



THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018378

Address: 5201 Rainier Avenue South

Applicant: Hugh Schaffer, S+HWorks, LLC

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, April 26, 2016

Board Members Present: Julian Weber (Chair)
Carey Dagliano-Holmes
Sharon Khosla
Charles Romero
David Sauvion

Board Members Absent: None

SDCI Staff Present: Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2-40
(South) Lowrise 2 (LR2) and NC2-40
(East) NC2-40
(West) Commercial 2 (C2-65) and LR2

Lot Area: 24,408 square feet (sq. ft.)



Current Development:

A vehicle repair garage, used car sales area and accessory detached structures exist on the project site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development includes residential uses (single family residences, townhouses and apartments) to the west and south; and commercial uses (retail, restaurants, offices, etc.) east and north of the subject property.

This urban triangular-shaped corner site is located within the Columbia City Residential Urban Village and the Southeast Seattle Reinvestment Area (SESRA), situated on the west side of Rainier Avenue South. There are a variety of institutional and commercial uses in immediate vicinity of the project along the Rainier Avenue South corridor, north and south of the project. The Columbia City Historic Landmark District is approximately a half block north of the proposal site. The neighborhood is evolving with blocks of significant development of residential and commercial development in the past several years. The site is situated in an area that is moderately pedestrian and transit oriented due to its proximity of bus transit along Rainier Avenue South.

Access:

Vehicular access to the subject property is possible from both Rainier Avenue South and 39th Avenue South.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The project site slopes upward gently towards the southwest, rising approximately 12'. There are no Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) mapped on the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a six-story mixed-use commercial/residential structure with five stories of residential (102 units) above ground-related commercial (1,910 sq. ft. of retail), live-work units (3 units) and enclosed parking area. A total parking quantity of 52 stalls is planned within the structure.

This project includes a request to rezone the project site from NC2-40 to Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3-65). The applicant has outlined this information in the design packet.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 11, 2015

This project includes a request to rezone the project site from NC2-40 to Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3-65). The applicant has outlined this information in the design packet.

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3018378) at this website:

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

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

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019

Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design concepts were presented to the Board. The presentation began by showing three large and distinct massing moves. Additionally, the architect's presentation included supplementary information (massing articulation sketches of the preferred scheme) that was not included in the EDG design packets initially provided to the Board. The project team's goals were to design a project that represents the residential and commercial nature of the area; responds appropriately to adjacent residential uses; and, creates a strong, attractive and pedestrian-friendly design. All three options included a six-story structure with partially below grade parking, commercial space, live-work space, and approximately 120 +/- residential units. Outdoor amenity areas were also proposed in all of the schemes presented to the Board.

The first scheme (Concept A) identified as the code-compliant option, illustrated an L-shaped massing facing Rainier Ave South. This scheme included a triangular-shaped elevated courtyard amenity space overlooking Rainier Ave South; and reduced upper-level massing facing Rainier Avenue South with the bulk of the structure pushed towards the south and west boundary lines. This option included 115 residential units, seven live-work units, 2,057 sq. ft. of commercial area and 25 parking stalls.

The second scheme (Concept B) was identified as an interior courtyard ("doughnut") option. This scheme showed a simplified massing with an interior courtyard that would be flanked by single loaded corridors around its perimeter. The majority of the massing bulk of this scheme was pushed to the perimeter of the site, creating impacts to both the Rainier frontage and the adjacent Lowrise-zoned properties to the south and to the west. This scheme was comprised of 120 residential units, 4 live-work units, 2,057 sq. ft. of commercial area and 48 parking stalls. This design would require several design departures from residential setback requirements, non-

residential street-level transparency requirements, parking location standards, and parking sight triangle requirements.

