



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018682

Address: 323 Bellevue Ave E

Applicant: James Cary of Cardinal Architecture

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, January 14, 2015

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

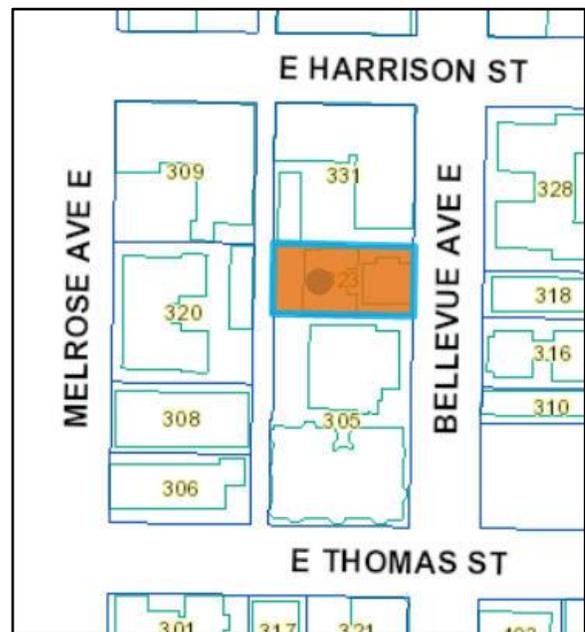
DPD Staff Present: Magda Hogness

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Midrise with heights limits of 60 feet; (MR) located in the Capitol Hill Urban Village.

Nearby Zones: The Midrise (MR) zone extends north toward E Mercer St, east to I-5, south toward E Olive Way, west to Harvard Ave E. Across the interstate, the zoning changes to Seattle Mixed 85 (SM-85).

Lot Area: Located on Bellevue Ave N between E Harrison St and E Thomas St, the parcel contains 7,200 square feet. This midblock site has 60' of frontage along Bellevue Ave N.



Access: The subject property includes vehicular access from the alley.

Current Development:

A two-story, 6-unit apartment building known as “The Sterling” currently exists on the site. The wood framed building, originally constructed in 1956 for Sterling Taylor, was designed by notable Seattle architect Paul Hayden Kirk. The building’s private unit entrances, high ribbon windows, and patios are designed in the spirit of the single family home. The Landmarks Preservation Board recently denied nomination of the building for landmark status.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The mid-block site is located on the western edge of the Capitol Hill neighborhood, within the West Slope District as mapped in the Capitol Hill Guidelines. Bounded by Broadway Ave to the east and the I-5 to the west, this area slopes steeply down towards the interstate and the Cascade neighborhood. Densely developed and predominantly composed of three-story multifamily buildings, many of which feature brick exteriors, the area’s small infill projects add to the housing supply as single family structures are replaced with higher density housing.

Surrounded primarily by other apartment buildings, nearby buildings were constructed in a wide range, from the early 20th century to 2014. The site immediately north of the site contains an L-shaped, three-story apartment building built in 1923. Surface parking and a two story parking garage is accessed from a driveway off Bellevue Ave and off the alley. Across the street to the east, is a two-story wood framed apartment building. Thomas Street Mini Park is also located across the street at the corner of Bellevue and Thomas. Directly to the south is a four story precast apartment building built originally in 1908. This building has parking access off the alley. Further south, on the corner of Bellevue and Thomas is a 4-story brick apartment building. Across the alley to the west, is a seven story, multifamily building with access to parking located off Melrose Ave.

Other apartment buildings in the immediate area typically range from 2 to 7 stories. Early and mid-20th century structures in the area tend to be brick construction; while newer buildings are wood framed with a variety of finish materials.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a 28,500 sf six story, mixed use project featuring 24 apartments above a street-level restaurant and a below-grade parking garage; existing structure to be demolished.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3018682) 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

Prior to the Early Design Guidance meeting, the applicant provided three massing schemes; each option has similar square footage, parking for 16 vehicles in a garage accessed off the alley, and green roofs. Massing Option A shows a six story structure containing 29 residential units, a mix of studio and one bedroom units. Referred to as the horseshoe plan, the interior uses are configured in a U- shape. The resulting massing creates a monolithic presence along Bellevue Ave E and compared to the other options, is the defining difference of the scheme, along with the secondary differences, the ground floor residential use and entry location.

