City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

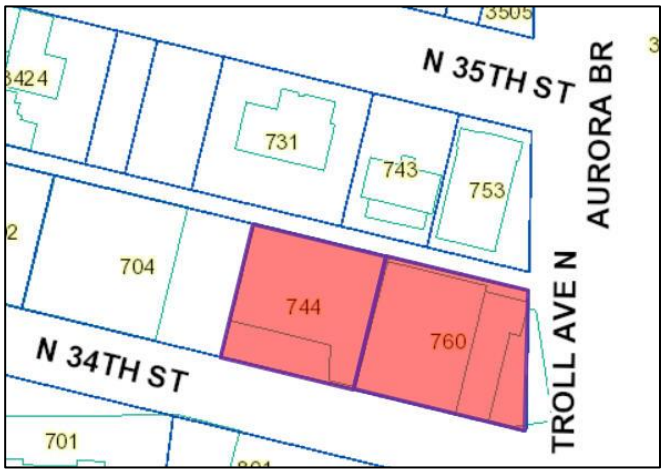
Project Number:	3018639
Address:	744 N 34th Street
Applicant:	Myer Harrell, Weber Thompson
Date of Meeting:	Monday, February 02, 2015
Board Members Present:	David Neiman (Chair) Ellen Cecil Jerry Coburn Dale Kutzera
Board Members Absent:	Marc Angelillo
DPD Staff Present:	Lindsay King

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC3-40
(South) IC-65
(East) C1-65
(West) NC3-65

Lot Area: 31,260 sq. ft.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The subject site is located on the southwest corner of N 34th Street and Troll Avenue N. The subject lot and lots to the west are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-65). Lots to the south are zoned Industrial Commercial (IC-65). Lots to the east are zoned Commercial One (C1-65). Lots to the north, across the alley, are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-40). The site contains two parcels with existing commercial buildings. To the northwest is the Fremont Public Library, a City of Seattle Landmark structure. The site contains approximately 17.5 feet of grade change from the southeast corner to the northeast corner. Grade also slopes down from the northeast corner to the northwest corner, along the alley. To the north are existing commercial structures. To the west is an existing two story commercial structure and to the south is a three story commercial structure.

This neighborhood, located within the Fremont Hub Urban Village, includes multifamily housing, community services, restaurants and shopping. The subject lot is located along N 34th Street which serves as a major vehicular, bike and pedestrian corridor. One block to the west is Fremont Avenue N which is a major vehicular, transit and pedestrian hub. Fremont Avenue N contains a number of multi-story multifamily mixed use structures and one story commercial structures. Directly to the north is the one story Fremont Library, a designated City of Seattle Landmark structure. Directly east of the subject lot is the Aurora Bridge, a landmark structure, which includes the Fremont Troll. Uses along N 34th Street are varied and include single and multistory commercial structures. Within walking distance from the site, services include a restaurants, grocery stores, shopping, library and parks. Natural amenities in the area include Lake Union.

Fremont Avenue N is a major Metro bus corridor providing service from Downtown Seattle to many districts north of Lake Union. The Burke Gilman Trail is located one block to the south providing pedestrian and bicycle service to the University of Washington and Ballard with connections to multiple locations. N 35th Street is designated as an arterial street.

Access:

Access is available from N 34th Street, Troll Avenue and an existing improved alley along the north property line.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance application for a 5-story building with 105,432 sq. ft. of office space above 15,211 sq. ft. of retail space at ground level. Parking for 258 vehicles to be provided at and below grade. Existing structures to be removed.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 2, 2015

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3018639) 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 Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the applicant presented three design alternatives. All massing schemes included a central lobby and notch stair flanked by retail. Parking was accessed from the alley.

Massing scheme A included a recess in floors 2-5 along the west façade for fenestration and included a defined entry on N 34th Street.

Massing scheme B included a setback from grade to floor 5 along the west property line to provide a through block connection between N 34th Street and the library. Retail spaces are located along the through block connection and a feature stair has been added to 34th Street. The 5th floor included an upper level setback along N 34th Street.

Massing scheme C maintained a through block connection along the west property line. In addition to the through block connection a 27 foot deep setback was shown along 34th Street to provide a south facing public courtyard space. The feature stair was maintained along 34th Street and courtyards (approximately 25' x 80') were introduced into the center of the building to provide light and air within the body of the structure. The 2nd floor was recessed to articulate the base and the upper levels. The southeast corner will include a coffee shop with public plaza space spilling out into the redesigned Troll Avenue. Troll Avenue will be designed with both stairs and ramps to facilitate movement up the hill per SDOT direction.

The stated intent was to create a timeless design with durable materials. The site and right-of-way design will incorporate aggressive storm water management including the collection and filtering of water from the Aurora Bridge within the redesigned Troll Avenue right-of-way setback.

The architect presented a design parti and material concept which included an emphasis on the first 30 feet of the building. Human scale elements with well-proportioned windows will be

added to the ground level treatment. The applicant intends to use a mix of vision and spandrel glass on the upper levels facing 34th Avenue. The south façade may also include fins to provide a shading element and add a finer grain of detail to the façade. The concept included a highly transparent corner element in the southwest corner. The transparent corner is intended to have a similar language to the recessed 2nd level gasket and the feature stair. The gasket will continue around the building onto the alley. The façade facing the alley is intended to include a regular punched window pattern.

