



## FINAL EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020176/3018096/3020177 (Convention Center Expansion)

Address: 1600 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue/ 920 Olive Way/ 1711 Boren Avenue

Applicant: LMN Architects, for Pine Street Group

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, October 06, 2015

Board Members Present: Anjali Grant (Acting Chair)  
Gabe Grant (substitute)  
Peter Krech (substitute)  
Grace Leong  
Alan McWain

Board Members Absent: Murphy McCullough (recused for this project)  
Gundula Proksch

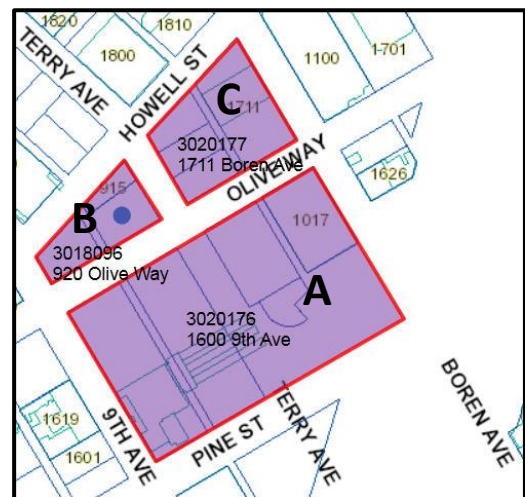
DPD Staff Present: Garry Papers, M. Arch, Senior Land Use Planner  
David L. Landry, MCP, MLA, Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC 340/290-400; Downtown Mixed Commercial, 340 ft non-residential maximum height

Nearby Zones: (North) DMC 340/290-400  
(South) DMC 340/290-400  
(East) DMC 340/290-400  
(NC3P-85 across I-5)  
(West) DOC2 500/300-500

Lot Area: 3020176 Site A: 202,509 sq ft.  
3018096 Site B: 25,551 sq ft.  
3020177 Site C: 50,979 sq ft.



### **Current Development:**

The majority of site A consists of a bus and light rail marshalling yard and station, mostly recessed below adjacent grades, plus a 2 story commercial building at the northeast corner. Site B consists of an alley and 2 one-story commercial buildings and surface parking lots. Site C consists of an alley and one, one story commercial building wrapped by surface parking lots.

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

The largest site A has the Paramount Theatre at its southwest, and one 14 story apartment tower at its northeast, and the rest of the south and east sides face vacant land and the sunken I-5 freeway corridor. There are existing and proposed towers to the north and west of the larger 3-block project area, including office, hotel and residential projects 14-40 stories tall. The surrounding Denny Triangle neighborhood consists of mixed commercial structures and parking lots, rapidly transitioning to tall, dense mixed use structures, consistent with zoning and planning policies.

The project site is a physical and urban design 'hole' in the dense downtown fabric, and is located between two connector streets (Pine and Olive) which bridge the I-5 trough, which is the edge between downtown density and the mid-rise, mixed use fabric of the Capital Hill and First Hill neighborhoods to the east and south.

### **Access:**

Pedestrian access is from the surrounding sidewalks on the following streets: Pine, Olive and Howell running east-west; 9<sup>th</sup> Ave, Terry and Boren running north-south. Terry Street and alleys were previously vacated from Site A, so vehicular access to it must be off one of the four surrounding street frontages. The two alleys and Terry segment between Olive and Howell are operational at the moment, but are proposed to be fully vacated concurrent with this project; those vacations are assumed to have occurred for the purposes of this Design Review.

### **Environmentally Critical Areas:**

None

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed development on double-block site A is a 5 level, approximately 200 ft tall structure containing about 1.4 million sf of exhibition space, meeting rooms, service and support, with associated parking access and below grade loading docks. The facility is a detached expansion of the Washington State Convention Center. Parking for 600-800 cars is located within the primary structure. A 16 story office tower is proposed on the northeast block C, with retail and a truck holding zone and ramp at the ground level; the spiral ramp serves the underground loading docks for the adjacent convention facility (accessed below Olive street). A 30 story residential tower is proposed on the northwest Block B, with ground level retail and a loading/service bay.

## **FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) May 19, 2015**

The Design Proposal booklet 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 booklet 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)

### **INTRODUCTION TO EDG #1:**

This EDG meeting intentionally focused on context and urban design analysis, for the public and Downtown Design Review Board (the Board) to provide early input and guidance about important contextual concerns, and how context might influence and inspire the building forms and/or program. At EDG#2, the applicants will provide the typical EDG massing options, respond to EDG#1 guidance, and the Board will identify the Priority Downtown Guidelines at that time.

NOTE: While the drawings and general Board comments refer to the co-development towers that may occur above Sites B and C, those two towers are not submitted for detailed review at this time. If and when they are proposed to move forward, they would receive separate reviews, public notice and MUP numbers.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Stated the project appears overly program-driven and not adequately responsive to context yet.
- Supported more pedestrian activating uses on all street level frontages, as they all are heavily used connectors between neighborhoods.
- Concerned that floor slabs and large blank walls appear to occur along many pedestrian eye levels, and the floors should adjust to prevent that.
- Stated the project lacks an overarching goal or idea for such a large and impactful structure.
- Regretted the urban analysis did not include emphasis on the smaller grain of the neighborhoods to the east.
- Emphasized that the sidewalks on Pine and Olive are key connectors and are crowded now, and the project should widen those sidewalks and add amenity to them.
- Reiterated the need for consistent pedestrian activation and practical uses along the sidewalks, since most pedestrians will not be attending actual conventions.

- Impressed by other convention centers designed by the architects (Vancouver, BC in particular) and stressed that Seattle deserves the same or better, particularly in terms of activation, transparency, sustainability and nighttime beauty.
- Emphasized that Pine Street should be lined with continuous retail, and that the ‘pop-up’ retail spaces shown were not viable.
- Requested the project develop how it functions as “a civic building”.
- Requested more public open space(s) and attention to the large roof.
- Stressed how the structure will be visible from streets and public viewpoints to the east, in particular 4 Columns Park.
- Stated the project should exhibit a smaller grain, compatible with the character and pattern of adjacent neighborhoods.
- Submitted the project is large but should not be a singular ‘icon’.
- Stated the terminus of the Terry Green Street should not be a parking or vehicle entrance.
- Opposed to the large truck portal on Boren, across from a residential building.
- Asked for more nature and green elements in the project, such as small parks and tree clusters, as there “are no parks in Denny triangle”.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the five Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX):

All page references are to the EDG#1 booklet dated 5/19/2015; Citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

### **FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE May 19, 2015**

#### **1. Respond to Views & Influences from Adjacent Context:**

- a. **Context Analysis:** The Board appreciated the complete context inventory provided (especially the multiple perspectives, pg. 54-65), and applauded many of the applicant stated goals such as: “Engage the downtown urban framework...Create a welcoming street presence...Integrate mixed uses such as retail...Enrich urban diversity...Create a unique (Seattle and PNW) experience”. Tangible follow through on these commendable goals will be the applicant test for future Board meetings. (A1)
- b. **Viewpoints:** The Board noted this large building will be seen from many vantage points, with differing scales and fields-of-view; the Board was particularly concerned with the wide-angle views from neighborhoods to the east and south, where intervening buildings do not (and likely never will) moderate the size and bulk of the proposed structure (pg. 60/61). The Board supported the stated ‘collage of S,M,L scales to mitigate an XXL building’. (B1; C2)

- c. **Street Grid:** The Board agreed the project should acknowledge the street grid shift at Howell, and recognize how the building form will be visible at the street end views down 9<sup>th</sup> & Terry Avenues from the north (pg 62/63). The Board emphasized these two streets are designated Green Streets, connecting the site to SLU and Lake Union with pedestrian, bike and landscaping enhancements. These Green Streets are the only 'public open space' contemplated in the rapidly densifying and open space deficient Denny Triangle district. (A1; B1)
- d. **Connections:** Pedestrian movement along all adjacent streets was a prime focus of Board considerations; special emphasis was on the Pine Street 'hillclimb' and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since some joint convention events will link the proposed Convention Center Expansion (CCX) and the existing Convention Center, the segment of 9<sup>th</sup> between Pike and Pine will be heavily loaded with pedestrian groups, and how those crowds of pedestrians are received at the southwest corner and along the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave frontage was emphasized. (B3, D1)

The Board suggested that streetscape improvements on 9<sup>th</sup> between Pine and Pike, and 'intersection repair' at Pike and 9<sup>th</sup> might become off-site Public Benefits through other city reviews.

NOTE: Since the project involves street vacations, it will receive Design Commission (DC) review of the public realm and benefits; the Board received a memo from DC staff based on the EDG booklet.

- e. **Landmarks:** The Board noted the adjacent Paramount Theatre is a designated city landmark and functions as a key way-finding marker; the project massing should respect and possibly defer to the Paramount (pg. 59), opening up light and views to the theatre's rich north facade (see #6 on pg. 11 and 63). This guidance might coincide with comments under 2d below. (B2; B3)
- f. **Prominent Corners:** The Board agreed the southwest corner should generously recess to accommodate crowds from Pine and 9<sup>th</sup> (see 1d), possibly with exterior decks above to optimize views up and down Pine Street (pg. 39, and building section shown at meeting). The Board agreed both east corners will be highly visible to many neighborhoods south and east (and to users of the freeway) and they should be 'pedestrian beacons' to help bridge the I-5 gap (pg. 60, 64); the Board supported the retail shown at those corners and encouraged they be larger (pg. 51/52). The northwest corner will be extra visible because of the grid shift, and should respond to the axial street view down 9<sup>th</sup> (pg. 63). Finally, the northeast corner also deserves attention, as Olive Way is a key pedestrian link to Capitol Hill, regardless of the one-way, eastbound vehicular flows. (B1; B3; C1; C4)

## 2. Massing & Public Realm:

- a. **Vertical Programming:** The Board appreciated the complex building program and supported the challenge of a new 'vertical convention center prototype'. The Board applauded retention of the existing streets rather than an even larger super block,

but was concerned about the scale compatibility of even the resulting double-block form (347 ft x 565 ft footprint) in a fabric largely made up of quarter block and smaller masses (pg 10). (A1; B2)

Regarding the physical massing model shown, the Board was glad to hear that ‘carving of the CCX volume is possible’, to explore various ways to achieve the correct ‘collage of S,M,L scales’. The Board supported exterior decks to populate the large facades, and internal light-wells for the program, but not if such private assets are at the expense of street level needs for the public realm. This pivotal 3 block, 6.4 acre project will be an exercise in balancing a large internal program and external urban design priorities. (B4)

