City of Seattle

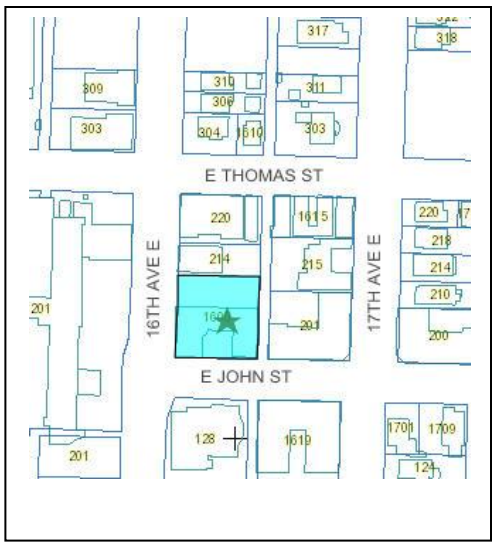
Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE
EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number:	3013051
Address:	1600 East John Street
Applicant:	Scot Carr of Public 47 Architects for Anhalt Apartment, LLC
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, April 24, 2013
Board Members Present:	Dawn Bushnaq (Chair) Dan Foltz (Substituting) Natalie Gualy Christina Orr-Cahall
Board Members Absent:	Ric Cochran (recused) Chip Wall
DPD Staff Present:	Shelley Bolser

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone:	Lowrise Residential 3 (LR3) in a Major Institution Overlay (MIO-50)
Nearby Zones:	(North) LR3 (South) LR3 (East) LR3 (West) MIO-50-LR3
Lot Area:	14,408 square feet



Current Development:	The southern two thirds of the site are occupied by an existing building, designed by Fred Anhalt. The northern third of the site is occupied by a surface parking lot and below grade storage.
Access:	Existing surface parking lot accessed from the alley and a curb cut at 16th Ave E. Proposed pedestrian access is from the street frontages, with parking access from the alley.
Surrounding Development:	An early 20th century 3-story brick residential building with alley-facing garages is located north of the site. Early 20th century residential 1-3 story buildings are located across the alley from the site and across the street to the south. An early 20th century church has been converted to offices across the street to the south. Group Health campus is located west, across 16th Ave E. The Group Health campus buildings are approximately 5 stories tall with large setbacks from 16th Ave E. This site is located near the 15th Ave E commercial area of Capitol Hill. The subject site is located approximately one block from the busier arterials of 15th Ave E and E. Thomas St. This area is characterized by more residential development, older residential buildings, older religious institution buildings converted to office or residential use, and current institution buildings.
Neighborhood Character:	The multi-family buildings are frequently brick or masonry and range from 1-4 stories tall. The single family structures to the east are predominantly 1-1/2 story wood frame structures. The buildings that are currently or have been converted from religious institutions are predominantly finished in masonry or terracotta. Group Health campus structures range in age and materials, with an institutional vernacular. Mobility in the immediate neighborhood is characterized by heavy pedestrian traffic, frequent transit service, cyclists, and vehicles.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a 4-story structure containing 15 residential units with below grade parking for 18 vehicles, accessed from the alley. The entire development site includes an existing Anhalt building that has been used as office space for Group Health. This building has been designated as a historic landmark. The Anhalt building will be retained, restored, and converted to apartment use. The Landmarks Board is separately reviewing restoration of the historic landmark, and impacts of the new development on the historic landmark. Design review purview is for the proposed new development only.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: October 3, 2012

The packet includes materials presented at the 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.

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

Mailing Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

The applicant noted that they have begun the historic landmark nomination process for the Anhalt building. The proposal is also going through review as an Energy Code Demonstration Project.

The proposed new building would be designed to contrast with the Anhalt building, consistent with the standard guidelines for additions to historic buildings. The proposed new building would include a courtyard design to reference the Anhalt building, as well as references to materials, scale, and corner treatments. The intent is for the new structure to visually recede and provide of a backdrop for the Anhalt building.

