



City of Seattle

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



FOURTH EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014195

Address: 1700 1st Avenue S (Seattle Arena)

Applicant: Jack McCullough for WSA Properties III, LLC

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, March 05, 2013

Board Members Present: Gabe Grant (Chair)
Mathew Albores
Pragnesh Parikh
Gundala Proksch
Brian D. Scott

Board Members Absent: None

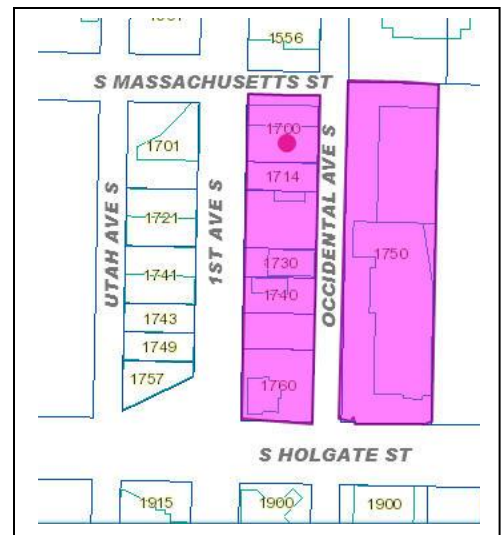
DPD Staff Present: Garry Papers, Senior Land Use Planner (Design Review)
John Shaw, Senior Transportation Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Industrial Commercial (IC-85 ft)
Stadium Transition Overlay

Nearby Zones: (North) IC-85
(South) IG2 U/85 & IG1 U/85
(East) IG2 U/85
(West) IC-85

Lot Area: 276,000 sf (approx 397ft x 680 ft)
(including Occidental Ave ROW)



Current Development:	One story warehouse along east edge, fronting railroad yard. Four structures along S 1st Ave, 1-2 stories tall, with surface parking. Brick and asphalt paved Occidental Ave S running north-south through middle of site.
Access:	Vehicular access from S Holgate, S 1st, and currently Occidental to the north; no access from the east which is railroad property.
Surrounding Development:	Mixed commercial and office buildings, 1-5 stories to north, south and west, mixed in with surface parking. A 5 level parking structure for Safeco Field is adjacent to the northeast. Railroad yards to the east.
ECAs:	Liquefaction Prone Soils (entire site)
Neighborhood Character:	1st Ave is fairly consistently lined with masonry and concrete structures between 2-5 stories, for multiple blocks north and south; railroad yards and support structures to the east and southeast up to 3rd Avenue; Safeco parking structure and stadium on blocks to north; mixed commercial on 1st Avenue to west, with container cranes, Rt 99 and Port lands behind to the west.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Future construction of an approximately 725,000 sf, 18,000 – 20,000-seat private spectator sports facility (Seattle Arena). Project includes demolition of eight existing structures of approximately 128,087 sf, and grading will occur for construction. Proposal includes venue-related commercial development at the site (such as team merchandise stores, ticket offices, team offices, and potentially restaurants and club spaces). Occidental Ave S between S Holgate and S Massachusetts is proposed to be vacated. Required parking for the facility is proposed to be provided by commercial parking lots off the site.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: November 27, 2012

Due to the large project scale and unique program, this Early Design Guidance (EDG) review is divided into 2 meetings: EDG #1 focuses on Context/Urban Analysis and Standard Arena Programming. Herein, the Downtown Design Review Board (DRB) offered preliminary response and comments on those issues, to inform the applicant in the development of massing options. More detailed studies will be presented at EDG #2.

EDG #2 is scheduled for Tuesday, December 11, 2012, where the DRB will provide typical EDG feedback and guidance, including identifying Priority Guidelines and Departures.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the November 27, 2012 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.

or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Address: Public Resource Center
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98124

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 40 members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted the adjacent parking structure has important access drives and vehicle queuing locations that should be shown on context drawings.
- Stated that major truck routes along Edgar Martinez and Holgate/Atlantic might pose constraints on the project site, and its loading functions.
- Noted that Safeco Field to the north has 4 spectator entry points, one at each corner.
- Noted the presentation did not mention parking; applicants responded that all required parking will be provided at off-site locations, to be determined and finalized later.
- Noted that a building of this scale is rare, and the project should fit and define its context, and set the future tone for the district.
- Encouraged the project to be both respectful, contextual, and support the ground level, and be something inspiring, striking and not hide the arena functions.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, understanding the program factors as presented, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following overall siting, program and design guidance. Relevant guidelines are referenced by **letter/number** when applicable. For reference, the Downtown Guidelines are summarized at the end of this report. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