- b. **Mitigate the I-5 Gap:** The Board agreed the project should knit the adjacent neighborhoods together. The large and fully visible south and east walls will be seen within the fabric beyond of smaller, more vertical downtown buildings (pg 60/61), therefore massing modulation and façade scaling techniques will be especially critical on those elevations. (A1; B2; B4; C2)
- c. **Terry Street & ‘Truck Plaza’:** The stated reason for the full vacation of the segment of Terry between Howell and Olive was to enable sizable and multiple truck maneuvering options there (from block C onto Olive, Howell and possibly Terry northbound). The Board was strongly opposed to creating a compromised streetscape or ‘truck plaza’ on a Green Street, or as a terminus of a Green Street that links downtown to Lake Union. After learning the preliminary size and number of truck movements, the Board was especially concerned about compromising Green Street continuity and safe, direct pedestrian movements between Howell and the proposed CCX building across Olive Way (also see 3e). (A1-Green Street Policies; B1; B3; E3)
- d. **Lobby and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interface:** The Board agreed that the primary CCX entries and lobby are best facing the southwest sun and along 9<sup>th</sup>, and they supported the stated intention to make that lobby highly permeable to the street and frequently open to the general public (the controlled zone being deep inside). The Board supported the two corners being described as transparent, tall and welcoming. However, the absence of a sizable setback or public open space along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street was a concern (pg 51), especially considering crowd surges from the proposed lobby. An open space ‘pearl’ (like Plymouth Pillars and Westlake Parks) on the Pine Street link between Cal Anderson and the Pike Market, would be a valuable open space addition (see 1c, and pg 39/left). (C4; D1;D3)

The Board discussed this important frontage & public realm interface at length: additional ground level space for the Green Street treatment and CCX events to spill out was agreed to have potential; the proposed retail ‘market hall’ –if open typical hours –was supported in order to activate the 300+ ft long façade when no CCX events are happening. Even a tall, transparent wall looking into an often empty lobby with just escalators was agreed to not be genuinely activating; the hours and degree

of public porosity into the lobby and what public attractors are within will be critical. (C1-2)

- e. **Massing Options for EDG #2:** The Board looks forward to three massing options at the next meeting that respond to all major context influences, yet manifest three clear, and distinct design concepts; suggestions for those might be: a) Program-driven/code compliant; b) Subtractive, slices and notches; c) Additive, volumes and voids. A hybrid is certainly plausible, as the primary Block A is alone 4.5 acres in size, and this site has uniquely different east and west view prospects (see 1b). (A2; B4)
- f. **Roof Design:** The Board stressed the very large roof is a “5<sup>th</sup> Elevation” which will be visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. The 4+ acres provides a major opportunity for a combination of: sizable sustainable strategies; useable open space for users; canvas for an exceptional landscape design; and/or possible public realm in a dense, park deficient district. The Board cautioned that these uses should determine roof structural considerations, rather than the structural cost being used to eliminate a superior design or use. (A2; D1; D2)

### 3. Perimeter Street Edges & Ground Floors: (B3-3; C1; C3; C4; D1-1; E1)

- a. **Ground Floor Edges:** The Board agreed all street edges in this central location must be done well, with no street sacrificed as a designated ‘back-of-house’. To maximize pedestrian interaction and provide legitimate uses for all Seattleites not only CCX users, all ground level frontages should: minimize the number and length of blank walls; interject regular lengths of retail or porous, activating uses; reasonably step floors with the adjacent sloping sidewalks to permit regularly spaced doors; and integrate any mandatory services, exit doors or other blank elements in a highly artful manner. The Board agreed maximum transparency is good, but pedestrians looking into closed and frequently empty lobby spaces does not equal diverse and consistent activation.
- b. **Pine Street:** The Board agreed this sidewalk is a very heavily traveled link uphill to Capitol Hill, and it likely deserves additional width via a setback, a consistent curbside landscape amenity, and definitely requires more substantial retail activation than the small ‘pop-ups’ indicated on pg 52/left.
- c. **Boren Avenue:** The Board supported the 4 retail corners and stretching that activation along all of Boren, and visually minimizing any vehicle portals along both block fronts of Boren Avenue, particularly the east truck portal into site C.
- d. **Olive Way:** The Board was concerned this important pedestrian street lacked consistent retail activation. Any elevators or blank walls should be staggered with intermittent retail or similar activation. Perimeter services should be pushed inward rather than interior parking/services pushing out to the sidewalk.

- e. **Terry Avenue Green Street Terminus:** The Board was unanimously opposed to a vehicle portal as the terminus of the Terry Green Street (regardless of the outcome of the streetscape issues in 2c above), and instead advised a major pedestrian entry be on axis, and link into the public lobby facing 9<sup>th</sup>. Any parking portal on this frontage should be shifted east.
- f. **Howell Street:** Like Olive, this street is an important stitch between the CCX and the rapidly infilling district to the north, so it requires interesting uses and facades on all block faces that reinforce pedestrian movements both east-west and north-south.
- g. **Site C, Northeast Block:** The Board agreed the truck movements appear to overwhelm this block and retail should be maximized and fill in the corners and every available part of the perimeter. The Board seeks SDOT technical corroboration that the truck movements are absolutely the smallest necessary, and all curb cuts and portals should be minimized in width and façade presence.
- h. **Sites B & C; Co-development:** The Board supported planning ahead and requested more details to ensure viable cores, lobbies, and loading space will be possible on the two blocks. The potential for public open space at the interesting hinge of the two street grids should be explored on the west ‘point’ of the northeast Block B (see 1c/f).

#### 4. General:

- a) The Board was intrigued by the applicant’s statement that this CCX represented a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Convention facility, geared toward generation “z”, and requested more development of what that means for the physical form and expression of this project.
- b) The Board agreed the objective must be much more than filling the existing void with a large block of self-serving program; the site is at a crossroads of scales, views and neighborhoods and there is an obligation to also improve connections, enhance the public realm, and add substantial and dynamic uses that serve all pedestrians.

<b>SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) July 21, 2015</b>
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 P.O. Box 34019  
 Seattle, WA 98124-4019



Email: [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## INTRODUCTION TO EDG #2:

This EDG#2 meeting focused on massing options for all 3 blocks, since the two co-development blocks between Olive and Howell are now full parts of the review. The Board also provided guidance on the design development of the primary convention center block, and those EDG#2 comments are listed in **BOLD** under each restated topic from the EDG#1 guidance.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

- Stated the project should include a public, pedestrian pass through of the double block, like the current Convention Center provides, preferably from Pine to Olive/Terry.
- Supported more pedestrian activating uses on all street level frontages, as they all are heavily used connectors between neighborhoods.
- Stated the project should incorporate an LRT station or bus stops that provide direct access for convention visitors and workers in the surrounding district.
- Stated the project turns its back on the Boren Street pedestrian experience; should design as though the I-5 noise and void will not be a permanent condition.
- Regretted the design did not include more emphasis on the smaller grain of the neighborhoods to the east, and that the project has 'no relationship to the east'.
- Stated the proposal lacks a vision merited by its critical location between downtown, Denny Triangle and Capitol Hill.
- Stated the project has minimal street level uses that would foster civic life and engagement; the program 'box' is too dominant.
- Regretted the large, expensive proposal does not do more to be a civic icon on par with others such as the Central Library, Olympic Sculpture Park, or Central Waterfront.
- Stated the proposal should better integrate with the surroundings and do more to heal the scar of the freeway, as the first Convention Center did with Freeway Park.
- Requested the applicants meet directly with PPUNC, 'as promised'.
- Emphasized that the 'micro-retail' on the existing Convention Center is not successful, and the proposal should have more consistent and deep retail on the street levels.
- Stated the Boren and Olive facades look like afterthoughts, and large detailed elevations are needed to confirm pedestrian scale, activation and interest.
- Noted the streetscape designs were not lush, and the highly visible roof had no design.
- Supported the deep modulations and warm tones of the visible ceilings and soffits shown on the 9<sup>th</sup> avenue perspectives.
- Concerned the highly transparent Pine street façade is too tall and flat, and it is highly visible to the east and south.
- Requested consistent pedestrian activation and unique shops for visitors along the sidewalks, especially Pine which is the prime connector, since 'Pike is so unfriendly'.
- Stated the ground level looks 'abandoned, with only 10% retail', and the Terry terminus was 'mean'.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the five Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX):

All page references below are to the EDG#2 booklet dated 7/21/2015; citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

## **SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 21, 2015**

### **5. Respond to Views & Influences from Adjacent Context:**

- a. **Context Analysis:** The Board appreciated the complete context inventory provided (especially the multiple perspectives, pg. 54-65), and applauded many of the applicant stated goals such as: “Engage the downtown urban framework...Create a welcoming street presence...Integrate mixed uses such as retail...Enrich urban diversity...Create a unique (Seattle and PNW) experience”. Tangible follow through on these commendable goals will be the applicant test for future Board meetings. (A1)

**At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how centrally located and visible the structure will be, thus the project forms and architectural character should express a memorable and civic identity, yet not appear alien or out of scale.**

- b. **Viewpoints:** The Board noted this large building will be seen from many vantage points, with differing scales and fields-of-view; the Board was particularly concerned with the wide-angle views from neighborhoods to the east and south, where intervening buildings do not (and likely never will) moderate the size and bulk of the proposed structure (pg 60/61). The Board supported the stated ‘collage of S,M,L scales to mitigate an XXL building’. (B1; C2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board appreciated the multiple and detailed perspective views provided, and recommended additional views for the next meeting, from more distant viewpoints on Capitol Hill and First Hill, along the Boren and Olive facades, and other public viewpoints.**

- c. **Street Grid:** The Board agreed the project should acknowledge the street grid shift at Howell, and recognize how the building form will be visible at the street end views down 9<sup>th</sup> & Terry Avenues from the north (pg 62/63). The Board emphasized these two streets are designated Green Streets, connecting the site to SLU and Lake Union with pedestrian, bike and landscaping enhancements. These Green Streets are the only ‘public open space’ contemplated in the rapidly densifying and open space deficient Denny Triangle district. (A1; B1)

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the strong cantilevered form that punctuates the grid shift as viewed south down 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg 62,63), and the setback, canted lower levels on the southeast corner of block B, which open views and pedestrian**

**movement from Terry to the CCX lobby entry (pg 47). The applicants should provide massing studies which set back the entire tower form at that corner to improve those same views to the CCX, and enhance light to the Terry Plaza.**

- d. **Connections:** Pedestrian movement along all adjacent streets was a prime focus of Board considerations; special emphasis was on the Pine Street 'hillclimb' and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since some joint convention events will link the proposed Convention Center Expansion (CCX) and the existing Convention Center, the segment of 9<sup>th</sup> between Pike and Pine will be heavily loaded with pedestrian groups, and how those crowds of pedestrians are received at the southwest corner and along the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave frontage was emphasized. (B3, D1)

The Board suggested that streetscape improvements on 9<sup>th</sup> between Pine and Pike, and 'intersection repair' at Pike and 9<sup>th</sup> might become off-site Public Benefits through other city reviews.

NOTE: Since the project involves street vacations, it will receive Design Commission (DC) review of the public realm and benefits; the Board received a memo from DC staff based on the EDG booklet.

