



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3015143

Address: 3206 Harvard Ave

Applicant: Heather Beckford

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, July 10, 2013

Board Members Present: Dawn Bushnaq
Ric Cochrane
Dan Foltz
Natalie Gualy
Christina Orr-Cahall

DPD Staff Present: Bruce Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Two in a pedestrian zone with a height limit of 40' (NC2P 40).

Zoning Pattern: Neighborhood Commercial zoning with a pedestrian overlay and 40' height limits line Eastlake Ave E. on both sides from Fuhrman Ave E. on the north to E. Shelby St. on the south where Lowrise zoning (LR) is introduced on the east side of Eastlake Ave. Fronting Fairview Ave. the zoning changes to Commercial Two with a 40' height limit (C2 40). East of the alley, Lowrise Three zoning predominates.



Lot Area: The total lot area equals 8,540 square feet. A two-story building, circa 1924, occupies the irregular shaped site. Building materials include a brick and terra cotta façade with a wood frame structure. The site terrain ascends steeply to the alley behind the existing building. The site ascends approximately 18 feet from the northwest corner to the eastern edge near the alley.

Current Development & Access: The Larson Building occupies the site. Three rights of way border the site: Harvard Ave. E on the west; E. Martin St. on the south; and an alley to the east.

Neighborhood Character & Surrounding Development: The subject site sits at the northern precinct of the Eastlake neighborhood and the Roanoke community near the University Bridge. The nearby ship canal, Interstate 5, and the Eastlake Ave corridor represent the vicinity’s dominant features. The overwhelming presence in the immediate vicinity are the two levels of I-5, the express lanes of which lie 60 feet above the street level of Eastlake Avenue and whose upper deck sits some 98 feet above the street. The topography rises as it climbs from the water toward the east and north. This portion of Capitol Hill forms a triangular shaped area with its apex on the north near the intersection of Fuhrman Ave E. and Eastlake E. Ave. The area possesses a mix of single family residential, multi-family and commercial uses. Water related uses line the water course. A number of older commercial structures and more recent midrise office and condominium developments run along both sides of Eastlake Avenue E., both to the north and south of E. Allison Street. The site lies within the Eastlake Residential Urban Village overlay.

ECAs: The site has a mapped steep slope.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes preserving the brick and terra cotta façade of the existing two-story building and constructing a four to five story, terraced structure housing 41 dwelling units and 3,775 square feet of commercial space at grade.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant proposes three massing variations all of which include preservation of the Larson Building façade. Scheme A adds two floors above the existing two-story façade along Harvard Ave with an additional floor and clearstory toward the back of the site. An open space at Level Three extends the Union Bay Lofts' courtyard into the site. Concern with noise generated by the interstate informs the idea of a courtyard internal to the building. Balconies from the upper levels overlook the court. Scheme B slightly steps back the proposed addition from existing Harvard Ave and the E. Martin St. facades, then forms a series of two unequal terraces at four to five stories as the structure steps back from Harvard Ave. Roof top open spaces overlook the freeway. The architect carves in Scheme C a courtyard open to the west at the third and fourth levels above the existing two-story façade. The new upper levels wrap around the court. At the back of the site, the structure rises to a fifth level.

A series of façade studies shown on p. 13 of the EDG booklet illustrate various ways of composing the two elevations above the existing building. The effort appears informed mostly by the window and pier spacing of the Larson Building.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Seven members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. Attendees raised the following issues:

- The E. Martin St. steps are an important feature of the neighborhood. These need improvement and better visibility.
- Pedestrian and bike movements represent a significant issue. The corner needs visual enhancement.
- Create a landscape buffer between the curb and the sidewalk in order to ensure pedestrian safety and reduce noise.
- Improve the pedestrian crossing at Eastlake.
- The Eastlake Ave crossing is particularly germane as many of the future residents will cross the street to reach their cars.
- The bump-out on E. Martin St. enhances the project.
- The site acts as a mini-gateway between neighborhoods. It links the Eastlake and the Roanoke communities.
- The position of the residential door in the Larson Building can inform the composition of the addition.

DPD received one letter from in which the author praised Scheme A and favored a façade with the maximum amount of transparency.

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. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

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

A. Site Planning

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.

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

The Board endorses the idea of a landscape barrier between the curb and the sidewalk. The generous area between the curb and the building presents an opportunity for a gracious streetscape. Continue the landscaping into the E. Martin St. right of way.

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

Focus attention on the landscaping design for the Harvard Ave streetscape and the E. Martin right of way to ensure a quality pedestrian environment.

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.

The developer has every reason to respect the Union Bay Lofts. The architects of the proposal ought to consider the less intense zoning across the alley.

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

Produce a visually porous separation between courtyards. The adjoining courtyards do not need access to one another, however, the design should allow for a mostly uninterrupted visual connection.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

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.

In general, the applicant addressed height, bulk and scale issues appropriately for the site. The projection or appendage closest to the E. Martin St. right of way needs careful attention as to its scale and relationship to the larger structure, to the adjoining right of way, and to the properties across the alley. An opportunity exists for this projection to form a gem or jewel like object.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

- 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.**

The Board endorses the architect's preferred option "A" with its third level internal courtyard adjoining the open space at the Union Bay Lofts.

None of the three elevation studies generated much enthusiasm among the Board members. By MUP application, the architect will submit a solution; however, working studies of the façade development need inclusion in the Recommendation packet.

Deliberation focused on several possible organizing principles for the facade including the use of the central residential entry, the hinge at Harvard and E. Martin, the fissure between the Union Bay Lofts and the proposal and the rhythm of the upper floor windows and balconies from the adjoining structure.

Integrate the roof top features into the larger structure rather than creating a set of discrete objects of the penthouses and amenity room.

- 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.**

Drawings of the next design iteration will display materials. A color and materials board is required.

D. Pedestrian Environment

- 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.**

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-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas. Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.

The architect's decision to ensure alley access to the solid waste storage area was appreciated.

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

The Board strongly encourages the improvement or enhancement of the E. Martin St right of way to ensure both safety and an attractive means of access between neighborhoods.

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

D-9 Commercial Signage. Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.

Develop a signage concept for the Recommendation meeting.

D-10 Commercial Lighting. Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.

D-11 Commercial Transparency. Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.

For the new commercial spaces specify highly transparent windows.

E. Landscaping

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.

Work with SDOT to improve the E. Martin St. right of way. Ensure adequate lighting and attractive landscaping.

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site. Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

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

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the applicant did not propose departures from the land use code.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.

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