There is a large Deodora cedar tree on the property to the north. The applicant indicated this is not an exceptional tree, and they have been discussing trimming or removing the tree with the neighbor to the north.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- The modern aesthetic combined with the proposed height may not fit with the neighborhood context.
- Concerned that the proposed 4-story height doesn't match the predominant 3-story height.
- Not supportive of the front setback departure, since it will reduce light to existing adjacent residential units.
- Supportive of a rear setback departure, as long as there are additional setbacks next to the building that's located to the north.
- The bulk of the building should be located further to the east portion of the lot, in respect for the location of the residential units adjacent to the north.

- The side courtyards should be evenly distributed between the north and south sides of the proposed building, rather than the location shown mostly on the south side of the proposed building.
- Would like to see masonry and other design treatments to relate to the historic context.
- Would like to see landscaping consistent with landscaping to the north, such as the planters adjacent to 16th Ave E.
- The large Deodora cedar leans heavily into this site, and the tree shape may or may not lend itself to trimming, but it might require removal.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: April 24, 2013

The packet includes materials presented at the 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.

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

Mailing Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

Erin Doherty from the Department of Neighborhoods attended the meeting, and as part of the applicant's presentation noted that changes to the historic landmark are being reviewed by the Landmarks Board, with advice from the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). The ARC has reviewed the proposed new construction and potential impacts to the historic landmark, and supports the proposed design.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- The neighbors to the north noted that they have submitted the same comment letter to DPD as they submitted at EDG, since they believe the proposal hasn't changed since the previous design, with the exception of balcony and window locations.
- The height of the proposed building isn't in scale with the three story context on this street.
- The existing zoning that allows 4 story buildings in a 3-story context is a problem.
- The improvements to the Anhalt Building are a positive aspect of the proposal.
- The modern 4-story concept isn't consistent with the adjacent early 20th century architecture.
- The departures are problematic.

- The use of masonry is supported, as opposed to cement board.
- The proposed massing scheme is consistent with the height adopted for the neighborhood, and the courtyard is a positive aspect of the proposal.
- The neighborhood includes an eclectic collection of buildings and the proposal will be a positive addition.

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 (OCTOBER 3, 2012):

1. **Context: (A-2, B-1, C-1)**
    a. The design concept should be contemporary <u>and</u> contextual. The primary context is the entire east side of 16th Ave E for this block.
    b. The context should relate to the street pattern for this side of 16th Ave E, not just the Anhalt building.
    c. The proposed design should clearly express design cues from the 16th Ave E context.

2. **Design Concept and Scale: (A-5, A-7, B-1, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, D-8, D-12)**
    a. The Board supports the applicant's stated design goals of "compatible, not mimicking historic structures, wholeness, receding." The proposed design should achieve these goals.
    b. The pattern of balconies and long staggered windows shown on the front façade at EDG is not in keeping with the street's context. The design needs to respond to the smaller scale of 16th Ave E punched windows.
    c. The design should reference nearby datum lines and proportions. The Board's guidance recommended a 'quiet' building that relates to the rhythm of the streetscape.
    d. The Board noted it will be important to visually ground the building to respond to the 16th Ave E context, using masonry or other visually weighty, durable material.
    e. The Board noted that while the proposed height is taller because the zoning code changed, the visual height should be knitted into the fabric of the predominant 3-story context.
        i. This could be achieved by stepping back the fourth floor and providing a strongly defined cornice line between the third and fourth floors.
        ii. There may be other ways to address this transition, while still maintaining the 'wholeness' of the building and relating the design to the horizontal line of adjacent building heights.

3. **Landscaping: (A-2, E-1, E-2)**

a. The street level design should respond to the landscaping context of 16th Ave E, with landscaping and alignment that continues the pattern of 16th Ave E.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS (APRIL 24, 2013):

1. **Context and Scale: (A-5, A-7, B-1, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, D-8, D-12)**
   a. The changes to the massing and design concept are an improvement over the option shown at EDG.
   b. The simple and regular building forms relate well to the architectural context.
   c. The balconies provide an open southern façade that responds well to the adjacent landmark. The relief in the massing of the street wall also creates visual interest and enhances street level vitality.
   d. The secondary scale characteristics such as the inset bricks, window proportions, and datum lines are thoughtful references to nearby scale.
   e. Three of four Board members felt that the overall composition, response to context, height and street wall met the Design Review Guidelines. One Board member felt the proposal should be set back at the 4th floor in response to the nearby 3-story context.

