



RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016112

Address: 1606 California Avenue SW

Applicant: Neal Thompson, Roger Newell Architects

Date of Meeting: Monday, April 21, 2014

Board Members Present: Todd Bronk (Chair)
Alexandra Moravec
Matt Zinski
Don Caffrey

Board Members Absent: T. Frick McNamara

SDCI Staff Present: Katy Haima

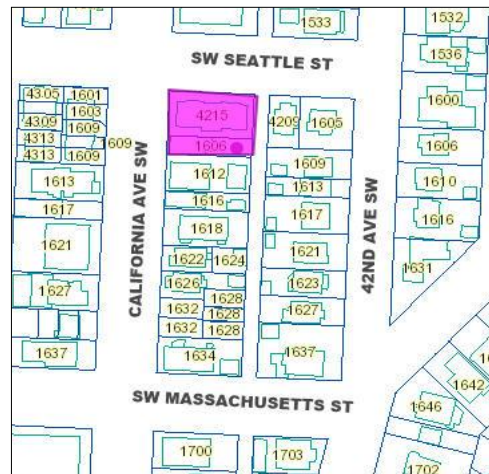
SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise Three (LR3)

Nearby Zones: North: LR3
South: LR3
East: SF5000
West: LR3

Lot Area: 9,430 sq. ft.

Current Development: Apartment Building and Single Family Residence



Surrounding Development: The subject site is located on the southeast corner of SW Seattle Street and California Avenue SW. The subject lot and properties to the north, south and west are located within the Lowrise Three (LR3) zone. Properties to the east, across the alley, are located in the Single Family (SF5000). California Avenue SW is an arterial street serving as a primary north/south corridor for the neighborhood.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: California Avenue SW serves as a primary transportation corridor containing multi-story residential apartment buildings on either side. Parcels not adjacent to California Avenue SW to the east and west are generally zoned Single Family. The neighborhood consists of one-three story residential structures. The housing type varies from midcentury brick and masonry apartment buildings, new wood frame apartment and townhouse structures, and one to two story single family homes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Early Design Guidance application for a 3-story apartment building with 16 residential units and parking for 21 vehicles to be provided in a below grade parking garage and at ground level. The existing single family residence and four-plex are to be demolished.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: March 6, 2014

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016112) at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3016112), 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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the applicant presented four design alternatives. Each option includes a residential building(s) containing 14-20 units. Parking access is provided from

an alley located along the east property line. Parking is provided at grade adjacent to the alley and in a shared subterranean parking garage.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Expressed support for preferred design scheme four, noting it will fit nicely into the neighborhood.
- Noted California Avenue SW is very congested and it is hard for a pedestrian to cross.
- Noted parking is difficult in the evenings and weekends.
- Felt additional density will add transients and crime.
- Felt property values will decrease due to loss in views.
- Felt building design should respect the existing view corridors and provide a massing transition to the adjacent single family zone.
- Appreciated the provided 30 foot setback to the alley lot line.
- Supported the preferred design option four, but felt the entrance lobby should be located at grade, closer to the street property line, and at the corner.
- Concerned about viability of partially below grade units and lack of daylight on the north property line.
- Would like to see the stair penthouse and elevator shaft combined to reduce height minimize bulk impacts.
- Concerned the construction of the underground parking garage may impact the older structures nearby.
- Noted that sidewalk and alley should be replaced if construction of building further damages existing infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION: April 21, 2016

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016112) 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

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised at the Recommendation Meeting:

- Felt that the design had many positive aspects, but needed additional refinement to strengthen the overall cohesiveness and completeness of the design.
- Appreciated the thoughtful and thorough design responses to issues raised by the Board and SDCI staff, and felt that the project had greatly improved through the process.
- Supported the elegant aesthetic and quality material palette, and felt this should be maintained as the project moves forward.
- Felt the blank wall on the California facade read as too prominent a feature, and that while the reveals help to break down the scale and provide interest, additional refinement is needed. Noted that the location of the blank walls appeared to be bathrooms in the units, and discouraged the use of high half-windows, as they often become storage for toiletries.
- Supported the expression of the vertical “beacon” at the entry.

