



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014773

Address: 204 Pine Street

Applicant: Jim Westcott, of WTGBD, for Equity Residential

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, January 07, 2014

Board Members Present: Gabe Grant (Chair)
Mathew Albores
Murphy McCullough
Gundala Proksch

Board Members Absent: Pragnesh Parikh

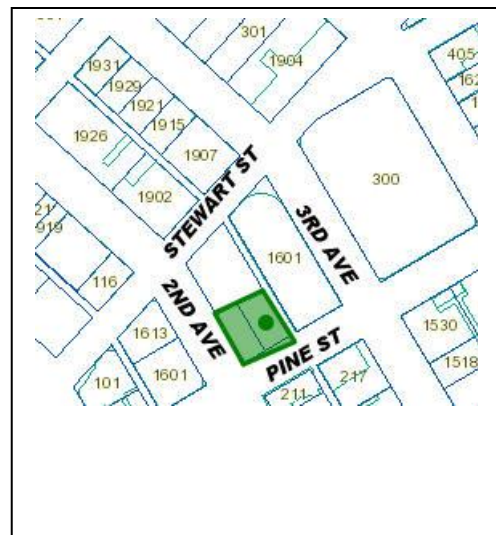
DPD Staff Present: Garry Papers, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC 240/290-400

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

Lot Area: 14,159 sf rectangle; gentle slope down
7 ft from northwest to southeast



Current Development: Surface parking lot

Access: Corner lot fronting south onto Pine Street, and west onto 2nd Avenue. Alley access from east.

Surrounding Development: The site is west of the half-block, 9 level parking structure known as the 'Macy's garage', separated by the alley. The rest of the subject half-block is currently a surface parking lot. A mix of 4 -14 story commercial buildings occupy the surrounding street faces, with consistent, active ground floor uses, usually retail.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: This visible corner site is in the heart of an active mixed use, downtown district, serving residents, workers, shoppers and tourists. The 2 adjacent streets are very active pedestrian corridors connecting to the waterfront and Pike Place Market; both are classified Class 1 Pedestrian Streets and Principal Transit Streets. The vicinity contains a high percentage of high quality, 20th century commercial buildings (several are landmarks), exhibiting different styles but generating a harmony of consistently transparent street levels, rich articulation, and generally lighter color materials.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a 400 ft, 39 story residential tower of approximately 375 units and 364,000 sq ft, including amenity space, and approximately 3,000 sf of ground level retail. Four levels of parking above the ground floor and 4 below grade (about 300 spaces) are proposed, with 2 access ramps off the alley, adjacent to the required loading.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: May 7, 2013

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The Early Design Guidance (EDG) booklet 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. 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 15 members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted the sculptural character of the option A tower, especially to the south, was more interesting on the skyline than the “very flat walls” of options B & C.
- Stated the retail proposed is only about 20% of the ground floor, and that is not enough considering the corner is a “virtual 100% intersection” and could garner high rents.
- Objected to the largely blank, north party wall on the podium, even though it may be covered by an adjacent building in the future.
- Encouraged the addition of residents in the vicinity to balance the commercial and tourist population.
- Stated the option C proposed top was interesting, but was concerned the middle floors were lacking interest and too repetitive for such a highly prominent site.
- Concerned about wind shear down the face of flat tower walls, thus supported the large canopy at the podium of option A; would like to see an analysis of wind impacts to sidewalks.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: January 7, 2014

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The Recommendation booklet includes materials presented at the Recommendation 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:

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PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments at this meeting.

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 (the Board) provided the following site planning and design guidance. The Board identified the following Downtown Design Guidelines of **highest priority for this project**. Under each priority guideline, the EDG comments are followed by the **Final Recommendation comments in bold**.

The Priority Downtown guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text of all guidelines please visit the [Design Review website](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/howeare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm):
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/howeare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm>

Page references below are to the Recommendation booklet dated January 7, 2014.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed this is an exceptional corner site, highly visible, with an extremely active pedestrian street character. It fills a crucial missing tooth in the fabric and connects the inland commercial core to Pike Place Market and the waterfront. Therefore the project should strongly reinforce this vital pedestrian movement, and be well-informed by the uses, rhythm and patterns in the surrounding context, especially at the podium and street level [see B-1 below].

The Board agreed the response to the 2nd Avenue street axis and grid shift is promising, as it breaks the relatively long tower wall planes into smaller facets (also see departure request). They also encouraged more exploration of a vertical inter-lock between podium and tower, perhaps enlarging the proposed vertical slots, and/or carrying one of three tower corners right to sidewalk grade, as shown in option A. Other sculptural aspects of option A or B may be integrated into C, to increase variety in the middle zone of floors 10-34.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the rotated planes at the tower top, including the revisions that increased these rotated portions to 4 floors of height, and accentuated the two different cladding characters, thus perceivable from the street. See comments under B-1 and C-1 for additional response to context issues.

