



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA (WEST) DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3013982

Address: 300 Terry Avenue North

Applicant: Kurt Jensen of Jensen Fey Architects for Stanford Hotels Corp.

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, January 30, 2013

Board Members Present: David Delfs (Chair)
Mindy Black
Magda Hogness
Jill Kurfirst
Lipika Mukerji

Board Members Absent: Jacob Connell

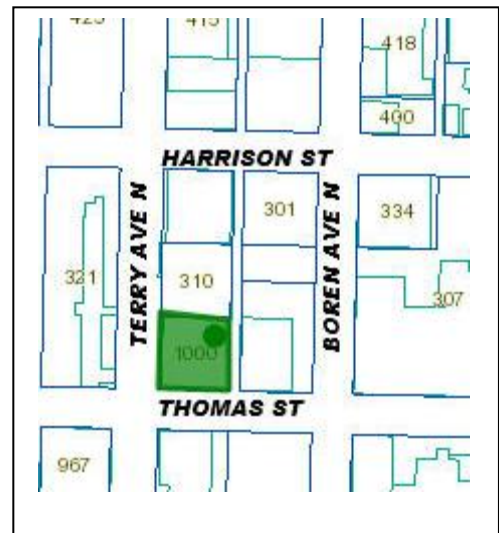
DPD Staff Present: Shelley Bolser, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: IC-65

Nearby Zones: (North) IC-65
(South) IC-85
(East) IC-65
(West) IC-65

Lot Area: 13,800 square feet



Current Development: The site is located on the northeast corner of Thomas St and Terry Ave N. The site is occupied by a three-story commercial building constructed in 1954.

Access: Existing vehicular access is via curb cuts at Terry Ave N and Thomas St. The Thomas St curb cut leads to rooftop parking. Existing pedestrian access is from Thomas St, near the intersection. An alley is located adjacent to the east side of this site.

The surrounding development is a mix of uses and age of structures. Nearby development includes older 1-2 story commercial office and retail/restaurant structures and newer 10-12 story office, medical, and retail mixed-use structures.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character: Several historic landmarks are located nearby. A historic landmark (the 320 Terry Avenue building) is located immediately to the north.

Recreational opportunities include Lake Union a few blocks to the north and Cascade Playground three blocks to the east.

The area offers frequent transit service, including the South Lake Union Streetcar stop across the street from the subject property, and several nearby bus routes.

ECAs: Steep slope environmentally critical areas are shown on DPD maps on the site to the east. No environmentally critical areas are located on the subject property. The site slopes approximately 20' in elevation from the northwest corner up to the southeast corner.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a 15-story hotel structure containing 283 rooms, a restaurant, meeting rooms, and no parking spaces.

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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 (3013982) 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 3013982 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 that the proposal includes a second pedestrian entry to the building on Thomas St. A service loading bay will be located on the alley but no vehicular parking is proposed on site. Due to the slope, the proposed building will be approximately the same height as the adjacent Amazon buildings on this block.

The EDG alternatives presented three options for tower placement. The building base/podium remained the same for each alternative. The applicant explained that due to the slope, the hotel and commercial entries are best placed on Terry Ave N. The only vehicle access is for solid waste collection and loading at the alley. The proposed building base includes glazing at the street frontages and the plaza to the north, as well as a building entry from Thomas St.

The applicant showed sketches of a conceptual design, including awnings that stepped with grade on Thomas St., a masonry base to reference nearby historic structures, and an upper tower with metal panel siding and punched windows. The hotel corridors were oriented to the north and east, resulting in possible blank walls and a column of windows running down the center of the north and east facades.

A curb bulb is planned for the intersection of Terry Ave N. and Thomas St., with the intent of providing a wider sidewalk area and a vehicle pull-out on Terry Ave N.

The landscape plan concept responded to the existing water runnel and gardens in the adjacent plaza, as well as the Terry Ave N special paving and other streetscape amenities. The northwest podium level deck included a proposed green roof with plantings for visual interest as viewed from above.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments and questions included the following:

- Questions were raised about the feasibility of glazing on the north façade and full height glazing at the upper tower.
 - The applicant explained that there is a no-build easement on the north side of the site, which allows glazing at the property line. The hotel rooms would include glazing that starts approximately 18" above the floor.
- Concerns were raised about the size of the EDG file on the DPD website for the packet.
- The massing options should have included consideration of an L-shaped tower with the open space located on the northwest corner of the site, to maximize daylight to the plaza.

