



## FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3015682

Address: 1511 Dexter Avenue N

Applicant: Runberg Architecture Group, for Bellweather Housing

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, November 18, 2015

Board Members Present: Boyd Pickrell, Chair  
Christine Harrington  
Katie Idziorek  
Homero Nishiwaki

Board Members Absent: Janet Stephenson

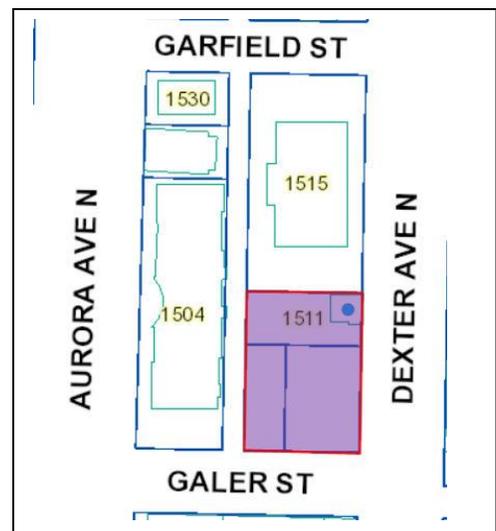
DPD Staff Present: Garry Papers, RA, MArch, Senior Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC3-40 (proposed rezone to NC3-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC3-40  
(South) SM 85  
(East) C2-65  
(West) C1-65

Lot Area: 16,240 sf, steeply sloping



**Current Development:** A surface parking lot and small one story commercial structure occupy the lower portion of the site fronting Dexter; a vegetated slope occupies the west portion of the lot that fronts on the alley.

**Access:** Vehicle access is from Galer Street and the alley; the former reaches the alley then dead ends into the slope. Pedestrian access is from the two streets, Galer and Dexter Avenue; the former reaches the alley then transitions to stairs that connect upslope, the latter is a busy transit and bike route.

**Surrounding Development:** A five story office building and surface parking is adjacent to the north; a five story office building is across Dexter to the east; a five story residential building steps down the slope across Galer Street to the south; a six story residential structure, above parking levels, is upslope across the alley to the west.

**ECAs:** ECA 2, Potential Slide: site slopes down 28 ft overall from the northwest alley corner to the southeast property corner at Dexter Avenue.

**Neighborhood Character:** The neighborhood is mostly 4-6 story commercial buildings along the Dexter Avenue corridor, with mixed use and residential structures of various scales to the west and along Aurora Avenue. The Lake Union waterfront is one block east, connected by the Galer Street pedestrian link. The South Lake Union Urban Center boundary is located at Galer Street, so this site is not included.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a six story residential structure, with a total of 68 units and three ground level live/work units fronting Dexter. Parking for 14 spaces is within the structure, with access off Galer Street, plus 16 surface spaces perpendicular off the alley. A Contract Rezone from NC3-40 to NC3-65 is included in the MUP application, pending City Council action.

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) February 19, 2014

The Design Proposal includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:  
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the 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](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## PUBLIC COMMENT

At the EDG Meeting, the following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Concerned that the proposed structure, especially if rezone is approved at NC 65 foot height, will be too close to the Citiscape condominiums across the alley, and eastward views from lower units will get blocked (several mentioned this) [Staff Note: City code does not protect views from private property].
- Supported the proposed apartment uses and rezone height, as it will add residential units and choices directly on a high capacity transit street, adjacent to the urban center.
- Applauded the applicants for meeting with the Queen Anne Land Use Review Committee (LURC), and supported the massing as shown, the curb cut off Galer, setback amenity deck at level five, and the ground level setback along Galer.
- Concerned that all trash bins and pick-up be fully internalized, to not impact alley or steep Galer Street, and that the roots and branches of the existing trees on the adjacent lot be fully protected.
- Supported the project, uses and massing as compatible with the existing buildings along Dexter, and advised generous sidewalk lighting along both streets.
- Noted the steep sidewalks on Galer are a pedestrian safety issue, and suggested textured surfaces, assist rails, and careful selection of street tree species to minimize quantity and size of slippery leaves falling on sidewalks.
- Disagreed with the rezone height increase from 40 feet to 65 feet [Staff Note: Staff clarified that the Rezone process is a separate review and analysis, and a City Council decision].

