
- Design new buildings to maximize the amount of sunshine on adjacent sidewalks throughout the year.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that the vertical modulation shown in the preferred option, along with high quality materials and a strong architectural design concept and the full required setback along the south side of the site would provide a sensitive transition to the zone edge. The Board was supportive of the building massing above the ground level and encouraged interesting roof lines, reminiscent of the varied roof lines found in the neighborhood context. The Board was pleased with the step back of the top floor, which give an appropriate transition between the scale of this building and the environs.

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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that all four sides of the sites have different characters and context to respond to. The west façade will be very visible from John Street and should be designed not as a back side to the building, but receive the same architectural treatment as the other three sides. The south façade should respect and be sensitive to the abutting neighbors and lower zone edge. The 14th Avenue façade (east elevation) is a street edge with a residential character while the John Street (north elevation) side is a strong commercial thoroughfare. The Board also noted the greater neighborhood context and the number of historic buildings that are considered a strong component of the Capitol Hill character. The Board agreed that reference to this character should be apparent in this building.

- 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.**

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Incorporate signage that is consistent with the existing or intended character of the building and the neighborhood.
- Solid canopies or fabric awnings over the sidewalk are preferred.
- Avoid using vinyl awnings that also serve as big, illuminated signs.
- Use materials and design that is compatible with the structures in the vicinity if those represent the desired neighborhood character.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that despite the varied influence on all sides of the site, the overall architectural concept should be cohesive and consistently applied on all elevations.

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.

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Use wood shingles or board and batten siding on residential structures.
- Avoid wood or metal siding materials on commercial structures.
- Provide operable windows, especially on storefronts.
- Use materials that are consistent with the existing or intended neighborhood character, including brick, cast stone, architectural stone, terracotta details, and concrete that incorporates texture and color.
- Consider each building as a high-quality, long-term addition to the neighborhood; exterior design and materials should exhibit permanence and quality appropriate to the Capitol Hill neighborhood.
- The use of applied foam ornamentation and EIFS (Exterior Insulation & Finish System) is discouraged, especially on ground level locations.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that they look forward to reviewing a well-considered, high quality material palette 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.

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Provide entryways that link the building to the surrounding landscape.
- Create open spaces at street level that link to the open space of the sidewalk.

- Building entrances should emphasize pedestrian ingress and egress as opposed to accommodating vehicles.
- Minimize the number of residential entrances on commercial streets where non-residential uses are required. Where residential entries and lobbies on commercial streets are unavoidable, minimize their impact to the retail vitality commercial streetscape.

See D-12.

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

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- Consider: pedestrian-scale lighting, but prevent light spillover onto adjacent properties; architectural lighting to complement the architecture of the structure; transparent windows allowing views into and out of the structure—thus incorporating the “eyes on the street” design approach’
- Provide a clear distinction between pedestrian traffic areas and commercial traffic areas through the use of different paving materials or colors, landscaping, etc.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that exterior lighting, clear sight lines and transparency at ground level should be considered for enhancing site and pedestrian safety and should be presented at the next meeting.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that they look forward to reviewing the details of commercial signage.

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 noted that they look forward to reviewing the details of the ground level exterior lighting plan.

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.

See A-3 and A-4.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed at length the quality the entryways to the main building entrance and the entrances to the individual live/work entrances. The Board was particularly concerned with the live/work entries and noted that these units needs to be congruent with the sidewalk level and not far above the sidewalk as shown. The Board was concerned with the proposed stoops: the recessed stoops are unlikely to be successful as viable commercial spaces and should be avoided. The grade on John Street is a challenge and the Board recommended a stepped floor plate to address the sidewalk more directly. The alternative would be to step back the building face from the sidewalk, allowing for space that the live/work units can better engage with street and pedestrian activity.

E. Landscaping

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board expressed a strong interest in the development of the ground level streetscape and right-of-way that includes a visually interesting and street-activating environment with landscape and hardscape features.

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. Side and Rear Setbacks (SMC 23.47A.014):** The Code requires a 15 feet setback for portions of the structure between 13 feet and 40 feet and an additional two feet for every ten feet above 40 feet. The applicant proposes to encroach into the required setbacks along the south and west sides at the corner.

The Board indicated that they would not be favorable towards such a departure and the full setback should be provided on this zone edge.

- 2. Commercial Depth (SMC 23.47A.010.B.3):** The Code requires an average depth of 30 feet with a minimum of 15 feet. The applicant proposes to provide less than the required depth.

The Board indicated that they would not be favorably inclined towards such a departure due to their concern that the flexibility and viability of the future use of the live/work units be maximized.

- 3. Floor to Floor Height (SMC 23.47A.010):** The Code requires a 13 foot floor-to-floor height at ground level. The applicant proposes [Click here to enter text.](#)

The Board indicated they would not support such a departure and that the full height should be provided at a minimum at street level to engage and enhance the pedestrian streetscape.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended that two more meetings are likely to be needed and the project could move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting. If this is selected, then the project should plan on having two Recommendation phase meetings. The other alternative is that the project could return for a Second EDG meeting and then a Recommendation meeting.