



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA (WEST) DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012878

Address: 315 1st Avenue North

Applicant: Brian Runberg, Runberg Architects for SRM Development

Date of Meeting: February 27, 2013

Board Members Present: Mindy Black (Acting Chair)
Magdalena Hogness
Jill Kurfirst

Board Members Absent: Jacob Connell
David Delfs
Lipika Mukerji

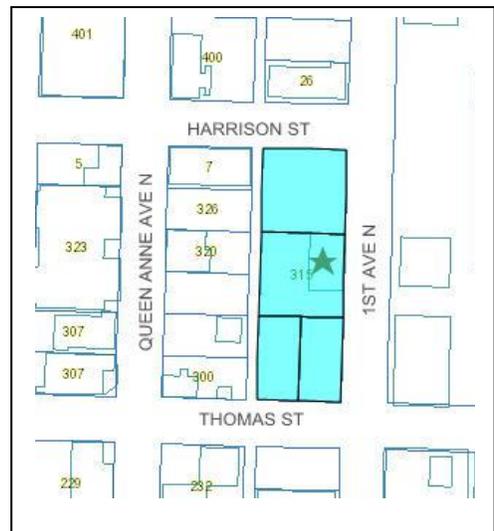
DPD Staff Present: Shelley Bolser

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 the entire half block most of a ½ block, measuring 43,200 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, Kinneer 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.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Applicant proposes a six story mixed use building with retail, live-work, and lobby areas at grade and apartments above. 212 residential units, 12,018 square feet of retail space, and 238 parking spaces are proposed below grade, accessed from two points in the alley. 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 3012878 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.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: February 27, 2013

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The meeting packet includes materials presented at the Recommendation 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 meeting packet is also available to view in the 3012878 EDG file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

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The site and proposed development size has been expanded since EDG, to include all the parcels on the east half of this block. At the EDG meeting, the proposal didn't include the southeast parcel of this block, but the Board gave guidance in anticipation of the possible addition of this parcel.

The applicant noted that the proposal retains all the existing street trees and adds 5 street trees. The applicant presented a materials and colors board and explained that the cementitious panels will be Swiss Pearl, Natura, or similar high quality.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments and questions were raised at the Recommendation meeting:

- Supportive of the proposed Google design.
- The retail spaces should include deeper overhead weather protection than shown at the Recommendation meeting, especially on 1st Ave N.
- The second phase of the Lake to Bay trail will include wayfinding kiosks, and there may be a good opportunity for a kiosk at this site. The location of the Lake to Bay trail will temporarily run along the north side of this site. The permanent trail location will likely be along the south side of this site.
- The south façade is the most valuable retail exposure due to natural light; the design of the retail use at this façade should be optimized for indoor/outdoor use.

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 (MARCH 21, 2012):

1. **Street Level:** (A-1, A-2, A-10, C-2, D-1)
 - a. 1st Ave W and W. Harrison Street need wide sidewalks and open space, due to very high levels of pedestrian activity at this intersection and location across the street from Key Arena and Seattle Center events.
 - b. Continue developing the intent of wider sidewalks at all street frontages.
2. **Massing Options:** (A-1, A-2, A-10, C-2, D-1)
 - a. A combination of Option A and B may be the best massing option in response to adjacent residents across the alley, and the need for pedestrian open space at the northeast corner. The location of open space should provide light and air for adjacent residents across the alley, as well as relief for pedestrians at the northeast corner.
3. **Architectural Concept:** (A-1, A-2, A-10, C-2, D-11)
 - a. The Board strongly supported the modern “Googie” architectural concepts, and the idea of a mass floating above a transparent base.
 - i. The Board directed the applicant to play up the design concept to the maximum amount possible.
 - ii. 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 noted that the construction type (wood over concrete) may make some of the cantilever concepts more difficult to achieve.
 - iii. The Board suggested that the “folding plane” concept may work better with the construction type, but there was support for either concept.
 - iv. 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.
 - b. The glassy transparent base should include operable garage door storefronts or other operable systems.
 - c. Design the retail/restaurant spaces to create opportunities for interacting with the sidewalk activity, with porosity such as operable storefronts.
4. **Alley facade:** (A-1, C-2, D-8)
 - a. Residential units across the alley have their primary windows on the alley façade. Therefore, the alley should be designed to provide human scale, and light and air.