1. **Overview:** The Board discussed the vision for the surrounding district, and the specific role this facility should play in this context:
 - a) The arena will be a public landmark and should provide public amenities and spirit.
 - b) The vicinity is urbanizing, maturing, and pedestrian volumes will increase to balance out the existing vehicle bias; this project should reinforce pedestrian scale. **(C-1)**

- c) Building and site should incorporate best-practice sustainability features, which exploit and express the unique scale and visibility of an arena; eg large roof area for rainwater harvesting and/or treatment, and/or Photo-voltaic panels.
 - d) Innovation, technology and forward-thinking should be expressed in the facility, as they are a hallmark of the Seattle identity. **(A-1)**
 - e) Besides the approximately 150 arena events/year (with basketball and hockey in winter/spring), the building, its uses, and public spaces should contribute to the district year round, and when no events are occurring. A full-year event schedule should be provided.
2. **Context Response:** The Board emphasized the arena should be much more than another big stadium object which is vacant and lifeless when no event is happening.
- a) 1st Avenue is a vital street north AND south of the site, with a consistent, mixed-use, fine-grain street wall connecting diverse destinations. The arena is in the middle of this street, and should provide continuity and reinforce its urban, pedestrian attributes. **(B-3)**
 - b) Besides 1st Avenue and south, the facility should anticipate pedestrian movement and other access from the east along Holgate, and north from E Martinez, as the district to the east evolves. Bus, light rail and other modes may also come from the east. **(B-1)**
 - c) Parking locations and resulting pedestrian flows to the arena are important influences on the building design, entries etc. If those parking locations are not established or permanent, then the building entries and pedestrian flows should provide suitable flexibility for future changes and possible connections. **(E-2)**
 - d) Especially since no on-site parking is provided, pedestrians will arrive from all directions based on variable rates and lot availability. The applicants should examine pedestrian flows and where access is expected, with estimated quantities for each flow (totaling 20,000). **(C-4)**
 - e) Provide all available mode data and access/departure directions from the 2 existing stadiums to the north.
 - f) Since event patrons may arrive via shuttle buses and other modes, consider site planning for bus layovers and other event needs besides pedestrians.
3. **Massing & Architectural Concept:** The Board agreed the project must be both fabric, contextual, and street supportive, AND be a landmark, with a memorable character that is uniquely Seattle.
- a) Plazas and public amenities should create strong place-making, provide generous before/after celebration space, and be available during non-event times. **(D-1)**
 - b) The project should express a memorable roof image and/or profile, to respond to prominent views from afar (ferries, hills, trains, downtown, etc.). **(A-2)**
 - c) While the primary concourse level may end up elevated above grade, the typical vertical transition of steep stairs and escalators should be mitigated, and other options explored, that smooth those transitions and create special places. **(D-3)**

- d) Specific (eg Rainier) and general (eg downtown) views out from the upper levels should be provided and celebrated, and encourage some upper level view terraces that are open to public at all times or at least during non-event times. **(A-1)**
 - e) The generic arena program (as presented) suggests an omni-directional approach to concourses and vertical circulation, yet this site is constrained east-west; this arena should respond to that constraint, and not appear “forced’ onto the site. **(B-2)**
 - f) The east façade facing the railroad tracks is very visible and should have a deliberate, scaled design treatment; it should anticipate potential, future access bridges or decks from the east. **(C-3)**
4. **Streetscape and Public Realm:** The ground level treatment, especially along 1st Avenue, should be pedestrian scale with active uses, and public spaces should be located and scaled to accommodate crowd gathering and flows, especially at intersections.
- a) All street edges should be permeable and activated with uses that serve both internal and street customers, and are a diverse mix, not simply team or event related; ‘a new idea’ about arena amenities that support the neighborhood full-time. **(C-1)**
 - b) The movement of large crowds and dispersing onto active streets should be choreographed and moderated to not overwhelm infrastructure, and the facility design should emphasize an “experiential” more than consumer approach.
 - c) All service areas should be hidden and curb cuts/service doors consolidated to minimize pedestrian impacts. **(E-1)**
 - d) The base of the building should stitch the district fabric together, but not copy or mimic a historic style. **(C-2)**
 - e) Occidental Avenue has possibilities as a shared, flexible plaza space, but terminates into Safeco field and has no crosswalks there; pedestrians must jog back to 1st Avenue. Consider pedestrian gatherings and flows in multiple directions. **(D-1)**
- 5) **Presentations:** The Board stressed the required 3 options should be genuinely different alternatives of equivalent programs; not variations on one theme, or obviously infeasible options. They also encouraged diagrams and drawings that display the design evolution.

SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: December 11, 2012
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APPLICANT PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the December 11, 2012 EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (and referencing the above date) at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp. or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98124

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 40 members of the public attended this Second Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Concerned about safety at the Holgate rail crossings, especially if the number and length of trains increases from existing volumes; a State rail plan implies increases by 2023.
- Requested any pedestrian plazas be carefully placed and sized to accommodate waiting crowds at vehicle and rail crossings, especially at the Holgate locations.
- Noted the adjacent parking structure has busy access drives and staging locations that would be compromised by the proposed pedestrian flows onto the north plaza.
- Requested more clarification about the “potential access alternative” shown on pg 26.
- Noted the preferred option creates a maximum footprint that does not widen sidewalks on First Avenue or Holgate, for pedestrian surges; stated the sidewalk at Safeco is 31 ft wide.
- Stated the stepped plaza shown in the preferred option is poor for crowd gathering, and suggested a flat plaza would perform better.
- Commented that much can be learned from the many years of operations by the two existing stadiums, and operational agreements between the 3 entities are desirable.
- Requested abundant and convenient bike parking.
- Requested all disabled ramps be convenient and protected from weather.
- Requested adequate and convenient disabled van parking.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, understanding the program factors as presented, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members focused their concerns and design guidance on the **following 4 major topics**, followed by various additional comments. These reference by **(letter-number)** the relevant guidelines, listed at the end of this report.

1. Plazas and Public Realm:

- A) The Board supported a large public plaza at the northwest corner of the site, however they were very concerned the terraces and 30 ft transition to the concourse shown, would create an inflexible gathering space, and the raised terraces with hard planters and intimidating stairs would not be sufficiently public in character. **(D-1)**

The plaza should incorporate the following revisions:

- 1) most of the gathering space should be at sidewalk grade; **(C-1)**
- 2) the plaza should engage First avenue as much as Occidental, and allow diverse pedestrian movement desire lines from First, Occidental and entries; **(B-1)**
- 3) ramps and/or stepped terraces should not be located along First Avenue because they compromise street wall activation; **(C-3)**

- 4) the primary arena entrance at this corner should inflect to the primary movement axis of First Avenue and not be exclusively axial on Occidental; **(B-3)**
 - 5) disabled access should be equivalent and fully integrated into the plaza, arena entrances, and any ramping or stepped approaches. **(universal access principles)**
- B) The Board agreed the sidewalk width along all of First Avenue should be significantly larger than the existing 16 ft; more than the 23 ft suggested (to provide a café zone). It could also be a distinctive linear landscape and/or sustainability element. **(C-1,D-3)**
 - C) Generous crowd capacity spaces (inside the property line) at the two southern corners on Holgate should be provided, to allow queuing space near the railroad crossing and across First Avenue; also allow for the diagonal pedestrian desire line at Holgate and First. **(C-4, D-3, D-6)**
 - D) Upper level view terraces open to the public (event and non-event times) are a desirable feature, as long as they are easily reached and have clear way-finding, and resolve security and vagrancy issues with lighting, monitoring and operations. **(D-5,6)**

2. Street Edge Activation and Form:

- A) The Board supported a consistent, articulated, and largely transparent street wall along Holgate and most of First Avenue (excepting the northwest plaza), executed with authentic, durable materials. Large amounts of blank wall should be avoided and located away from corners, where eased movement and pedestrian transparency into the 'iconic cone' should be maximized, at several locations. **(C-1, C-3)**
- B) The Board stressed that consistent activating uses along First and Holgate are as important as the architectural form. A distributed mix of arena/ team-related tenants and typical street-oriented tenants is desirable, to ensure a rich pedestrian experience even during non-event times. The east end of Holgate is a logical vehicle and service point, but that pedestrian approach should be mitigated with arena entries, activation and quality pedestrian-scaled design features. **(B-3, C-1)**
- C) Activating uses should also edge the plaza and address Occidental Street. **(D-1)**

3. Architectural Character and Materiality:

- A) The Board supported the basic expression of the revised option 3 shown in the addendum, as a positive start on their guidance to achieve a civic landmark with strong contextual aspects. They focused especially on the street level views showing the facade layering that reveals the 'iconic cone' **(B-1)**. The character and degree of covering over the northwest plaza needs further study, in terms of structural complexity, sustainable purpose, and balancing daylight and rain protection **(D-1)**.
- B) The connection of material choices to Seattle and the region should be fully explored, and combined with serious integration of sustainable materials and methods. **(D-3)**
- C) Sustainable strategies and integrated design should be more explicitly documented, and the building forms might express sustainable elements more overtly, and possibly with an educational purpose to the thousands of event visitors. **(A-1, D-3)**

4. Context and Parking Response:

- A) This very large project should fully coordinate its design and operations with adjacent neighbors such as Amtrak and the Safeco parking structure, and its access. **(B-1)**
- B) Users will approach the building from off-site parking and transit from all directions, regardless of applicant agreements for the legislated minimum parking. Therefore the project should anticipate and be flexibly designed for many access contingencies over 50+ years, including possible pedestrian/bike flyovers from the east at Holgate. **(A-1)**

5. Design Guidelines:

The Board identified the **Downtown Design Guidelines** of highest priority for this project which are listed at the end of this report, although all Downtown Design Guidelines listed are still applicable. For the full text of all guidelines, please visit the [Design Review website](#).