2. **Gate and Entry Court:**
   a. The gate design based on the pattern of grout lines in the brick façade adds visual interest to the street level. The steel gate and fence color reflect the charcoal grey brick, which enhances the design concept.
   b. The seating is a positive aspect of the entry court.

3. **Landscaping: (A-2, E-1, E-2)**
   a. The Board noted that the landscape design is an appropriate response to EDG.

The City-wide and Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

A-2 <u>Streetscape Compatibility</u>. 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.

A-5 <u>Respect for Adjacent Sites</u>. 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.

A-7 <u>Residential Open Space</u>. Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Incorporate quasi-public open space with new residential development or redevelopment, with special focus on corner landscape treatments and courtyard entries.**
- **Create substantial courtyard-style open space that is visually accessible to the public view.**
- **Set back development where appropriate to preserve a view corridor.**
- **Set back upper floors to provide solar access to the sidewalk and/or neighboring properties.**
- **Mature street trees have a high value to the neighborhood and departures from development standards that an arborist determines would impair the health of a mature tree are discouraged.**
- **Use landscape materials that are sustainable, requiring minimal irrigation or fertilizer.**
- **Use porous paving materials to minimize stormwater run-off.**

B-1 <u>Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility</u>. 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.**

Broadway-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Help maintain and enhance the character of Broadway by designing new buildings to reflect the scale of existing buildings.**
- **Masonry and terra cotta are preferred building materials, although other materials may be used in ways that are compatible with these more traditional materials. The Broadway Market is an example of a development that blends well with its surroundings and includes a mixture of materials, including masonry.**
- **The pedestrian orientation of Broadway should be strengthened by designing to accommodate the presence or appearance of small store fronts that meet the sidewalk and where possible provide for an ample sidewalk.**

C-1 **<u>Architectural Context</u>. 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.**

C-2 **<u>Architectural Concept and Consistency</u>. 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.**

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

Capitol Hill-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Incorporate building entry treatments that are arched or framed in a manner that welcomes people and protects them from the elements and emphasizes the building's architecture.**
- **Improve and support pedestrian-orientation by using components such as: non-reflective storefront windows and transoms; pedestrian-scaled awnings; architectural detailing on the first floor; and detailing at the roof line.**

C-4 **<u>Exterior Finish Materials</u>. 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.**

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

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.**

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.**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) 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(s).

1. **Front Setback (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires a minimum 5' front setback. The applicant proposes a 0' front setback.

   This departure provides an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-2, A-5, B-1, C-1, C-2, and E-1 by allowing a front façade that reinforces the existing street wall, and by providing additional open space for light and air to the residential buildings on either side.

   The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure.

2. **Rear Setback (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires a 10' rear setback when the property abuts an alley. The applicant proposes a 0' rear setback, in order to provide additional open space in the center of the site, similar to the design strategy intention in the first departure.

   This departure provides an overall design that better meets the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-2, A-5, B-1, and C-2 by including additional open space for light and air to the residential buildings on either side.

   The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure.

3. **Maximum Façade Length (SMC 23.45.527.B.1):** The Code requires that the combined length of all facades within 15' of a lot line to not exceed 65% of the length of that lot line. The applicant proposes to allow more than 65% of the lot line as façade length, within 15' of the north side lot line. This departure is intended to provide open space that better responds to the proposed and adjacent residential units. The proposed average setback would exceed the average setback resulting from a code-complying alternative.

   This departure provides an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-2, A-5, B-1, C-1, C-2, and E-1 by allowing a front façade that reinforces the existing street wall, and by providing additional open space for light and air to the residential buildings on either side.

   The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated April 24, 2013, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the April 24, 2013 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with no conditions.