



City of Seattle

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



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

Project Number: 3015507

Address: 810 Dexter Ave N

Applicant: Brian Runberg of Runberg Architects for Jodi Patterson-O’Hare and Holland Development

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, September 11, 2013

Board Members Present: Mindy Black (Chair)
Boyd Pickrell
Matt Roewe (substituting)
Janet Stephenson

Board Members Absent: Kate Idziorek
Jill Kurfirst

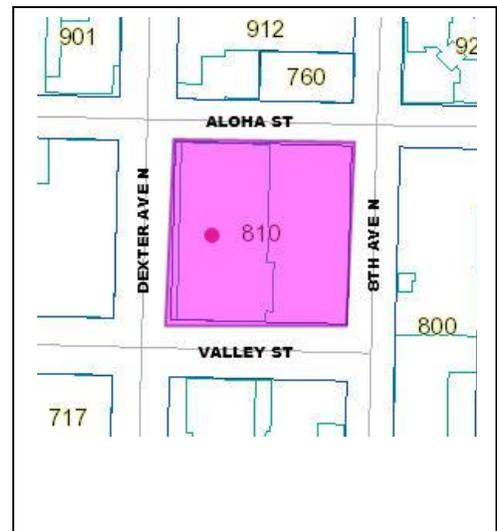
DPD Staff Present: Shelley Bolser

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: SM-160/85-240

Nearby Zones: North: SM-85
South: SM-160/85-240
East: SM-85
West: SM-160/85-240

Lot Area: 62,500 square feet



Current Development: One 3-story commercial structure with a surface parking lot.

Access: Existing vehicular access is via curb cuts at the street frontages.

A newer multi-story hotel is located to the northeast. Recently constructed mixed-use residential structures are located to the north, northwest, and west.

Newer multi-story office, hotel, and institutional buildings are located in the blocks to the east and south, along with some older structures, and some surface parking lots. Several sites are under construction within a few blocks of the site. Mercer corridor improvements are underway two blocks to the south.

Older structures near the site include 1-2 story commercial and industrial buildings from the early to mid 20th century, and surface parking lots. A recently designated historic landmark is located across the street to the southeast (Puget Sound Power and Light).

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The South Lake Union neighborhood was recently rezoned for increased development density. This site is located near the northwest edge of the larger South Lake Union neighborhood.

Nearby recreational opportunities can be found at Lake Union Park, one block to the east. MOHAI and the Center For Wooden Boats are also located at the southern edge of Lake Union.

The adjacent streets all include specific designations. 8th Ave N is designated as a Green Street. Dexter Ave N is designated as a Class II Pedestrian Street.

Nearby transit opportunities include bus service and bike corridors on Dexter Ave and other nearby corridors. The South Lake Union Streetcar is also located two blocks to the east.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for an 85' tall, 7-story building with 378 residential units over 3,600 square feet of commercial space and below grade parking for 262 vehicles. The existing structures would be demolished.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: September 11, 2013

The packet includes materials presented at the 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.

The packet is also available to view in the 3015507 file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

The north edge would be set back 10' or more, with a larger northwest plaza and second lobby, in response to the pedestrian connection from Aloha Street across the pier to Lake Union Park.

A 6' setback is proposed on 8th Ave to accommodate stoop conditions. A two-story podium on 8th Ave N is proposed as a response to the scale of the historic landmark to the southeast.

A 10' setback is proposed at Dexter Ave N to allow for larger townhouse stoops and landscaping. The applicant noted that the townhouse stoops would be level with the sidewalk and the townhouse entries.

The west courtyard entry (the "portal" shown in the packet) would respond to the location of the True North courtyard entry to the west across Dexter Ave N. The facades on either side of the west portal would likely include common residential areas or leasing office, rather than residential units.

