



## RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018722-LU

Address: 3208 Claremont Ave S

Applicant: Mark Travers of Mark Travers Architect

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2018

Board Members Present: Charles Romero, Chair  
David Bader  
Chris Colley  
Jhomar Small

Board Members Absent: Carey Dagliano Holmes

SDCI Staff Present: Magda Hogness

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed (SM-85)

Nearby Zones: Commercial (C3-65, C1-65)  
Neighborhood Commercial (NC3-55),  
Lowrise (LR2, LR2 RC, LR3, LR3 RC),  
Single Family (SF 5000)

Lot Area: 21,600 sq. ft.

### Current Development:

Five single family structures are located onsite, originally constructed between 1900-1965. Vehicular access is located off the alley.



**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The mid-block site is located in the North Rainier Hub Village and the Mount Baker Station Area Overlay District. Surrounding development consists of auto repair shops, multi-family buildings, and single family homes. The neighborhood is in transition with some larger mixed-use, multi-family developments to the north and south. The Mt. Baker Light Rail Station and public plaza area are located three blocks to the northwest.

The North Rainier HUB Urban village plan envisions this area as a new transit oriented town center, with priorities geared toward developing a neighborhood core, creating housing, catalyzing commercial development, offering services, promoting living wage employment opportunities, and offering access to transit and non-motorized travel choices. In 2015, City Council approved an ordinance to rezone land in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village and implement incentive zoning obligations for affordable housing and open space.

**Access:**

The subject properties currently have vehicular access from the alley.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposal is for a seven story building containing 156 apartment units, 4 live/work units, 6,720 sq. ft. of commercial space and parking for 110 vehicles. Existing structures are proposed to be demolished.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number 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 SDCI:

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

**Email:** [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

**FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE November 10, 2015**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported development in the area.

- Concerned about safety and security.
- Noted that the proposed north corridor, with commercial/retail spaces, appears to have limited visibility.

## **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 and Arrangement of Uses:** The Board recognized this site as very prominent and recommended the applicant explore ways for the proposal to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future. The Board deliberated the massing options and the overall scale, arrangement of uses and response to the context. (CS3-A-4)  
The Board discussed several of their concerns related to the massing:
  - a. The Board was concerned with the lack of facade modulation and hierarchy shown in the massing options and directed the applicant to develop other massing options. The Board noted that the preferred Massing Alternate 1 is the least successful and could be broken up to provide additional modulation, while Alternate 2 and Alternate 3 show more successful massing modulation. When studying other massing options, the Board also recommended expressing a 2-story plinth to break down the bulk. (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS2-D, DC2-A)
  - b. Recognizing that the northwest portion of the site is highly visible, the Board recommended distinguishing the corner with massing and ground level treatment. The Board directed the applicant to explore a massing option which opened up the northwest corner, similar to a flipped version of Massing Alternate 3 with a courtyard accessible from the street to create a pedestrian oriented streetscape. (CS2-B, CS2-C, DC2-A)
  - c. Acknowledging that the proposed project does not optimize the arrangement of uses on the site, the Board recommended consideration of future retail to drive program locations and flexibility for these spaces to adapt. The Board also indicated they would not be supportive of a departure to lower the required height of non-residential spaces. (PL3, PL3-B-3, DC1-A)
- 2. Architectural Concept and Blank Facades:** The Board discussed the building frontages and blank facades.
  - a. The Board was unanimously concerned with the blank facades and lack of windows shown along the north, south and ground level alley facade and directed the applicant to explore adding modulation, depth and additional transparency in these locations. (DC2-B, DC2-C-1)
  - b. The Board recommended maximizing daylight for interior corridors and interior units. (CS1-B-2)
  - c. Recognizing that the oversized corridors with bike storage constrains exterior building modulation, the Board did not support the bike storage location and

recommended the applicant decrease the corridors in width and provide exterior modulation. (DC2-B, DC2-C-1)

- 3. Landscape and Streetscape:** The Board was very concerned with the quality of the street level design and gave direction on the landscape and streetscape.
- a. The Board was concerned with the lack of public and amenity space presented and recommended providing open space at the northwest corner as well as more active uses, such as retail, along the open space frontage, to encourage interaction and make a strong connection to the street. (CS2-B-2, DC1-A)
  - b. The Board was also concerned with the viability of the commercial and retail spaces and recommended locating these spaces in visible and prominent areas along the street front. (PL3, DC1-A)
  - c. The Board directed the applicant to remove the street fencing and provide a strong grade level connection with ample space for pedestrian visibility and circulation. (CS2-B-2, PL1-B, PL2-B)

## SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 23, 2016

### PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Would like to see retail that's walkable and level with the sidewalk.
- Noted that the site is near the light rail station and would like to see better amenities provided.