**At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how the project forms, public realm and street edges must be generous and respond to the current (ie Pine Street) and projected increases (developments to north and west) in pedestrian street activity, and movement desire lines, especially through the double block. The sidewalk widths may need to be widened from the currently shown code minimums on Pine, Boren and Olive.**

- e. **Landmarks:** The Board noted the adjacent Paramount Theatre is a designated city landmark and functions as a key way-finding marker; the project massing should respect and possibly defer to the Paramount (pg 59), opening up light and views to the theatre's rich north facade (see #6 on pg 11 and 63). This guidance might coincide with comments under 2d below. (B2; B3)

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the size and location of the southwest entry plaza, and the associated step backs on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg 69,79), which provide space and scale transitions to the landmark Paramount, with refinement guidance under 6d below.**

- f. **Prominent Corners:** The Board agreed the southwest corner should generously recess to accommodate crowds from Pine and 9<sup>th</sup> (see 1d), possibly with exterior decks above to optimize views up and down Pine Street (pg 39, and building section shown at meeting). The Board agreed both east corners will be highly visible to many neighborhoods south and east (and to users of the freeway) and they should be 'pedestrian beacons' to help bridge the I-5 gap (pg 60, 64); the Board supported the retail shown at those corners and encouraged they be larger (pg 51/52). The northwest corner will be extra visible because of the grid shift, and should respond to

the axial street view down 9<sup>th</sup> (pg 63). Finally, the northeast corner also deserves attention, as Olive Way is a key pedestrian link to Capitol Hill, regardless of the one-way, eastbound vehicular flows. (B1; B3; C1; C4)

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed both east corner points remain visually weak. Although the southeast 40 ft. retail height is supported, the retail porosity of both corners should be enhanced, and there should be more vertical presence relative to the tall mass above. The ground level corner setback shown at 9<sup>th</sup> and Boren is essential; a similar one is possibly desirable at Boren and Olive.**

## **6. Massing & Public Realm:**

- a. **Vertical Programming:** The Board appreciated the complex building program and supported the challenge of a new 'vertical convention center prototype'. The Board applauded retention of the existing streets rather than an even larger super block, but was concerned about the scale compatibility of even the resulting double-block form (347 ft x 565 ft footprint) in a fabric largely made up of quarter block and smaller masses (pg 10). (A1; B2)

Regarding the physical massing model shown, the Board was glad to hear that 'carving of the CCX volume is possible', to explore various ways to achieve the correct 'collage of S,M,L scales'. The Board supported exterior decks to populate the large facades, and internal light-wells for the program, but not if such private assets are at the expense of street level needs for the public realm. This pivotal 3 block, 6.4 acre project will be an exercise in balancing a large internal program and external urban design priorities. (B4)

**At the EDG#2, the Board applauded the large scale physical model and its use as a dynamic study tool. The Board supported the preferred CCX concept of the central mass-box with three stepped and legible volumes on the north, south and west sides. The transparency of the west and south layers is critical to lightening the massive form (pg 69) however more information on the materiality of the north volume (along Olive) is needed. The multiple roof decks and balconies shown were supported, and strongly encouraged to be publically accessible when an event is not occurring, or at least certain securable portions at typical (8-8 or 10-10) public hours (dedicated public elevator to balconies shown on Pine, etc).**

**The Board agreed the Pine Street elevation is a fully and highly visible wall to the community, and appears to be overly flat for a 500 ft long, 200 ft tall wall (pg 88). The balconies and vertical elevators shown are critical to create intermediate scales. Additional modulation elements and 'chiseling' are also recommended especially at the lower levels. The specific materiality of this south-facing glass volume should be explained in detail at the next meeting, in terms of reflectivity, glass patterns/color, energy performance and shading.**

- b. **Mitigate the I-5 Gap:** The Board agreed the project should knit the adjacent neighborhoods together. The large and fully visible south and east walls will be seen within the fabric beyond of smaller, more vertical downtown buildings (pg 60/61), therefore massing modulation and façade scaling techniques will be especially critical on those elevations. (A1; B2; B4; C2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the proposed east façade (pg 88) presents an exciting super-window and visible ballroom ceiling to the neighborhood, but the middle and street levels are entirely too blank and lack intermediate scales. This elevation should be treated like any other pedestrian street, and not assume the I-5 culvert is a permanent condition. The Board also recommended the long meeting room balcony have greenery and/or glazing to make it attractive to users and the vicinity.**

- c. **Terry Street & ‘Truck Plaza’:** The stated reason for the full vacation of the segment of Terry between Howell and Olive was to enable sizable and multiple truck maneuvering options there (from block C onto Olive, Howell and possibly Terry northbound). The Board was strongly opposed to creating a compromised streetscape or ‘truck plaza’ on a Green Street, or as a terminus of a Green Street that links downtown to Lake Union. After learning the preliminary size and number of truck movements, the Board was especially concerned about compromising Green Street continuity and safe, direct pedestrian movements between Howell and the proposed CCX building across Olive Way (also see 3e). (A1-Green Street Policies; B1; B3; E3)

**At the EDG#2, the Board restated concerns about the quantity and timings of truck movements on the Terry plaza, and requested more detailed information on those operations (the 26 of 30 days per month shown on pg 116 was very concerning, but the actual hours and frequency of truck movements is needed). The Board generally endorsed the design approach to pedestrianize and minimize vehicular impacts on the plaza – to design for ‘pedestrians first’. The Board agreed this space is a critical visual and pedestrian link from the Terry Green Street to the CCX facility, and its streetscape and adjacent building walls must be fully composed; the street-level image on pg 47 presented many concerns about large, blank ground level loading doors, and visual terminus. Also see comments under 7e.**

**Staff NOTE: As a formal street vacation request, this portion of Terry Avenue will receive full future review by SDOT and the Design Commission, and they will have detailed input on the plaza surface and former ROW streetscape design; the Board has purview over the adjacent private building walls and thus are commenting on the activation and materials of the frontages, regardless of the eventual streetscape design.**

- d. **Lobby and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interface:** The Board agreed that the primary CCX entries and lobby are best facing the southwest sun and along 9<sup>th</sup>, and they supported the stated intention to make that lobby highly permeable to the street and frequently open to

the general public (the controlled zone being deep inside). The Board supported the two corners being described as transparent, tall and welcoming. However, the absence of a sizable setback or public open space along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street was a concern (pg 51), especially considering crowd surges from the proposed lobby. An open space 'pearl' (like Plymouth Pillars and Westlake Parks) on the Pine Street link between Cal Anderson and the Pike Market, would be a valuable open space addition (see 1c, and pg 39/left). (C4; D1;D3)

The Board discussed this important frontage & public realm interface at length: additional ground level space for the Green Street treatment and CCX events to spill out was agreed to have potential; the proposed retail 'market hall' –if open typical hours –was supported in order to activate the 300+ ft long façade when no CCX events are happening. Even a tall, transparent wall looking into an often empty lobby with just escalators was agreed to not be genuinely activating; the hours and degree of public porosity into the lobby and what public attractors are within will be critical. (C1-2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly supported the southwest entry plaza, but recommended the two open sides slope or step with the adjacent sidewalks to maximize pedestrian access and diagonal desire lines. The Board also agreed both building plaza edges needed retail activation besides the retail and adjacent CCX entry doors shown (even if these doors are open during public hours to the 'mixing zone' as stated). Added retail activation at the southeast corner of this plaza will also address the recommendation for more Pine activation (7b).**

**The Board agreed the two-sided market hall along Pine Street will succeed only if the adjacent public 'mixing zone' has a natural flow-through circulation from Pine to Olive. The steep 14ft tall, narrow stairs shown on Olive and the recessed, hidden doors at the upper landing are not welcoming or easy to use. The Board recommended the Olive stairs be widened and possibly the 'mixing zone' volume project at that street, with the stairs internal. More gradual stepped floors of the mixing zone should be studied, even if impacting ceiling heights below. The narrow stairs to Pine were not essential, thus providing more retail continuity on that street.**

- e. **Massing Options for EDG #2:** The Board looks forward to three massing options at the next meeting that respond to all major context influences, yet manifest three clear, and distinct design concepts; suggestions for those might be: a) Program-driven/code compliant; b) Subtractive, slices and notches; c) Additive, volumes and voids. A hybrid is certainly plausible, as the primary Block A is alone 4.5 acres in size, and this site has uniquely different east and west view prospects (see 1b). (A2; B4)

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the applicant-preferred massing scheme for both the CCX structure and the two co-development blocks (pg 92-94), with important refinements to the co-development blocks found under 7g and 7h.**

- f. **Roof Design:** The Board stressed the very large roof is a “5<sup>th</sup> Elevation” which will be visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. The 4+ acres provides a major opportunity for a combination of: sizable sustainable strategies; useable open space for users; canvas for an exceptional landscape design; and/or possible public realm in a dense, park deficient district. The Board cautioned that these uses should determine roof structural considerations, rather than the structural cost being used to eliminate a superior design or use. (A2; D1; D2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board restated the need for a creative and multi-purpose design for the large and visible roof (pg 95); a complete landscape design, preferably with some usable space and public access, should be provided at the next meeting.**

**7. Perimeter Street Edges & Ground Floors:** (B3-3; C1; C3; C4; D1-1; E1)

- a. **Ground Floor Edges:** The Board agreed all street edges in this central location must be done well, with no street sacrificed as a designated ‘back-of-house’. To maximize pedestrian interaction and provide legitimate uses for all Seattleites not only CCX users, all ground level frontages should: minimize the number and length of blank walls; interject regular lengths of retail or porous, activating uses; reasonably step floors with the adjacent sloping sidewalks to permit regularly spaced doors; and integrate any mandatory services, exit doors or other blank elements in a highly artful manner. The Board agreed maximum transparency is good, but pedestrians looking into closed and frequently empty lobby spaces does not equal diverse and consistent activation.

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the street level program and design required the most attention, as the response to clear EDG#1 guidance was not sufficient on almost all frontages. The Board recommended frequent doors and actual porosity where humans move from sidewalks into building spaces, not simply ‘visual porosity’ or transparency. The 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage design shown (pg 61) has the best potential; the Board supported the storefront modulation and setbacks shown, but recommended more depth for the street facing portions of the split level retail (pg 66 shows 12 ft) to ensure this critical Green Street frontage is successful and lively. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- b. **Pine Street:** The Board agreed this sidewalk is a very heavily traveled link uphill to Capitol Hill, and it likely deserves additional width via a setback, a consistent curbside landscape amenity, and definitely requires more substantial retail activation than the small ‘pop-ups’ indicated on pg 52/left.

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly reiterated this street frontage is critical to provide consistent retail activation on a busy pedestrian link to Capitol Hill. The retail amount/consistency shown is a very inadequate link, as the context diagram on pg 71 clearly shows. The Board recommended more retail depth (where customers**

enter the space) and more linear retail frontage in the middle and west block face, well beyond the approximately 25% shown (pg 71; code requires 75%).