6. Other guidance:

Responding to the Larger Context

The primary architectural concept is demonstrated by the consistent streetwall, complimented by a public plaza oriented to the primary access off First Avenue, and needed in a park-deficient district. **(A-1)**

The Board encouraged the 'iconic cone' shape as a skyline landmark, its legibility at street level, and its distinctive color making it visible from hills, ferries and viewpoints in the surroundings. The specific materials, reflectivity and lighting of this element (and the entire building and site) will be critical as the design evolves, considering a majority of the sports events will likely occur on winter evenings. **(A-2)**

Relating to the Neighborhood Context

The compositional balance of the streetwall 'square' and a visible, accessible arena cone 'circle', are crucial to ensure this design contributes to the district context. **(B-1)**

Although the structure will be relatively small compared to the two existing arenas, it will be a large and approximately 130 ft tall mass from the street. To create a variety of scales, all streetwalls should display various modulation rhythms to break down the 400 - 500 ft lengths, yet not be overly fussy or contrived. The proposed layering and stepped-back transition at the top of the street wall is encouraged. **(B-2)**

To reinforce a positive area attribute, the Board recommended a strong street wall along Holgate and First Avenue, stitching together the consistent, existing street wall north and south of Holgate. **(B-3)**

The Board supported the contemporary expression and rich layering of materials shown in option 3. They requested shorter expanses of solid wall along First Avenue. Street wall materials can be contemporary and lighter colors, as long as they exhibit depth, relief, shadow-play and authenticity of detailing and execution. **(B-4)**

Creating the Pedestrian Environment

The Board agreed the street level uses, especially along First Avenue, should be diverse, many to be open at all days/hours (not only events), and represent a fine-grain mix of tenants. See D-1 for details on the Plaza spaces. The project can greatly improve on the existing stadiums by including a mix of street level activating uses, and incorporating a flexible and truly public plaza, valued and used by citizens at all times. **(C-1)**

To create facades of many scales, the west and south elevations should emphasize the storefronts and other human scale elements. The east elevation remains highly visible, and requires a quality, artful facade treatment that balances the train acoustic issues, service uses within, and the visibility from trains, 4th Avenue, and the hills beyond. **(C-2)**

To maximize active ground floor edges, the Board emphasized this as an issue of form, transparency and a wide mix of active uses. They cautioned that any edges adjacent to the plaza, sidewalks or street corners, maintain activating uses with shorter blank wall segments than those shown. **(C-3)**

The Board recommended primary entries for event crowds require generous gathering space and should accommodate multiple pedestrian movement desire lines. **(C-4)**

The project should integrate generous rain canopies along the two streets, and study simpler approaches for protection at the plaza, which might include variable transparencies and/or photovoltaic opportunities. **(C-5)**

To some, the east elevation is comparable to an alley façade, and is visible across the railyard; so it should be treated as a fully visible elevation; see C-3 above. **(C-6)**

Enhancing the Streetscape & Open Space

The Board extensively discussed the plaza character and activation in terms of this guideline, and agreed the stepped terraces shown were not effective for diverse gatherings, nor fully public in character. The plaza should be primarily at grade to

reinforce the sidewalk and this guideline, and the Board agreed a smaller portion of stairs, terraces or ramps could work adjacent to the plaza, as long as sloped or dead wall portions not reach First Avenue. **(D-1)**

The Board encouraged a lush landscape treatment to soften the requisite large paved areas, and the integration of sustainable best practices, in particular rainwater harvesting and/or storm detention. **(D-2)**

The Board continues to seek more explicit elements that locate this design in Seattle, preferably through sustainable systems and material choices, and regional symbols. **(D-3)**

Preliminary signage placeholder sizes and locations should be shown, including in order of priority: ground level public way-finding; ground level merchants; pageantry banners and graphics; building identification. Public Art opportunity sites are welcome. **(D-4)**

Besides adequate lighting on the façade, under soffits, on street furniture, and in display windows, the Board stressed that all public spaces, especially any upper level public terraces, require generous lighting. Also see D-6. **(D-5)**

The Board emphasized design for safety in all the public realm components. **(D-6)**

Minimizing the Adverse Impacts

The Board expressed concern about vehicle-pedestrian conflicts, which **is particularly important at the southeast corner and along Massachusetts Street, where pedestrians must cross curb cuts or possibly active streets.** **(E-1)**

The Board recommended all loading and service functions should be screened from view or behind doors. **(E-3)**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

This EDG did not present any departures. The need for departures should be discovered and clearly shown at subsequent meetings.