### FINAL RECOMMENDATION November 18, 2015

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## PUBLIC COMMENT

At the Recommendation meeting, the following comments were raised:

- Generally supportive of the project to add residential units in this location.
- Concerned about security along the projects north and west sides, and advised lighting and careful landscape selection to not create adverse safety conditions.
- The Queen Anne Community Council, Land Use & Planning Committee (LURC) supported the project as revised since EDG, and the requested departures.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the design revisions since EDG, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance:

### FINAL RECOMMENDATION November 18, 2015

The Board identified the following Citywide guidelines as Priority Guidelines at the EDG meeting. The Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

**All page references below are to the Recommendation booklet dated November 18, 2015.**

## CONTEXT & SITE

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

### CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

**CS2-A-1. Sense of Place:** Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place.

Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

### CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

**CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics:** Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting**, the Board noted the site-specific features underlined above - the Dexter transit street and Galer pedestrian link - and endorsed the preferred massing option C (pg 34), which had the following positive features which should be retained: deep setback south amenity deck at level 6, which improves eastward public views from the upslope Galer pedestrian walkways; absence of tall

elevator overrides and penthouses on the roof; deep ground level setback along entire Galer frontage; and deep reveals/notches on the south, east and north facades.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board reiterated how the ground level setback along Dexter supports the busy sidewalk of a transit & bike street, and the setback along Galer provides a lush landscape edge along the pedestrian 'hill climb'.**

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board supported the vehicle access off Galer Street and the alley, not Dexter Avenue which is a primary bike and bus transit street. The Board endorsed the approximate 7 foot setback at the two live work units on Dexter, and the transparent lobby defining the southeast property corner. See DC1-B-1 for comments on how the Galer Street parking drive interacts with the streetscape.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the proposed 6 ft setback along the Dexter live/work units, and the patios and landscaping in front of those units, as shown on pgs 49/50, with the condition #4 on the last pages.**

#### **CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-1. Corner Sites:** Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board supported the tall (about 14 ft clear) and transparent lobby wrapping the southeast corner, which the Board agreed should be a strong design statement. The Board supported the parking portal and a small portion of blank wall located well off the corner on Galer Street. See PL3-A-1 for additional comments on the lobby doors.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board agreed the southeast corner has a suitably strong statement, because of the full-height glazing, low sills and legible entrance canopy with signage, as shown on pg 45 and 52. To ensure the corner is a lit beacon and illuminates the adjacent sidewalks, provide interior perimeter lighting at the office corner glazing that is interconnected to the exterior lighting circuit.**

#### **CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning:** Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

**CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features:** Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board reiterated the massing is bermed into the sloping site and the building height has been strategically reduced to not overscale the Galer Street pedestrian link or its lake views. See section on pg 42.**

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board discussed how the proposed building, at the approximate 55 ft height assumed within the rezone envelope (pg 19), would be compatible with the surrounding structures along Dexter. The Board also commented that the western most façade of the proposed massing is approximately 55 feet from the adjacent Citiscape condominiums, which is comparable to a typical city street ROW. Because of this distance and screening, the Board did not advise further bulk reductions on this façade, but did advise typical levels of material and compositional interest, that unit balconies should be modest, and the shared amenity deck be oriented to the south and east, not west, to protect the neighbors' privacy.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board agreed the west elevation has an attractive composition and quality materials, both architectural and landscape. There are no balconies to impact privacy, and the private patios for level 2 units are in recessed light wells.**

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design:** Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board stated the project was a contemporary composition with modest means and quality materials. The Board agreed the dark brown wrapping elements on both the east and west facades (# B on pg 45) were critical to the design success, and therefore recommended detailed conditions on the last page.**

