



City of Seattle

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



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016095

Address: 1007 Stewart Street (at Terry Ave)

Applicant: Jeremy Schoenfeld, of LMN Architects, for Trammel Crow Co.

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, November 05, 2013

Board Members Present: Gabe Grant (Chair)
Kathryn Armstrong (substitute)
Peter Krech (substitute)
Gundula Proksch

Board Members Absent: Mathew Albores
Murphy McCullough
Pragnesh Parikh

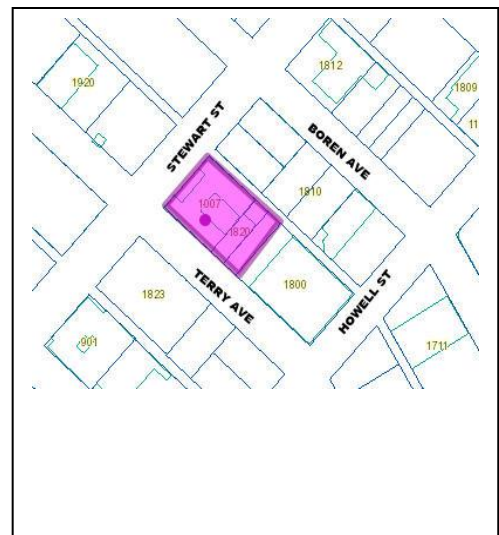
DPD Staff Present: Garry Papers, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC 340/290-400

Nearby Zones: (North) DMC 340/290-400
(South) DMC 340/290-400
(East) DMC 340/290-400
(West) DMC 340/290-400

Lot Area: 20,760 sf rectangle; flat



Current Development: 3 story apartment building, circa 1912 and a 1 story commercial structure. The apartment building was evaluated and denied nomination by the Landmarks Preservation Board in May 2010 (status effective for 5 years).

Access: Corner lot fronting onto Stewart street and Terry Avenue. Service and parking access from alley along east side of site. Pedestrian access from two street sides.

Surrounding Development: The site is bordered by a 37 story residential tower across Terry avenue to the southwest, a 5 story office/storage block to the southeast, and surface parking lots across Stewart to the north. The adjacent half block to the northeast across the alley is the Hill 7 office/hotel project, an 11 story block under construction (MUP#3013130). Terry Avenue is a designated green street.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: The vicinity contains a mix of commercial and residential structures of various styles and eras, but they generate a consistently pedestrian friendly public realm. The area to the south and west is characterized by more recent, very high density towers, while to the north and northeast is mostly parking lots and low commercial buildings. A potential expansion of the convention center might be 2 blocks to the south.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a 14 story office tower of approximately 235,000 sf, including building amenity spaces and ground floor public lobby, and approximately 8,000 sf of ground level retail. Four to six levels of below grade parking for about 210 spaces are proposed, with parking and loading access off the alley. The applicant also presented early sketches for a possible 22 story option, which depends on a FAR transfer from an adjacent parcel.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) MEETING: November 5, 2013
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DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet 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

The following comments and concerns were raised at this Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Stated the proposed building design is acceptable, but looks too much like all others in the vicinity.
- Encouraged the design to avoid ugly metal wall finishes similar to the existing building opposite on Terry Avenue.
- Cautioned any above-grade parking to fully screen car noise, headlights and fumes, especially from existing and future residents/guests in adjacent buildings.
- Lamented the loss of affordable, downtown apartments in the existing building to be demolished.

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 siting and design guidance. The Board identified the following Downtown Design Guidelines of **highest priority for this project**.

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](#).

All page references below are to the EDG booklet dated November, 05, 2013.

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 discussed how the ground plan response to this specific corner site and the green street requirement, as shown on pg 42, was very sound, but the massing and character of the tower above was too generic. The Board suggested more careful analysis of context and environmental cues that could inform the upper tower form (also see B-4).

The Board was generally supportive of a 22 story scheme, if all the guidance herein is followed, but cautioned that 8 more stories creates different proportions (compare pg 41 and 54). Additional Board feedback at future meetings might be substantial if a

taller than 14 story massing emerges. See B-1 for additional comments on tower expression, and departure #1 comments regarding the upper west façade, facing Terry. The essential positive elements on the ground floor are described under B-3.

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 agreed the stepped boxes or lower floor ‘drawers’ shown in option C were very promising, as long as the ground floor remains tall and transparent and the multiple exposed soffits receive a distinctive treatment (as shown on pg 41 and 43) to reinforce the staggered reading. The two levels of amenity deck shown on pg 44 are also an important activating presence to relieve the lower facades, with distinctive railings and exposed columns. These elements create spatial and sectional interest to both street frontages, which is valuable in a district composed of largely flat, cubic masses.

The Board cautioned the west façade to not reflect glare into residential uses on the opposite side of Terry, and did not support any above grade parking, and none was shown in option C.

