



# City of Seattle

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



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3013263

Address: 2025 Terry Avenue

Applicant: Murray Jenkins with Ankrom Moisan Architects for Cornish College of the Arts

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, July 02, 2013

Board Members Present: Gabe Grant (Chair)  
Matthew Albores  
Peter Krech (substitute)

Board Members Absent: Murphy McCullough  
Pragnesh Parikh  
Gundula Proksch

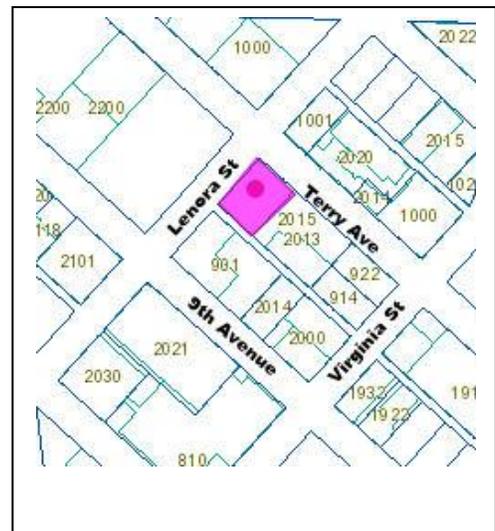
DPD Staff Present: Shelley Bolser, Senior Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC-240/290-400

Nearby Zones: (Northwest) DMC-240/290-400  
(West) DMC-240/290-400  
(Southeast) DMC-240/290-400  
(East) DRC-85/150

Lot Area: 10,792 square feet



Current Development: This site includes a surface parking lot accessed from the alley.

The site is located in the Denny Triangle area north of downtown in a pedestrian-oriented area with frequent transit service (bus and streetcar). The subject property is located on a site that slopes from Terry Ave down to the alley.

Adjacent development includes a recently constructed residential building to the south (Carbon 56), recently constructed buildings to the north (2200 Westlake), early 20th century buildings to the northeast and east (Cornish College), and a vacant mid-20th century office building across the alley to the west.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character: The area includes a combination of early 20th century commercial and residential structures, recent residential and office construction, residential high rise construction underway a block to the west (MUP 3010926), and proposed future high rise office construction (Amazon campus proposed a few blocks to the west).

Older buildings range from 1-5 stories. Recent construction ranges from 3-40 stories. Cornish College of the Arts campus occupies several buildings near the site. The existing streetscape reflects a mix of height, style, and age of construction types.

The site is located on the southwest corner of Terry Avenue and Lenora Street. Both Lenora St and Terry Ave are designated Green Streets.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a 19-story structure containing 230 rooms (422 student housing beds for Cornish College students), Institutional uses (Cornish College Student Affairs Offices, classroom areas, and Residence Life Offices), and parking for 9 vehicles below grade, accessed from the alley. The proposal is subject to design review due to the requested departures from Land Use Code development standards.

<b>EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: July 2, 2013</b>
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## DESIGN PRESENTATION

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).

The packet is also available to view in the 3013263 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](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

The applicant explained that the preferred option includes a departure from the Green Street upper level setbacks on Terry Ave, for approximately half that street frontage. The applicant explained that the design intent is to locate part of the street level and upper façade close to the east property line in response to the nearby street wall context, articulate the east façade of the building, encourage congregate residence unit floor plans with maximum daylighting, and emphasize the corner entry.

The applicant clarified that a small setback (1-2') is proposed between the southern half of the Terry Ave street frontage and the east property line, in order to provide potential for additional building articulation.

The lower two stories of the building would include campus amenity area, which the applicant clarified is a student lounge or "Cornish Living Room" for students to gather and practice. Other uses in the lower 3 stories include offices for student services, classroom areas, and a secured lobby for student residents of the building.