The Pine retail should read more as tall pavilions along the street that provide scale. Setbacks between them, for cafes and select smaller views into the pre-function atrium, which should possibly be narrowed to afford more retail depth, at least at sidewalk levels (see 6d). Daylight into the pre-function atrium can occur above the more contextually-critical retail pavilions, which can be interspersed between any escalators and landings; the pavilion roofs could provide public view decks, internally and to the street. Large scale, detailed elevations and sections of the prefunction atrium are needed at the next meeting.

- c. **Boren Avenue:** The Board supported the 4 retail corners and stretching that activation along all of Boren, and visually minimizing any vehicle portals along both block fronts of Boren Avenue, particularly the east truck portal into site C.

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Boren street level is important to pedestrians and the nearly continuous blank walls shown were of major concern (pg 88, 93). The Board recommended shallow 'pop-up' retail here rather than on Pine, or at a minimum, a continuous layer for display windows, artful wall treatments, and narrow landscape planters at the building edge (plus the lush curbside planter). Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- d. **Olive Way:** The Board was concerned this important pedestrian street lacked consistent retail activation. Any elevators or blank walls should be staggered with intermittent retail or similar activation. Perimeter services should be pushed inward rather than interior parking/services pushing out to the sidewalk.

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Olive street level should have more retail frontage, especially near the Terry intersection, and pedestrian activation along the length. The freight elevators might be exposed as pedestrian interest and a visual feature on the elevation, if they are of glass or a similar dynamic treatment. Wall treatments similar as described above for Boren, should be employed on any necessary blank walls. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- e. **Terry Avenue Green Street Terminus:** The Board was unanimously opposed to a vehicle portal as the terminus of the Terry Green Street (regardless of the outcome of the streetscape issues in 2c above), and instead advised a major pedestrian entry be on axis, and link into the public lobby facing 9<sup>th</sup>. Any parking portal on this frontage should be shifted east.

**At the EDG#2, the Board was disappointed the parking portal did not move, and did not accept the rationale provided; the portal shown continues to be an unsatisfactory terminus for the Terry Green Street (pg 47). The Board restated it should be shifted, or further façade and scale techniques must be developed to**



mitigate the portal presence, yet provide a suitably scaled visual terminus. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

The Board supported the two pedestrian crosswalks of Olive at Terry, but agreed the 'receiving uses' of employee and parking entries are not suitable for a Green Street. The Board recommended replacing these with retail, or a prominent and gracious forecourt/entry that leads Green Street pedestrians west to the stairs/escalators at the north end of the 'mixing zone' (see comment 6d); this would truly implement the applicant diagram on page 36, blue arrow.

- f. **Howell Street:** Like Olive, this street is an important stitch between the CCX and the rapidly infilling district to the north, so it requires interesting uses and facades on all block faces that reinforce pedestrian movements both east-west and north-south.

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the placement and linear amount of active uses along Howell (pg 92, left) appears sufficient, and expects the applicant to pursue further increases in the amount and depth of 'retail orange' graphically shown on both blocks B and C. The Board agreed the screening of the truck ramp portion in the middle of block C must be sophisticated and provide excellent pedestrian interest. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

- g. **Site C, Northeast Block:** The Board agreed the truck movements appear to overwhelm this block and retail should be maximized and fill in the corners and every available part of the perimeter. The Board seeks SDOT technical corroboration that the truck movements are absolutely the smallest necessary, and all curb cuts and portals should be minimized in width and façade presence.

At the EDG#2, the Board restated the above technical checks are still needed. The Board agreed the office massing shown was bulky and squat, and recommended studies that increase the reading of two more slender volumes that slip past each other, east-west. The offset at the top of each volume might be more substantial to improve the legibility, plus the south volume might register to Olive to enhance the grid shift, and thus create a consistent, sunnier podium stepback along Olive. The Board agreed the tower should not lap down to grade on the Howell elevation, and the podium needs a clear expression, possibly taller than 1 story on the north and south sides.

- h. **Sites B & C; Co-development:** The Board supported planning ahead and requested more details to ensure viable cores, lobbies, and loading space will be possible on the two blocks. The potential for public open space at the interesting hinge of the two street grids should be explored on the west 'point' of the northeast Block B (see 1c/f).

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the basic massing of preferred block B, with a tall podium, expressed gasket and the tower proportions. The Board supported the generous set back at grade at the west with the adjacent activating retail, but

agreed the overall form should better respond to the visual axis down Olive onto the 'flat iron' building and site condition. Also see comments under 5c.

## 8. General:

- a) The Board was intrigued by the applicant's statement that this CCX represented a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Convention facility, geared toward generation "z", and requested more development of what that means for the physical form and expression of this project.

**At the EDG#2, the Board heard the response to what 5<sup>th</sup> generation means, but still had difficulty seeing how this is tangibly expressed in the proposed building. The proposal does offer high transparency out to the context, but the building does not appear more 'welcoming and open' to the public than a typical facility, nor does the perimeter or land locked mixing zone provide 'engagement between the event and the city' (pg 117, last paragraph). More tangible follow through on these assertions is needed at future meetings.**

- b) The Board agreed the objective must be much more than filling the existing void with a large block of self-serving program; the site is at a crossroads of scales, views and neighborhoods and there is an obligation to also improve connections, enhance the public realm, and add substantial and dynamic uses that serve all pedestrians.

**At the EDG#2, the Board summarized that while the proposed CCX massing has improved, and has shifts, transparency and the beginnings of scale modulations that respond to context, it needs much more refinement, particularly on the south side. While the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue street level and plaza have potential, the ground floor edges on all three other streets require substantially more program space and effort to provide genuine activation, porosity, and pedestrian scale. The Co-development proposals are promising, but also require massing refinements and more detailed design of all pedestrian level facades.**

### THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) October 6, 2015

The Design Proposal booklet 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 booklet 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)

### INTRODUCTION TO EDG #3:

This EDG#3 meeting focused on how the applicants responded to DRB guidance from the EDG#2, and other Board comments generated by the submitted exhibits. In addition to the EDG#3 booklet posted on the Design Review site above, the applicants displayed two large scale models; one showing the entire 3 subject blocks with detailed surrounding context, and a second that showed the lower levels of the CCX building at a larger scale. The detailed comments from the Board provided at EDG#3 are listed in **bold italics** under each restated topic from the EDG#2 guidance.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

- Stated that the buildings are too large and out of scale with the character of Capitol Hill.
- Suggested that the project needs a better transition to Capitol Hill.
- Concerned that the small changes are only at the sidewalk perimeter do not address the need to break down the building bulk; the 'large and X-large' scales are not needed.
- Suggested the green/ art wall along Boren is merely dressing up a bad design.
- Stated that the 'public mixing zone' dead ends on both ends, not reaching the streets.
- Felt the Capitol Hill facing façade is a negative.
- Concerned the Olive elevation is too flat and shows too many back of house facilities.
- Suggested the project should be brought back for a future EDG meeting.
- Questioned the viability of commercial retail space at the mid-block on Olive.
- Supported the publically visible stairs along Pine but concerned that the stair soffit creates a wide, oppressive element overhanging the sidewalk.
- Stated that the full block of parking and a two block long façade is oppressive.
- Stated that the project has the potential to be a dead zone at night.
- Suggested that retail alone is not persuasive in creating life in the city.
- Stated the visible parking floors along Olive are bad and the parking portal at the terminus of Terry is in the wrong location.
- Supported the southeast plaza as opening up a valuable corner and providing a generous welcome spot on the path between the two CC phases.
- Encouraged the integration of other civic and community, street-activating uses besides retail, such as childcare, hotel, branch library, police storefront, transit stops, etc.

### PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the five Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX):

All page references below are to the EDG#3 booklet dated 10/06/2015; citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

**9. Respond to Views & Influences from Adjacent Context:**

- a. **Context Analysis:** At the EDG#1, the Board appreciated the complete context inventory provided (especially the multiple perspectives, pg. 54-65), and applauded many of the applicant stated goals such as: “Engage the downtown urban framework...Create a welcoming street presence...Integrate mixed uses such as retail...Enrich urban diversity...Create a unique (Seattle and PNW) experience”. Tangible follow through on these commendable goals will be the applicant test for future Board meetings. (A1)

At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how centrally located and visible the structure will be, thus the project forms and architectural character should express a memorable and civic identity, yet not appear alien or out of scale.

***At the EDG#3, the Board discussed design elements at the pedestrian scale in great detail, and the recommendation to manifest pedestrian activation and interest at all locations on all perimeters of all three blocks, using varied materials, added activities or nodes for users near passive spaces, visual interest and texture at all loading doors (when closed), vehicle portals and non-retail frontages.***

***The Board agreed the building façade along Boren needs to be more visually compelling, at both the pedestrian levels and the middle zones which are seen from multiple vantage points. The full width green wall shown was not supported, and a greater use of vertical and horizontal compositional elements was recommended at both scales on this highly visible elevation.***

- b. **Viewpoints:** At the EDG#1, the Board noted this large building will be seen from many vantage points, with differing scales and fields-of-view; the Board was particularly concerned with the wide-angle views from neighborhoods to the east and south, where intervening buildings do not (and likely never will) moderate the size and bulk of the proposed structure (pg 60/61). The Board supported the stated ‘collage of S, M, L scales to mitigate an XXL building’. (B1; C2)

At the EDG#2, the Board appreciated the multiple and detailed perspective views provided, and recommended additional views for the next meeting, from more distant viewpoints on Capitol Hill and First Hill, along the Boren and Olive facades, and other public viewpoints.

***At the EDG#3, the Board appreciated the multiple perspective views provided, but recommended additional views along Terry Avenue looking toward the Olive façade that is the Terry Green Street terminus, developing an intentional and scaled elevation response to that terminus condition, and showing the pedestrian edges of Terry Avenue and the adjacent building ground floors in detail. Fully conveying all three facades holistically may require 2-3 perspectives.***

- c. **Street Grid:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the project should acknowledge the street grid shift at Howell, and recognize how the building form will be visible at the street end views down 9<sup>th</sup> & Terry Avenues from the north (pg. 62/63). The Board emphasized these two streets are designated Green Streets, connecting the site to SLU and Lake Union with pedestrian, bike and landscaping enhancements. These Green Streets are the only 'public open space' contemplated in the rapidly densifying and open space deficient Denny Triangle district. (A1; B1).

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the strong cantilevered form that punctuates the grid shift as viewed south down 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg. 62,63), and the setback, canted lower levels on the southeast corner of block B, which open views and pedestrian movement from Terry to the CCX lobby entry (pg. 47). The applicants should provide massing studies which set back the entire tower form at that corner to improve those same views to the CCX, and enhance light to the Terry Plaza.