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 of highest priority for this project.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE March 6, 2014

- 1. Massing and Materials.** The Board noted that preferred Massing Scheme Four provided the better design solution. The Board felt the massing and site design should evolve with the provided guidance.
 - a) The Board liked the variation in massing on the north façade. The Board noted that the modulation in the staggered façade provides opportunities for corner windows (CS2-D).
 - b) The Board felt Massing Scheme Four provided the better design solution by minimizing the number of units facing single family zone across the alley (CS2-D).
 - c) The Board felt the site design would benefit by moving the buildings to the minimum 5 foot setback along California Avenue SW. The reduced setback would provide a more substantial building presence along the street and also increase the setback along the alley across from the single family zone (PL3-B2).
 - d) The Board noted the building exterior should be constructed of durable materials of high quality (DC4).
- 2. California Avenue Façade and Entrance Lobby.** The preferred massing alternative located a shared entrance lobby on the SW corner of the site adjacent to California Avenue SW. The Board supported the lobby location but felt additional site design efforts were necessary to make the space successful.

- a) The Board noted that the lobby should engage the street more directly by being located closer to the street at the code required minimum setback of 5 feet (CS2-B2, PL3-A2, DC1-A)
- b) The Board directed that the lobby should be located as close to grade as possible to remove the need for exterior ramping. If ramping is necessary, the Board felt it should be located within the structure (PL3-A2).
- c) The Board directed more transparency be incorporated onto the California Avenue facade to bring eyes onto the street. The Board was particularly concerned about the large blank wall facing the street (PL2-B).
- d) Board felt the entrance lobby lighting should act as a beacon for residents and visitors to the site. The Board requested a full lighting plan at the recommendation meeting (DC4-C).

3. Subterranean Units. The Board was concerned about the viability of the partially below grade units and felt that additional efforts should be made to maximize natural light to these spaces.

- a) The Board noted that provided window wells must be designed to maximize natural light (CS1-A2).
- b) The Board supported the terracing of the window well to provide direct access between the unit and the amenity space. The Board felt the setbacks and ground level amenity space should be developed to provide privacy and security between the ground level residential use and the street, particularly important at the corner (PL3-B).
- c) The Board discouraged the below grade decks on California Avenue SW façade (PL3-B).
- d) At the next meeting, the Board wished to see additional details for the treatment of the subterranean access and sidewalk experience. The Board requested imagery and drawings from the sidewalk and window well locations. The Board encouraged the applicant to research successful case studies and examples of similar conditions to inform the design including key architectural and landscaping features that create successful spaces (PL3-B).

4. Corner Treatment. The Board felt the architectural concept should be developed to provide a corner residential treatment compatible with the scale of the lowrise zoning.

- a) The Board noted that the corner was particularly visible traveling in the south bound direction on California Avenue SW. The Board felt the architectural response should include a large amount of glazing and substantial glass at the corner (CS2-C).
- b) The Board felt the street level corner should be activated by the subterranean units' direct access to the setback amenity spaces (CS2B, CS2C).
- c) The Board felt that both the building's architectural concept and the building's landscape and amenity design should be responsive to the corner location (CS2-C, DC3, CD4).
- d) The Board noted that the decks on the north façade should be sized to be usable by residents but felt the rendering provided a balcony railing is too substantial and heavy. The Board noted the full bannister detracts from the corner treatment by locating a

substantial horizontal element. The Board felt the decks should be light and airy which could be achieved by providing a glass railing (CS2-C, DC2).

5. Parking and Access. The Board agreed the parking ramp access was unresolved and needed further study.

- a) The Board noted the current parking ramp begins at the low point of the site but felt the ramp location adjacent to the sidewalk provided a potential safety hazard. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board would like to see an analysis of a different access location further south on the alley and an analysis justifying proposed access point (DC1-B, DC1-C).
- b) The Board recommended moving the building to 5' feet to the California Avenue SW property line would help resolve additional ramping needs for an alternative access location. The Board also was willing to review a design departure for a steeper ramp as necessary to facilitate a different access location on the alley (DC1-B).
- c) The Board was concerned about the treatment of walls facing the driveway access. The Board felt the retaining walls used to hold grade should be treated with scaling devices and with texture (DC2-D).
- d) The Board agreed the ground level parking along the alley should incorporate landscaping and trees to break up the expanse of concrete, soften the hardscape, and provide a buffer between the building and the single family homes across the alley. The Board felt parking spaces should be grouped with trees, in grade, between the parking spaces (PL3-B). Tree in grade (DC1-C)
- e) Applicant should show location and access to required bike parking at the Recommendation Meeting (PL4-B, DC1-B).
- f) At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested vignettes demonstrating the pedestrian experience at the alley (DC1-C).