The third, and applicant preferred, scheme (Concept C) was described as the “bar and townhome” option. This scheme showed the majority of the project massing along and following Rainier Avenue South, with a plaza separating smaller scale townhomes toward the south and west ends of the site. The intent of this scheme was to reduce the project scale from the NC zoning along Rainier Avenue South to the LR2 zoning on 39th Avenue South. This option included 121 residential units, three live-work units, 1,888 sq. ft. of commercial area and 55 parking stalls. This design would also require several design departures from residential setback requirements, non-residential street-level transparency requirements, street-level non-residential use depth provisions, parking sight triangle requirements, and parking location standards.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Many members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised (with applicant/planner response in *italics*):

- Concerned about the safety and the site lines of the parking entrance relative to its proposed proximity to the intersection of Rainier Avenue South and 39th Avenue South.
- Voiced support of a design that is compatible with the architectural character of Columbia City.
- Encouraged the Board to not support code departures requests for sight triangles and residential setback requirements. Discouraged a design that would create a large wall abutting the project site’s south boundary line.
- Stated that the proposal would not meet the frequent transit requirements and would be required to provide more parking onsite.
The planner explained that Frequent Transit requirements are reviewed during the Master Use Permit (MUP) phase and was not part of the Board’s purview.
- Stated that the proposed parking layout was “unrealistic” and would not adequately accommodate vehicular maneuvering on the site.
- Requested the future design incorporate elements that enhance the pedestrian connection between Columbia City and Hillman City. Asked that the Rainier Avenue South façade be softened with green space, nice seating areas and not allow the project to create a “canyon-like” setting at the street.
- Encouraged the applicant to incorporate green solutions such as a green roof and pervious paving in the design.
- Voiced support of the onsite parking quantity and encouraged a design that would support the usage of alternative modes of transportation (walking, light rail, bus transit, bicycling).
- Asked about the building’s setbacks abutting the east and west property lines.
The applicant clarified the setback for the garage wall along 39th Avenue South is 4’ from the property line, and 7’ from the sidewalk edge. Along Rainier there will be

approximately 1' setback from the property line, with planting and entry areas along that façade.

- Glad to see the site developed and appreciated the pedestrian and transportation considerations.
- Asked that the applicant incorporate amenities for a range of incomes and lifestyles.
- Requested that the following design changes in order to emphasize the attributes of the buildings in the Columbia City District:
 - The Rainier Avenue South façade height should be kept low.
 - Incorporate more modulation along the east façade in order to break down the façade massing.
 - Incorporate timeless, high quality exterior materials throughout the project.
 - Enhance the corner by providing gathering space and good landscaping.
- Expressed concern that the blank façade along 39th Avenue South would be problematic and pose a crime/safety issue.
- Inquired if street improvements (sidewalks, curbs, landscaping, etc.) are proposed along 39th Avenue South.
The applicant clarified that new curbs and sidewalks will be provided along 39th Avenue South.
- Would like affordable housing to be considered. Did not agree that bicycles were a viable mode of transportation in this neighborhood which is currently very auto-oriented.
- Felt that that parking should be located below grade as stated in the design guidelines.
- Observed that a large expanse of blank wall would face the property south of the project site and at grade along 39th Avenue South. Felt that design that negatively impacts the qualities and characteristics of the streetscape should be discouraged.
- Concerned that the proposed massing's height, bulk, and scale does not meet Columbia City neighborhood plan design goals.

SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 9, 2016
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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3018378) at this website:

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

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant presented three alternative design concepts (Concepts A, B and C) to the Board for consideration. These design concepts had been revised in response to the Board's feedback from the first EDG meeting.