***At the EDG#3, the Board was generally in support of a sizable (approximately 38' x 59') public plaza at the northeast corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Olive (as shown on pg. 45, upper right), as it occupies and marks a special pedestrian crossroads location. The Board will review the detailed design features of this plaza at subsequent meetings. See comments under 12h for the podium massing adjacent to this plaza. See Departure # 4 for Board comments about the projections proposed along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street.***

- d. **Connections:** At the EDG#1, the pedestrian movement along all adjacent streets was a prime focus of Board considerations; special emphasis was on the Pine Street 'hillclimb' and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since some joint convention events will link the proposed Convention Center Expansion (CCX) and the existing Convention Center, the segment of 9<sup>th</sup> between Pike and Pine will be heavily loaded with pedestrian groups, and how those crowds of pedestrians are received at the southwest corner and along the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave frontage was emphasized. (B3, D1)

The Board suggested that streetscape improvements on 9<sup>th</sup> between Pine and Pike, and 'intersection repair' at Pike and 9<sup>th</sup> might become off-site Public Benefits through other city reviews.

NOTE: Since the project involves street vacations, it will receive Design Commission (DC) review of the public realm and benefits; the Board received a memo from DC staff based on the EDG booklet.

At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how the project forms, public realm and street edges must be generous and respond to the current (ie Pine Street) and projected increases (developments to north and west) in pedestrian street activity, and movement desire lines, especially through the double block. The sidewalk widths may

need to be widened from the currently shown code minimums on Pine, Boren and Olive.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed support for the various voluntary edge setbacks shown on pg 16/right, and for the southwest plaza and its east edge creating a welcoming seating terrace/steps as shown on pg 43. The project's public realm and street edges beyond the property line, within SDOT purview, should be generous and respond to pedestrian street activity.***

- e. **Landmarks:** At the EDG#1, the Board noted the adjacent Paramount Theatre is a designated city landmark and functions as a key way-finding marker; the project massing should respect and possibly defer to the Paramount (pg. 59), opening up light and views to the theatre's rich north facade (see #6 on pg. 11 and 63). This guidance might coincide with comments under 2d below. (B2; B3)

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the size and location of the southwest entry plaza, and the associated step backs on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg. 69,79), which provide space and scale transitions to the landmark Paramount, with refinement guidance under 6d below.

***At the EDG#3, the Board agreed the plaza, tall overhang, roof terrace, and setback box-form above the CCX entrance, as shown on pg 38, create a respectful massing relationship with the Paramount, however at the next meeting the Board will scrutinize the materials and flex hall level functions that define this key public open space, at all vertical levels. In particular the Board will evaluate the dark cladding, large entry soffit, and portions that are transparent; whether the south façade is a balcony and/or interior lobby; and what functions will be visible behind this prominent window (the plans on pg 50/left indicate a stair and service wall). See 11 i for comments on the plaza.***

- f. **Prominent Corners:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the southwest corner should generously recess to accommodate crowds from Pine and 9<sup>th</sup> (see 1d), possibly with exterior decks above to optimize views up and down Pine Street (pg. 39, and building section shown at meeting). The Board agreed both east corners will be highly visible to many neighborhoods south and east (and to users of the freeway) and they should be 'pedestrian beacons' to help bridge the I-5 gap (pg. 60, 64); the Board supported the retail shown at those corners and encouraged they be larger (pg. 51/52). The northwest corner will be extra visible because of the grid shift, and should respond to the axial street view down 9<sup>th</sup> (pg 63). Finally, the northeast corner also deserves attention, as Olive Way is a key pedestrian link to Capitol Hill, regardless of the one-way, eastbound vehicular flows. (B1; B3; C1; C4)

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed both east corner points remain visually weak. Although the southeast 40 ft. retail height is supported, the retail porosity of both corners should be enhanced, and there should be more vertical presence relative to

the tall mass above. The ground level corner setback shown at 9<sup>th</sup> and Boren is essential; a similar one is possibly desirable at Boren and Olive.

***At the EDG#3, the Board agreed the east retail corners are larger, have adequate transparency and porosity, and show taller, glass proportions to the overall mass; further increases of these attributes are welcome, as the pg 32 perspective demonstrates. Setbacks or notches at the 2 busy Boren sidewalk corners may still be warranted (pg 30), and the 'bakery' entry doors should shift a bit west off the busy corner. The Board strongly supported the large floor area, and taller, transparent northwest corner retail as shown on pg 42 and 46.***

## 10. Massing & Public Realm:

- a. **Vertical Programming:** At the EDG#1, the Board appreciated the complex building program and supported the challenge of a new 'vertical convention center prototype'. The Board applauded retention of the existing streets rather than an even larger super block, but was concerned about the scale compatibility of even the resulting double-block form (347 ft. x 565 ft. footprint) in a fabric largely made up of quarter block and smaller masses (pg. 10). (A1; B2)

Regarding the physical massing model shown, the Board was glad to hear that 'carving of the CCX volume is possible', to explore various ways to achieve the correct 'collage of S,M,L scales'. The Board supported exterior decks to populate the large facades, and internal light-wells for the program, but not if such private assets are at the expense of street level needs for the public realm. This pivotal 3 block, 6.4 acre project will be an exercise in balancing a large internal program and external urban design priorities. (B4)

At the EDG#2, the Board applauded the large scale physical model and its use as a dynamic study tool. The Board supported the preferred CCX concept of the central mass-box with three stepped and legible volumes on the north, south and west sides. The transparency of the west and south layers is critical to lightening the massive form (pg. 69) however more information on the materiality of the north volume (along Olive) is needed. The multiple roof decks and balconies shown were supported, and strongly encouraged to be publically accessible when an event is not occurring, or at least certain securable portions at typical (8-8 or 10-10) public hours (dedicated public elevator to balconies shown on Pine, etc.).

The Board agreed the Pine Street elevation is a fully and highly visible wall to the community, and appears to be overly flat for a 500 ft. long, 200 ft. tall wall (pg. 88). The balconies and vertical elevators shown are critical to create intermediate scales. Additional modulation elements and 'chiseling' are also recommended especially at the lower levels. The specific materiality of this south-facing glass volume should be explained in detail at the next meeting, in terms of reflectivity, glass patterns/color, energy performance and shading.

***At the EDG#3, the Board again applauded the large models and restated the Pine Street elevation is highly visible, but agreed that the projecting stair form is effective at breaking up the previous flatness, and becoming a memorable, 'signature' for the CCX. It should be treated as a distinct sculptural move, possibly by adding a unique texture to the stairs south glazing layer, and/or emphasizing a dramatic soffit color/material. The Board was not convinced that soffit should be mirrored, but agreed this southeast facing elevation should remain bright and well-lit on all evenings (not only during events).***

- b. **Mitigate the I-5 Gap:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the project should knit the adjacent neighborhoods together. The large and fully visible south and east walls will be seen within the fabric beyond of smaller, more vertical downtown buildings (pg 60/61), therefore massing modulation and façade scaling techniques will be especially critical on those elevations. (A1; B2; B4; C2)

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the proposed east façade (pg. 88) presents an exciting super-window and visible ballroom ceiling to the neighborhood, but the middle and street levels are entirely too blank and lack intermediate scales. This elevation should be treated like any other pedestrian street, and not assume the I-5 culvert is a permanent condition. The Board also recommended the long meeting room balcony have greenery and/or glazing to make it attractive to users and the vicinity.

***At the EDG#3, the Board supported the Boren corner configurations, ground level modulations, layering and voluntary setbacks as shown on plan pg 30. However, the middle green wall façade garnered much Board concern: smaller extents of green wall may be successful, but the entire wall needs to be visually compelling with distinct horizontal and vertical composition and material variation (possibly mixing the three options shown on pg 29 rather than all one), especially at lower levels. Shaped, textured forms or truly sound attenuating materials should be integrated into most of this facade to mitigate the freeway noise.***

- c. **Terry Street & 'Truck Plaza':** At the EDG#1, the stated reason for the full vacation of the segment of Terry between Howell and Olive was to enable sizable and multiple truck maneuvering options there (from block C onto Olive, Howell and possibly Terry northbound). The Board was strongly opposed to creating a compromised streetscape or 'truck plaza' on a Green Street, or as a terminus of a Green Street that links downtown to Lake Union. After learning the preliminary size and number of truck movements, the Board was especially concerned about compromising Green Street continuity and safe, direct pedestrian movements between Howell and the proposed CCX building across Olive Way (also see 3e). (A1-Green Street Policies; B1; B3; E3).

At the EDG#2, the Board restated concerns about the quantity and timings of truck movements on the Terry plaza, and requested more detailed information on those



operations (the 26 of 30 days per month shown on pg. 116 was very concerning, but the actual hours and frequency of truck movements is needed). The Board generally endorsed the design approach to pedestrianize and minimize vehicular impacts on the plaza – to design for ‘pedestrians first’. The Board agreed this space is a critical visual and pedestrian link from the Terry Green Street to the CCX facility, and its streetscape and adjacent building walls must be fully composed; the street-level image on pg. 47 presented many concerns about large, blank ground level loading doors, and visual terminus. Also see comments under 7e.

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***At the EDG#3, The Board restated the design approach for the plaza along Terry Avenue between Howell and Olive should be pedestrian first, ensuring north/south connections when vehicles are present and creating a usable space during CCX events. Therefore, the sidewalks on both sides should be consistent connectors and generous, outside any required truck movements (which should be minimized); the sidewalks, planting buffers and setbacks shown on pg 48 were supported. The Board also restated this space is a critical visual and pedestrian link from the Terry Green Street to the CCX facility.***

***The Board continued to have concerns about the quantity and timing of truck movements on the Terry plaza, and supported the eroded ground floor massing at the Block B southeast corner, but recommended the presence of the block B loading doors be more subordinate to the corner entrance lobby (pg 61).***

- d. **Lobby and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interface:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed that the primary CCX entries and lobby are best facing the southwest sun and along 9<sup>th</sup>, and they supported the stated intention to make that lobby highly permeable to the street and frequently open to the general public (the controlled zone being deep inside). The Board supported the two corners being described as transparent, tall and welcoming. However, the absence of a sizable setback or public open space along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street was a concern (pg. 51), especially considering crowd surges from the proposed lobby. An open space ‘pearl’ (like Plymouth Pillars and Westlake Parks) on the Pine Street link between Cal Anderson and the Pike Market, would be a valuable open space addition (see 1c, and pg. 39/left). (C4; D1;D3)

The Board discussed this important frontage & public realm interface at length: additional ground level space for the Green Street treatment and CCX events to spill out was agreed to have potential; the proposed retail ‘market hall’ –if open typical hours –was supported in order to activate the 300+ ft. long façade when no CCX

events are happening. Even a tall, transparent wall looking into an often empty lobby with just escalators was agreed to not be genuinely activating; the hours and degree of public porosity into the lobby and what public attractors are within will be critical. (C1-2)

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly supported the southwest entry plaza, but recommended the two open sides slope or step with the adjacent sidewalks to maximize pedestrian access and diagonal desire lines. The Board also agreed both building plaza edges needed retail activation besides the retail and adjacent CCX entry doors shown (even if these doors are open during public hours to the 'mixing zone' as stated). Added retail activation at the southeast corner of this plaza will also address the recommendation for more Pine activation (7b).