- The next stage of review should include an analysis of the nearby contextual use of materials and architectural treatments.
- The base expression should be clearly carried to Terry Ave N., rather than stepped down as it turns the corner.

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:

1. Massing Alternatives:

- a. The applicant should return for a second EDG meeting with additional massing studies that provide additional light and air to the courtyard, provide a respectful separation from the Amazon buildings, and allow for a well composed corner expression between the upper and lower portions of the building. (A-1, A-2, A-4, A-5, A-10, B-1, C-2, D-1)
- b. The Board noted that the options presented at the EDG meeting all include an L-shaped tower, but another tower configuration may offer better solar access to the plaza and a contextual response to the Amazon buildings. (A-1, A-5)
 - i. The Board acknowledged that a functional floor plan is part of the massing consideration (such as open floor space for a ballroom).

2. Architectural Concept:

- a. The corner expression at the building base was shown in the conceptual sketches as a brick material with a cornice that steps down at the corner from Thomas St. to Terry Ave N. The building base expression should instead wrap the corner and provide a graceful transition to the tower above. (A-1, A-10, B-1, C-1, C-2, C-4)
 - i. Possible solutions may include recessing the podium, extending the tower toward the street, weaving the upper and lower architectural expression. (B-1, C-2, C-4)
 - ii. The Board advised the applicant to look to projects with similar grade transitions on Thomas and other streets for possible design solutions. (A-1, A-10, B-1, C-1, C-2, C-4)
- b. The Board noted that the base should not feel like an applied façade, but rather should create a visual transition to the tower. (C-2, C-4)
- c. The façade should be well-composed and use design techniques to reduce the scale. Extending the glazing from the courtyard through the tower could help to weave the tower and podium expressions. (C-2, C-3, C-4)
- d. The north, south, and east facing blank walls should be treated for visual interest, which could include windows, signage, interesting materials, etc. The north

façade should maximize glazing, given the easement and the visibility of this façade from the street frontage. (A-1, A-2, C-1, C-4, C-2, D-2)

- e. The second floor convention areas could include outdoor space at the podium on Thomas St, with enhancement of the entry on that street. This would activate the Thomas Street frontage and could offer a better transition between podium and tower. (A-4, A-10, C-3, D-1, E-1, E-2, E-3)
- f. The podium green roof on the northeast corner will be dark and shadowed. The applicant should consider additional or different locations for green roof areas that are visible from nearby buildings. (A-1, E-1, E-2, E-3)

3. Street Level and Courtyard Level:

- a. The focus of pedestrian amenities and open space on Terry Ave N is appropriate, given the pedestrian activity in the plaza, the nearby mid-block connections, and the sloped sidewalk on Thomas St. (A-1, A-2, D-1)
- b. The Thomas St entry should be visually enhanced as second major building entry, rather than a side entry. The entry location should be designed for safety, especially given the proximity to the alley vehicular entrance. (A-3, D-1, D-7)
- c. The proposed plaza bridges are a positive aspect of the proposal, and the images of streetscape design examples in the EDG packet are helpful.
 - i. The design for street level activation is a positive aspect of the proposal. The street level design should maximize opportunities for porosity (ex. operable storefronts and entries) into the courtyard at the ground level. (A-2, A-4)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Board identified the following Citywide Design Guidelines 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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Encourage provision of “outlooks and overlooks” for the public to view the lake and cityscapes. Examples include provision of public plazas and/or other public open spaces and changing the form or facade setbacks of the building to enhance opportunities for views.**
- **Minimize shadow impacts to Cascade Park.**
- **New development is encouraged to take advantage of site configuration to accomplish sustainability goals. The Board is generally willing to recommend departures from**

development standards if they are needed to achieve sustainable design. Refer to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* (LEED) manual which provides additional information. Examples include:

- Solar orientation
- Storm water run-off, detention and filtration systems
- Sustainable landscaping
- Versatile building design for entire building life cycle

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

The vision for street level uses in South Lake Union is a completed network of sidewalks that successfully accommodate pedestrians. Streetscape compatibility is a high priority of the neighborhood with redevelopment. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming and open to the general public.