Concept B and Concept C necessitate multiple code departures specified later in this document.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Many members of the public attended this Second Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Requested that the garage entry and exit location be moved further south on 39th Avenue South to provide a safer and better flow of traffic for drivers using the garage as well as cyclists, drivers and pedestrians using South Dawson Street and 39th Avenue South.
- Concerned that the parking layouts presented are not compliant with the Land Use Code requirements.
- Stated that the minor modulation applied to the long façade abutting Rainier Avenue South for Scheme C was not sufficient to reduce the perceived height and scale of the proposed structure. Options such as omitting residential units above the podium base to create dramatic modulation moves and upper-level height reductions at the structure's corner were suggested to the Board as possible methods to have this proposal complement the existing scale of the neighborhood.
- Reiterated concern that the proposed massing's height, bulk, and scale does not meet Columbia City neighborhood plan design goals. Consequently, voiced opposition to the applicant's requested code departures.
- Commented that Scheme A is more sensitive to Rainier with its modulation and that the proposed six-story structure would impact views to the horizon line from the residential properties west of the subject site.
- Voiced concern with the proposed setback requests and materials for the retaining wall and elevator/stair tower along the project site's south property line. Requested that setback requirements be maintained and that exterior cladding materials/fenestration for south-facing walls be durable, easily maintained and considerate of future development planned for the neighboring property just south of the project site.
- Questioned the validity of the traffic study information presented to the Board.
- Encouraged the Board to be attentive to the negative impacts (parking, traffic, scale, etc.) of a six-story development in this transitional area along Rainier between Columbia City and Hillman City neighborhoods.
- Expressed concern regarding parking and traffic impacts to 39th Avenue South and South Dawson Street associated with the proposed project.
- Voiced concern about the long frontage and immense building mass proposed along Rainier Avenue South and encouraged the Board to support a design that is compatible with the scale of development south of the project site, as well as, the surrounding neighborhood.

- Encouraged a design with high-quality exterior materials.
- Commented that the proposed project is a “good bookend” to the Columbia City neighborhood.
- Appreciated the overall design and felt it could be an asset to the community.
- Asked that special attention be focused on how the building’s northernmost corner meets the property edge.
- Encouraged more ground-level landscape be applied along Rainier Avenue South to soften the existing streetscape.

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

<p>THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 26, 2016</p>
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PUBLIC COMMENT

Many members of the public attended this Third Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised (with Board response in *italics*):

- Appreciated the additional modulation applied to the building mass to reduce the building’s bulk and scale. Felt that the presented design concept addressed the Board’s recommendations successfully.
- Encouraged the Board to be mindful of the complexities associated with the project site and requested that the Board move the project to the next phase.
- Commented that the project is a vast improvement to the existing structure/uses on the project site and reiterated that the overall design would be an asset to the community.
- Reiterated concern that the proposed massing’s height, bulk and scale is not complementary to the existing height, bulk and scale of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Voiced general disappointment in the progress of the design and how it does not appear to meet the Columbia City neighborhood plan design goals.
- Encouraged the Board to support a design that includes refinements to the north and south facades of the bar massing that is more respectful to the existing neighborhood

character at four stories and inclusive of upper-level setbacks above the fourth story level.

- Reiterated request that the garage entry and exit location be moved further south on 39th Avenue South to provide a safer and better flow of traffic for drivers using the garage as well as cyclists, drivers and pedestrians using South Dawson Street and 39th Avenue South.
- Stated that the proposed design is out of scale with the neighborhood. Recapped to the Board the potential negative impacts (parking, traffic, scale, etc.) of a six-story development in this transitional area along Rainier between Columbia City and Hillman City neighborhoods.
- Voiced interest about about the transparency at ground level; inquired if the Board had reviewed concepts that promoted more onsite parking; and, asked if other design details would be considered at the EDG meeting.

The Board Chair provided a brief overview of the Design Review process and explained that the EDG phase is an opportunity for the Board to focus on the bulk, scale and organization of the building. He explained that there would be an additional Recommendation meeting that will cover materiality and other finer details.

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

PRIORITIES & BOARD 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.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 11, 2015

1. Design Concept, Architectural Composition and Massing:

- a. The Board discussed each design scheme (Concept A, B and C) and offered feedback. In reviewing the three concepts, the Board felt that Concept A was successful in modulation along Rainier Avenue South but commented the elevated exterior amenity space abutting Rainier was not appropriate. The Board was also concerned with the transition of the massing to the Lowrise-zoned property south west of the project site along 39th Avenue South.

The Board voiced that Concept B was the least preferred because the elevated courtyard would not be beneficial to the units and would create long continuous facades abutting all of the subject site's boundary lines.