Landscaping will be included to enhance the through block connection, the courtyard in the southwest corner, on the 2nd floor recess, a green roof, the redesigned Troll Avenue and an enhanced N 34th Street planting strip.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were multiple members of the public were in attendance at the Early Design Guidance meeting held on February 2, 2015. The following public comments were offered:

- Expressed support preferred massing option C which included an interior courtyard space and a mid-block connection to the library.
- Supported massing option C. Felt the preferred massing option would create a thriving neighborhood.
- Supported the interior courtyard space and felt it was very important to the success of the building.
- Supported for the proposed office space which is much needed in the neighborhood.
- Concerned about loss of light, air and views to the structure directly behind.
- The ground level treatment should be developed for a friendly pedestrian experience.
- The design should include a less boxy top.
- Supported the street improvements along Troll Avenue to make a safe, walkable, attractive sidewalk.
- Proposed improvements to Troll Avenue are positive and a huge commitment to the neighborhood.
- Noted Fremont Avenue to Troll Avenue alley is largely undeveloped and narrow. Expressed concern traffic impacts about movement of vehicles, trucks and pick up of solid waste and recycling.
- Expressed support for the quantity of parking spaces provided.
- Bicycle parking access should occur from Troll Avenue and the alley and not the through block connection.
- Noted bike parking should be located to be convenient for users.
- Street trees should be maintained.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 2, 2015

1. **Massing and Site Design**. The Board unanimously supported the preferred massing study C which included a through block connection, public plaza in the southwest corner, a feature stair, stepped retail plate to meet sidewalk grade and interior courtyard spaces. The Board directed that the preferred massing alternative should be developed with the following guidance.
   a) Massing option C provided the better design solution by locating the public retail plaza along the south façade on N 34th Street. Long term viability of the outdoor space will be maintained with this massing, even if the adjacent site is developed (CS2-B2, DC3-1, DC4).
   b) The Board supported the architectural concept which included a well-defined pedestrian scale base and a 2nd level transparent gasket with vision and spandrel glass upper level facing N 34th Street. The transparent southwest corner, the gasket wrapping the building and the feature stair were all highly successful compositional elements that should be further developed (CS1-B, CS3-A2, DC2-B and D, DC4).
   c) The Board supported modern architectural concept and the intent to utilize high quality, durable materials consistent with the inspirational images and presentation provided by the applicant (CS3-A2, DC2-B and D, DC4).

2. **N 34th Street and the Through Block Connection.** The Board supported the intent of the project to develop a high quality pedestrian environment for the first 30 feet of building height.
   a) At the Recommendation Meeting, the applicant should provide more detail on how the retail spaces will connect with the sidewalk on N 34th Street and the through block connection (CS2-B2, PL3-C, DC3-A and B, DC4).
   b) At the Recommendation Meeting, the applicant should provide additional detail for the right-of-ways and through block connection demonstrating ground level materials, paving treatments, lighting, signage, way finding and overhead weather protection (CS2-B1, PL2-B, C and D, PL3-A4, DC2-B and D, DC3-A and B, DC4).
   c) At the Recommendation Meeting, the applicant should demonstrate how the through block connection will meet the Fremont Library and the existing pathways (PL1-A1 and B1).

3. **Troll Avenue**. The Board was very supportive of the proposed concept for Troll Avenue right-of-way improvements which included green storm water treatment for the Aurora Bridge, public plazas and pedestrian friendly walkways and stairs.
   a) At the Recommendation Meeting the applicant should provide additional detail on how Troll Avenue right-of-way has been developed with a sense of place consistent with the Fremont neighborhood character (CS1-E1, CS2-B2, CS3-B1, DC3-A and B, DC4).

4. **Multi modal users of the site.** The Board noted that the site servies a variety of users including office tenants, retail patrons, pedestrians, vehicles, trucks, bikes and utility

collection vehicles. The site and building design should be developed to safely accommodate all users to the site.

a) At the Recommendation Meeting the applicant should demonstrate how the movements of all site and building users have been coordinated to create safe passage for each (PL4-B, DC-1).
b) At the Recommendation Meeting the applicant should provide detail on the location of the bike facilities and how user would access the facilities from the adjacent right-of-ways (PL4-B, DC-1).

5. **North Façade.** The Board supported the intent to provide a regular punched window pattern on the north façade.
   a) At the Recommendation Meeting, the applicant should demonstrate how the design has been developed within the context of the new residential building proposed directly north (CS2-D1, 4 and 5).
   d) At the Recommendation meeting the applicant should include perspectives showing what the building will look like from the historic library (CS2-D1, 4 and 5).

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. 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-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

CS1-E Water

CS1-E-1. Natural Water Features: If the site includes any natural water features, consider ways to incorporate them into project design, where feasible

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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

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

CS2-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-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.

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

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

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

PL2-C Weather Protection

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

PL2-D Wayfinding

PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding: Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

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

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

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.

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-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-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

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-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-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.

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-B Signage

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

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-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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no departures were requested for the preferred massing alternative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the First Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.