Bicycle parking would be located in the garage, accessed from the vehicular ramp. The vehicular ramp is proposed to be smaller than permitted by the Land Use Code, but the applicant explained that the proposal includes 9 parking spaces only for Cornish College staff. The driveway isn't expected to experience many vehicle trips, so potential bike/vehicle conflicts should be minimal.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comments included the following:

1. Concerned with proposed use resulting in a lack of human activity at the street level use.
2. Concerned with potential light spillage impacts to residents across the street, particularly from the proposed uses on the lower three floors of the building.
3. The building entries lighting should be lit with low wattage lights and shielded to avoid light spillage to nearby residences.
4. Audible alerts should not be used in the garage entry, since there are a number of nearby residences that would be disturbed by this type of system.
5. Comments included support for the vehicular entry from the alley.
6. Concerned about the nature of the population, and the number of students in the area.
7. Concerned about potential impacts to nearby residences' privacy. The proposed window locations should be designed to minimize impacts to nearby residences.

8. The nearby context is lower height and the proposed design should respond to that height.
9. Concerned about the proposed height in comparison to existing nearby buildings.
10. The alley is heavily used by vehicles and may not be safe for cyclists due to potential vehicle conflicts.
11. The building should be set back from the residential building to the south.

## 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 (JULY 2, 2013):

1. **Massing Options:** The Board was concerned about the departure from the Green Street setback. The Board noted that it's challenging to provide guidance in response to a massing option that is based on a departure with an unclear rationale. After extensive discussion, the Board determined that if the applicant proceeds with the departure request, an additional EDG meeting is required. The Second EDG meeting would be needed to consider the massing response to context, a conceptual Green Street plan, and potential rationale for the Green Street departure.
  - a. The Board noted that the Green Street Departure could result in a massing that responds to the context of nearby street walls. (A-1, B-1)
  - b. The Code compliant massing option, or a combination of the Code Compliant and the preferred option, may offer a better response to Design Review Guidelines, nearby massing context, and need for student amenity areas. (A-1, B-1, C-5)
  - c. The Board clarified that if the applicant proceeds with the departure request, the rationale for the departure should include significant design attention to the development of the Green Streets at street level. The Board would like to review a conceptual landscape plan at a Second EDG meeting. The landscape plan should indicate potential strategies for enhancing the Green Streets. (C-1, C-5, D-1, D-2)
  - d. The third floor setback should be landscaped to relate to the Green Street below. The Board noted that this area offers potential outdoor student amenity area, if it's designed and treated to minimize noise impacts to nearby residents. (D-1, D-2)
2. **Alley Entrance:** The alley entrance to the parking garage and bicycle storage should be designed to maximize cyclist and driver safety, and minimize noise impacts to nearby residents.
  - a. The narrow alley driveway should include a marked path for bikes and pedestrians, in addition to the vehicle ramp. (C-4, C-6, D-6, E-2)
  - b. An audible alarm is not supported. Vehicle activated lights in combination with mirrors can sufficiently address potential conflicts without disturbing nearby residents. (B-1, C-6, E-2)

3. **Streetscape Design and Architectural Concept:** The proposal should be designed to accommodate Cornish College student needs, minimize impacts to nearby residents, and respond to nearby architectural context.
  - a. The amenity spaces should be designed to accommodate the anticipated high volume pedestrian traffic to the “campus living room.” (C-1, D-1, D-2)
  - b. The proposed gathering areas and building entries should be designed to minimize impacts to nearby residents. (B-1, C-1, C-4, C-5, D-1, D-2, D-5)
  - c. The Lenora Street façade and Green Street should respond to the nearby architectural context at 2200 Westlake, and how the design sensitively responds to adjacent uses. (B-1, B-2, B-3, C-5)
  - d. The Board noted that this intersection will be an important identity for the Cornish campus. The proposed design should be designed to provide a sense of Cornish identity within this area, without mimicking nearby architecture. (B-1, B-3, B-4, D-3)
  - e. Lighting should be designed to provide security for Cornish students and minimize light spillage and glare to nearby residents. (D-1, D-5, D-6)
  - f. The solid waste storage area and plan for collection days should be designed to coordinate with the garage ramp and alley functions. (E-2)

### **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 Downtown Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project.