No design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting.

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

- 1. Massing:** The Board supported the development of Massing Alternate 4, in particular the plaza at the northwest corner. However, the Board had several unresolved concerns related to the bulk and scale of the massing. The Board directed the applicant to further develop the design and proceed with a modified preferred option based on their guidance. (CS2-B, CS2-C, DC2-A)
- a. The Board agreed this structure will set a precedent for the neighborhood and stressed the importance of expressing a coherent hierarchy with the massing. The Board supported the use of secondary elements and additional modulation in a way that establishes the hierarchy for the massing. (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS2-D, DC2-A)
  - b. In order to break up the scale and bulk of the massing, the Board recommended substantially modulating and setting back the upper stories, breaking up the notches along the roofline. (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS2-D, DC2-A)

- 2. Architectural Expression and Blank Facades:** While generally supporting the conceptual response, the Board agreed the design should be further developed to establish a hierarchy and reinforce a less symmetrical expression.
- a. The Board recommended strategic variation in the modulation and massing expression to help define the hierarchy and emphasize the corners. (DC2-A, DC2-B)
  - b. To mark and distinguish the upper and lower massing, the Board recommended further defining the two level base so that the podium level expression is more dramatic. (DC2-A, DC2-B)
  - c. While the podium should be differentiated from the rest of the massing, the Board also agreed there should be a relationship between the upper and lower massing. In particular with the residential lobby, the Board recommended establishing a connection to the massing above to strengthen the legibility of the main entry. (PL3, DC2-A, DC2-B)
  - d. Related to what was previously shown as blank walls, the Board strongly supported the glazing along the north and south facades. Acknowledging that the design doesn't appear to comply with building code, the Board unanimously agreed the amount of glazing should remain as shown and the massing should be further inset to accommodate the same amount of glazing. (DC2-B, DC2-C-1)
- 3. Landscape and Streetscape:** The Board discussed the street level design and gave direction on the landscape and streetscape.
- a. The Board supported the location of the plaza and encouraged developing the open space in conjunction with the adjacent programs to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other. The Board recommended removing the bike racks from the plaza and relocating bike parking along the right of way. To enhance the connection to the streetscape the Board encouraged consideration of future retail to drive program of the plaza. For the next meeting, the Board requested more information about the plaza program. (PL1-A, PL1-B, PL3-C DC3-B-1, DC3-A-1)
  - b. The Board agreed the arrangement of uses at the street level should be further resolved to increase visibility of the commercial spaces and strengthen the connection to the street. The Board encouraged grouping the commercial spaces towards the north portion of the site and relocating the residential entry. The Board also questioned if the trash area was adequate and recommended providing more information at the next meeting. (CS2-B-2, PL3-A, DC1-A)
  - c. For the commercial spaces at the south portion of the site, the Board was concerned with the extensive ramping proposed in front of the spaces and the lack of visibility for the entries. The Board recommended removing the ramping, providing a strong grade level connection and locating the commercial entries in visible and prominent areas along the street front. (PL3-C, DC1-A)
  - d. The Board discussed wayfinding for the site and agreed vehicular parking and loading for the commercial spaces should be clarified to indicate how future retail users will access parking. (PL3-C, DC1-A)

## RECOMMENDATION May 8, 2018

### PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Would like to see the project contribute to the community and neighborhood.
- Concerned with the limited public outreach.
- Preference for landscape and greenery.

SDCI staff also summarized the design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Supported the mixed-use nature of the project.

SDCI also received non-design related comments concerning parking.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with off-street parking, traffic and construction impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCI and are not part of this review.

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

- 1. Massing and response to EDG guidance:** The Board supported the design advancement of the massing, including the setbacks provided at the upper stories, the use of secondary elements and additional façade articulation. The Board agreed that the modified design establishes a hierarchy which breaks up the bulk and scale of the massing. (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS2-D, DC2-A)
- 2. Ground plane, Pedestrian Experience and Landscape:** The Board discussed the plaza and street level design and recommended conditions to strengthen the public realm.
  - a. The Board agreed with public comment related to responding to the larger community and viewed the plaza open space as an opportunity to connect to the neighborhood in a culturally and/or historically relevant way. While the Board recognized that the open space program will depend on the adjacent future retail tenant, the Board unanimously agreed that the plaza design approach should be further developed to respond to the neighborhood context, consistent with the Mount Baker Design Guidelines. The Board discussed if additional development should be presented at another meeting to ensure the open space prioritizes placemaking. Ultimately, three Board members recommended approval of the subject design and all four Board members recommended a condition to further design the open space design to respond to the existing cultural and historic context

and indicated one potential solution may be to engage artists for art and/or selecting plaza materials. The Board also encouraged working directly with neighborhood groups for inspiration on how to reflect the culture of the neighborhood. (PL1-A, PL1-B, PL3-C DC3-B-1, DC3-A-1)