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project **better meet** these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board Recommendation meeting.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of this EDG meeting, the Board thanked the applicants for a complete presentation, and looked forward to the EDG #3 meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2013.

THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: January 22, 2013
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APPLICANT PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the January 22, 2013 EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (and referencing the above date) at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp. or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

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700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98124

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 40 members of the public attended this Third Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Pleased that preliminary discussions are occurring between applicants and ArenaCo (Mariners parking structure) operators.
- Requested more details about the proposed “access road” on east side of arena, including clear height for trucks; otherwise trucks must use existing Massachusetts Street.
- Noted Occidental and Massachusetts streets provide “critical functions” for Safeco and Century Link fields such as emergency access, ADA and transit drop-offs, and bus staging.
- Concerned about conflicts of those street uses with the proposed “Festival Plaza” spillover shown in the “red dot drawings (pg 36-39)”, northward from the project’s stairs and plaza.
- Concerned about ADA access up plaza stairs and to facility in general. [Applicant responded ramps there are not proposed, but instead access via entry doors and internal elevators.]
- Wanted clarification about location and quantity of bike parking. [Applicant responded: along First Ave and quantity TBD, possibly a bike valet system.]
- Asked about the quantity of ticket offices and location. [Applicant responded: one adjacent to flat plaza at northwest entrance, and one internal.]

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the response to Board guidance provided by the proponents, understanding the program factors as presented, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members focused their concerns and design guidance on the following **major**

topics. These are the Boards priority comments at this stage in the design evolution, and do not replace the specific Design Guideline comments contained under EDG #2 above, which still apply.

Summary of off-site issues:

The Board identified significant un-resolved off-site issues and factors that influence and impact the project design. The applicant has made assumptions about these off-site outcomes, but the Board advises that until these issues can be resolved with certainty, the applicants should design for the “worst case” and accommodate all plausible contingencies on their property, without relying on preferred but unverified outcomes, and not using the public right of ways to accommodate project-generated impacts.

- 1) Pedestrianized Occidental & Massachusetts Streets:** Existing Safeco parking and truck cross-traffic uses these streets; existing bus staging and loading occur on Occidental. The proposed plaza steps end about 9 ft from the Massachusetts property line. The proposed size and location of the large north stairs appears to depend on a modified Occidental character and use. The issue remains unresolved regarding where the thousands of north-exiting patrons will circulate at the foot of the stairs, if the existing streets and/or traffic remain in the current configuration.
- 2) Off-site Parking and pedestrian access directions:** The project will generate 15 - 20,000 patrons per event and does not include parking; choosing a variety of parking lots/rates, users will approach the building from off-site parking from all directions, regardless of agreements for the code-required minimum parking, or additional demand parking. There is no pedestrian entry/exit at the southeast corner, yet many parking sites, the 5th Ave busway, and light rail are located to the east. Pedestrian access at grade at that location is complicated by the proposed loading docks, access road, and Holgate ramp. Pedestrian access to the east is also complicated by numerous active rail tracks, and the building design should anticipate pedestrian queuing spaces at grade, and a possible pedestrian flyover connecting to the building at an upper level.
- 3) Removal of existing parking lane along 1st Avenue:** SDOT has not approved removal of this lane and such approval is unlikely given the traffic capacity and possible streetcar space needs in the ROW. Additionally, there is the need for curbside ADA, shuttle bus drop offs and other transport-to-entrance adjacencies. The Board advised that a widened sidewalk (about 20 ft paved pedestrian width, plus a curbside buffer) be created via a continuous building setback, to accommodate the event generated pedestrian flows. (For reference, note the existing Safeco Field 1st Avenue sidewalk is about 30 ft wide).

- 4) **Holgate sidewalk and loading:** The proposed loading dock and Holgate ramp appear to assume truck maneuvering IN the Holgate ROW, a very busy freight street. This is under review by SDOT. The ramp generates a long and large blank wall, which the proposed green wall does not successfully mitigate. Because of the loading and curb cuts, the proposed southeast corner does not provide much pedestrian queuing near the railroad tracks. The southwest corner does not recess to provide pedestrian queuing at a key intersection, and assumes the existing wide sidewalk will remain, which has not been confirmed long-term by SDOT.
- 5) **Access road and Holgate loading ramp:** The proposed east access road should be tall enough to accommodate trucks, which would have at least 2 apparent benefits: the current truck traffic on Massachusetts could be diverted to the access road and improve the pedestrian condition at the north plaza/stairs; also - according to the applicants - arena trucks could then approach from the north using the access road, and the Holgate ramp could be relocated off the building perimeter, freeing it for more active uses and a pedestrian scaled design at the sidewalk.