6. Amenity Space. The Board noted the project lacked residential amenity space.

- a) The Board would like to see further development of the amenity space as usable rooms along the alley and street property lines (DC1-A, DC3 B and D).
- b) The Board stated that the subterranean unit relationship to the sidewalk was awkward. The Board noted the ground level units should have a better spatial relationship to the exterior amenity. (DC3).
- c) The Board strongly encouraged incorporating a rooftop deck to maximize amenity space available to residents. The Board noted a rooftop deck would provide substantial views (DC3-B).
- d) The Board felt the landscape texture and pattern should relate directly to architectural pattern and texture. At Recommendation, the Board requested a landscape and hardscape plan, prepared by a landscape architect, with a copy of the green factor worksheet. (DC4-D).

RECOMMENDATIONS: APRIL 21, 2016

The Board was very pleased with the progression of the design since the last meeting, and noted that the applicant provided a thorough explanation of how concerns raised at EDG were

resolved. The Board appreciated the care and thoughtfulness of the packet and attention to detail. The Board appreciated the time and effort that went into the fine-grained details and felt the design concept was well-thought out. The Board agreed that the design was attractive and had an elegant aesthetic that expressed a clear and defined language with a simple and subtle material palette.

The Board offered further guidance on the following items:

- 1. Entry Sequence & Beacon Tower.** Overall, the Board appreciated the resolution of how the entry sequence was brought to grade, and how the vertical beacon element was used to enhance the entry and provide a unique design feature. (CS2.B, CS2.C, PL3.A, DC1.A, DC2.A, DC2.B, DC2.C, DC4.A, DC4.C)
 - a. The Board supported the design concept presented as Option 1, “Steel and Glass,” on Page 17 of the packet. The Board felt the glass blocks appeared retro, which diminished the elegance of the established design language. The Board supported the glass and steel option, noting that the proportions appear to elongate and heighten the appearance of the tower, and that the intentional misalignment creates a unique design language that establishes the element as a distinct piece and reinforces its prominence.
 - b. The Board noted that the steel and glass option would make the interior stairs visible from the exterior. The Board recommended a condition that the applicant work with SDCl to develop the stair design as a more cohesive part of the exterior expression. The Board discouraged the use of carpet in the stairwell, and recommended that the stairs be thoughtfully designed to match the palette used for the exterior of the beacon tower.
 - c. The Board recommended approval of departure 1 (see Departure section, at the end of this report), noting that due to the location and the setback, internal lighting of the stair tower appears to have minimal impact. The Board suggested that the lighting should be subtle, consistent, and kept at the minimum possible while meeting safety and security standards.
 - d. The Board noted that the wood joints at the soffits should be carefully and intentionally detailed.

- 2. Blank Wall.** The Board discussed the portion of blank wall facing California Ave, and how this contributed to the overall façade composition. The Board supported the simple, clean composition of this façade. The Board agreed with public comment that adding additional transparency, such as high windows at the bathrooms, would detract from the clean expression. (DC2.B, DC2.C, DC2.D, DC4.A, DC4.D)
 - a. The Board discouraged large signage on this portion of the façade.
 - b. The Board was concerned with the grounding and lack of scale transition from this portion of blank façade, and recommended a condition to add layers of 3’-4’ and 5’-6’ plantings, some of which should be evergreen, at the base of the portion of blank wall on the west facade. The Board suggested carrying the composition at the subterranean unit courtyard to this location.