**PUBLIC LIFE**

**PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

## **PL1-A Network of Open Spaces**

**PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space:** Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board supported the level 6 amenity deck and its associated setback on the south end of the massing, to improve public views eastward from the Galer Street pedestrian walkways to the west. This appropriate setback and other bulk modulation shown on pg 54 are why Guideline DC2-A, Massing, was not cited as a priority. This deck location also supports DC1-A-4.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board agreed the massing setback, common roof deck, and highly transparent perforated metal guardrails (pg 45/55) are well-located to maximize views for occupants and Galer Street pedestrians.**

## **PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes:** Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board agreed the voluntary setback along part of Dexter, and the proposed setback and building edge plantings enhanced the pedestrian experience along Dexter, a street busy with buses, bikes, and other modes.**

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

## **PL2-A Accessibility**

**PL2-A-1. Access for All:** Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

**PL2-A-2. Access Challenges:** Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended reducing the height of the stepped planters along Galer to approximately 24" maximum at any location, and adding design-integrated railings along the property line to assist pedestrians walking up that sloping sidewalk.**

## **PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed safety concerns, especially along the steeply sloping Galer Street. See PL2-A-2 and DC4-D-2 for additional safety comments. The Board endorsed the idea that the adjacent tree lot have active uses and other methods to ensure it does not attract vagrants.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended consistent lighting bollards along the alley parking, and along all four building walls at ground level; see conditions on last page.**

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board supported the primary residential lobby at the southeast corner, and requested studies to have the lobby door open directly onto Dexter, where it helps activate that street and storefront, rather than hidden around the corner. The Board also wanted that entrance to be level and welcoming, not crowded into the sloping sidewalk, and promoted a blade or other design element that marks this primary lobby entrance for southbound pedestrians and traffic, and distinguishes it from possible ground level live/work signage and doors.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the lobby entrance, canopy and blade sign on Dexter, as shown on pg 45, 51 and 59.**

**PL3-A-2. Common Entries:** Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

**PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses:** Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed how the live/work frontage will need to be a sophisticated design to ensure a strong commercial character along Dexter Avenue, yet incorporate some translucent and/or layering elements to afford privacy if the shallow, one-story spaces within become predominantly residential. The Board requested large scale elevations with materials, and perspectives including the adjacent landscape design; see comments under DC4-D-1.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the ground level live/work facades, materials and landscaping as shown on pg 45, 49 & 50, but recommended the metal planter edges shown on pg 49 step with the slope to stay 8-16" maximum tall, and that plant species be layered in height up to the windows. See conditions on last page.**

### **PL3-C Retail Edges**

**PL3-C-1. Porous Edge:** Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

**PL3-C-2. Visibility:** Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays.

Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

**PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities:** Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the Dexter façade, patios and landscaping design, and a minimum depth departure, based on the high transparency of the storefronts and the interior walls being detailed to support retail/commercial activities. See conditions on last page.**

## DESIGN CONCEPT

### **DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site. PL2-B-3]**

#### **DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-1. Visibility:** Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

**DC1-A-4. Views and Connections:** Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board reiterated that the common roof deck south location receives good sun exposure and provides good views.**

#### **DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation**

**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design:** Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed to ensure safe pedestrian and vehicle sight-lines, the driveway should remain basically level at the exiting lane as it transitions to sloping Galer, and adjacent landscaping and walls (especially upslope) should maintain generous and clear sight-lines to the busy pedestrian link. The Board requested large scale sections and elevations with pedestrian sightlines indicated.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the driveway as shown on pg 36 and 44, and recommended an attractive mesh gate to augment the Galer Street elevation improvements described under DC2-B-2.**

#### **DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-1. Below-Grade Parking:** Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

**DC1-C-4. Service Uses:** Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board requested a specific study and coordination with Seattle Public Utilities staff, to confirm internalized trash locations and the on-site pick-up routes and truck staging point.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the trash room as shown on pg 38.**

**DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

#### **DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable,

include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was accepting of the short blank west wall along Galer, assuming it will receive a treatment that provides pedestrian interest. The Board agreed a similar treatment is needed on the north facade corner exit wall, since it will likely be visible for the foreseeable future. The Board supported additional windows, reveals and material variation on the north façade.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board discussed the entire length of the Galer Street ground level façade at length, and as part of the blank wall departure request. The Board recommended a combination of art screens (similar to that shown on pg 61) and green screens, on both sides of the garage opening, to provide pedestrian visual interest. See conditions on last page.**

#### **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed how important the reveals and notches shown in the preferred option (pg 34) are to meeting this guideline, and the Board advised those key elements achieve substantial depth. The Board endorsed the shifted north stair described by the applicants, to provide windows on the north façade, visible from Dexter Avenue.

The Board did not cite 'DC2-A, Massing' as a priority guideline, because the preferred massing shown on pg 34/right is promising and consistent with the established street wall along Dexter, but the Board expects high levels of fenestration composition, depth and material variation that provide human scale on all four elevations, especially the three seen obliquely from Dexter Avenue.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the brown wrapping forms of the 'shell' (pg 23), but was disappointed to learn they are projecting only 8" from the adjacent wall surfaces, as shown on plans and pg 48. The Board recommended the applicants sincerely explore shifting the entire building mass slightly west, to gain more depth and interest at the critical Dexter frontage; the Board recommended 14 -20" total projection. The 8" projection is sufficient on the west elevation.**

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board also discussed the red vertical reveal on the Dexter façade as providing a valuable secondary feature, but agreed the slight**

chamfer in plan is confusing, and the reveal depth is insufficient to be legible. The Board recognized the width of the red reveal may have to be reduced to improve formal clarity, and supported the full wrap of the red color at the roof deck (pg 23). The Board recommended several revisions to strengthen the legibility of this important reveal; see conditions on last page.

#### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

**DC2-D-2. Texture:** Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the proposed ‘stacked bond brick’ #K (pg 45), as an important textural material at the street levels.**

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

#### **DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

**DC4-A-1. 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.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the proposed materials, including the 15” metal faces of the critical brown wrapping forms, but recommended all soffits of that wrap also be metal for consistency, especially the ground level soffits on Galer and Dexter, as shown on pg 49. NOTE: the soffit at the southwest corner of Galer appears to be about 6 ft above the sidewalk at the property line (pg 44); detail edges and corners to ensure adequate safety for pedestrians, especially the blind.**

#### **DC4-C Lighting**

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare:** Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the lighting concept shown on pg 60, including the wall sconces and frequent soffit lights on Galer and Dexter, but recommended additional wall sconces along the north façade.**

## **DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

**DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials:** Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board endorsed the Dexter setback landscaping as shown, which is lush and creates sociable transitions to the sidewalk, incorporating stoops, seating walls and other layering techniques.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended landscape conditions along Dexter Avenue described on the last page. The Board also recommended the planters along Galer be reduced in height and that the plant species be layered in height to help screen the blank wall occurring along most of that street facing wall.**

**DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials:** Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board cautioned that the tree and landscape species along the Galer Street curb and setback zone should be selected to not shed an excessive amount or large slippery leaves, which could create safety issues on the steep Galer sidewalk. The Board also endorsed textured sidewalk surfaces, assist rails along the setback planters, and wayfinding devices to indicate the extent of the Galer pedestrian link. The Board also cautioned all landscape retaining walls along Galer to be stepped in order to keep walls 18-24 inches maximum height, and lower near the driveway sight lines. The Board requested large scale sections and elevations with all walls and shrub heights indicated.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the dense landscape and 'signature oak' tree located at the southwest corner. The Board also supported the stepped landscape planters along Galer, but recommended all planter heights be reduced from those shown on pg 56 and the plant species be revised; see conditions on last page.**

**The Board also recommended reduction of the width of the planter in the linear west light well to maximize the usable space for the adjacent units (see pg 73). The Board recommended the planter be at grade, or staggered planters with a maximum 18" height curb, plus vines to help mitigate the 13 ft tall concrete wall opposite the sunken units.**

### **EXCEPTIONAL TREE GROVE DISCUSSION:**

The applicants presented information from an ISA Certified Arborist; none of the 20 mature trees on the western portion of the site is individually city-classified as

Exceptional, but they form a continuous canopy, and that is classified as an Exceptional Tree Grove, with 8,800 sf of canopy area. To retain the grove, the root protection zone for the grove would leave a buildable depth of approximately 48 ft off Dexter Avenue (see pg 30).