In brief: The project – which generates extraordinary pedestrian traffic - provides no public realm relief on its south or west sides, has pedestrian unfriendly walls and loading along Holgate, and the north Plaza/stairs/terrace have questionable public-use value and several major design issues.

Specific Project Issues:

Based on three EDG reviews of the proposed development, the Board endorsed the basic massing approach, and position and height of the arena bowl. Considering the revised materiality and architectural character shown on this date, the Board agreed the design has evolved well, but before commenting more on architectural treatment, *the Board identified the following more urgent urban design and public realm interface concerns in the current proposal:*

- 1) **North Plaza:** The proposed public ‘upper terrace’ appears difficult to access, lacks a vital function for its large 33,000 sf, and creates approximately 30 ft tall walls on 3 sides that are apparently blank; the dead-end platforms and water wall shown on the west face is poor mitigation. The Board requests evidence why the practice courts generating this awkward form cannot be shifted south, depressed further, and/or have a modified profile to reduce this tall blank box.

Considering the applicant-provided patron entrance percentages, the central stairs appear oversized (26,000 sf), and they overemphasize the Occidental axis considering the primacy of the 1st Avenue ‘address’ and entrance. The Board supported the more recent ‘curved stair version’ (pg 23) as a better gesture to 1st Avenue, but also suggested exploring stairs that flow down east-to-west (as long as blank walls are not presented to Occidental). The approximately 17,000 sf at-grade plaza appears proportionally small,

and deserves more year round activating edges besides the ticket-office. Additionally, the small size and pedestrian capacity is especially an issue if the Massachusetts traffic remains. The Board agreed the north plaza/stairs space should accommodate all anticipated uses, without necessitating spilling into the streets.

- 2) **Signage/fin-wall along First Avenue:** The Board reviewed this feature (pg 57) for the first time on this date, and questioned the essential purpose of such an element, besides signage? Although pedestrians can walk under it, the Board was concerned that this feature exaggerates the street wall length at 90 ft high x 680 ft long. The Board is concerned the fin blocks valuable winter southwest sun from the adjacent public plazas, and requested accurate shadow studies.

The Board suggested that such a feature might be more suitable on the east side of the space, buffering the railroad tracks, used like a stage, and/or coordinated with revised stairs stepping down to the west. Some Board members regretted the removal of horizontal rain protection over the public plaza, and suggested some be added back and/or deeper canopies be added projecting from the building and/or fin. This new fin element must be shown on the ground floor/plaza plans, including any code required stairs/exiting, and needs more Board evaluation.

- 3) **Equivalent, universal access to all public realm places:** The applicants explained that ramp access would be prohibitive to access the public stair/platforms and upper terrace at 27 ft above grade; yet no exterior, public elevator is evident to serve those spaces during non-event times. The Board stated generous and universal access is vital, and requiring users to enter the building and navigate hallways to internal elevators (as explained by applicants) is not acceptably equivalent, creates post-event bottlenecks, and may not satisfy ADA requirements.
- 4) **First Avenue uses and sidewalk:** The Board endorsed the proposed street level active uses (retail and restaurant) as promising, but cautioned they are only about 50% of the frontage, and any blank walls (eg pg 60, 61, 63), lobbies, escalators and other event-only elements should be minimized and pushed off the First Avenue frontage. The clear height of the retail storefronts should be increased above the 15 ft shown.

To achieve a continuous, widened sidewalk without moving the curb, the Board advised setting back **all** building walls about 8 ft from the property line (about 300 ft already is) to create a continuous 18 -20 ft paved pedestrian zone, plus wall modulation along the approximately 500 ft length, and a curbside tree/buffer/seating zone at the existing curb line (permeable depending on curbside drop-off requirements).

- 5) **Holgate uses and loading:** The proposed locker and office uses are not ideal activator uses along a sidewalk; and true active uses should extend further east on the Holgate frontage. The Holgate loading ramp parallel and adjacent to the property line creates a blank wall, and the proposed green wall is too large for an at-grade, pedestrian location.

The proposed access road, loading and ramps impact the sidewalk greatly; all those functions should be fully internalized on this exceptionally large (6.3 acre) site. To correct this situation, the Board's suggestions in off-site item #5 above should be strongly pursued. The southwest entrance should be recessed more from the busy intersection for patron queuing and security checks, similar to how the northwest entry functions.