The Board agreed the two-sided market hall along Pine Street will succeed only if the adjacent public 'mixing zone' has a natural flow-through circulation from Pine to Olive. The steep 14ft tall, narrow stairs shown on Olive and the recessed, hidden doors at the upper landing are not welcoming or easy to use. The Board recommended the Olive stairs be widened and possibly the 'mixing zone' volume project at that street, with the stairs internal. More gradual stepped floors of the mixing zone should be studied, even if impacting ceiling heights below. The narrow stairs to 9th were not essential, thus providing more retail continuity on that street.

***At the EDG#3, the Board agreed the revised southwest plaza edges were more welcoming, but the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue stair should be expanded. The Board supported the expanded retail at the northwest corner and the revised, gradual Olive stairs, as shown on pg 45, that provide a more welcoming entrance and Olive address for the Mixing Zone. See additional comments about the Olive steps under 11d.***

***STAFF clarification: the Mixing Zone was stated to be fully open to the public when there are no CCX events, and during CCX events the ticketed demising line is at the yellow "registration" zone east of the Mixing Zone shown on pg 49; Board support for the entire CCX ground level strategy is contingent on this mixing zone being fully public and open for generous timeframes, to activate the 9th Avenue corners and Green Street frontage with two-sided retail, and to create a viable 'public atrium' and pass-through, in lieu of any public terraces at upper levels.***

- e. **Massing Options for EDG #2:** The Board looks forward to three massing options at the next meeting that respond to all major context influences, yet manifest three clear, and distinct design concepts; suggestions for those might be: a) Program-driven/code compliant; b) Subtractive, slices and notches; c) Additive, volumes and voids. A hybrid is certainly plausible, as the primary Block A is alone 4.5 acres in size, and this site has uniquely different east and west view prospects (see 1b). (A2; B4)

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the applicant-preferred massing scheme for both the CCX structure and the two co-development blocks (pg. 92-94), with important refinements to the co-development blocks found under 7g and 7h.

***At the EDG#3, the Board supported the overall massing scheme for the CCX structure as presented, with important revisions along Olive discussed under departure #1. The Board supported the Block B west plaza and massing as shown on pg 61, and more importantly via the model; the Board recommended more perspectives of this block from the west, to confirm a superior response to the 'flatiron' condition.***

***The Board supported the 3-part tower massing of block C, but recommended the vertical recesses be deeper. The block C office podium was less well resolved, and the Board recommended the height, scale and stepping of the podium needs more study, possibly a more dramatic change of materials and/or taller, and deeper offsets at the gasket to the tower. The Board agreed the two-story scale along Olive and part of Boren (shown on pg 27) was more successful than the one on Howell.***

- f. **Roof Design:** At the EDG#1, the Board stressed the very large roof is a "5<sup>th</sup> Elevation" which will be visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. The 4+ acres provides a major opportunity for a combination of: sizable sustainable strategies; useable open space for users; canvas for an exceptional landscape design; and/or possible public realm in a dense, park deficient district. The Board cautioned that these uses should determine roof structural considerations, rather than the structural cost being used to eliminate a superior design or use. (A2; D1; D2).

At the EDG#2, the Board restated the need for a creative and multi-purpose design for the large and visible roof (pg. 95); a complete landscape design, preferably with some usable space and public access, should be provided at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board acknowledged that the only public open spaces are at several at-grade locations, and the upper roof terraces are exclusively for users of the CC events, or for rental by public organizations/events. Therefore, the Board stressed that each and every public space 'at grade' must be as permeable and welcoming as possible for the majority of event and non-event occasions (see 10d Clarification above). The Board will review the specific landscape design elements and other features for all roof decks (as diagrammatically shown on pg. 19) at subsequent meetings.***

## **11. Perimeter Street Edges & Ground Floors: (B3-3; C1; C3; C4; D1-1; E1)**

- a. **Ground Floor Edges:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed all street edges in this central location must be done well, with no street sacrificed as a designated 'back-of-house'. To maximize pedestrian interaction and provide legitimate uses for all Seattleites not only CCX users, all ground level frontages should: minimize the number and length of blank walls; interject regular lengths of retail or porous, activating uses; reasonably step floors with the adjacent sloping sidewalks to permit regularly spaced doors; and integrate any mandatory services, exit doors or other blank elements in a highly artful manner. The Board agreed maximum transparency is good, but pedestrians looking

into closed and frequently empty lobby spaces does not equal diverse and consistent activation.

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the street level program and design required the most attention, as the response to clear EDG#1 guidance was not sufficient on almost all frontages. The Board recommended frequent doors and actual porosity where humans move from sidewalks into building spaces, not simply 'visual porosity' or transparency. The 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage design shown (pg. 61) has the best potential; the Board supported the storefront modulation and setbacks shown, but recommended more depth for the street facing portions of the split level retail (pg. 66 shows 12 ft.) to ensure this critical Green Street frontage is successful and lively. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed that the project's street level programming and design elements require the most on-going attention and follow through. The building ground floor along 9<sup>th</sup> as shown in plan and elevation on pg 40, was improved and supported. The portion of Pine shown on pg 36 was supported, especially the number, amount and vertical scale of the five retail 'pavilions'.***

- b. **Pine Street:** The Board agreed this sidewalk is a very heavily traveled link uphill to Capitol Hill, and it likely deserves additional width via a setback, a consistent curbside landscape amenity, and definitely requires more substantial retail activation than the small 'pop-ups' indicated on pg. 52/left.

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly reiterated this street frontage is critical to provide consistent retail activation on a busy pedestrian link to Capitol Hill. The retail amount/consistency shown is a very inadequate link, as the context diagram on pg 71 clearly shows. The Board recommended more retail depth (where customers enter the space) and more linear retail frontage in the middle and west block face, well beyond the approximately 25% shown (pg. 71; code requires 75%).

The Pine retail should read more as tall pavilions along the street that provide scale. Setbacks between them, for cafes and select smaller views into the pre-function atrium, which should possibly be narrowed to afford more retail depth, at least at sidewalk levels (see 6d). Daylight into the pre-function atrium can occur above the more contextually-critical retail pavilions, which can be interspersed between any escalators and landings; the pavilion roofs could provide public view decks, internally and to the street. Large scale, detailed elevations and sections of the pre-function atrium are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board strongly reiterated that it is critical to provide a strong and consistent pedestrian link between Capitol Hill and 9<sup>th</sup> by activating the street with a continuous edge of retail or other elements that provide pedestrian interest. The Board supported the building jogs and setbacks shown on pg 34 & 36, but was concerned about the approximately 130 ft long 'vacant space' between the west retail box and plaza on pg 34. The Board recommended the two-bay green recess***

***remain, but incorporate seating that allows pedestrians to look down into the prefunction spaces, while retaining some green relief. The Board also recommended all four bays of glass adjacent to the escalators incorporate elements of scale and visual interest, possibly integrated with a kinetic interior artwork or other feature to stimulate pedestrians; the Board did not consider escalators to qualify for that, but the floating stair shown next to the windows is preferred to escalators.***

- c. **Boren Avenue:** At the EDG#1, the Board supported the 4 retail corners and stretching that activation along all of Boren, and visually minimizing any vehicle portals along both block fronts of Boren Avenue, particularly the east truck portal into site C.

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Boren street level is important to pedestrians and the nearly continuous blank walls shown were of major concern (pg. 88, 93). The Board recommended shallow ‘pop-up’ retail here rather than on Pine, or at a minimum, a continuous layer for display windows, artful wall treatments, and narrow landscape planters at the building edge (plus the lush curbside planter). Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed that Boren Avenue is an important pedestrian link, however the current design shown on pg 30 - especially below the meeting level balcony - is not supporting pedestrians or the mid-range visibility across the freeway (pg 32/33). Some elements are promising: the retail corners, adjacent deep reveals, the stepped low planting walls.***

***The singular treatment of the central “large” scale green wall was not supported. The Board recommended the multiple exit doors be ‘hidden’ but other material, visual and compositional interest –rather than continuous greenery - occupy all the wall surface below the canopy levels. See 10 b for more comments on this wall above ground level.***

- d. **Olive Way:** At the EDG#1, the Board was concerned this important pedestrian street lacked consistent retail activation. Any elevators or blank walls should be staggered with intermittent retail or similar activation. Perimeter services should be pushed inward rather than interior parking/services pushing out to the sidewalk.

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Olive street level should have more retail frontage, especially near the Terry intersection, and pedestrian activation along the length. The freight elevators might be exposed as pedestrian interest and a visual feature on the elevation, if they are of glass or a similar dynamic treatment. Wall treatments similar as described above for Boren, should be employed on any necessary blank walls. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board strongly supported the added mid-block retail along Olive Way, and the highly transparent treatment of the nearby employee entrance and parking lobby (see pg 44). The Board did not support exposing the parking floors to***

*the Olive façade, but was enthusiastic about translucent glass at the exit stair towers, and especially at the northwest and larger northeast elevators, showing the movement behind. The Board agreed the Olive stair/ramp into the 'mixing zone' is a crucial activator, and widening/deflecting the east edge of the opening toward the Terry axis should be studied (see diagram pg 48, lower left).*

*The Board agreed the parking portal on Olive, shown at the Terry axis on pg 16, appears overly prominent because the rest of that terminus elevation is not a deliberate composition, responding to the visual axis of the Green Street. If this portal is not shifted off axis, the Board recommended further elevational studies and an intentional composition, confirmed by perspectives noted under 9b.*

- e. **Terry Avenue Green Street Terminus:** At the EDG#1, the Board was unanimously opposed to a vehicle portal as the terminus of the Terry Green Street (regardless of the outcome of the streetscape issues in 2c above), and instead advised a major pedestrian entry be on axis, and link into the public lobby facing 9<sup>th</sup>. Any parking portal on this frontage should be shifted east.

At the EDG#2, the Board was disappointed the parking portal did not move, and did not accept the rationale provided; the portal shown continues to be an unsatisfactory terminus for the Terry Green Street (pg. 47). The Board restated it should be shifted, or further façade and scale techniques must be developed to mitigate the portal presence, yet provide a suitably scaled visual terminus. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

The Board supported the two pedestrian crosswalks of Olive at Terry, but agreed the 'receiving uses' of employee and parking entries are not suitable for a Green Street. The Board recommended replacing these with retail, or a prominent and gracious forecourt/entry that leads Green Street pedestrians west to the stairs/escalators at the north end of the 'mixing zone' (see comment 6d); this would truly implement the applicant diagram on page 36, blue arrow.

*At the EDG#3, The Board supported the crosswalks and tabled intersection shown on pg 47, while those ROW improvements are for SDOT review and confirmation. See 11 e above for comments on the Terry terminus. The Board agreed the block B lobby should be more prominent on Terry, and recommended additional perspective renderings (see comments under 9b).*

- f. **Howell Street:** Like Olive, this street is an important stitch between the CCX and the rapidly infilling district to the north, so it requires interesting uses and facades on all block faces that reinforce pedestrian movements both east-west and north-south.

