



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

Project Number: 3012878

Address: 315 1st Avenue North

Applicant: Brian Runberg

Date of Meeting: March 21, 2012

Board Members Present: David Delfs (Chair)
Mindy Black
Jacob Connell
Jill Kurfirst
Lipika Mukerji
Bo Zhang

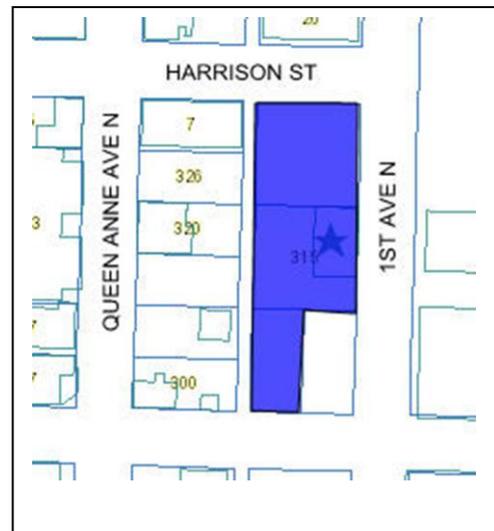
DPD Staff Present: Shelley Bolser

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three with a 65' height limit (NC3-65)

Nearby Zones: North: NC3-65
South: NC3-65
East: NC3-85
West: NC3-65

Lot Area: A site occupying most of a ½ block, measuring 36,000 square feet, bordered by Harrison St, 1st Ave N, Thomas St, and an alley. The site slopes slightly, with approximately 10' of grade change from north down to south.



Current Development: A one-story, commercial structure built in 1970 occupies the site. Surface parking lots surround this structure and occupy most of the site.

Access: Existing curb cuts and alley access.

The site is located in the Uptown Urban Center. This neighborhood includes multifamily housing, community services, restaurants, entertainment and shopping. Directly adjacent to the east side of the site is Key Arena and Seattle Center. East of the site on 1st Avenue North there are residential and retail buildings. Within walking distance from the site there are banks, grocery stores, schools, medical offices, book stores, movie theaters, restaurants, and the Seattle Center. Natural amenities in the area include Lake Union, the park like grounds of the Seattle Center, Kinnear Park, Myrtle Edwards Park and the Olympic Sculpture garden.

Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character: Metro bus routes provide service with stops close to the site providing links to the central downtown core and other areas. 1st Ave N and Queen Anne Ave N are planned for Rapid Ride lines starting in Fall 2012. First Avenue North is designated as a principal arterial and a major transit street. Harrison Street and Thomas Street have no special classifications.

Harrison Street is more residential in character, with older brick multi-family buildings and mature street trees. Thomas Street has more surface parking lots, few street trees, views to Elliott Bay to the west, and the pedestrian bridge across Elliott Ave. 1st Ave character is dominated by Key Arena, monumental scale, and large plazas. The overall area is characterized by strong street walls and some surface parking lots. Ground floor uses in the area are both residential and commercial. Newer mixed use buildings in the area are six to seven stories tall.

ECAs: No mapped Environmentally Critical Areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Applicant proposes a six story mixed use building with retail, live-work, and lobby areas at grade and apartments above. Two levels of below grade parking are proposed, with two access points from the alley. 183 apartments, 6 live-work units, 4,275 square feet of retail space, and 250 parking spaces are proposed. The existing commercial building will be demolished.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3012878) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The EDG packet is also available to view in the 3012848 EDG 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

The applicant noted the intent to do a modern building with Googie expression, playing on the Century 21 plan and architectural styles of the mid-century modern designs at Seattle Center and nearby. The concepts of a “folding plane” and a “tectonic expression” were presented, with the elements expressing form and movement in north-south directions. The ‘sliding element’ between the east and west forms would be very transparent, in order to strengthen the design concept.

The applicant noted that the developer hopes to obtain the SE corner lot. If they succeed, any of the options shown could be easily adapted to occupy the entire ½ block.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 12 members of the public affixed their names to the Early Design Review meeting sign-in sheet. Those who spoke raised the following issues:

- Concern with sufficient alley circulation, especially at the north garage entry that will be used for event parking.
- More commercial space is needed in the proposed development, in order to create a lively street experience at night.
- The mature street trees at this site should be retained.
- The modern expression is exciting and interesting – the applicant should really play up the forms, angles, curves, and colors.
- Question about the level of affordability of units – the applicant responded they will be market rate rentals
- Support for option A or B because of the open space at the alley, across from the residential buildings.
- Support for option C if it were possible to place plaza space at grade to respond to the Key Arena plaza and high pedestrian traffic.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

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

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown new developments should, to the extent possible, be sited to further contribute to the neighborhood's pedestrian character.

Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas encourage outdoor dining areas utilizing sidewalks and areas adjacent to sidewalks. Outdoor dining is especially encouraged for sites on block faces with southern exposure.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted the very high volumes of pedestrian traffic that flood 1st Avenue and Harrison Street when there are events at Key Arena. Sufficient sidewalk width on those streets is crucial, given this context. The Board noted that a combination of Option A and B may be the best massing option, since it would allow courtyard space at the alley to provide light and air for adjacent residents, and it would also provide some additional open space for pedestrians at the northeast corner.

The Board strongly supported the modern "Googie" architectural concepts, and noted that the glassy transparent base should include operable garage door storefronts or other operable systems. The Board directed the applicant to design the retail/restaurant spaces to create opportunities for interacting with the sidewalk activity. Operable storefronts are one way to create flexible spaces and provide porous storefronts at the street level.

The Board acknowledged that the applicant has proposed additional setbacks at the sidewalk in response to high pedestrian traffic, and advised the applicant to further enhance that design intent.

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

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, developments that respond outward to the public realm are preferred.

- **Site outdoor spaces in accordance with the location and scale of adjacent streets, buildings, and uses. For example, an on-site plaza should not unduly interrupt the retail continuity of a street.**
- **Locate plazas intended for public use at or near grade to promote both a physical and visual connection to the street. Special paving materials, landscaping, and other elements can be used to provide a clear definition between the public and private realms.**
- **Define outdoor spaces through a combination of building and landscaping, and discourage oversized spaces that lack containment.**

Board Guidance reflects the comments in response to Guideline A-1.

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:

Corner Lots in Uptown

Generally, buildings within Uptown should meet the corner and not be set back. Building designs and treatments as well as any open space areas should address the corner and promote activity. Corner entrances are strongly encouraged, where feasible.

Board Guidance reflects the comments in response to Guideline A-1.

C. Architectural Elements 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.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown buildings and landscaping should strive to create projects with an overall neat and cohesive appearance.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was very excited about the possibilities of the Googie mid-century modern design concept. The Board was supportive of the concept of a mass floating above a transparent base. The Board noted that the construction type (wood over concrete) may make some of the cantilever concepts more difficult to achieve. The Board suggested that the “folding plane” concept may work better with the construction type, but there was support for either concept.

The Board directed the applicant to play up the design concept to the maximum amount possible. The design should strongly express the building forms, include a two-story transparent base expression, include interesting colors, and the south end of the building should appear to ‘fly’ in response to the grade drop at that end of the site (cantilever where possible to express this concept).

The Board suggested a design response to nearby existing datum lines, but noted that very strong expression of the modern design concept is more important than referencing datum lines.

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.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown entries should be designed to be pedestrian friendly (via position, scale, architectural detailing, and materials) and should be clearly discernible to the pedestrian.

Throughout Uptown special attention to the pedestrian experience and street right-of-way should be given along pedestrian corridors as identified on the map (pg. VI).

Throughout Uptown the use of a pedestrian-scaled streetlamp within all character areas is encouraged. In addition, streetscape features such as street clocks and benches are encouraged in Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas.

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas, encourage Seattle Center campus redevelopment along its boundaries to either open vistas from Uptown into Seattle Center or to provide activation for the street.

Including amenities for transit riders in a building's design rather than the traditional use of curbside bus shelters generates a safer and more active street. In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas the elimination of curbside bus shelters is encouraged in retail areas as appropriate.

Board Guidance reflects the comments in response to Guideline A-1.

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

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown ensure alleys are designed to be clean, maintained spaces. Recessed areas for recyclables and disposables should be provided.

In Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas encourage alleys to be activated with subordinate retail spaces at the mouth of the alley. Encourage retail to “turn the corner” at alley entrances.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board directed the applicant to erode the building and providing additional alley circulation area near the north end of the site, in response to the proposed event parking entry and existing buildings across the alley. These buildings are unlikely to be demolished, and the condominium building has units facing the alley and a garage entry near the proposed event parking entry.

The Board also directed the applicant to continue the façade treatment into the alley, preferably past the garage entries. Fenestration or green screens may be appropriate treatment at the alley façade in these areas.

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.

Board Guidance reflects the comments in response to Guideline A-1.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No proposed departures were identified at the Early Design Guidance meeting.

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.