



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016745

Address: 219 1st Avenue N

Applicant: Archana Iyengar, Caron Architecture

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, April 02, 2014

Board Members Present: Boyd Pickrell (Chair)
Katherine Idziorek
Jill Kurfirst
Janet Stephenson

Board Members Absent: Mindy Black

DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-65)

Nearby Zones: North: NC3-65
South: NC3-65
East: NC3-65
West: NC3-65

Lot Area: 7,191 sq. ft.

Current Development: Two apartment buildings.



Surrounding Development: The subject site is located midblock on the west side of 1st Avenue N between John Street and Thomas Street. The subject lot and all surrounding lots are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-65). The site contains one parcel with two existing 1-story apartment buildings. The lot is substantially flat, with a minor 3 foot slope in the north south direction. An existing three story apartment building is located to the north. A one story office building and surface parking lot is located to the south. A newer seven story mixed use building is located on the adjacent lot, west across the alley. To the east, across 1st Avenue N is a surface parking lot.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: The site is located in the Uptown Urban Center. This neighborhood includes multifamily housing, community services, restaurants, entertainment and shopping. One block to the northeast is Key Arena and the Seattle Center. East of the site on 1st Avenue North there are surface parking lots and one story commercial buildings. To the north are residential and retail buildings. Within walking distance from the site there are banks, grocery stores, schools, medical offices, book stores, movie theaters, restaurants, and the Seattle Center. Natural amenities in the area include Lake Union, the park like grounds of the Seattle Center, Kinneer Park, Myrtle Edwards Park and the Olympic Sculpture garden.

Metro bus routes provide service with stops close to the site providing links to the central downtown core and other areas. 1st Ave N and Queen Anne Ave N provide Rapid Ride lines. First Avenue North is designated as a principal arterial and a major transit street. John Street and Thomas Street have no special classifications.

1st Ave character is dominated by Key Arena, monumental scale, and large plazas. The overall area is characterized by strong street walls and some surface parking lots. Ground floor uses in the area are both residential and commercial. Newer mixed use buildings in the area are six to seven stories tall.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Early Design Guidance application for a 6-story building with 44 residential units above 900 square of commercial space. Parking for 8 vehicles is proposed within a garage accessed by the alley. The existing structures are to be demolished.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016745) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3016745), 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 applicant's presentation included a statement of intent to provide brick as a primary material. The ground level setback is intended to be 3 feet consistent with the ground level setback to the north to provide a more gracious sidewalk.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Felt building massing should include amenity areas with gardens facing the alley.
- Expressed concern about the blank north façade which will face the existing residential units.
- Would like to see a courtyard provided on the north façade.
- Concerned about loss of views to Space Needle and surrounding territory.
- Felt additional parking, including street permit parking, should be provided.
- Expressed concern that the proposed building is missing Queen Anne's quaint charm.
- Felt the proposed building did not represent the existing neighborhood context.
- Would like to see a retail space provided, that can later be divided into smaller spaces.
- Noted smaller retail spaces give a rhythm and action to the street.
- Supported design which provides ground level parking only.
- Felt exterior finish material should include brick and masonry.
- Concerned the site plan does not show the bay window for the building to the north.
- Felt that the massing should erode at the corner so that bay windows are not facing a large blank wall.

- Felt commercial space should be provided at sidewalk grade so as to avoid large ramps within the small commercial space.
- Supported greater building height to provide additional setback to the north.
- Felt 900 square foot retail space is a good size.
- Felt additional retail space should be provided at ground level rather than a leasing office.

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.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE March 19, 2014

1. Massing. The Board felt Massing Option A provided the better design solution with a setback along the north façade opposite the existing units. The Board also supported the unit orientation of Massing Option B, which provides units facing the alley.

- a) The Board felt the applicant provided a comprehensive analysis of the massing options for a tight infill site. The Board supported the building layout with the lobby and stair circulation on the north and units oriented to the south (CS2-D5).
- b) Ultimately the Board supported a massing option combining A and B. The combined massing should include a setback on the north façade consistent with massing option A and units facing the alley consistent with Massing Option B. The Board did support a taller building, consistent with Massing Option A, to accommodate the additional north setback (CS2-D5, DC2-A1).
- c) The Board agreed there must be a thoughtful treatment of the façade facing the structure to the north. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board would like to see how the north façade is treated to minimize large expanses of blank wall and maximize light and air opportunities for adjacent units (CS2-D5, DC2-B2).

