



City of Seattle

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



RECOMMENDATION OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018686

Address: 2031 3rd Avenue

Applicant: Brad Hinthorne, Perkins+Will, for Martin Selig Real Estate

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, March 29, 2016

Board Members Present: Murphy McCullough, Chair
Anjali Grant
Grace Leong

Board member absent: Gundula Proksch

DPD Staff Present: Michael Dorcy

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC 240/290-400

Nearby Zones: (North) DMR/R 125/65
(South) DMC 240/290-400
(East) DMC 240/290-400
(West) DMC 240/290-400

Lot Area: 19,440 sq. ft.



Current Development:

The project site is currently developed with three two-story commercial buildings, with the Jewish Federation Building occupying the northern half of the site. Currently under construction immediately to the south of the development site is a mixed-use building, with ground floor retail/ commercial and 6 stories of residential apartments above.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

This area of Belltown has been a mixture of low-rise and medium-rise structures, many constructed during the first half of the 20th century. Twelve of the buildings have been designated as historic landmarks. The majority of the historic and iconic buildings are of masonry construction, many composed of red brick. In recent years the historic fabric of Belltown has been transformed by the inclusion of towers of significant heights gathered about two nodes. The proposed new tower is part of the southeastern gathering of towers. Nine towers, ranging in height from 240 feet to 449 feet, are situated within a two-block radius of the proposal site.

Access:

Vehicular access to the site is planned to be from the alley west of the site.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no critical areas on the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed building would accommodate retail, office, and residential uses, with five stories of below grade parking. Fifteen stories of office uses would be capped by thirteen stories of residences and amenity spaces. At the first EDG meeting, held on Tuesday, January 6, 2015, three massing concepts were presented to the Board by the applicants. The third, the preferred concept, was the "Z scheme." This scheme maintained the separate ground-floor division of lobbies in a rectangular base, topped by 15 floors of office space in a four-sided essentially plain, rectangular form. Out of that base massing there arises 13 stories of residences, situated in a 10-sided rectilinear tower which suggests an abstracted Z-form.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

By the time of the 2nd EDG meeting, held on July 28, 2015, the massing of the proposal had been altered to reflect changes in the amount of allowable office area available, subject to the amount of FAR that would be available for transfer from one-fewer adjacent parcels. The applicants voluntarily returned to the Downtown Design Review Board in order to clarify and illustrate the massing changes.

The massing changes, as explained by the design team, resulted in a simplification of the overall form of the building, notably in omitting the notch that had separated the lower office floors from the upper residential floors. It was believed that the unique shape of the residential portion of the tower was sufficiently interesting without the notch. Additionally, the outdoor open areas on the 12th floor and on the rooftop had been given further development. In particular the “top” floor—in reality a three-story space-- “Conservatory” space was designed to contain a fitness center and other gathering spaces, heavily glazed and filled with ample vegetation. (See page 11 of the July 28th packet.) The “Conservatory” rooftop feature would require a departure from SMC 23.49.008.B. (See the listing of proposed departures on page 20 of the July 28th packet, and on pages 4 and 5 of this report.)

The four Board members present at the July 28th meeting reaffirmed their approval that the project should proceed to design development and MUP intake. Also, after considering the analysis of the site and context, the changes in the program provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, they reaffirmed the applicability of the guidelines earlier identified for the project and the guidance given at the January 6, 2015 EDG meeting.

Packets for each of the Design Review meetings as presented at the meetings, are available online by entering the project number (3018686) at this website:
http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The packet are 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

The proposed structure would be 440 feet tall, a 36-story mixed-use high rise of approximately 187,000 square feet of office space and 330 apartments. 75 percent of its ground floor street frontage, a total of 7,000 square feet, would be in retail use, enhanced by thirty-foot ceiling heights. Separate entries for residential and office uses were located on two separate streets, Lenora and 3rd Avenue. There would be 10 floors of office space, in the lower portion of the tower. A shared amenity floor, outdoor terrace space, would separate the office space from the 22 residential floors, those topped by a tall, multi-story conservatory space. Additionally, a series of 3-story social spaces are distributed throughout the residential portion of the tower. There would be 5 floors of below-grade parking providing for 250 cars.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At the second EDG meeting nearby residents had expressed concerns regarding: security of the block and the need for security lighting; the activation of the street which worked better in conjunction with more and smaller retail spaces; the need for activation moving around the corner, along Lenora Street as well as along 3rd Avenue; glare from materials used in the building—glass and metal; removal of some of the stern rectangularity of the proposed structure; consideration of views of the building from the waterfront—profile, top, place in skyline. It was noted that the alley and the alley façade needed careful and not just “backside” and “back-of-house” treatment. One observer wanted no “iconic” lights. Another “loved the midline cantilever” and its effect as shown in the cover rendering, and warned against engineering the dramatic effect out of the profile. Representatives of the properties directly south of the proposed site expressed concerns regarding the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) calculations upon which massing calculations were based. Other concerns regarded tower spacing on the block.

There were no public comments offered at the recommendation meeting held on March 29, 2016.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the second Early Design Guidance meeting, five departures from development standards were requested. At the recommendation meeting, requested departures had been narrowed to two.

SMC 23.54.030.B.2.c For non-residential uses with 20 or more spaces, 35% minimum and 65% maximum are to be small stalls. A minimum of 35% are to be large stalls. *Request to allow 16% large and 84% small and medium stalls.* The departure allows for optimizing the core location

and stall configuration, contributing to a well-proportioned and unified building (Guideline B 2 and E-2); and

SMC 23.49.008.B A 10 % height bonus with facades enclosing an area of less than 9,000 sf.
Request to allow 10,700 sf of enclosed area plus an additional 3,890 sf (14,590 sf total).

The tower-top conservatory enhances the skyline (A-2) and reinforces the building's sculptural form (B-3, B-4).

BOARD DIRECTION

The Board voted recommendation of approval of the presented design and of the two requested departures, without any recommended conditions, by a vote of 4-0.

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