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

- A-1 Respond to the Physical Environment.** Develop an architectural concept and compose the building’s massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found beyond the immediate context of the building site.
- B-1 Respond to the Neighborhood Context** – Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.
- B-2 Create a Transition in Bulk & Scale.** Compose the massing of the building to create a transition to the height, bulk, and scale of development in neighboring or nearby less intensive zones.
- B-3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area .** Consider the predominant attributes of the immediate neighborhood and reinforce desirable siting patterns, massing arrangements, and streetscape characteristics of nearby development.

- B-4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building.** Compose the massing and organize the publicly accessible interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.
- C-1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction.** Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should be open to the general public and appear safe and welcoming.
- C-4 Reinforce Building Entries.** To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce the building’s entry.
- C-5 Encourage Overhead Weather Protection.** Encourage project applicants to provide continuous, well-lit, overhead weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.
- C-6 Develop the Alley Façade.** To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, develop portions of the alley façade in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.
- D-1 Provide Inviting & Usable Open Space.** Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.
- D-2 Enhance the Building with Landscaping.** Enhance the building and site with substantial landscaping—which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.
- D-3 Provide Elements that Define the Place.** Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable “sense of place” associated with the building.
- D-5 Provide Adequate Lighting.** To promote a sense of security for people downtown during nighttime hours, provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building facade, on the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, and on signage.
- D-6 Design for Personal Safety & Security.** Design the building and site to enhance the real and perceived feeling of personal safety and security in the immediate area.
- E-2 Integrate Parking Facilities.** Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.

## 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. Green Street Upper Facade Setbacks (SMC 23.49.058):** The Code requires a continuous upper level setback of 15' for the street frontages abutting Green Streets, for portions of the façade that are taller than 45'. Both Lenora St and Terry Ave are designated Green Streets. The applicant proposes to reduce the required setback to 0' on the southern half of the Terry Ave street frontage, and maintain the required setbacks along the north half of Terry Ave and the entirety of Lenora St. This would allow a southeast corner element to extend out to the street for the height of the tower, and provide a setback at the south edge of the site. The south setback would allow separation from the adjacent residential building and would allow for south-facing on the tower.

The Board cautiously indicated that they would continue to entertain this departure at the Recommendation stage of review, but will need to review the departure request and massing at a Second EDG meeting. At a Second EDG meeting, the applicant should demonstrate a compelling rationale for how the design better meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines, including additional development of the Green Street, shadow studies that show potential impacts to the Green Streets, and information about how the proposed massing and design results in a better Green Street design.

- 2. Loading Berth Requirements (SMC 23.54.035):** The Code requires two loading berths that measure 10'x35' with 14' vertical clearance. The applicant proposes one of the two loading berths to measure 10'x23' with 14' vertical clearance.

The Board indicated that they would continue to entertain this departure at the Recommendation stage of review, but they will need to see how the proposed loading area can sufficiently serve the building program.

- 3. Driveway Widths for Nonresidential Uses (SMC 23.54.030.D.2):** The Code requires driveway widths of 22' for 2-way traffic for non-residential uses. The applicant proposes to reduce the driveway to 11' and use annunciators to regulate traffic flow, due to the small number of proposed parking spaces.

The Board indicated that they would continue to entertain this departure at the Recommendation stage of review, depending on the response to Guidance regarding sufficient area for cyclists and pedestrians entering the garage, non-audible alert systems, and designing the solid waste staging area to respond to the narrow driveway and alley circulation needs.

## **BOARD DIRECTION**

**At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended that if the applicant chooses to proceed with Departure Request 1, then the project should return to the Board for an additional EDG meeting.**

**Board recommended that if the applicant chooses to remove any requested departures from Green Street requirements, then the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.**