2. Street Wall. The Board applauded the ground level setback adjacent to the sidewalk. The setback will provide a street wall and setback consistent with the adjacent structure to the north.

- a) The Board noted the setback should be treated to provide a gracious, welcoming approach to the retail and residential entrances (CS2-A2, CS2-B2, CS2-C2).
- b) At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board requested more information about the experience at ground level including ground level transparency, overhead weather projection and lighting. The Board also felt the applicant should explore additional potted landscaping at the residential entry as expressed in the Uptown Design Guidelines. The Board felt the entries should be pedestrian scaled, friendly, gracious, and incorporate sufficient transparency and lighting to provide safe spaces (PL2-B, PL2-C, PL3-A)

- c) The Board felt the first floor level transition to the upper level should align with the bay window datum to the north (CS2-C2).
- d) The Board was concerned that the adjacent bay window will look into a large blank wall in the northeast corner. The Board felt the building should respond to this relationship and treat the corner with a meaningful gesture to provide relief (CS2-C2, CS2-D5).

3. Architectural Context and Materials. The Board noted the building is proposed within a neighborhood with a well-defined material character. The Board agreed the proposed building should be designed as background building rather than a signature piece.

- a) The Board supported the proposed architectural concept which included a more contemporary design. The Board noted that the architectural concept should incorporate material cues from traditional neighborhood context, specifically brick at ground level (CS3-A1).

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

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-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

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-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

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.

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building

articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

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.

PL2-C Weather Protection

PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage: Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

PL2-II Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances

PL2-II-i. Pedestrian-Friendly Entrances: Throughout Uptown entries should be designed to be pedestrian friendly (via position, scale, architectural detailing, and materials) and should be clearly discernible to the pedestrian.

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.

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.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

DC1-VI Treatment of Alleys

DC1-VI-i. Clean Alleys: Throughout Uptown ensure alleys are designed to be clean, maintained spaces. Recessed areas for recyclables and disposables should be provided.

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-B Architectural and Facade Composition

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.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

DC2-I Architectural Context

DC1-I-iii. Uptown Urban Character Area: Embrace high quality urban infill, and responds to special relationships with nearby civic institutions. The following features are encouraged:

- a. Consistent street wall;
- b. Engaging the sidewalk / storefront transparency;
- e. High quality, durable materials;

DC2-III Human Scale

DC2-III-i. Proportioned Design: Throughout Uptown human-scaled architecture is strongly preferred. Proportion should be provided by such components as the detail of windows, doorways, and entries. Appropriate scale and proportion may also be influenced by the selection of building materials.

DC2-III-iii. Weather Protection: The use of exterior canopies or other weather protection features is favored throughout the district for residential and commercial uses. Canopies should blend well with the building and surroundings, and present an inviting, less massive appearance.

DC2-III-iv. Integrated Exterior Features: Throughout Uptown size signs, exterior light fixtures, canopies and awnings to the scale of the building and the pedestrian. Signs that add creativity and individual expression to the design of storefronts are encouraged. Signs should be integrated into the overall design of the building. Signs that appear cluttered and detract from the quality of the building's design are discouraged.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance the following departures were requested:

- 1. Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008 B3):** The Code requires nonresidential uses at ground level to have an average depth of 30 feet. The applicant proposes a depth of 28 feet.

The Board indicated early support for the departure request. Board noted the reduced commercial depth provides the opportunity for the additional street level setback. The proposed setback is consistent with the ground level setback for the structure to the north, providing a consistent increased sidewalk width, better meeting the intent of City Design Guidelines C2-B C and CS2-C Urban Pattern and Form.

- 2. Street Level Use (SMC 23.47A.005 C):** The Code limits residential use to 20% of the total façade width. The applicant proposes 41% of the street façade as residential use.

The Board did not indicate support for the requested street level use departure. The Board felt 20% of the façade as dedicated residential use was sufficient. The Board felt the leasing office was not a sufficiently active street level use. The Board would prefer to see this space permitted as a ground level commercial use that is temporarily used for leasing. The Board did not feel the requested departure better met the intent of City adopted design guidelines.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.