Page 33 of the Recommendation booklet shows that preservation of the grove and its root zone would result in a 32% reduction of development potential on the east part of the site. To recover that development area, the building massing would need to increase nearly 3 full floors, to an approximate height of 80 feet. The Board agreed this height would be incompatible with the height, bulk and scale of neighboring buildings (contrary to guideline CS2-D-1), and the adjusted narrow massing would not blend into the urban pattern and form (contrary to guideline CS2).

**For these reasons the Board *unanimously* agreed the tree-retention scheme had significant guideline impacts, and *unanimously* supported the proposed site plan that replaces the exceptional tree grove with on-site trees and lush understory plantings (booklet pg 31), which create a canopy area of 9,746 sf at maturity (larger than the existing exceptional grove canopy).**

#### **DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project 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 **FINAL** Recommendation meeting the following departures were requested:

1. **Residential Uses at Street Level (SMC 23.47A.005.C.1):** The Code requires 20% maximum of the street-level, street-facing façade to be residential uses. The applicant proposes 56% to be live/work (classified as commercial use) and 44% to be residential lobby, managers office and other residential uses.

The Board agreed the lobby, entrance and managers office create a very transparent, commercial expression to Dexter Avenue and the corner with Galer, meeting the spirit of the Code. [ PL3-A; PL3-C; CS2-C-1]

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.**

2. **Minimum Depth of Non-residential Uses at Street Level (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3):** The Code requires non-residential street level uses to average a minimum of 30 ft depth. The applicant proposes 29'-3" depth for all non-residential uses.

The Board agreed the voluntary 6 ft setback along Dexter is a valuable buffer, and the consequent 9" reduction in live/work depth is supportable. [CS2-B-2]

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.**

3. **Minimum Height of Non-residential Uses at Street Level (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3):** The Code requires non-residential street level uses to be 13 ft minimum floor to floor. The applicant proposes one of the 3 live/work units to be 12'-7", and another to be 11'-9"; the third live/work unit is 13'-1".

The Board supported the three units stepping with grade, and the consequent reductions in height for two of the units, especially since the street facades are tall and highly transparent. [PL2-B-3]

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.**

4. **Maximum Length & Percentage of Blank Wall (SMC 23.47A.008.A.2):** The Code requires blank facades (between 2 and 8 ft above grade) to not exceed 20 ft in length or exceed 40% of the façade width along a street. The applicant proposes a blank façade on Galer that is 24'-2" long, and the total blank percentage on Galer to be 47%.

The Board supported the increase in this blank wall only if the design adds a combination of art panels and green screens to provide pedestrian scale and interest on this wall.

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure. NOTE: subsequent to the meeting, the applicants submitted an exhibit pg 72, which appears to meet the Boards guidance and meets Code, thus making this departure unnecessary.**

5. **Parking Adjacent to Street-level, Street-facing Façade (SMC 47A.032.B.1.b):** The Code prohibits parking uses inside a structure immediately adjacent to the street façade. The applicant proposes parking spaces along a 22ft long portion of the sloped Galer Street façade.

The Board agreed the wall treatment and stepped landscape planters adjacent to this portion of façade, reinforces the pedestrian experience along the Galer pedestrian link. [DC1-C-2]

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.**

6. **Parking Access from Non-Alley Location (SMC 23.47A.032.A.1.a):** The Code requires all parking access to be from the alley, if the site abuts an improved alley (this site does).