The Board appreciated that the preferred Concept C illustrated a better courtyard orientation and the potential for a strong urban frontage along Rainier Avenue South. However, members of the Board noted that the arrangement of the massing blocks appeared to be disjointed and not unified.

Overall, the Board concluded that the proposed schemes did not adequately address the site context; lacked sufficient façade articulation and did not effectively transition to the surrounding lower-scaled residential properties to the south and to the west. Therefore, the Board directed the applicant to return for a Second Early Design Guidance meeting to further explore all three schemes presented relative to the following guidance:

- i. The Board noted that the massing options should better transition to the adjacent LR2 property. (CS2.D)
- ii. Analysis of the second level exterior plaza, including its relationship to adjacent residential uses and the street was requested by the Board. (CS2.D.5, PL3.B, DC3.A)
- iii. The Board appreciated the supplementary information (massing articulation sketches of the preferred scheme) distributed to the Board at the meeting but voiced a preference that this information be illustrated for each option. Therefore, the Board requested that further development of the massing and articulation perspectives for all of the schemes be provided at the next EDG meeting. The Board also requested the applicant show further context and adjacent buildings to better illustrate the existing scale and adjacency relationships. (CS2.A.2, CS2.C.1, CS2.D, DC2.A, DC2.B)

2. Rainier Avenue South Frontage:

- a. The Board expressed support for a design that provided a strong urban frontage along Rainier Avenue South. (CS2.B, CS2.C.1, CS2.D)
- b. The Board recognized that the configuration and size of the live-work units will add to the viability of the development and noted that the currently proposed configuration of the live-work units would be problematic. Thus Board requested diagrammatic floor layout plans of the live-work units at the next meeting. (PL3.B)

3. 39th Avenue South Frontage and Vehicular Access:

- a. The Board stated that the 39th Avenue South street-level façade needs further study with regards to transparency, blank walls, pedestrian/resident safety and vehicular access and expects these concerns to be resolved in the next design iteration. (PL2.B.1, PL2.B.3, PL3.B, DC1.B, DC2.B)
- b. The Board felt that the elevated access to the townhouse units sited above the podium base was awkward, and requested the applicant explore a design that enhances the relationship of the townhomes to the grade. (PL3.A, PL3.B)
- c. The Board observed that the location of the parking entrance abutting 39th Avenue South could be a safety issue due to its proximity to the intersection and stated detailed analysis is necessary. The Board suggested the applicant explore relocating the parking entrance farther south along this street as a method to address this concern. (DC1.B.1)

SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 9, 2016

1. Design Concept, Architectural Composition and Massing:

a. Board discussion focused on the development of the preferred Concept C design scheme. In reviewing this concept, the Board felt that vast improvements had been made to this design to improve the relationship of the proposed townhomes to the grade along 39th Avenue South and the reduction of massing against the Lowrise-zoned property to the south. However, the Board discussed other specific and significant issues and concluded that these issues should be resolved prior to the next phase of project development. Therefore, the Board directed the applicant to return for a Third Early Design Guidance (EDG) meeting to present the Concept C massing option that addresses the following guidance with focused attention to specific key design guidelines (CS2.B.2, CS2.C.1, CS2.D, DC3):