- b. Erode the building and providing additional alley circulation area near the north end of the site, in response to the proposed event parking entry as well as the existing buildings across the alley with residents that have their primary windows facing the alley.
- c. 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.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS (FEBRUARY 27, 2013):

1. Street Level:

- a. As the Lake to Bay trail plan develops (signage, kiosks, etc.), the applicant should closely coordinate with SDOT to integrate these amenities at this site. (A-1, A-2)
- b. The southeast corner retail is well-sited in response to the southern exposure and provides sufficient overhead weather protection. (A-1, A-2, A-10, D-1)
- c. The 1st Ave N. façade includes an area near the southeast corner where the building overhang serves as overhead weather protection but is only 4.5' deep and located 20' above the sidewalk area. The height and depth of this area will not provide adequate overhead weather protection, human scale, or serve to identify the retail entries.
 - i. The Board recommended a condition to provide canopies along the southern portion of the east façade. At a minimum, canopies should be provided at the retail entries. The canopies should be designed to provide functional weather protection and entry identification. The canopies should be consistent with the overall building design (i.e. transparent glass as opposed to c-channel that visually interrupts the transparent base). (A-1, C-2, D-1)
- d. The Board noted that the pedestrian spaces at the corners are sufficiently sized and well-designed, in response to EDG. (A-1, A-2, D-1)

2. Architectural Concept:

- a. The Board noted that if SDOT doesn't approve or requires a term permits for the structural building overhangs (the angled fins), then the proposed design could be modified and remain within the scope of the approved design. Modifications necessary to respond to SDOT requirements can remain within the scope of the approved design, as long as the modifications are consistent with the following:
 - i. Maintain the appearance of the edge of the fin and parapet in the shape and proportion shown at the Recommendation. For example, revisions should not include a stepped parapet or significant reduction in the angle of the fins. (A-10, C-2)
 - ii. The building signage could be hung from the angled fin, rather than mounted on the fin. (C-2)
- b. The Board discussed the exhaust vents between windows and determined that these are well integrated into the overall design. (C-2)

- c. The Board noted the following aspects of the design concept are a critical part of the design concept and recommended approval. A change to these items may trigger additional Recommendation meetings: (C-2)
 - i. The rooftop mechanical equipment is cleanly grouped and screened. The rooftop forms are interesting and complement the overall design.
 - ii. The landscape plan is well designed and the patterned use of seasonal color enhances the overall design.
 - iii. The pattern of mullions on the storefront windows and different pattern of mullions at the entries is critical to the design concept.
 - iv. The 6" plane change between materials ("exaggerated rain screen") is an important aspect of the design concept.

3. Alley facade: (A-1, C-2, D-8)

- a. The Board appreciated the design of the alley facade, the additional setbacks for adequate circulation and planting, and the green screen.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

- 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.

- 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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure was based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet the design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure.

- 1. Structural Building Overhangs (SMC 23.53.035):** The Code allows a maximum 3'0" horizontal projection and 2'6" vertical projection at the roof for architectural features such as cornices, eaves, sills, and belt courses. The applicant proposes horizontal projections up to 7'0" beyond the property line, and vertical projections up to 3'6" to provide angled projections on the north, south, and west facades.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, A-2, A-10, and C-2 by enhancing the architectural "Google" concept through the use of angled projections from the building.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure, subject to the condition listed at the end of this report.

- 2. Nonresidential Floor to Floor Height (SMC 23.47A.):** The Code requires a minimum floor to floor height of 13'. The applicant proposes a floor to floor height of 12'2" at the north facade.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, A-2, A-10, and C-2 by expressing the architectural "Googie" concept through the use of a consistent horizontal street level to enhance the appearance of a floating upper mass.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure, subject to the condition listed at the end of this report.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated February 27, 2013, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the February 27, 2013 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the three Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures, with the following condition:

1. The proposed design shall be modified to provide canopies along the southern portion of the east façade. At a minimum, canopies should be provided at the retail entries. The canopies should be designed to provide functional weather protection and entry identification. The canopies should be consistent with the overall building design (i.e. transparent glass as opposed to c-channel that visually interrupts the transparent base). (A-1, C-2, D-1)