The applicant proposes 16 parking spaces perpendicular off the alley (those are code compliant) and 14 parking spaces within the structure with access off Galer Street.

To provide all parking access from the alley, the Board agreed the 20% sloped ramps along the alley, and the resulting retaining walls and minimized landscape areas, would create a less compatible and pleasant transition to the Galer pedestrian link and neighboring properties. [ PL1-A-1, CS2-D-2]

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.**

7. **Minimum Depth of Non-residential portions of Live/work Uses (SMC 23.47A.008.E.1):** The Code requires the full width and first 15 ft from the street-facing street-level façade, to be only non-residential functions. The applicant proposes interior bedroom walls that are 7' 5" from the façade, and approximately half the width of each live/work unit.

The Board agreed the voluntary 6 ft setback combines with the 7 ft 5" proposed to create an acceptable depth of commercial character in the 13'5" distance from pedestrians on the sidewalk. The Board supported the stated intent for the street-facing bedroom walls to be detailed with shelves, lighting and other means for display of goods and/or artwork, that creates a backdrop with visual interest for pedestrians.

**The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant this departure.**

## **BOARD RECOMMENDATION**

The recommendation summarized above was based on the #3015682 design review packet dated Wednesday, November 18, 2015, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Wednesday, November 18, 2015 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 (all page references are to the booklet dated 11/18/15) [guidelines referenced]: These conditions should be resolved prior to MUP issuance.

- 1) **'WRAPS' & SOFFIT MATERIAL:** Use metal material for the faces of the critical brown wrapping forms, and all soffits of that wrap for consistency, especially at the visible, ground level soffits on Galer and Dexter, as shown on pg 49. [DC4-A-1]
- 2) **DEXTER AVENUE FAÇADE DEPTH:** Seriously explore shifting the entire building mass slightly west, to gain more depth and interest at the critical Dexter frontage; the Board recommended 14 -20" total projection between the face of the 'wraps' and the adjacent wall surface. [DC2-C-1]

- 3) **DEXTER AVENUE VERTICAL 'REVEAL'**: To improve the clarity and legibility of this important reveal: a) recess the red plane to be 24-36" from the adjacent stair plane; b) continue that red plane consistently from grade all the way to top of level 6; c) delete the chamfer between stair and corridor, and replace it with a 90-degree corner that may afford a linear sidelight into the stair; and d) paint the ground level exit door to match the reveal color (see pg 49). [DC2-C-1]
- 4) **DEXTER AVENUE PLANTERS**: Step the metal planter edges (pg 49) with grade, to be 8-14" maximum tall, and specify plant species to be layered in height up to the windows. [DC4-D-1]
- 5) **GALER STREET LOWER WALLS**: Provide a combination of art screens (similar to that shown on pg 61) and green screens, on both sides of the garage opening, to provide pedestrian visual interest. Specify a garage door to be an attractive, artful mesh design, providing visual interest to pedestrians. [DC4-D-2]
- 6) **GALER STREET PLANTERS**: Reduce the height of all stepped planters along Galer to approximately 24" maximum at any location, and add design-integrated railings along the property line to assist pedestrians walking up that sloping sidewalk. Specify plant species to be layered in height to help screen the blank wall along most of that street facing wall. [DC4-D-1]
- 7) **WEST LIGHT WELL PLANTER & LANDSCAPING**: Reduce linear stepped planter to be at grade, or provide staggered planters with 18" maximum curbs, and add vines or other vertical plants to mitigate the tall concrete wall. [DC3-B-1]
- 8) **SITE & BUILDING PERIMETER LIGHTING**: Provide 5 wall sconces along the north façade, near grade level, and provide all bollard, soffit and wall sconce lights shown on pg 60. [PL2-B-2]
- 9) **CORNER LIGHTING & PRESENCE**: Provide interior perimeter lighting at the southeast corner glazing that is interconnected to the exterior lighting circuit. [PL2-B-2; DC4-C-1]