- i. The Board acknowledged that the project site is a challenging property to develop due to its triangular shape and the lower-scaled zoning transition occurring south and west of the project site along 39th Avenue South. Also, the Board felt that the transition to townhouses along 39th Avenue South is good in concept. However, the Board reiterated that the arrangement of the massing onsite continued to appear not cohesive. Specifically, the Board requested further exploration of design methods to create an enhanced transition between the townhomes and the larger bar massing oriented along Rainier Avenue South to create a better (more natural) integration of the two masses into one cohesive development instead of the appearance of two separate projects connected by an upper-level terrace. (CS2.D)
- ii. The Board observed that the project site is located in an unusual transitioning “connector” area between an established neighborhood (Columbia City) and an evolving neighborhood (Hillman City) some blocks south of the site: Thus, the proposed project should be compatible with the development in the Columbia City neighborhood and set a positive precedent for future development south of the subject site leading towards Hillman City. The Board recognized that the two highly visible “ends” of the larger building mass (north corner at the intersection of South Dawson Street and Rainier Avenue South; and the south-facing façade) are critical corner conditions that required further design exploration. The Board also stated that some significant moves are necessary to minimize the perceived height, bulk and scale of the north and south ends of the bar mass. Thus, the Board requested that the applicant explore more design strategies that include stepping back the upper-level massing with the intention of reducing height, bulk and scale. (CS2.C.1, CS2.D, CS3.A, DC2)
- iii. The Board commented that the north corner is a significant corner condition that should be distinctive; and expressed that further exploration of how this could be achieved was necessary. The Board also stated that more opportunities to create pedestrian-oriented open spaces/public amenities (landscaping, seating, etc.) should be explored on the ground plane and especially at the site’s northern edge. The Board voiced that this open space at the northern edge could potentially assist in softening the visual impacts of

the building and provide more relief in terms of visibility to vehicular traffic at that intersection. (CS2.C.1, PL1.B.3, PL2.B.3)

- iv. The Board requested to review a modified version of the Concept C design scheme that illustrates the vehicular location of the garage entry further south along 39th Avenue South. Additional Board discussion concerning this Board request is noted below for item #3.c. (CS2.D, DC1.B)
- b. The Board acknowledged the modulation applied to the east façade and encouraged the applicant to continue to apply massing articulation techniques to break up the extensive east-facing façade of the bar massing along Rainier Avenue South. (DC2.A, DC2.B)

2. Rainier Avenue South Frontage:

- a. The Board acknowledged and voiced appreciation for the proposed pedestrian improvements and amenities (seating, plaza area, etc.) provided for transit riders at the bus stop in front of the proposal at Rainier Avenue South. (PL4.C.1, PL4.C.2)
- b. The Board commented that the main building entry appeared confined and expressed support for a design that includes a more spacious residential lobby area that would accommodate ample space and mobility for all users (residents, visitors and cyclists). (PL3.A, PL3.B, PL4.A)

3. 39th Avenue South Frontage, Residential Amenity Space and Vehicular Access:

- a. At the Second EDG meeting, the Board listened to public comment indicating an intent to develop the neighboring property adjacent to the project sites' south boundary line and discussed the ramifications of the terraced landscaped retaining wall design presented to the Board and illustrated in the EDG design packet (pg. 35). The Board commented that the proposed design would be sympathetic to future development but advised the applicant to be mindful that this landscaped buffer will be challenging to landscape and maintain. (CS2.D, DC2.2)
- b. The Board stated that the conceptual design of the residential amenity spaces needs further study. The Board voiced concern with the egress and access to the upper-level courtyard/plaza area and questioned the usability of the amenity space by residents due to its size and placement against the envelope of residential units. The Board also commented on the lack of interior amenity space. (DC3)
- c. During the Second EDG meeting, the Board listened to the applicant's design reasoning and the applicant's transportation expert's technical feedback in support of the proposed garage entrance location abutting 39th Avenue South. The Board also heard significant public feedback about the existing traffic conditions at the Rainier Avenue South/South Dawson Street/39th Avenue South intersection and suggestions that the proposed garage entrance should be relocated further south along 39th Avenue South. Upon review of the applicant's materials, the Board voiced disappointment that the materials did not illustrate an alternative garage entrance location for the preferred design scheme (Concept C). The Board stated that it was important that they understand the effects to the building design, in addition to traffic feedback, associated with an alternative garage entrance location. Thus, the Board requested that the applicant provide a Concept C design scheme that

illustrates a vehicular garage entrance sited further south along 39th Avenue South. (CS2.D, DC1.B, DC1.C)

THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 26, 2016

1. Design Concept, Architectural Composition and Massing:

- a. The Board was appreciative of the additional massing studies and recognized the design team's effort in refining the design concept. The Board reviewed the applicant's response to specific issues identified at the last EDG meeting and had a focused discussion on the merits of the applicant's preferred option (Concept C) in response to said guidance and specific key design guidelines (CS2.B.2, CS2.C.1, CS2.D, DC3). The Board feedback was as follows:
 - i. The Board stated that the development of the architectural expression of the facades (articulation, datum points, etc.) illustrated in the EDG 3 design materials (pgs. 9, 11, 15, 19) assisted in breaking down the scale of the extensive east-facing façade and creating a cohesive development between the two masses. (CS2.D, DC2.A, DC2.B)
 - ii. The Board agreed that the modifications to both the north corner and the south-facing façade of the bar mass as shown in the EDG 3 design packet (pgs. 11, 15) were successful in addressing the Board's prior concerns regarding the perceived height, bulk and scale of the north and south ends of the bar mass. (CS2.C.1, CS2.D, CS3.A, DC2)
 - iii. The Board commented that the inclusion of balconies at the north edge are an "elegant" design element to this prominent corner. The Board appreciated that the design had been enhanced with an increased setback at the site's northern edge to allow pedestrian-oriented open spaces/public amenities (landscaping, seating, etc.) at the ground plane and especially at the site's northern edge (EDG 3 design packet pgs. 9, 11). (CS2.C.1, PL1.B.3, PL2.B.3)
 - iv. The Board encouraged consideration of secondary architectural features and materiality at a human scale into the building facades of the large bar massing that will also be complementary to the townhouse massing. At the next phase of design, the Board anticipates review of secondary architectural features and that materiality will be addressed. (DC2.B, DC2.C, DC2.D, DC4.A)

In addition to the Board's feedback concerning the applicant's design response to Board direction noted above, the Board discussed and considered public sentiment concerning the scale of the design. The Board stated that, due to the size and triangulated-shape of the site, the building is sited appropriately. The Board further stated that the stepping down of the larger bar massing to the interstitial spaces with terracing and to the lower height townhome massing is an appropriate gesture to the neighboring south and western lowrise-zoned residential developments. Thus, the Board unanimously supported the applicant preferred design (Concept C) as illustrated in the EDG 3 design packet (pgs. 6, 9, 11, 15, 19) and recommended that Concept C should move forward to the Master Use Permit (MUP) submittal phase of development.

2. Rainier Avenue South Frontage:

- a. The Board appreciated that the design had evolved to include a more spacious residential lobby area that would accommodate ample space and mobility for all users (residents, visitors and cyclists). (PL3.A, PL3.B, PL4.A)

3. 39th Avenue South Frontage, Residential Amenity Space and Vehicular Access:

- a. The Board's feedback concerning the conceptual design of the lower level residential amenity space (level 2 plaza) inclusive of landscaping were very positive (pgs. 24-25). The Board stated the placement of the interior amenity space (lounge) was appropriate. (DC3)
- b. At the third EDG meeting, the Board reviewed several studies that illustrated a vehicular garage entrance sited further south along 39th Avenue South and listened to the applicant's design reasoning in support of the proposed garage entrance location abutting 39th Avenue South. Upon review of the applicant's materials, the Board concluded that the garage entrance location identified in the applicant's preferred scheme (pg. 19) is appropriate as it relates to the building's design. The Board stated that it is imperative that conflicts between vehicles and non-motorists should be minimized whenever possible. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board expects to review design details (mirrors, pavement treatment, etc.) that will address this concern in the next design iteration. (CS2.D, DC1.B, DC1.C)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide 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

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

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

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

PUBLIC LIFE

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-B Residential Edges

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

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

PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses: Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

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

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

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

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

DC1-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation: Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

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.

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

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

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

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

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

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

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

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

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

DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas: Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

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.

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 **THIRD** Early Design Guidance the following departures were requested:

1. **Residential Building Setback (SMC 23.47A.014.B.1):** The Code states that a setback is required where a lot abuts the intersection of a side lot line and front lot line of a lot in a residential zone. The required setback forms a triangular area. The applicant proposes the development encroach 5’ into the required setback area.