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed the proposed tower would be visible essentially from all sides, from all distances, from the water and surrounding hills. Therefore the tower composition and especially the tower top are critical design elements. The Board agreed the step backs, angled top profile, large balconies and the large amenity canopy of option C were the most promising for creating a handsome

transition to the sky. Based on the views down 2nd Avenue, the northwest corner of the top deserves more compositional effort, equal to the currently emphasized southwest corner view.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the tower top composition as shown on page 57/58 and the elevations, including the glass guardrails, the layered and canted screen around the mechanical enclosure, and the perforated canopy. The Board agreed the roof canopy should maintain a simple rectangular profile (rather than tapered as shown on page 53), which reinforces the continuity of the ground-to-roof ribbon 'spine' profile.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board emphasized how the lower levels and ground floor must continue the positive pedestrian experience and predominantly retail uses along both street fronts. The relevant urban analysis (pg 17-19) was sound, however the Board did not see how it informed the retail frontage shown in option C; which had the following weaknesses:

- a)The height of glazing/transparency appears overwhelmed by the mass wall above; the glazed retail height should increase and less mass should bear down on it;
- b)The renderings show about 23 ft of mass wall along the Pine sidewalk, this is too long a blank wall (and is not consistent with the departure portrayal on pg 69);
- c)Although horizontal glazing slots are present in the podium parking floors, they are narrow and the percentage of mass to glazing is very high; redesign to add more glazing. And consider more material variation, layering and perhaps a third translucent material that helps reduce the mass wall bulk (the Board was certain that parked cars should not be visible from the street, but is receptive to bikes, storage and other semi-active 'shadows' being visible to pedestrians).

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board applauded the thoughtful analysis of adjacent podium materials, datums and context, and supported the revised podium elevations as shown, including: the enlarged horizontal slots, the elimination of ground floor mass along 2nd Avenue, and the deep, angled reveals/joints in the white precast material (as best shown on pages 37 and 45) . See comments under C-1 for Board required refinements to the southeast corner.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed how the surrounding buildings display a consistent street level experience, largely transparent, diverse active uses, and richly layered materiality. The proposed storefronts and podium should be informed by a fulsome analysis of these attributes and the intelligent transfer of essential principles to the proposed ground floor.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board appreciated the physical models and complete range of perspective renderings, which greatly assisted the Board’s understanding of the proposal in context.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed how this prominent site deserves a very integrated and high quality design, especially at the podium and tower top. The Board mildly supported the applicant-preferred option C, but they stressed more interlock of the podium to tower and major revisions to the podium itself. They welcomed the positive attributes of Options A & B to be integrated into C, including more sculptural treatments to the middle floors.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the essential façade compositions and high material quality as presented, but requested the south and west facades be simplified to ensure the primary reading of the two mid-tower vocabularies is not diluted (the more vertical west and south, versus the more quiet and horizontal east and north). The Board agreed the perspectives shown on pages 52-55 were more convincing and coherent than the physical model. The following mid-tower elements are critical for the design approval and should be retained:

- **West/South: white ‘spine’ ribbon and deep slots adjacent; 4 story, staggered white louvers and fritted glass verticals; subordinate horizontal spandrels and corner wraps, deep balconies and resultant shadow play. (pages 52/53)**

- East/North (excepting the southeast corner and top 4-5 stories): staggered horizontal accents and extrusions at northeast corner; flush/integrated horizontal louvers; stronger horizontals and subordinate verticals. (pages 54/55)

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board extensively discussed the relatively small amount of ground floor retail, the minimal retail frontage on 2nd Avenue, and the absence of a retail door on 2nd Avenue.

The Board was in unanimous agreement that the retail use should wrap the corner more than shown, to at least the line of the elevator core doorway, and ideally being 50 -75% of the 2nd avenue frontage. They also required provision for a retail door on 2nd, and encouraged the storefronts on Pine to contain multiple door-sets and be demisable into 2-3 spaces. They applauded the 16-20 ft clear retail heights and stated the proposed 31-37 ft depth to be minimally acceptable.

The Board agreed the residential lobby should shift further north on 2nd Avenue, that the lounge function along the street should be reduced or internalized, but that the leasing office/sales office provides 9-5 active use behind large transparent windows, and the amount could remain as shown on pg 69.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the shifted residential lobby on 2nd Avenue, and applauded the retail corner wrap and added retail doors on Pine and 2nd Avenue, all as shown on page 26. The Board was concerned the crucial southeast corner did not exhibit sufficient transparency to Pine Street, or to the parking elevator and retail for pedestrians along this prime retail route. The Board recommended the following conditions:

- **Condition A:** Eliminate the mass wall east of the elevator vestibule door, and create a glass corner up to the same transom datum shown to the west.
- **Condition B:** Change the west vestibule wall to glass to provide views into the retail.
- **Condition C:** Explore pushing the elevator further north (and create a retail access door in the west wall mentioned above) to increase the view of retail from the sidewalk.