- b. The Board supported the street level arrangement of uses with commercial space relocated towards the north portion of the site. However, the Board agreed the jog in the central commercial frontage and adjacent planter limits the space for streetscape interaction. For this area the Board unanimously recommended a condition to setback the projecting ground level façade to align with the rest of the central commercial frontage. The Board also suggested potentially switching the location of the entry. (CS2-B-2, PL3-A, DC1-A)
- c. The Board appreciated the use of contrasting pavement to define the location of bike racks, fire hydrants, light poles, away from the main sidewalk pathway. To strengthen the site circulation and use, the Board recommended studying and defining residential access and relocating the linear planter proposed in front of the commercial space, closer to the residential entry as a condition. (PL3-C, DC1-A)
- d. To create more opportunities for residents to sit and gather, the Board unanimously recommended a condition to provide additional bench seating integrated with the planter near the residential main entry. (PL1-A, PL1-B, PL3-C DC3-B-1, DC3-A-1)
- e. Related to the streetscape, the Board acknowledged that safety and security are important considerations to create a safe and comfortable walking environment. The Board supported the proposed ground level transparency which provide “eyes on the street” consistent with the Design Guidelines and CPTED principles. To enhance safety and improve the quality of public realm, the Board recommended adequate lighting at the plaza and potentially along the north and south frontages as a condition. (DC4-C)
- f. The Board also recommended studying and potentially reducing nighttime light pollution impacts along the alley as a condition of approval. (DC4-C)

**3. Materiality and Façade Composition:** The Board supported the overall materiality and façade composition, in particular the masonry brick veneer base and longboard wood lap siding. The Board focused their discussion on the alternates for the main residential entry volume and recommended conditions to reinforce the legibility of this massing element.

- a. To differentiate the residential entry volume from the rest of the massing, the Board recommended a condition to continue the upper fenestration pattern and material treatment down one level to the canopy and remove the banding between the second and third building levels. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-A)
- b. The Board supported the use of a single material to reinforce the continuity of the residential entry volume, and recommended approval of the preferred cladding option 2 on page 13 of the Recommendation packet. The Board agreed the masonry option provides texture and defines the residential entry volume and they recommended a lighter tone of brick for this area. The Board unanimously recommended these changes as a condition. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-A)

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Recommendation meeting, no departures were requested.

## 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

**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.

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

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods:** In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

### 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-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.



**PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities:** Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

**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.

**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-3. Individual Entries:** Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

**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-B Residential Edges**

**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.

## DESIGN CONCEPT

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

#### **DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-1. Visibility:** Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

**DC1-A-2. Gathering Places:** Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

**DC1-A-3. Flexibility:** Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

**DC1-A-4. Views and Connections:** Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

### **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 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 façades 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-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building façades, 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.

**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.

**RECOMMENDATION**

At the conclusion of the RECOMMENDATION meeting, the Board recommended approval of the project with conditions.

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Tuesday, May 08, 2018, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, May 08, 2018 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the materials, three Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and all four Design Review Board members recommended the following conditions:

1. Develop the open space design to respond to the existing cultural and historic context, potentially through engaging artists. (PL1-A, PL1-B, PL3-C DC3-B-1, DC3-A-1)
2. Setback the projecting ground level façade to align with the rest of the central commercial frontage. (CS2-B-2, PL3-A, DC1-A)
3. Study pedestrian circulation and relocate the linear planter proposed in front of the central commercial space, closer to the residential entry. (PL3-C, DC1-A)

4. Provide additional bench seating integrated with the planter near the residential main entry. (PL1-A, PL1-B, PL3-C DC3-B-1, DC3-A-1)
5. Provide adequate lighting at the plaza and potentially along the north and south frontages to address safety. (DC4-C)
6. Study and potentially reduce nighttime light pollution impacts along the alley. (DC4-C-1)
7. For the residential entry volume, continue the upper fenestration pattern and materials down one level to the canopy and remove the banding between the second and third levels. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-A)
8. Revise the residential entry volume cladding to masonry as shown in cladding option 2 and use a lighter tone of brick for this area. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-A)