In regards to Concept C, the Board indicated a willingness to entertain this requested departure. The Board appreciated how the townhouse building mass had evolved since the first EDG meeting and better addressed the public realm and the adjacent neighboring property to the south. (CS2.D, DC2.A)

2. **Residential Building Setback (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3):** The Code requires a structure containing a residential use with a side or rear lot line abutting a lot in a residential zone be setback as follows:
 - a. 15’ for portions of structure above 13’ in height to a maximum of 40’; and
 - b. for each portion of structure above 40’ in height, an additional setback at the rate of 2’ of setback for every 10’ by which the height of such portion exceeds 40’.

The townhouse structure’s south wall façade is parallel with the side lot line-abutting property in a residential (LR2) zone. The applicant proposes a 7’ setback for portions of the structure above 13’ to a maximum of 30’ in height.

The Board indicated a willingness to entertain this requested departure, provided that the inclusion of glazing on the south façade of southernmost townhome unit be explored and the generosity of the courtyard facing south be maintained. (CS2.D, DC2.A)

3. **Non-Residential Street-Level Transparency Requirements (SMC 23.47A.008.B.2):** The Code requires 60% of the street-facing façade between 2' and 8' above the sidewalk be transparent. The applicant proposes reduced transparency of the street-facing façade abutting 39th Avenue South. The applicant explained that in order to utilize the sloping topography to partially locate parking below the grade, a portion of the façade abutting the west property line will be opaque.

The Board appreciated that the townhouse mass had been lowered to the street level and the rhythm of the terraced plaza. The Board looks forward to reviewing alternative methods to accomplish transparency onto the site as the design continues to evolve. (PL3.B, DC1.B, DC2.B)

4. **Parking Location (SMC 23.47A.032.B.1.b):** The Code states that street-level parking within a structure shall be separated from street-level, street-facing facades by another permitted use. The applicant proposes parking stalls within the garage area to abut the street-level, street facing façade along 39th Avenue South without separating it from the street with another permitted use. The applicant explained that this departure would allow the arrangement of the interior uses to be primarily along Rainier Avenue South rather than 39th Avenue South which is more residential in character.

The Board indicated that they would be inclined to support this departure as presented for the reasons outlined by the applicant's rationale. (PL3.B, DC1.B, DC2.B)

5. **Street-Level Non-Residential Use Depth Provisions (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3):** The Code states that non-residential uses in new structures shall extend an average depth of at least 30' and a minimum depth of 15' from the street-level street-facing façade. The applicant proposes that each of the structure's ground-level live-work units and a portion of the commercial space all facing Rainier Avenue South have an average depth less than 30'. The applicant also explains that the commercial space would not comply with the minimum 15 depth requirement (13'-4"). The applicant stated that this departure would allow the parking layout to be efficiently configured for this triangular-shaped site.

The Board indicated a continued willingness to entertain this requested departure, provided that the proposed live-work units and commercial space are configured to be viable spaces. The applicant will need to provide detailed live-work unit floor layout plans, clarity of the entries and streetscape surrounding the commercial space for the Board to make a determination. The Board expects to review a stronger justification in consideration of this departure for the commercial space at the north corner. (PL3.B.3, DC1.A)

6. **Street-Level Residential Use Provisions (SMC 23.47A.008.D.2):** The Code states that when residential uses are located along a street-level street-facing façade, the floor of a dwelling unit located along the street-level street-facing facade shall be at least 4’ above or 4’ below sidewalk grade or be set back at least 10’ from the sidewalk. The applicant proposed townhouse units abutting 39th Avenue South that would not meet this code requirement because the floor of the proposed townhouse units would be less than 4’ above or below sidewalk grade and set back 7’ from the sidewalk. The applicant explained that this departure would allow the townhouse mass be set lower in relationship to the LR2 zoning to the south.

The Board indicated that they would be inclined to support this departure as presented for the reasons outlined by the applicant’s rationale. (PL3.B, DC1.B, DC2.B)

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

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