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the placement and linear amount of active uses along Howell (pg. 92, left) appears sufficient, and expects the applicant to pursue further increases in the amount and depth of 'retail orange' graphically shown on

both blocks B and C. The Board agreed the screening of the truck ramp portion in the middle of block C must be sophisticated and provide excellent pedestrian interest. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed that the screening of the truck ramp in the middle of block C (pg 59), and any perimeter back-of-house on either block (pg 60), should be a sophisticated glass design, providing an excellent pedestrian experience and interest by using varying patterns or materials.***

- g. **Site C, Northeast Block:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the truck movements appear to overwhelm this block and retail should be maximized and fill in the corners and every available part of the perimeter. The Board seeks SDOT technical corroboration that the truck movements are absolutely the smallest necessary, and all curb cuts and portals should be minimized in width and façade presence.

At the EDG#2, the Board restated the above technical checks are still needed. The Board agreed the office massing shown was bulky and squat, and recommended studies that increase the reading of two more slender volumes that slip past each other, east-west. The offset at the top of each volume might be more substantial to improve the legibility, plus the south volume might register to Olive to enhance the grid shift, and thus create a consistent, sunnier podium 'stepback' along Olive. The Board agreed the tower should not lap down to grade on the Howell elevation, and the podium needs a clear expression, possibly taller than 1 story on the north and south sides.

***At the EDG#3, the Board applauded the sizable decreases in the two truck portals (48 ft on Boren; 26 ft on Terry), and supported the approach of integrating and recessing the loading doors into the podium bays, as shown on pg 58/59. See 10 f for office podium comments.***

- h. **Sites B & C; Co-development:** At the EDG#1, the Board supported planning ahead and requested more details to ensure viable cores, lobbies, and loading space will be possible on the two blocks. The potential for public open space at the interesting hinge of the two street grids should be explored on the west 'point' of the northeast Block B (see 1c/f).

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the basic massing of preferred block B, with a tall podium, expressed gasket and the tower proportions. The Board supported the generous set back at grade at the west with the adjacent activating retail, but agreed the overall form should better respond to the visual axis down Olive onto the 'flat iron' building and site condition. Also see comments under 5c.

**At the EDG#3, the Board supported the massing, tower proportions and development of block B, with a tall podium, and expressed gasket. Also see comments under 10 e.**

- i. **9<sup>th</sup> Plaza edge/greenery/steps:** At the EDG#3, the Board agreed *the stairs leading up to the plaza from 9<sup>th</sup> were too narrow, and the wide, long berm actually creates a barrier (see pg 43/left). The Board recommended widening the stairs, similar to those along Pine, incorporating smaller planters to maintain some Green Street character, and easing back the planter and bench at the corner to accommodate diagonal pedestrian desire lines from the busy crosswalks to the primary CCX entrance doors. The Board supported the new gradual, mid-block stairs on 9<sup>th</sup> up to the mixing zone, and encouraged them to be less abrupt at the sidewalk transition; the adjacent public elevator would be less obstructive if a glass enclosure.*

## 12. General:

- a) **5<sup>th</sup> Generation Facility:** At the EDG#1, the Board was intrigued by the applicant's statement that this CCX represented a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Convention facility, geared toward generation "z", and requested more development of what that means for the physical form and expression of this project.

At the EDG#2, the Board heard the response to what 5<sup>th</sup> generation means, but still had difficulty seeing how this is tangibly expressed in the proposed building. The proposal does offer high transparency out to the context, but the building does not appear more 'welcoming and open' to the public than a typical facility, nor does the perimeter or land locked mixing zone provide 'engagement between the event and the city' (pg. 117, last paragraph). More tangible follow through on these assertions is needed at future meetings.

***At the EDG#3, the Board appreciated the further clarification of the meaning of 5<sup>th</sup> generation, emphasizing an "open, welcoming facility". While the Board reluctantly acknowledged there are no places open to the general public (without paying rental) above the ground floor, the Board supported the following stated attributes which improve public welcome and porosity: the revised 'mixing zone' is genuinely public with generous openings on three sides; the street edges have consistent and variable voluntary setbacks that expand the sidewalk and layer the building edge; there are at least four sizable, usable corner plazas (9<sup>th</sup> /Pine; 9<sup>th</sup> /Howell; Boren/Howell; Olive/Terry), and others may emerge.***

- b) **Scaling a double-block in a central, fine grained location:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the objective must be much more than filling the existing void with a large block of self-serving program; the site is at a crossroads of scales, views and neighborhoods and there is an obligation to also improve connections, enhance the public realm, and add substantial and dynamic uses that serve all pedestrians.

At the EDG#2, the Board summarized that while the proposed CCX massing has improved, and has shifts, transparency and the beginnings of scale modulations that respond to context, it needs much more refinement, particularly on the south side. While the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue street level and plaza have potential, the ground floor edges on all three other streets require substantially more program space and effort to provide



genuine activation, porosity, and pedestrian scale. The Co-development proposals are promising, but also require massing refinements and more detailed design of all pedestrian level facades.

***At the EDG#3, the Board summarized that the project's site plan and massing have improved, the corners along Olive and Boren are stronger, and that some areas of transparency are adequate. However, the Board recommended that other areas need additional refinement. Several key edges of the ground floor perimeter need more attention. The lower and middle façade along Boren should be much more visually compelling. The Board stated that the massing refinements to the Co-development blocks are going in the right direction, but need further refinement, especially at the podium, gasket and facades along Howell and Olive for block C.***

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Board identified the following **Downtown Design Guidelines of highest priority for this specific project**, while all guidelines remain applicable. The Priority Downtown Guidelines are summarized below; for the full text please visit the [Design Review website](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/howeare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm) and <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/howeare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm>

### SITE PLANNING AND MASSING

**A1 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 nearby or beyond the immediate context of the building site.**

**A1.1. Response to Context:** Each building site lies within a larger physical context having various and distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Develop an architectural concept and arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. a change in street grid alignment that yields a site having nonstandard shape;
- b. a site having dramatic topography or contrasting edge conditions;
- c. patterns of urban form, such as nearby buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
- d. access to direct sunlight—seasonally or at particular times of day;
- e. views from the site of noteworthy structures or natural features, (i.e.: the Space Needle, Smith Tower, port facilities, Puget Sound, Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains);
- f. views of the site from other parts of the city or region; and
- g. proximity to a regional transportation corridor (the monorail, light rail, freight rail, major arterial, state highway, ferry routes, bicycle trail, etc.).

**A1.2. Response to Planning Efforts:** Some areas downtown are transitional environments, where existing development patterns are likely to change. In these areas, respond to the urban

form goals of current planning efforts, being cognizant that new development will establish the context to which future development will respond.

## ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

**B1 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.**

**B1.1. Adjacent Features and Networks:** Each building site lies within an urban neighborhood context having distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. a surrounding district of distinct and noteworthy character;
- b. an adjacent landmark or noteworthy building;
- c. a major public amenity or institution nearby;
- d. neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
- e. elements of the pedestrian network nearby, (i.e.: green street, hillclimb, mid-block crossing, through-block passageway); and
- f. direct access to one or more components of the regional transportation system.

**B1.2. Land Uses:** Also, consider the design implications of the predominant land uses in the area surrounding the site.

**B3 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.**

**B3.1. Building Orientation:** In general, orient the building entries and open space toward street intersections and toward street fronts with the highest pedestrian activity. Locate parking and vehicle access away from entries, open space, and street intersections considerations.

**B3.2. Features to Complement:** Reinforce the desirable patterns of massing and facade composition found in the surrounding area. Pay particular attention to designated landmarks and other noteworthy buildings. Consider complementing the existing:

- a. massing and setbacks,
- b. scale and proportions,
- c. expressed structural bays and modulations,
- d. fenestration patterns and detailing,
- e. exterior finish materials and detailing,
- f. architectural styles, and
- g. roof forms.

**B3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level:** Consider setting the building back slightly to create space adjacent to the sidewalk conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, sitting, or dining. Reinforce the desirable streetscape elements found on adjacent blocks. Consider complementing existing:

- h. public art installations,
- i. street furniture and signage systems,
- j. lighting and landscaping, and
- k. overhead weather protection.

**B4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building: Compose the massing and organize the 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.**

**B4.1. Massing:** When composing the massing, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- a. setbacks, projections, and open space;
- b. relative sizes and shapes of distinct building volumes; and
- c. roof heights and forms.

**B4.2. Coherent Interior/Exterior Design:** When organizing the interior and exterior spaces and developing the architectural elements, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- d. facade modulation and articulation;
- e. windows and fenestration patterns;
- f. corner features;
- g. streetscape and open space fixtures;
- h. building and garage entries; and
- i. building base and top.

**B4.3. Architectural Details:** When designing the architectural details, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- j. exterior finish materials;
- k. architectural lighting and signage;
- l. grilles, railings, and downspouts;
- m. window and entry trim and moldings;
- n. shadow patterns; and
- o. exterior lighting.

## THE STREETScape

**C1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction: Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.**

**C1.1. Street Level Uses:** Provide spaces for street level uses that:

- a. reinforce existing retail concentrations;
- b. vary in size, width, and depth;
- c. enhance main pedestrian links between areas; and

d. establish new pedestrian activity where appropriate to meet area objectives. Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity.

**C1.2. Retail Orientation:** Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will “spill-out” onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

**C1.3. Street-Level Articulation for Pedestrian Activity:** Consider setting portions of the building back slightly to create spaces conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining. Further articulate the street level facade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience via:

- e. open facades (i.e., arcades and shop fronts);
- f. multiple building entries;
- g. windows that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior;
- h. merchandising display windows;
- i. street front open space that features art work, street furniture, and landscaping;
- j. exterior finish materials having texture, pattern, lending themselves to high quality detailing.

**C2 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.**

**C2.1. Modulation of Facades:** Consider modulating the building facades and reinforcing this modulation with the composition of:

- a. the fenestration pattern;
- b. exterior finish materials;
- c. other architectural elements;
- d. light fixtures and landscaping elements; and
- e. the roofline.

**C3 Provide Active — Not Blank — Facades: Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.**

**C3.1. Desirable Facade Elements:** Facades which for unavoidable programmatic reasons may have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest. Enliven these facades by providing:

- a. small retail spaces (as small as 50 square feet) for food bars, newstands, and other specialized retail tenants;
- b. visibility into building interiors;
- c. limited lengths of blank walls;
- d. a landscaped or raised bed planted with vegetation that will grow up a vertical trellis or frame installed to obscure or screen the wall’s blank surface;

- e. high quality public art in the form of a mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, relief, etc., installed over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface;
- f. small setbacks, indentations, or other architectural means of breaking up the wall surface;
- g. different textures, colors, or materials that break up the wall's surface.
- h. special lighting, a canopy, awning, horizontal trellis, or other pedestrian-oriented feature to reduce the expanse of the blank surface and add visual interest;
- i. seating ledges or perches (especially on sunny facades and near bus stops);
- j. merchandising display windows or regularly changing public information display cases.