- **Condition D: Add a low planter or other device to the southeast corner recess, plus lighting to discourage transient activities.**
- **Condition E: Provide well integrated signage for the public parking elevator, which maintains a highly transparent corner but makes the elevator evident for users.**

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board applauded the light, crystalline character of the tower renderings shown (pg 44-46). They supported the activity and scale contribution that the 4 levels of micro-units provided at the strategic corner; these should remain as shown, regardless of other podium changes, as these provide middle scale compositional interest and help to de-emphasize the parking floors. The Board encouraged more interlocking of the podium and lower tower.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the placement and façade composition of the efficiency units at the southwest corner, the podium materials, and the depth and detailing as presented (including the light box recesses at the parking slots), except for the refinements noted under C-1 and C-4.

C-3 Provide Active—Not Blank—Facades. Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed this highly pedestrian location warrants almost no blank façades, certainly along Pine and 2nd (see B-1 for concern about the blank wall shown at south east corner). They agreed even the north podium party wall should display less monolithic mass and/or more material variation.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, The Board agreed the north podium elevation with recessed dark panels (as presented at the meeting, in same locations shown with glass in the Recommendation booklet, page 41) is acceptable as an interim condition until and when a building infills the north part of the block. Also see comments under C-1.

C-4 Reinforce Building Entries. To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce the building's entry.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board supported the recessed residential entrance and its reinforcement with a strong fin element visible up through the podium; but that entrance location should shift north, even if stepped floors result.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board applauded the shifted residential lobby entrance, the transparent, retail use along the remainder of the 2nd Avenue frontage, and the use of stepped floor slabs to eliminate entrance step transitions. The Board recommended that the northwest door to that retail be shifted south 10-15 ft to eliminate most of the risers shown currently (5 to 2 or 3), and to create a more visible and welcoming entrance from the sidewalk, preferably a double door.

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed generous protection is essential on all frontages of this highly pedestrian location. They noted extensive canopies were shown on the detailed podium studies, and they should be retained and provide continuous protection.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board discussed this topic thoroughly. They agreed the solid canopy signifying the primary residential lobby on 2nd Avenue is acceptable, but the solid retail canopies shown (even tapered as shown on page 46) wrapping the rest of perimeter are too heavy, and detract from the legibility of the white ribbon. They also interfere with the tall transparency of the retail, a desirable proportion established by the applicant's context analysis (see page 47).

The Board supports integrated canopy lighting, but did not accept that glare or maintenance is a valid justification for wide, solid canopies in a northwest climate. The Board recommended that the retail canopies should be revised to clear or fritted glass with minimal struts or frames, preferably of a silver or dark color that blends into the retail storefront. The assembly should not emulate or detract from the primary white metal ribbon above it.

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed how pedestrian active the vicinity is and that all alleys are also pedestrian; they encouraged the alley façade to be developed similar to a street facing one, especially for the visible south half, employing quality materials, details and lighting, yet not creating CPTED issues. They encouraged

the southeast corner be eased back and/or transparent to promote sight angle visibility and pedestrian/vehicle safety.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board discussed the southeast corner at length; see comments under C-1. The Board supported the quality materials and pedestrian friendly door treatments shown on page 49, which create a variety of transparencies and visual texture. The Board recommended that the lowest band of wall materials – shown as metal panel - should be durable stone, architectural concrete or similar, to resist dents and damage over the life of the building.

D. Public Amenities

Enhancing the Streetscape & Open Space

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board reiterated that the key attributes of this location are the highly visible building corner and pedestrian concentration/ linkages to nearby destinations. Thus the architectural composition, materiality, pedestrian interest, and transparency of the street level should be very well resolved, acknowledging the richly layered and human scaled elements in most all of the surrounding street levels. The entry reveals and slots provide a place-making opportunity for material variation and other identifying treatments inside the property line.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board strongly supported the multiple retail entry doors (with the revision described under C-4), the light, transparent storefronts depicted on page 37 and 43, and the special sidewalk treatment at the 2nd Avenue residential lobby entrance. The Board reiterated that the tall, transparent storefronts are the critical defining feature of this pedestrian intensive corner location.

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed that commercial and building signage – especially the residential lobby - should be well integrated and detailed in the Recommendation submittal.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the signage plan as shown, with caution that the “potential fascia signs” indicated in the transom zone above the canopy not become too large or extensive, since they interfere with the valuable storefront proportion and transparency cited above; they should be located directly above the retail doorsets along Pine Street.