Option B, a six story structure organized around a day-lit central stair, contains 25 residential units, a mix of studio, one and two bedroom units, and a street level restaurant with spillover sidewalk seating. The applicant refers to this option as the code compliant version. The massing provides a strong street presence and corner bay window projections to the east and south gives additional interest. Centered in the lot, the building setbacks should allow for pedestrian views through site to the Space Needle & Olympic Mountains beyond.

Option C, the preferred option, resembles Option B and contains 24 residential units with a greater proportion of two bedroom units. Massing is further refined in this scheme. Relating to the adjacent building heights and the natural topography of the site, the massing steps down to the west. The massing is also shifted to the south, respecting the open space and solar access of the northern neighbor with a limited impact on the building to the south. The applicant notes this north setback increase allows for pedestrian views through site and provides a more generous private residential entry. Larger bay windows create more depth to the façade and articulate the varying setbacks between neighboring buildings. Departures are needed for the required setback encroachments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments offered at the meeting included the following:

- Stressed the importance of providing enough space for the smaller neighboring building to the North to access sunlight.

- Appreciated the applicant providing quality materials, but questioned the choice of metal panel.
- Concerned about the viability of the restaurant/ coffee shop space.

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.

- 1. Massing Options:** The Board unanimously prefers massing Option C as it respects the open space and solar access of the northern neighbor, and the stepped down massing relates to surrounding development. (Guidelines CS2.B, CS2-C, CS2.III) The Board directed the applicant to proceed with the preferred option.
 - The larger bay window projections provide the best articulation of the façade and announce the commercial entry. The Board deliberated if the bay windows should be located on the northeast or southeast corner of the building. Ultimately, the Board preferred the proposed southeast location, and requested the applicant bring more developed sketches for further study. (Guidelines DC2-B, DC2-C)
 - The amenity space location is desirable, as it shares the best view with all the future tenants. (Guidelines PL1-C, DC3-C)
- 2. Uses at Street Level:** The Board unanimously supports the commercial space shown in Options B and C. (Guidelines PL3.I, DC2-C, DC2-D)
 - To avoid a vacant street front, the Board suggests designing with adaptability in mind. (Guidelines PL3.I, DC2-C, DC2-D)
- 3. Entries:** Related to the uses at street level, the Board deliberated the proposed entry locations and questioned whether or not there should be a front door as this is the pattern in the neighborhood. Ultimately, the Board supported the entries as shown, since the commercial entry activates the south façade which would otherwise have little activity. (Guidelines PL3.A, PL3.I, DC2-C)
 - The Board recommends detailing the store front to provide flexibility for future location of doors. (Guidelines PL3.A, PL3.I, DC2-C)
- 4. Materials:** The Board strongly supported the quality of materials proposed, especially the brick, and urged the applicant to consider durability, detailing and color of the materials. (Guidelines DC4-A, DC4-II)
 - As part of refining the detailing, the Board would like to see the brick store front façade step forward and the metal panel to recede to provide a strong base. (Guidelines DC2-B, DC4-A)
 - Metal siding is discouraged in the Capital Hill Design Guideline in some cases (Guideline DC4-II-i.), and the use of this material warrants additional study. At the

next meeting, provide careful detailing and explanation of steps taken to avoid oil canning and/or present workable alternatives.

5. For the Recommendation Meeting, the Board specifically asks the applicant provide the following:

- Provide more detailed sketches of the bay window location, the pedestrian entry and the commercial entry.
- Study the potential of window locations; provide window mapping of the adjacent properties.
- Provide a materials board that will be left with the planner.
- Provide a full landscape plan.
- Provide a lighting plan of the site.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

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

Capitol Hill Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-I Architectural Concept and Consistency

CS3-I-i. Signage: Incorporate signage that is consistent with the existing or intended character of the building and neighborhood

CS3-I-iv. Materials: Use materials and design that are compatible with the structures in the vicinity if those represent the neighborhood character.

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-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses: In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer’s markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

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.

Capitol Hill Supplemental Guidance:

PL2-II Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances

PL2-II-i. Entryways: Provide entryways that link the building to the surrounding landscape.