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 strongly supported the continuous 9 ft setback along Terry Avenue, and the following specifics:

- * the largely paved landscape treatment, flush with the sidewalk;**
- * the adjacent activating uses, essentially flush with the sidewalk (eg no steps or moat); and**
- * the transparency and operable door/walls, as shown on pg 43 and 49.**

These provide public realm enhancements to the neighborhood and are essential to the departure consideration.

The ground floor commercial uses should fully engage this amenity (and along Stewart) and a restaurant or similar use with café tables is strongly encouraged. The Board supported the bright, glassy expression shown to maximize light reflection to the green street; this facade enjoys good daylight now but the southerly block will get built-out.

- 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, in addition to comments under A-1 and B-1, the Board discussed how the upper tower expression should distinguish the two or four sides, responding to solar orientations, neighbors and/or program. They suggested the north and south walls have a different facade expression from the east/west, or the facades acknowledge the compressed alley and the adjacent uses under construction 20 ft away. The proportions, materials and color palette should not echo the treatment of the adjacent half-block, otherwise $\frac{3}{4}$ of an entire block could appear too uniform. See departure discussion for more comments unique to the west façade.

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 supported the interaction shown on pg 42-44; also see comments under B-3. The Board also encouraged the lobby to be open and welcoming, and for the spatial design and clear way-finding to encourage visitors up the stair/escalators to the ‘great room’ and terrace above. The applicants described these as semi-public places; they should act as interior extensions of the public realm, even if privately monitored and not accessible at certain times.

- C-2** **Design Facades of Many Scales.** Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material 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 supported the staggered lower floors and terraces as a key scaling attribute, and encouraged the projecting ‘great room’ to take on an even more distinctive – yet light – character. Whether a glass ‘fishbowl’ or

strongly contrasting color/ material, that mid-scale element is crucial to off-setting the tower extrusion above. The Board agreed the expression shown on pg 41 and 44 has the 'great room' too similar to the tower above. The Board also agreed the slight notch in the tower west façade shown in plan and on pg 41 is a useful scaling device, and similar might occur elsewhere on the large tower walls. Also see B-4 comments.

D. Public Amenities

Enhancing the Streetscape & Open Space

D-1 Provide Inviting & Usable Open Space. Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed the lobby and semi-public terraces provide visitor and worker amenities. The Board supported the flexible 'great room' as a design element that clearly expresses to the street, and strongly encouraged it be programmed with events/meetings that reach beyond the building tenants. Also see comments under C-1 and D-3.

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 agreed the Terry setback provides valuable public space, and encouraged a link between this space and the terraces above along both streets. The terraces should display greenery visible to the street below (per pg 43), and a strong naturalistic theme might invite and carry through the lobby and up, assisting with way-finding.

E. Vehicular Access & Parking

Minimizing the Adverse Impacts

E-3 Minimize the Presence of Service Areas. Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, and the like away from the street front where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed the parking, loading and primary service elements appeared to be located in the best location along the alley (pg 42), but they requested detailed alley elevations at the next meeting, and advised a high quality treatment of the alley composition and materials; the same holds for the south ground floor façade which may be visible for some time.

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 following departure was requested:

- 1. Upper Level Green Street Setback (SMC 23.49.058.F.2):** In brief, the Code requires the entire façade fronting on a designated green street, above 45 ft high to be setback 15 ft minimum. The applicant proposes the façade along the Terry Ave Green Street to be set back 15 ft x 20 ft at the two corners, but in the middle to be occupied floorplates to the property line (approximately 1800 sf/ floor in the setback zone; or 56% of the code-required setback area).

The Board indicated support for this departure (length and mass as shown pg 39,45 & 49) at this time, based on the following: the green street setback in this location is not influencing street end views; the decreased setback on the northeast side of a Green Street will not overly shadow the linear park of the green street; the volumetric impact on the green street is negligible, when viewed from each block end. The Board disregarded the applicant's cost-based arguments about floorplate size, efficiencies and bay depths.

The Board added the following essential qualifiers to their preliminary support of the projection into the setback:

- the floor heights and stepbacks up to level 4 should follow the section on pg 49;
- the two corner notches shown should remain or be even larger;
- further explore the notch in the center of the projection;
- the projection should be less than full height (as shown on pg 45), especially if a taller tower;
- the material, glass and/or mullion patterns should be distinct for the projection, compared to the basic tower, to reinforce the reading of the projection as a distinct 'saddlebag'; and
- the projection should exhibit a relatively light and highly modulated character (deep mullions, sunshades, etc), compared to the more planer box beyond.

The Board also linked their support of this Departure to the applicant's voluntary initiative to provide, at their cost, the construction of full Green Street improvements on both street sides between Howell Street and Stewart Street (as depicted on pg. 42), except the portion already complete. This construction should be integrated into the project SIP submittal and be fully coordinated with SDOT and all its technical specifications. If this component of the project is eliminated or reduced in any way, the Board reserves the right (as part of its final review authority at the Recommendation stage) to re-evaluate the entirety of the Departure.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended 4-0 that the project should move forward to MUP Application, responding to the specific concerns, requests and guidance described above.