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed the lighting strategy should be well developed for Recommendation, including abundant light level for safety along the alley and a rich scheme along the street sides. They also encouraged a distinctive but not garish lighting strategy for the tower shaft and top, as the profile will be visible from all sides, and residents will not want light intrusion. Consider a glow of light off the proposed fins on each side and the amenity canopy, rather than garish or self-important lighting accents.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the podium lighting boxes, roof top lighting wash, canopy/sidewalk lighting, and other lighting elements as shown on pages 72-74, plus the addition of generous lighting along the alley walls.

- 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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed the alley and even north party wall should have ample lighting to improve safety and minimize vagrancy. Also see C-6 for comments on safety at the southeast corner next to the alley.

See comments under C-1 and D-5.

E. Vehicular Access & Parking

Minimizing the Adverse Impacts

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed how the above grade parking podium is handled on this strategic, highly visible corner, is in many ways the key to the project. They spent considerable time discussing the podium, its screening treatment and retail storefronts. See comments under A-1, B-1 and B-4 above.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, the Board supported the parking screening design and efficiency units as shown on page 37, 45 and the lighting strategy shown on page 51, which animates the blank walls at night.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to **better meet** these design guideline priorities, and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s). At the time of the Final Recommendation meeting, the following departures from current code requirements were requested:

- 1. Maximum Tower Width (SMC 23.49.058.D.2):** In brief, the Code requires the maximum north-south length of a facade above 85 ft to be 80% of the lot length, meaning 105 ft in this instance. The applicant proposes a maximum length of 116 ft, which is +10.5% or 11 feet more. Also, they propose 1094 sf in the 15 ft setback zone, where the code limits that to 983 sf maximum.

This departure would provide an overall design that better meets the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, B-3 and B-4, as the slight width increase is offset by a more complex tower shape on all sides, and the area in the setback zone is shaped in response to forces in the context.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.

- 2. Common Recreation Area (SMC 23.49.010.B.1):** In brief, the Code requires 5% of the total residential GSF to be common amenity/recreation area (in this case 10,667 sf) and for 50% maximum of that sf to be enclosed. The applicant proposes 9,705 sf of recreation space (962 sf or 9% less than required), and about 76% of it enclosed (26% beyond code).

This departure would provide an overall design that better meets the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, C-5 and D-1, by distributing the common exterior space on levels 7

and 40, and with a sizable amount at level 40 and oriented to the west views and sun. The enclosed portions are reasonable to afford weather protection in a windy location.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.

- 3. Podium Parking Screening (SMC 23.49.019.2):** In brief, the Code requires any parking above the third story to be ‘wrapped’ by another use for 30% minimum of its street frontage, and if a corner site, those other uses must occupy the corner. The applicant proposes all 4 levels of above grade parking, levels 2-5, to have another use, at the corner, resulting in a total of 3,960 sf of activated façade, compared to the 2,008 minimum total required, if only done at third and fourth levels.

This departure would provide an overall design that better meets the intent of Design Review Guidelines B-3, C-2 and E-2, by placing the activating alternative uses closer to the street and animating the crucial corner, and the overall area of other uses is larger than code requires.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated January 7, 2014, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the January 7, 2014 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 the following conditions: (Guidelines referenced)

- 1) Tower Façade Refinements:** Simplify the south and west facades to ensure the primary reading of the two mid-tower vocabularies is not diluted. (See B-4)
- 2) Southeast Corner Ground Level Revisions:** Decrease the mass wall at this corner. Increase the storefront proportion, safety and ground level transparency to the parking elevator and retail for pedestrians along this prime retail route. (See C-1)
 - **Condition A:** Eliminate the mass wall east of the elevator vestibule door, and create a glass corner up to the same transom datum shown to the west.
 - **Condition B:** Change the west vestibule wall to glass to provide views into the retail.
 - **Condition C:** Explore pushing the elevator further north (and create a retail access door in the west wall mentioned above) to increase the view of retail from the sidewalk.

- **Condition D: Add a low planter or other device to the southeast corner recess, plus lighting to discourage transient activities.**
 - **Condition E: Provide well integrated signage for the public parking elevator, which maintains a highly transparent corner but makes the elevator evident for users.**
- 3) **Northwest Retail Door:** Shift the northwest retail storefront door south 10-15 ft to eliminate most of the risers shown currently (5 to 2 or 3), and to create a more visible and welcoming entrance to the sidewalk. (See C-4)
 - 4) **Retail Canopies Revisions:** Revise solid materials to clear or fritted glass with minimal struts or frames, preferably of a silver or dark color that blends into the retail storefront. (See C-5)
 - 5) **Alley Wall Lighting:** Add generous, integrated lighting along the alley walls, for pedestrian safety. (See D-5)
 - 6) **Alley Wall Materials:** The lowest band of wall materials – shown as metal panel - should be durable stone, architectural concrete or similar, to resist dents and damage over the life of the building. (See C-6)