PL2-II-ii. Link Open Spaces: Create open spaces at street level that link to the open space of the sidewalk.

PL2-II-iii. Ingress/Egress: Building entrances should emphasize pedestrian ingress and egress as opposed to accommodating vehicles.

PL2-II-iv. Residential Entrances: Minimize the number of residential entrances on commercial streets where non-residential uses are required. Where unavoidable, minimize their impact to the vitality of the retail commercial streetscape.

PL2-III Personal Safety and Security

PL2-III-i. Lighting/Windows: Consider

- a. pedestrian-scale lighting, but prevent light spillover onto adjacent properties
- b. architectural lighting to complement the architecture of the structure
- c. transparent windows allowing views into and out of the structure—thus incorporating the “eyes on the street” design approach.

PL2-III-ii. Travel Area Distinction: Provide a clear distinction between pedestrian traffic areas and commercial traffic areas through the use of different paving materials or colors, landscaping, etc.

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-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

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.

Capitol Hill Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-I Human Activity

PL3-I-i. Open Storefronts: Provide for sidewalk retail opportunities and connections by allowing for the opening of the storefront to the street and displaying goods.

PL3-I-ii. Outdoor Seating: Provide for outdoor eating and drinking opportunities on the sidewalk by allowing restaurant or café windows to open to the sidewalk and installing outdoor seating while maintaining pedestrian flow.

PL3-I-iii. Visual Access: Install clear glass windows along the sidewalk to provide visual access into the retail or dining activities that occur inside. Do not block views into the interior spaces with the backs of shelving units or with posters.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

Capitol Hill Supplemental Guidance:

DC1-II Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas

DC1-II-i. Dumpsters: Consolidate and screen dumpsters to preserve and enhance the pedestrian environment.

DC1-II-ii. Screening: For new development along Broadway that extends to streets with residential character—such as Nagle Place or 10th or Harvard Avenues East (see map on page 12)—any vehicle access, loading or service activities should be screened and designed with features appropriate for a residential context.

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 Façade Composition

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

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.

Capitol Hill Supplemental Guidance:

DC4-II Exterior Finish Materials

DC4-II-i. 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.

1. Use wood shingles or board and batten siding on residential structures.
2. Avoid wood or metal siding materials on commercial structures.
3. Provide operable windows, especially on storefronts.
4. Use materials that are consistent with the existing or intended neighborhood character, including brick, cast stone, architectural stone, terracotta details, and concrete that incorporates texture and color.
5. Consider each building as a high-quality, long-term addition to the neighborhood; exterior design and materials should exhibit permanence and quality appropriate to the Capitol Hill neighborhood.
6. The use of applied foam ornamentation and EIFS (Exterior Insulation & Finish System) is discouraged, especially on ground level locations.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendations on departures are based upon the departure’s potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure.

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

1. **Rear Setback (SMC 23.45.518 B):** The Code requires a 10'-0" setback from the rear lot line that abuts an alley. The applicant proposes 10'-0" at alley level and a 6'-6" minimum (8'-4" average) for levels 2-5 beginning 22'-6" above alley level.

The Board indicated early support for the rear setback departure following the guidance provided, as the refined massing relates to the adjacent building heights (Guideline CS2-D) and the natural topography of the site (Guideline CS1-C).

2. **Side Setback (SMC 23.45.518 B):** The Code requires a 10 foot average setback and 7 foot minimum for portions of a structure over 42 feet in height. The applicant proposes a 7'-7" foot minimum and 5' average setback for the full height of the structure.

The Board indicated early support for the side setback departure since the massing shift to the south respects the open space and solar access of the northern neighbor, (Guidelines CS2-D and CS2-III) with a limited impact on the building to the south. The north setback increase also allows for pedestrian views through site and provides a more generous private residential entry (Guideline PL1-C).

3. **Front Setback (SMC 23.45.518 B):** The Code requires a 7 foot average setback with a 5 foot minimum setback. The applicant proposes a 7'-7" continuous at ground floor and a 4'-1" minimum, 6'-9" average to allow larger bay windows on levels 2-6.

The Board indicated early support for the front setback departure as the larger bay windows create more depth and interest to the façade (Guideline DC2-C).

BOARD DIRECTION

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