



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018296

Address: 710 Cherry Street

Applicant: Kathryn Smith, SMR Architects for Plymouth Housing.

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, March 11, 2015

Board Members Present: Natalie Gualy, Chair
Curtis Bigelow
Dan Foltz
Christina Orr-Cahall
Kevin Price
Krystal Brun

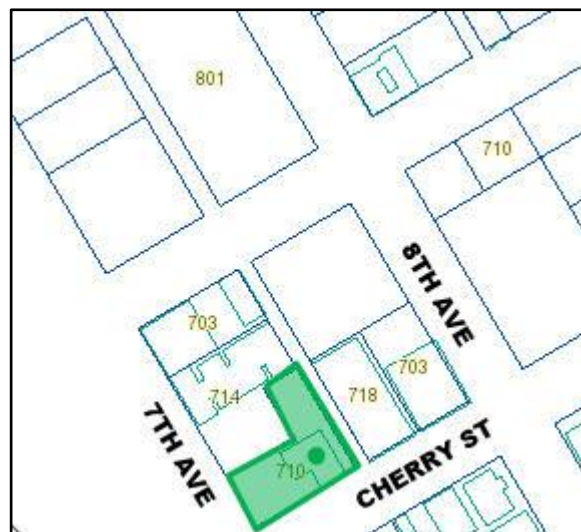
DPD Staff Present: Holly J. Godard

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Highrise (HR)

Nearby Zones: (North) Highrise (HR)
(South) Highrise (HR)
(East) Highrise (HR)
(West) Highrise (HR), and
Interstate 5

Lot Area: 9,599 square feet



Current Development:

Currently there is a three story office building with associated parking.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The area is characterized by midrise residential buildings, a religious institution and Interstate 5 across 7th Avenue.

Access:

Access to the site is via 7th Avenue or the alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no mapped Environmentally Critical Areas at the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project design is for low income housing of about 83 units with indoor and outdoor amenity space for the residents and a resident attendant’s apartment and office.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3018296) at this website:

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

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Mailing Public Resource Center
Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant explained the project goals and introduced the site context, opportunities and constraints to the Board. The applicant showed the zoning envelope at this Highrise zoned site and explained the general approach to present a midrise, seven story building Outdoor amenity space is proposed on the ground floor and at the rooftop level. Common space for residents and a resident manager office and living area is proposed on the ground floor. Service access is

proposed to be via the alley. A bicycle storage room is proposed with access via the north amenity space.

The proposal is for a 7 story building with a two story glass base with residential units above. The entry is proposed to be on 7th Avenue. A glass common area is proposed at the top floor with an open air amenity space adjacent to it.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public offered some comments:

- Use textured metal panels and/or a selection of metal treatments if metal is to be specified.
- Use colored metal.
- The departure requests sound appropriate if there is some increase in material quality or other specific contribution to the public experience.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

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The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

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

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-2. Off-Site Features: Provide opportunities through design to connect to off-site habitats such as riparian corridors or existing urban forest corridors. Promote continuous habitat, where possible, and increase interconnected corridors of urban forest and habitat where possible.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board approved of the building being sited as proposed due to the constraints of the site topography. The Board supported service uses and building mechanical systems being submerged into the site topography while common areas and entry functions are located along 7th Avenue. The Board suggested further study and design of the ground plane garden, garden wall, and right-of-way along Cherry Street including the existing cherry trees. The Board approved further explorations of a striving “rain garden” landscaping to continue landscape concepts on the block uphill and further east.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

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

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

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

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of acknowledging the residential uses across the alley, privacy, sensitive noise receptors, views, etc., as interior uses are explored in the design process. The Board favored continuing the right-of-way (and

on-site) garden style planting strip along Cherry Street. The Board favored the ground plane transparency shown at the meeting to support the floating box concept. The west façade is yet to be fully designed and detailed, but the Board encouraged the design team to consider façade massing including artful articulation and detailed expressions to communicate the interior uses. Use color and texture to accentuate the building due to its prominent location on the corner and as an important architectural form as seen from I-5 and the surrounding neighborhood. Nuances in massing choices should be explored to create clear design intent for the west and south façade.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of designing to the residents' needs, to safety precautions, and to noise and litter from I-5. The Board encouraged the designers to contemplate the interior two story space as an office and common room and its appearance from the exterior, day and night, and how working in a two story office would function for employee long term comfort.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

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

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

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

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

DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DC2-E Form and Function

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed façade composition and noted that all facades are important, visible and worthy of high quality design solutions. The Board is looking for visual interest without pastiche for the west and south facades; a solution that is integral to the concept and expressed with appropriate scale, texture, and color. The Board was favorable to the floating box(es) concept. The Board asked the applicant to create a “vocabulary of windows” to further communicate the design intent. Small windows, large window and paired windows should reinforce the uses and façade language. The Board was split on its opinion of the building top element where the upper level common room is located. However, the full Board thought it should be reconsidered as it relates to the building forms and uses within.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials: Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

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

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

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

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of the site as a defacto entry to downtown Seattle from I-5 and somewhat to Capitol Hill as Cherry street is heavily used by pedestrians and vehicles on 7th Avenue. Therefore the Board directed the applicant to be mindful to design a building with high quality and variable exterior materials, and to use lighting to highlight architectural elements and massing while providing a sense of security. Care must be taken to avoid glare or distraction. Integrate the proposed garden wall into the building concept. The concrete base along Cherry Street should be considered carefully for design, color and any contemplated treatment. The Board favored saving the beautiful and mature cherry trees on Cherry street and, if they need to be removed, to replace them with similar cherry trees.

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 recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

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

1. **Side setbacks (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires 7 feet average and 5 feet minimum. The applicant proposes one foot 9 inch average and up to 0 minimum on the south side setback to better meet site conditions, (DC2-A, B, CS2-B).

The Board indicated that they are favorable and willing to contemplate side setback departures.

2. **Front Setback (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires 7 feet average and 5 feet minimum. The applicant proposes 5 foot average and 5 foot minimum on levels 2-7. (DC2-A, B, CS2-B, C).

The Board indicated that they are favorable and willing to contemplate a front setback departure.

BOARD DIRECTION

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