- 6) **Arena 'Cone' character, street level visibility and materials:** The Board inquired about the cone color and materiality, and endorsed its strong differentiation from the white louvered wrapper. They encouraged the contrasting cone be highly visible from street level views, especially the 3 approach corners (pg 61, 62, 65), and supported the cone reaching directly to grade where the public and patrons can 'touch it'. The Board encouraged highly transparent corners, even more than as shown on pg 61. They inquired about the materials of the cone roof, encouraged consideration of daylight and/or evening accent lighting on the cone, and requested a rationale for the north slope of that roof, in terms of solar potential. The Board noted the 60 ft tall north wall facing the stairs appears to be largely glass, presenting energy and sustainability challenges.
- 7) **Other Floor Plans:** Besides the studies and refinements noted above, in order to better understand below grade constraints and all aspects of vertical circulation from the at-grade lobbies, the Board requested next time to see: the below grade and upper level floor plans (at minimum the concourse level served by the primary escalators/stairs). They wish to understand the below grade vehicle ramping and circulation, the reason the practice courts must be located as shown, and the potential for a southeast entry near or above the loading location shown. They are also concerned how the escalators to the concourse level work, what is the universal access from the southwest corner, and how building stairs provide optional entrance and egress.

FOURTH EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: March 05, 2013

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the March 05, 2013 EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (and referencing the above date) at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp. or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98124

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 30 members of the public attended this Fourth Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted positive progress on the plaza design, but concerned the steps and landscape walls as shown are too close to the Massachusetts street curb; crowd surges and pedestrian desire lines require more free movement near streets.
- Noted the 'north' loading option overlaps the Mariners property, and requires a use and access agreement with them; productive conversations between the parties are occurring.
- Expressed support for primary entrance being at the northwest corner, but safety and operations concerns remain with the adjacent railroad at southeast corner of site; adequate pedestrian queuing space at the track crossing, and concern about truck movements on Holgate and possible back-ups over the active rail tracks.
- Stated the drawing on pg 10 indicates 2 queuing zones on Holgate between existing tracks; 3 future tracks will be added there, and generally, 'an active rail-yard' is not a safe place to designate for any pedestrian queuing.
- Pleased to see mention of potential pedestrian overpass of Holgate ('by others'), and its possible link to an upper level of the arena, which would greatly improve pedestrian safety.
- Supported the proposed bike valet door as an activator of the blank wall facing Occidental.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the response to previous Board guidance provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following design guidance.

The following EDG #4 guidance especially reinforces four key Downtown Design Guidelines the Board agreed are most relevant at this stage, and for convenience those four are briefly listed here; see the end of the report for the full list of Board identified priority guidelines.

A-2: Enhance the skyline.

B-4: Design a well-proportioned and unified Building.

C-1: Promote pedestrian interaction.

D-1: Provide Inviting and Usable Open Space.

1) Holgate Street Ground Floor, Elevation and Loading :

a) **Ground Floor uses and façade:** The Board applauded the replacement of the loading ramp with activating office uses along the ground floor sidewalk (booklet pg 73), and the mostly transparent treatment shown on pg 53. **(C-1)**

- b) **Elevation simplification:** The Board agreed the stair towers provide vertical counterpoint, and should include glass strips as shown, but the central stack of louvers should incorporate more vertical lines to harmonize with the other elevations. **(B-4)**
- c) **Loading Docks:** The Board encouraged whichever scheme results in the maneuvering to be as internally contained as possible (so the loading doors can stay down), with the shortest possible door length along the sidewalk; that appears to be the Option A approach on pg 43, in concert with the angled docks shown on pg 47, resulting in a loading door about 25 ft wide, and the shared access road portal at about 28 ft wide. Any loading doors should incorporate translucent panels for pedestrian interest and night time glow **(C-1)**.

2) Building Base, Entries and Turbine Visibility:

- a) **First Avenue:** The Board applauded the 8 ft continuous building wall setback along First avenue (pg 73), the tall (about 19 ft) storefront proportion and integral overhang shown on section pg 20, and the largely transparent treatment of this 480 ft long wall shown on pg 21. The Board recommended changing the buff-color mass elements that resemble the Holgate stairs (pg 56), to a glass-like material, so the turbine blades within and at mid-block are more visible to the sidewalk. The Board also suggested re-consideration of the straight glass vestibule at the mid-block so the distinctive turbine blades encounter the sidewalk directly. Maintain the frontage of retail along the street, which is about 50%, not including the club/restaurant. **(C-1)**
- b) **Southwest entry:** The Board appreciated the lightening of the façade louvers at the entry corner (pg 54), but suggests it be more pronounced and possibly lift up fully to the +23ft high main concourse level, to better expose the tall lobby volume and the blades, and better signify entrance. The Board encouraged an increased north setback of the southwest entrance doors, further off the intersection. **(C-1 and C-4)**
- c) **Lighting:** The Board emphasized that soffit and interior lighting that spills onto the adjacent sidewalks is critical for maintaining a safe and 'open' appearance during evening hours; these perimeter lighting fixtures should be on a building-wide circuit, not dependent on tenant hours or occupancy. **(C-1 and D-5)**

3) Façade 'Permeable Wrapper', Materials and Turbine Visibility :