- Provide pedestrian-friendly streetscape amenities, such as: tree grates; benches; lighting.
- Encourage provision of spaces for street level uses that vary in size, width, and depth. Encourage the use of awnings and weather protection along street fronts to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Where appropriate, consider a reduction in the required amount of commercial and retail space at the ground level, such as in transition zones between commercial and residential areas. Place retail in areas that are conducive to the use and will be successful.
- Where appropriate, configure retail space so that it can spill-out onto the sidewalk (retaining six feet for pedestrian movement, where the sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

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

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Create graceful transitions at the streetscape level between the public and private uses.
- Keep neighborhood connections open, and discourage closed campuses.
- Design facades to encourage activity to spill out from business onto the sidewalk, and vice-versa.
- Reinforce pedestrian connections both within the neighborhood and to other adjacent neighborhoods. Transportation infrastructure should be designed with adjacent sidewalks, as development occurs to enhance pedestrian connectivity.
- Reinforce retail concentrations with compatible spaces that encourage pedestrian activity.

- Create businesses and community activity clusters through co-location of retail and pedestrian uses as well as other high pedestrian traffic opportunities.
- Design for a network of safe and well-lit connections to encourage human activity and link existing high activity areas.

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.

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.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Address both the pedestrian and auto experience through building placement, scale and details with specific attention to regional transportation corridors such as Mercer, Aurora, Fairview and Westlake. These locations, pending changes in traffic patterns, may evolve with transportation improvements.
- Encourage stepping back an elevation at upper levels for development taller than 55 feet to take advantage of views and increase sunlight at street level. Where stepping back upper floors is not practical or appropriate other design considerations may be considered, such as modulations or separations between structures.
- Relate proportions of buildings to the width and scale of the street.
- Articulate the building facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that relate to the existing structures or existing pattern of development in the vicinity.
- Consider using architectural features to reduce building scale such as: landscaping; trellis; complementary materials; detailing; accent trim.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Support the existing fine-grained character of the neighborhood with a mix of building styles.
- Re-use and preserve important buildings and landmarks when possible.
- Expose historic signs and vintage advertising on buildings where possible.

- Respond to the history and character in the adjacent vicinity in terms of patterns, style, and scale. Encourage historic character to be revealed and reclaimed, for example through use of community artifacts, and historic materials, forms and textures.
- Respond to the working class, maritime, commercial and industrial character of the Waterfront and Westlake areas. Examples of elements to consider include: window detail patterns; open bay doors; sloped roofs.
- Respond to the unique, grass roots, sustainable character of the Cascade neighborhood. Examples of elements to consider include: community artwork; edible gardens; water filtration systems that serve as pedestrian amenities; gutters that support greenery.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

Design the “fifth elevation” — the roofscape — in addition to the streetscape. As this area topographically is a valley, the roofs may be viewed from locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, views from outside the area as well as from within the neighborhood should be considered, and roof-top elements should be organized to minimize view impacts from the freeway and elevated areas.

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

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.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- New developments are encouraged to work with the Design Review Board and interested citizens to provide features that enhance the public realm, i.e. the transition zone between private property and the public right of way. The Board is generally willing to consider a departure in open space requirements if the project proponent provides an acceptable plan for features such as: curb bulbs adjacent to active retail spaces where they are not interfering with primary corridors that are designated for high levels of traffic flow; pedestrian-oriented street lighting; street furniture.

D-2 **Blank Walls.** Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Enhance public safety throughout the neighborhood to foster 18-hour public activity. Methods to consider are: enhanced pedestrian and street lighting; well- designed public spaces that are defensively designed with clear sight lines and opportunities for eyes on the street; police horse tie-up locations for routine patrols and larger event assistance.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Support the creation of a hierarchy of passive and active open space within South Lake Union. This may include pooling open space requirements on-site to create larger spaces.
- Encourage landscaping that meets LEED criteria. This is a priority in the Cascade neighborhood.
- Where appropriate, install indigenous trees and plants to improve aesthetics, capture water and create habitat.
- Retain existing, non-intrusive mature trees or replace with large caliper trees.
- Water features are encouraged including natural marsh-like installations.
- Reference the City of Seattle Right Tree Book and the City Light Streetscape Light Standards Manual for appropriate landscaping and lighting options for the area.

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.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.

E-3 **Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions.** The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes,

view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

Landscaping should be designed to take advantage of views to waterfront and downtown Seattle.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURE

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departure was requested:

- 1. Loading Berths (SMC 23.54.035):** The Code requires 2 loading berths measuring 10' wide by 30' deep. The applicant proposes two loading berths that measure 10' wide by 25' long.

The Board indicated that more information is needed related to the proposed building program and the description of how the loading berths may affect traffic and parking in the area. At the Recommendation stage of review, the applicant should demonstrate how the proposed departure better meets the intent of specific Design Review Guidelines. (A-2, D-1, D-7)

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should return to the Board for an additional EDG meeting.