## PUBLIC AMENITIES

**D1 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.**

**D1.1. Pedestrian Enhancements:** Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk, pedestrian enhancements should be considered in the resulting street frontage. Downtown the primary function of any open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide access into the building and opportunities for outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.

- a. All open space elements should enhance a pedestrian oriented, urban environment that has the appearance of stability, quality, and safety.
- b. Preferable open space locations are to the south and west of tower development, or where the siting of the open space would improve solar access to the sidewalk.
- c. Orient public open space to receive the maximum direct sunlight possible, using trees, overhangs, and umbrellas to provide shade in the warmest months. Design such spaces to take advantage of views and solar access when available from the site.
- d. The design of planters, landscaping, walls, and other street elements should allow visibility into and out of the open space.

**D1.2. Open Space Features:** Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

- a. visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk;
- b. walking surfaces of attractive pavers;
- c. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;
- d. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably "spill out" and enliven the open space;
- e. areas for vendors in commercial areas;
- f. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;
- g. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and

h. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks. residential open space

**D1.3. Residential Open Space:** Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

- i. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
- j. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
- k. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
- l. play areas for children;
- m. individual gardens; and
- n. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight.

**D2 Enhance the Building with Landscaping: Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping— which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.**

**D2.1. Landscape Enhancements:** Landscape enhancement of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below:

- a. emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;
- b. include a special feature such as a courtyard, fountain, or pool;
- c. incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture;
- d. distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation;
- e. soften the building by screening blank walls, terracing retaining walls, etc;
- f. increase privacy and security through screening and/or shading;
- g. provide a framework such as a trellis or arbor for plants to grow on;
- h. incorporate upper story planter boxes or roof planters;
- i. provide identity and reinforce a desired feeling of intimacy and quiet;
- j. provide brackets for hanging planters;
- k. consider how the space will be viewed from the upper floors of nearby buildings as well as from the sidewalk; and
- l. if on a designated Green Street, coordinate improvements with the local Green Street plan.

**D2.2. Consider Nearby Landscaping:** Reinforce the desirable pattern of landscaping found on adjacent block faces.

- m. plant street trees that match the existing planting pattern or species;
- n. use similar landscape materials; and
- o. extend a low wall, use paving similar to that found nearby, or employ similar stairway construction methods.

**D3 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.**

**D3.1. Public Space Features and Amenities:** Incorporate one or more of the following a appropriate:

- a. public art;
- b. street furniture, such as seating, newspaper boxes, and information kiosks;
- c. distinctive landscaping, such as specimen trees and water features;
- d. retail kiosks;
- e. public restroom facilities with directional signs in a location easily accessible to all; and
- f. public seating areas in the form of ledges, broad stairs, planters and the like, especially near public open spaces, bus stops, vending areas, on sunny facades, and other places where people are likely to want to pause or wait.

**D3.2. Intersection Focus:** Enliven intersections by treating the corner of the building or sidewalk with public art and other elements that promote interaction (entry, tree, seating, etc.) and reinforce the distinctive character of the surrounding area.

## VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING

**E2 Integrate Parking Facilities: Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.**

**E2.1. Parking Structures:** Minimize the visibility of at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and streetscape. Where appropriate consider incorporating one or more of the following treatments:

- a. Incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses at street level to reduce the visual impact of parking structures. A depth of only 10 feet along the front of the building is sufficient to provide space for newsstands, ticket booths, flower shops, and other viable uses.
- b. Use the site topography to help reduce the visibility of the parking facility.
- c. Set the parking facility back from the sidewalk and install dense landscaping.
- d. Incorporate any of the blank wall treatments listed in Guideline C-3.
- e. Visually integrate the parking structure with building volumes above, below, and adjacent.
- f. Incorporate artwork into the facades.
- g. Provide a frieze, cornice, canopy, overhang, trellis or other device at the top of the parking level.
- h. Use a portion of the top of the parking level as an outdoor deck, patio, or garden with a rail, bench, or other guard device around the perimeter.

**E2.2. Parking Structure Entrances:** Design vehicular entries to parking structure so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building. Subordinate the garage entrance to the pedestrian entrance in terms of size, prominence on the street-scape, location, and design emphasis. Consider one or more of the following design strategies:

- i. Enhance the pedestrian entry to reduce the relative importance of the garage entry.

- j. Recess the garage entry portion of the facade or extend portions of the structure over the garage entry to help conceal it.
- k. Emphasize other facade elements to reduce the visual prominence of the garage entry.
- l. Use landscaping or artwork to soften the appearance of the garage entry from the street.
- m. Locate the garage entry where the topography of the site can help conceal it.

**E3 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.**

**E3.1. Methods of Integrating Service Areas:** Consider incorporating one or more of the following to help minimize these impacts:

- a. Plan service areas for less visible locations on the site, such as off the alley.
- b. Screen service areas to be less visible.
- c. Use durable screening materials that complement the building.
- d. Incorporate landscaping to make the screen more effective.
- e. Locate the opening to the service area away from the sidewalk.

#### **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 final recommendation will be reserved until the final Board Recommendation meeting.

At the time of the **Final** Early Design Guidance, the following possible departures were identified:

1. **Façade Modulation – CCX; Olive Elevation (SMC 23.49.058.B):** The Code requires façades above 85 ft high to have maximum lengths as follows, unless they are set back 15 ft or greater from the property line, or are separated by inset modulations that are 15 ft minimum deep x 60 ft minimum length: 86-160 ft = 155 ft long; 161-240 ft = 125 ft long; 241-500 ft = 100 ft long; 501+ ft = 80 ft long. The applicant proposes the 577 ft long façade along Olive way to have multiple recessed modulations above 85 ft, the majority at 6 ft recessed, and others from 30 - 62 ft deep. The eastern portion displays a continuous parapet at about 200 ft height, that is 365 ft long, where code requires a 125 ft maximum length.

**The Board indicated receptivity for the reduced modulation depth of 6 feet, especially since it pertains to about one third of the façade above 85 ft, but was concerned the east parapet was three times longer than code allows. The Board recommended a complete and legible break in parapet and the massing at about the 150 ft point from**



**Boren, which appears to correspond with a stack of exterior balconies on levels 3-6 (pg 44) and which the Board encouraged continuing up to the parapet. (A2; B2; B4)**

- 2. Façade Modulation – CCX; Boren Elevation (SMC 23.49.058.B):** The Code requires façades above 85 ft high to have maximum lengths as follows, unless they are set back 15 ft or greater from the property line, or are separated by inset modulations that are 15 ft minimum deep x 60 ft minimum length: 86-160 ft = 155 ft long; 161-240 ft = 125 ft long; 241-500 ft = 100 ft long; 501+ ft = 80 ft long. The applicant proposes the 350 ft long façade along Boren Avenue to have a recessed modulation that is 15 ft deep across most of the façade from 85 -180 height, except for three projecting volumes that have 0 setback, and they extend to the approximately 210 ft height.

**The Board indicated receptivity for this composition, the 207 long parapet (vs 125ft code maximum), and the three discreet volumes, as long as the area of 15 ft depth is not reduced, and the two 15 ft deep reveals are no less than 46 ft wide total, and more is preferred. (A2; B2; B4)**

- 3. Façade Modulation – Office block C; Howell Elevation (SMC 23.49.058.B):** The Code requires façades above 85 ft high to have maximum lengths as follows, unless they are set back 15 ft or greater from the property line, or are separated by inset modulations that are 15 ft minimum deep x 60 ft minimum length: 86-160 ft = 155 ft long; 161-240 ft = 125 ft long; 241-500 ft = 100 ft long; 501+ ft = 80 ft long. The applicant proposes the 217 ft long façade along Howell to have three vertical recessed modulations that are 6 ft deep (from property line) and 20 ft wide, leaving a large plane that is 3 ft deep and about 90 ft wide.

**The Board did not support the reduced modulation depth and aggregated size of the three ‘stripes’, especially since they are illegible at only 3 ft deeper than the adjacent plane. The Board recommended one larger and deeper recess move that extends to the parapet, on this important ‘gateway’ façade (see pg 25). (A2; B2; B4)**

- 4. Green Street Upper Level Setbacks – CCX; 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (SMC 23.49.058.G.2):** The Code requires a continuous 15 ft setback above 45 ft on the entire 350 ft long frontage of the Green Street. The applicant proposes most of this required area to be setback from 29-244 ft, but there is a podium element approximately 50 ft x 240 ft long that is setback 10 ft, and the 60 x 60 ft projecting meeting room at about 120 ft high that has a 0 setback.

**The Board indicated receptivity to these two signature elements not setback the full 15 ft, as long as they not exceed the proposed elevational area and retain the relative transparency shown on pg 46. The adjacent extra-deep setbacks are also critical to making these two exceptions appear less intrusive to the Green Street. (A1, B2, B4)**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

At the conclusion of the Final Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board unanimously recommended moving forward to MUP application, responding to the guidance above, which should be read for the complete context of all Board guidance.

In addition to other MUP checklist requirements, **the following drawings shall be provided in the submitted MUP drawings**, and in the next DRB booklet, and any pre-requisite studies should be reviewed prior with the planner:

**1.Enlarged Lower Elevations/Plans:** For all three blocks and all frontages, the MUP should include overall elevations (booklet pg 54-61) PLUS enlarged partial elevations of the lower 3-5 floors, registered to corresponding partial floor plans below of the perimeter uses, similar to booklet pages 30,36,42,47. Include revised studies of the Pine Street portion per 11b, the stair materiality per 10a, the materiality of all the enclosure walls of the plaza per 9e, and the Boren walls per 10b.

**2. Landscape Revisions and Roof Plans:** Consistent with comments under 10f, provide complete landscape designs of all occupied terraces, and consistent with 11 i, revise the 9<sup>th</sup> avenue edge of the southwest plaza.

**3. Olive Avenue CCX Elevation Revisions:** Conceal parking ramps and develop translucent glass portions at elevators. Consistent with the Departure #1 comments, revise the parapet and wall modulation of the large, flat eastern half of the Olive elevation. Study widening the stair/ramp at the north end of the 'mixing zone'.

**4.Terry Avenue Perspectives:** Additional views along Terry Avenue looking toward the Olive façade that is the Terry Green Street terminus, developing an intentional and scaled elevation response to that terminus condition, and showing the pedestrian edges of Terry Avenue and the adjacent building ground floors in detail. Diminish the loading doors on block B and wrap the presence of the Olive lobby around the southeast corner.

**5.Olive & Howell Flatiron:** more perspectives of the block B massing and design from the west, including existing and future hotel context, to confirm a superior urban design response to the 'flatiron' condition.

**6.Office Building Revisions:** Provide elevations and perspectives that increase the reveal depths and modulations per comments under departure #3, and revise the tower and podium per 10e.

**7.Perspectives in MUP set, as DR Supplemental:** Include the following perspectives, updated to match revisions, in the MUP set on sheets labeled "DR": booklet pg 25,32,33,38,46, plus the additional ones noted under #4 & 5 above, that portray most of blocks B & C.

-end