- a) **Façade character:** The Board supported the basic language of vertical perforated metal louvers mounted on glass curtain wall, and encouraged the louvers to 'ripple' more (upper right on pg 57) and create various degrees of transparency. **(B-4)**
- b) **Balcony Boxes:** The Board supported exterior spaces for users, but was not supportive of the two orange boxes as shown; the frame color competes with the turbine, and the rigid symmetry appears forced. They suggested the boxes be of different sizes, placed more playfully around the building, and preferably focus on distinct viewpoints such as the cranes, or Mt Rainier (meaning a box on the upper south façade, which would be consistent with guidance 1b above). **(B-4)**

- c) **Façade Height:** The Board questioned why the complete façade treatment continues 20 ft above the un-occupied roof level, increasing shadow impacts on the plaza and obscuring the iconic turbine from adjacent streets and hills (see pg 52/58). The applicant rationale was not persuasive and they suggested the façade be lowered on the sides and north, or the upper 20 ft be executed in a light frame which reduces the perceived bulk of an already very large volume, and allows the turbine to be better seen. **(A-2 and B-4)**

4) Plaza Design, Fin-wall and overhead protection:

- a) **Plaza landscape design:** The Board supported the revised plaza design and re-aligned stairs which better address First Avenue and create a more generous porch and upper terrace. They agreed the steps and walls at the west edge should be pulled south to create more buffer at the Massachusetts curb. The Board supported the inclusion of bike parking and the valet concept activates a blank wall at the end of Occidental. The Board recommended the public elevator be more visible at ground level (by pushing the west stair edge east, and/or pulling the elevator west), the mechanical equipment noise be fully mitigated, and the hedges not create any hiding or camping recesses. **(D-1 and C-4)**
- b) **Fin Wall:** After much discussion, the Board agreed the fin wall as shown was obscuring the primary entrance from First Avenue (pg 57), casting afternoon shadows on the public plaza (pg 66, summer and equinox, noon-5pm), obscuring good west views from the plaza steps, and enlarging the bulk of an already large arena volume (pg 51), with marginal use or purpose. The Board recommended deleting it, or reducing it to a smaller, shorter projection (not requiring a separate stair) above the northwest corner, signifying entrance but not blocking sun or westward views from the plaza's terraces. The Board was intrigued by the notion of a projection screen for the seating terraces, but suggested this be a temporary/moveable element, possibly integrated into any overhead weather protection. **(D-1)**
- c) **Weather protection:** The Board agreed some weather protection on the plaza is valuable and should be studied further, but the sketch shown (incorporating the fin-wall) was too enclosing and too tall. They suggested canopies at several vertical levels, possibly trellis elements in the plaza itself, along the stair cut/ticket office, added to the upper terrace mechanical walls, and/or the existing north wall. Without reinforcing the mega-scale of the building, such canopies could also add human scale and signify the two banks of primary entrance doors, which are currently 'lost' in the planer glass of the north walls (see pg 39). **(D-1 and C-5)**

5) Sustainability:

The Board reiterates the importance of a model, high performance building and an integrated approach to sustainability in the entire project. They emphasize further development of the strategies and opportunities presented at EDG #3, including but not limited to: transit, bike and vehicle-share incentives; green and cool roofs; rainwater harvesting and on-site reuse; permeable pavement and runoff detention; solar shading and high performance of a largely

glazed envelope; daylighting and operable glazing; radiant floors and low velocity air systems; district plant opportunities; photo-voltaics and other renewable energy opportunities.

PRIORITY DESIGN GUIDELINES: identified by the Board at EDG #2

Council-adopted Downtown Design Guidelines

A. Site Planning & Massing

Responding to the Larger Context

- 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.
- A-2** Enhance the Skyline. Design the upper portion of the building to promote visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline.

B. Architectural Expression

Relating to the Neighborhood Context

- 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. The Streetscape

Creating the Pedestrian Environment

- 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-2** Design Facades of Many Scales. Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and materials compositions that refer to the scale of human activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.
- C-3** Provide Active—Not Blank—Facades. Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.
- 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. Public Amenities

Enhancing the Streetscape & Open Space

- 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-4** Provide Appropriate Signage. Design signage appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood. All signs should be oriented to pedestrians and/or persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood.
- 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. Vehicular Access & Parking

Minimizing the Adverse Impacts

- E-1** Minimize Curb Cut Impacts. Minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts on the safety and comfort of pedestrians.
- E-3** Minimize the Presence of Service Areas. Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, and the like away from the street front where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS DEPARTURES

No Departures were identified by the applicants at the time of EDG #4.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of this EDG meeting, the Board thanked the applicants for a complete presentation, and unanimously recommended the project should move forwards to MUP application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting, and the priority guidelines identified at EDG #2.