The applicant noted that depending on the Land Use Code definition of the proposed residential amenity use that will provide kayaks for residents at the northwest corner lobby, a departure for street level uses may or may not be required. This will be clarified prior to a Recommendation meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Will 8th Ave include vehicular access through to the south, across Mercer Street?
- The Board responded that no, 8th Ave N will not continue through to the south, once the Mercer Street improvements are complete.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

- 1. Architectural Concept.** The Board noted that a strong architectural concept with careful scalar moves will be especially important at this site, given that the site occupies an entire City block. The Board noted that a strongly expressed legible and cohesive

architectural concept has the potential to provide a better scalar response than a design with many small articulations. (B-1, C-2, C-3, C-4)

- a. The Board noted support for the design intent of a two-story podium on 8th Ave N, the preliminary massing on Aloha Street, and the overall angular massing of the proposal. (B-1, C-2, C-3)
 - b. The roofline should be modulated/articulated consistent with the architectural concept. The Board observed that the design could possibly incorporate strategies used in nearby development, but that a strong architectural concept is more important than a contextual response for this site. (C-2)
 - c. The Board stressed that high quality durable materials are expected on Dexter Ave N. (C-4)
 - d. The design should include careful treatment of any blank walls resulting from the sloped site conditions. (C-2, C-3, C-4, D-2)
2. **Corners.** The corners of the site should be designed to respond to the context of each street frontage and should enhance the architectural concept. (A-2, A-10, C-2)
 - a. The Board supported the proposed active plaza and highly glazed corner residential entry at the northeast corner of the site (Aloha and 8th). The Board noted that the prominent design of this building entry will be important, given the large site size. (A-3, A-4, A-10, C-2, D-1)
 - b. The Board noted that massing Option C appears to offer the best design response to the site, but the northeast corner in massing Option B appears to relate better to the corner. (A-10, B-1, C-2)
 - c. The Board supported the proposed retail at the northwest corner. (A-2, A-4, A-10)
 - d. The Board noted that the applicant has carefully considered potential treatment for the northwest and northeast corners. The southwest and southeast corners of the site should also be designed in response to the Guidelines and to enhance the proposed architectural concept. (A-10, C-2)
3. **8th Ave N.** The 8th Ave N street frontage should be designed to complement the residential enclave designation of 8th Avenue, located south of Mercer Street. (A-2, A-6, A-7, E-3)
 - a. The Board noted that proposed residential use, rain gardens, and stoops should be designed to be consistent with the context of the 8th Ave N. residential enclave street plan, located to the south of Mercer Street. (A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-6, A-7, D-12, E-3)
 - b. In order to provide adequate depth for the stoops and landscaping, a 10' setback should be provided on 8th Ave N, rather than the proposed 6' setback. (A-1, A-2, A-6, A-7, E-3)
 - c. The stoops on 8th Ave N should be elevated to enhance the residential character and privacy for street level residents. (A-2, A-6, A-7, D-12, E-3)
 - d. Lighting on 8th Ave N should be designed to maximize safety and security, as well as enhance the residential character of the street. (A-7)
 - e. The landscaping on 8th Ave N. should be designed to be consistent with the 8th Ave N. plan located south of Mercer Street. (E-3)

4. **Dexter Ave N. Street Level.** The Board directed the applicant to provide additional active uses at Dexter Ave N., beyond the one small commercial space shown at the northwest corner. (A-2, A-4, D-11, D-12).
 - a. The Board observed that a potential solution could include designing the street level residential units for flexible use in the future as live-work or commercial spaces, since the stoops are already level with the sidewalk, and Dexter Ave N. presents the context of smaller businesses at street level.
 - b. The design of any street level residential spaces on Dexter Ave N. should provide the depth, height, glazing and overhead weather protection that might be seen with live-work or commercial uses, as well as the treatment for residential privacy that will provide transparent and active street frontages. (A-2, A-4, C-4, D-11, D-12)

