



## FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016806

Address: 307 Broad Street

Applicant: Brad Hinthorne of Perkins+Will Architects

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, January 05, 2016

Board Members Present: Anjali Grant (Chair)  
Peter Kresch  
Grace Leong

Board Members Absent: Murphy McCullough  
Alan McWain  
Gundula Proksch

SDCI Staff Present: Michael Dorcy

### SITE & VICINITY

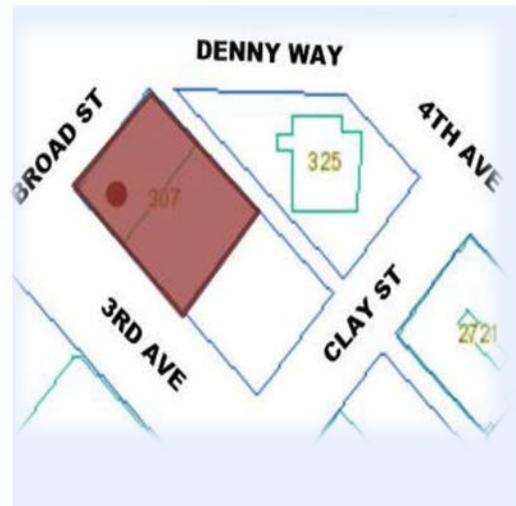
Site Zone: DMC-85

Nearby Zones: (North) NC3-65  
(South) DMC-85  
(East) DMC-85  
(West) DMC-85

Lot Area: 15,330 Square feet

### Current Development:

The site is occupied by a one-story commercial building, with an alley along the east side.



### **Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The Pacific Science Center, a designated City of Seattle Landmark on the Seattle Center campus, lies across Denny Way on the north. The Space Needle, another Seattle Center Landmark, is highly visible from the site. A mix of small commercial buildings and parking lots occupy the sites to the north, south and east across the alley. Three-to five commercial office buildings are located to the west, with newer residential structures on blocks south of the site.

### **Access:**

Pedestrian access is from the two adjacent streets, Broad Street to the north and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to the west. Vehicular access to the site is from the alley.

### **Environmentally Critical Areas:**

None.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is proposing a 9-story (above grade) residential structure with approximately 153 units, some on the ground floor with access directly from the sidewalk. The ground floor also boasts a residential lounge and leasing office.

The design packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (Will update on save/print) 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 SDCl:

**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)

<b>Recommendation Meeting: January 5, 2016</b>
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### **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

At the time of the recommendation meeting a MUP application had been submitted to the Department, proposing a nine-story (above grade), 190,000 square foot building with 149 residential units and below-grade parking for 117 vehicles.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Among written comments received by the Department were the following:

- Safety concerns regarding the location of the pedestrian crossing where the alley east of the site meets intersection of Broad Street and Denny Way;
- A number of individuals were disappointed with the design of the south façade which, as conjectured, would be visible for a long time;
- Views of both the Space Needle and the Pacific Science Center would be significantly impacted, especially as the rooftop amenities added an “extra story” to the height of the building;
- Disappointment with the lack of any ground floor retail/ commercial space.

These comments were echoed in public comments voiced at the Recommendation Meeting. It was noted by members of the public that the south face of the building, although improved, had not achieved the status of a fourth façade acceptable by the neighbors.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

## **PRIORITIES & BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

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.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **The Logic of the Box**

The preferred massing concept presented by the applicants at the EDG meeting on March 18, 2014, was that which featured a white upper box sitting on a three-story base. It was also the preferred option of the Design Review Board. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board affirmed that the box concept had been applied to the alley façade with substantial success (as indicated in the east elevation shown on page 28 of the packet). Still, the notion of a three-sided box was somewhat perplexing, and conveyed a sense of a design gesture gone awry, or at least, incomplete and unresolved, and not in keeping with Design Guideline B4 (Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building). While the façade on the south property line would necessarily be limited in transparency, and eventually in visibility, it did not thereby need to abdicate its role as the fourth side of the conceptual box. One obvious area to explore as a means to integrate the south façade with the other three sides of the box, would be to increase the extent of the vision glass along the two recessed edges of the façade. An even more important gesture would

be to introduce a change in plane, enough to establish a perceptible shadow line, and change in color or tone and texture aligned and commensurate with the bottom edge of the perceptual “box” of the other three facades.

## **Canopies**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board had agreed and had conveyed to the applicants and design team, that a continuous canopy was warranted along the Broad Street façade, as it was a major pedestrian pathway between Belltown and the Seattle Center and provided a key element of the Lake to Bay Loop circulatory planning effort. The Board stated that the overhead weather protection along Broad Street could be a major design element animating the north façade, and that it should wrap the key northwest corner. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the generous transparency along the lower Broad Street façade, but Board members did not agree with the design team that continuous overhead weather protection along Broad Street would detract from the clarity of the design of “the pure glass volume of the ‘jewel box’ on Broad.” They thought, rather, that the addition of a continuous canopy could otherwise enhance the concept and design of the box, give fuller and needed relief to the pedestrian realm, and better meet the intentions of the C-5 Guideline. The Board offered the design team flexibility on the height(s) of the canopy, as long as it was continuous along the length of the façade.

As they had stated at the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the canopies might be lower and more fragmented, but they should net a fairly continuous protection on the transit oriented and pedestrian pathway that was 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. The canopies along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue could be discrete, the Board commented at the earlier meeting, but should be generous. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board did not focus on the generosity of the proposed canopies at the individual residential units, but members did suggest that the entry to the bicycle storage area might benefit from an added canopy.

## **Bike Storage**

The Board felt that the entry to the bike storage area was “too compressed” and in need of further attention. The design team was directed to explore providing a canopy integrated with the bicycle entry as a part of its de-compression efforts.

## **Darker and Warmer**

Members of the Board conveyed the opinion that the vertical panels at the ground level residential entries should be darker in tone and of a warmer color. It was noted that they could even be reduced in overall size and still retain their effect.

## DEPARTURES

Two “departures” from SMC 23.49.018.A.3 were identified by the applicants (see page 41 of the Recommendation Meeting packet). Only one such departure would be needed.

### DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departure is 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.

1. **(SMC 23.49.018.D):** The Code requires that the lower edge of the overhead weather protection must be located a minimum of ten (10) feet and a maximum of fifteen (15) feet above the sidewalk. The Board, in requiring continuous weather protection along Broad Street as a condition of their approval of the overall design of the project, allowed the design team to vary from this Code standard as long as it resulted in a better design that met the intention of the Guidelines and the approval of the Land Use Planner assigned to the project.

## BOARD DIRECTIONS

The recommendations summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Tuesday, January 05, 2016, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, January 05, 2016 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the three Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with the following conditions. The design team was directed to work with the Land Use Planner assigned to the project to arrive at agreeable changes to the plans that would respond to the conditions.

### CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Provide continuous overhead weather protection along the entirety of the Broad Street façade.
2. Thoroughly explore expanding the overall transparency within the units that occupy the niches on the two edges of the south-facing wall.
3. Introduce a change in plane, enough to establish a perceptible shadow line, and changes in color or tone and texture of the exterior face of the south façade to align and be commensurate with the bottom edge of the perceptual “box” of the other three facades.

4. Explore ways to make the entry (off 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) to the bike storage area seem less compressed. Explore, in particular, providing a canopy integrated with the bicycle entry as a part of these efforts.
5. The vertical panels at the ground level residential entries should be made darker and of a warmer color; explore reducing them in size while maintaining their desired overall effect.