- 3. Architectural Composition.** Overall, appreciated the care and detailing of the composition, and felt that the architectural concept and material treatments were responsive to the corner location and reinforced the massing. (CS2.C, DC1.A, DC2.A, DC2.B, DC2.C, DC2.D, DC4.A)
- a. The Board supported the material palette as presented, including Dryvit stucco, masonry, glass, wood, and metal railings. The Board felt the materials were of a high-quality and appropriate for a residential structure. The Board appreciated the muted palette, and felt the changes in texture reinforced the façade composition.
 - b. The Board supported the overlap of the roof elements onto the portion of blank wall at the California façade, noting that these work to unite the contrasting vertical expressions.
 - c. The Board suggested that the detailing of all horizontals should be done with care, especially the spandrels and railings. The glass and black metal railings should remain to retain the clarity of the design expression.
 - d. The Board supported and reinforced the importance of the subtle details, such as the contrast of smooth and textured vertical elements, noting that this reinforced the clarity of the massing and strengthened the overall design concept.
 - e. The Board strongly supported the amount of transparency at the corners, and suggested including built-in window treatments for the units to retain a clean, uniform appearance.
 - f. The Board noted that the spandrel need not remain cementitious panel, but should retain the smooth expression to create a cohesive vertical expression with the fenestration by contrasting with the textured stucco.
- 4. Landscape Design.** The Board complimented the overall landscape plan composition and attention to detail. The Board noted that the layered and lush landscape softens the very linear architectural expression and successfully achieves a scale transition to the pedestrian realm. The Board recommended a condition that the landscape design remain as presented, with the exception of the recommended additions at the west facade, and provided the caveat that individual substitutions may be made, but should retain a lush and layered aesthetic. (DC3.A, DC3.C, DC4.D)
- 5. Parking Access.** The Board appreciated the revision to move the entrance to the parking farther south, to minimize pedestrian conflicts near the sidewalk, and suggested checking sightlines to make sure the ramp provides views as generous as possible. (DC1.B, DC1.C)
- 6. Trash Enclosure.** The Board noted that as shown on P.15, the trash enclosure could use some landscaping to soften it. However, after some deliberation, the Board agreed that the actual treatment need not be as shown on P.17 and may continue to evolve. The Board suggested that the design team take views of units above into consideration, as well as how relates to design expression. (DC1.C)

7. **Subterranean Units.** The Board appreciated the sections and vignettes provided in the packet, as well as the attention to details and relationship of the units to the open space that contribute to livability of the units. The Board recommended a condition that the terracing and landscape a the subterranean unit courtyards remain as presented on P.27, noting the importance for access to light and air, creating livable units with defensible space, and providing adequate privacy without feeling overly enclosed. (CS1.B, PL3.B, DC2.D, DC3.A, DC3.B, DC3.C, DC4.C, DC4.D)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on 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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

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

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.

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-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

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.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

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.

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

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

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-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

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

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.

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-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children’s play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

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.

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-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Façade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building façades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all façades 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 façades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to façades 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).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

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.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

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.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle’s climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

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.

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.

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.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

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).

At the time of the Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

- 1. Driveway Slope. (SMC 23.54.030.D.3):** The Code requires that no portion of a ramp shall exceed 15% slope. The applicant proposes a maximum slope of 20%.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the departure. As requested by the Board at EDG, the driveway ramp was moved south to minimize pedestrian conflicts at the sidewalk. The Board acknowledged the challenge in meeting grades at the sidewalk and underground garage, and appreciated the effort and thoughtfulness in revising the ramp to be located farther away from the sidewalk. (DC1.B, DC1.C)

- 2. Exterior Lighting. (SMC 23.45.534.a):** The Code requires exterior lighting to be shielded and directed away from adjacent properties. The applicant proposes a design in which ambient reflected light will spill onto adjacent properties.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the departure, noting the guidance provided at EDG, and the importance of the design element as a “beacon” for the entry and unique architectural feature that is crucial to the overall composition and design concept.

The Board also noted that due to the location of the feature, it is unlikely that the ambient light will impact adjacent properties, especially as the internal lighting is likely to be consistent, and kept at a minimum. The Board discussed using translucent or frosted glass treatments, but felt this would diminish from the strength of the beacon expression and detract from the clarity of overall design concept, as it would introduce a new material and texture. (PL3.A, DC1.A, DC2.A, DC2.B, DC4.A, DC4.C)

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated April 21, 2016, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the April 21, 2016 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 project design with conditions, listed below.

1. Work with SDCI Staff to develop the stair design as a more cohesive part of the exterior expression.
2. Incorporate layers of 3'-4' and 5'-6' plantings, some of which should be evergreen, at the base of the portion of blank wall on the west facade.
3. Retain the landscape design remain as presented, with the exception of the recommended additions at the west façade (Condition 2 above). Individual substitutions may be made, but should retain a lush and layered aesthetic.
4. The terracing and landscape at the subterranean unit courtyards should remain as presented on P.27