5. **Mid-Block Connection.** The mid-block connection configuration, orientation, and conceptual architectural response to the west 'portal' were supported by the Board. (A-1, A-2, A-4, A-7, D-1)
 - a. The Board supported the orientation of the mid-block connection with a large opening to the south to maximize sun exposure to the courtyard and connection. The Board noted that this orientation doesn't reflect the typical east-west mid-block connections, but it provides better solar access and provides a usable pedestrian connection from Dexter Ave N to the southeast corner of the site, with destinations to the southeast of the site. The Board also noted that this block isn't as long as the blocks south of Mercer Street, so a break directly across the block is not as critical as it might be in areas to the south. (A-1, A-2, A-4, A-7, D-1)
 - b. The Board noted that the courtyard and mid-block connection include several residences at grade. Given the nature of the proposed program and the quieter residential context of the area, it will be appropriate to include a plan for closing the mid-block connection in the evenings. The applicant should demonstrate the design of any gates, fences, and plan for closure at the Recommendation meeting. (A-6, A-7, C-2, C-4, D-7)
 - c. The Board discussed the conceptual design of the building above the west portal. This area should be modulated and treated to be consistent with the architectural concept. The Board noted that this may include more significant modulation to respond to the entry portal, and possible modulation of the cornice line. (A-3, C-2, C-4)

6. **Parking, Loading, and Solid Waste.** The Board supported the proposed parking garage entry location on Aloha St. The Board directed the applicant to design the parking garage to accommodate loading inside the building, and provide adequate areas for solid waste storage. The parking garage entry should be designed to include adequate areas for solid waste staging on collection days. The Board noted this is particularly important at this site because of the size of the development and lack of an alley. (A-1, A-2, D-6)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Encourage provision of “outlooks and overlooks” for the public to view the lake and cityscapes. Examples include provision of public plazas and/or other public open spaces and changing the form or facade setbacks of the building to enhance opportunities for views.
- Minimize shadow impacts to Cascade Park.
- New development is encouraged to take advantage of site configuration to accomplish sustainability goals. The Board is generally willing to recommend departures from development standards if they are needed to achieve sustainable design. Refer to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* (LEED) manual which provides additional information. Examples include:
 - Solar orientation
 - Storm water run-off, detention and filtration systems
 - Sustainable landscaping
 - Versatile building design for entire building life cycle

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

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

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

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

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

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- Create graceful transitions at the streetscape level between the public and private uses.
- Keep neighborhood connections open, and discourage closed campuses.
- Design facades to encourage activity to spill out from business onto the sidewalk, and vice-versa.
- Reinforce pedestrian connections both within the neighborhood and to other adjacent neighborhoods. Transportation infrastructure should be designed with adjacent sidewalks, as development occurs to enhance pedestrian connectivity.
- Reinforce retail concentrations with compatible spaces that encourage pedestrian activity.
- Create businesses and community activity clusters through co-location of retail and pedestrian uses as well as other high pedestrian traffic opportunities.
- Design for a network of safe and well-lit connections to encourage human activity and link existing high activity areas.

A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street. For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

Consider designing the entries of residential buildings to enhance the character of the streetscape through the use of small gardens, stoops and other elements to create a transition between the public and private areas. Consider design options to accommodate various residential uses, i.e., townhouse, live-work, apartment and senior-assisted housing.

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

A-10 Corner Lots. Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility. Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

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

C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency. Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

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

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

C-4 Exterior Finish Materials. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances. Convenient and attractive access to the building’s entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

- New developments are encouraged to work with the Design Review Board and interested citizens to provide features that enhance the public realm, i.e. the transition zone between private property and the public right of way. The Board is generally willing to consider a departure in open space requirements if the project proponent

provides an acceptable plan for features such as: curb bulbs adjacent to active retail spaces where they are not interfering with primary corridors that are designated for high levels of traffic flow; pedestrian-oriented street lighting; street furniture.

- D-2 **Blank Walls.** Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.
- D-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.
- D-7 **Personal Safety and Security.** Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

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

- 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.
- D-12 **Residential Entries and Transitions.** For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.
- E-3 **Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions.** The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

SLU-specific supplemental guidance:

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

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No departures were requested at the time of the EDG meeting.

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.