



City of Seattle

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

DESIGN
REVIEW

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018926
3018928

Address: 401 Pontius Avenue N
400 Minor Avenue N

Applicant: Jodi Patterson-O'Hare for Ankrom Moisan

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, January 28, 2015

Board Members Present: Boyd Pickrell (Chair)
Christine Harrington
Jill Kurfirst (Substitute)

Board Members Absent: Mindy Black
Katherine Idziorek
Janet Stephenson

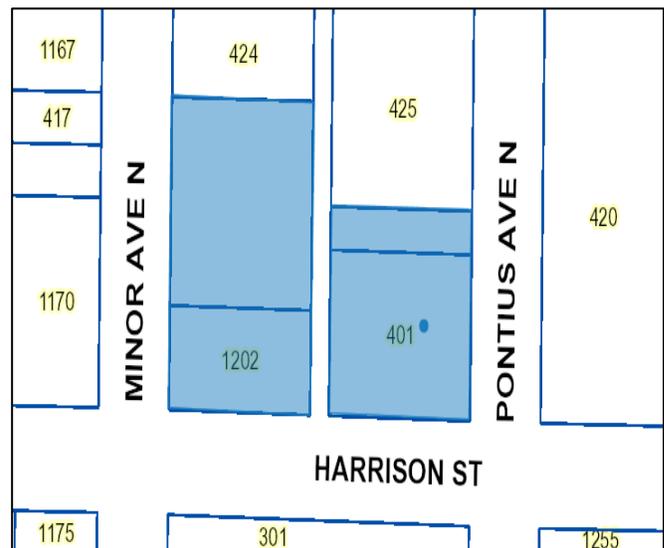
DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed Residential
(SM/R 55/85)

Nearby Zones: (North) SM/R 55/85
(South) SM/R 55/85
(East) SM/R 55/85
(West) SM/R 55/85

Lot Area: 14,400 sq. ft. and 21,600 sq. ft.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The subject sites are located on the south portion of a block bounded by Minor Avenue N to the west, Pontius Avenue N to the east and Harrison Street to the south. The site consists of two developments, one fronting on Minor Avenue N and the other fronting on Pontius Avenue. Both developments face Harrison Street. The two developments are separated by a platted alley that runs north-south. Project number 3018926 is located along Pontius Avenue N. Project number 3018928 is located on Minor Avenue N. The subject lots are zoned Seattle Mixed Residential (SM/R 55/85). Surrounding properties are also zoned SM/R 55/85.

The neighborhood is largely defined by Cascade Park located directly south of the subject lot across Harrison Street. Harrison Street is a designated Green Street. Both Minor and Avenue N and Pontius Avenue N are developed with residential structures. The neighborhood includes a variety of older developments and newer mixed use developments, including the Stack House, which is located across Pontius Avenue N. Sites to the north contain an existing residential structure, a surface parking lot, and a commercial building. The subject lot on Minor Avenue N contains two exceptional trees. The lot on Pontius includes one exceptional tree.

Access:

Access is available from Minor Avenue N, Pontius Avenue N, Harrison Street and a platted alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3018926: Early Design Guidance application for a 7-story, 100 unit residential building with below grade parking for 27 vehicles. Existing structure to be demolished.

3018928: Early Design Guidance application for a 7-story, 150 unit residential building with below grade parking for 126 vehicles. 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 (3018926) 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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the applicant presented three design alternatives. Each option included two buildings, one building on Minor Avenue N and another on Pontius Avenue E. Both buildings include frontage on Harrison Street. The design intent first massing option is designed to activate the alley with upper level setbacks and terrace amenity space facing the alley. The second massing option maintained the exceptional trees located on the sites.

In the presentation, the applicant expressed the preferred massing option's strong relationship to the Cascade Playfield. The design intent was to use a playful use of material and color to create a backdrop to the Park. The preferred massing alternative located the primary entries and a 2nd level podium deck on the south façade facing the park. The basic architectural concept includes a base, middle and top. The design intent of the base was to have a pedestrian focus with a solid, substantial, durable, heavy structure with 3' deep modulation to create a regular bay rhythm. The middle section includes a gasket with a recess created by the podium deck. The top of the structure was divided into two basic languages. The applicant noted that the intent is to design the façades facing Minor and Pontius will be designed with an urban residential character and a regular fenestration rhythm. The Harrison facade was intended to include 'screens' that provide a mural artwork feature as a back drop to the park.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was one member of the public were in attendance at the Early Design Guidance meeting held on January 28, 2015. No public comments were offered.

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.

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- 1. Massing and Site Design.** The Board unanimously supported the preferred massing study C that removes the exceptional trees. The Board noted the location across from the park, which will maintain an open southern exposure, requires a unique and thoughtful response.
 - a) The Board agreed that the preferred massing alternative, which removes the exceptional trees, better meets the intent of City adopted design guidelines. The Board supported

the removal of the exceptional trees in order to provide an exceptional south façade facing the park (CS2-I, CS2-B).

- b) The Board noted the preferred design, which included ground level units that do not engage the street, was not appropriate facing the park. The Board felt the design was fortress-like, insular and opaque. The Board felt strongly that the ground level should be redesigned to function as an active, porous, transparent front porch to the park (CS2-I, CS2-B, PL2-B3).
- c) The Board encouraged use of retail or other active residential accessory space to enliven the Harrison street level façade while providing a high degree of interaction with the pedestrian environment (CS2-B, CS2-I, PL2-B, PL3-C).
- d) The Board directed the applicant to design the base to be porous, active and engage the public realm with a combination of indoor/outdoor spaces to reinforce the character of the park (CS2-B, CS2-I, PL3-C, PL3-II, DC1-A).
- e) The Board noted that the required changes to the ground level façade on Harrison Street would likely require a loss of volume at the street. The Board expressed early support for a departure to the upper level setback along the alley in order to meet the direction for the design of the façade facing the street (CS2-B, CS2-I, PL3-C, PL3-II, DC1-A).

2. Harrison Green Street. The Board felt additional efforts were necessary to create a vibrant ground level façade and green street right-of-way design to develop a Heart Center across from the Cascade Park.

- f) The Board was supportive of the intent to create visible, meaningful entrances with a relationship to the park, but questioned the location of primary entries on the alley and aligned with the park path. The Board felt the entrances should relate to the context of the redesigned street façade facing the park (CS2-B, PL3-III-I, DC1-A).
- g) The Board agreed that the treatment of the green street should include a more thoughtful landscaping composition which may include asymmetrical spacing, a centerpiece, or a specimen tree. The Board also encourage the applicant to investigate using trees as multiple levels, including the 2nd floor amenity space. The Board noted that the landscaping should complement the architecture (DC4-D).
- h) The Board gave guidance that the right-of-way design and ground level building façade include pockets of landscaping to create eddies of activity (CS2-B, DC2-A2 DC3-A and C, DC4-D).
- i) The Board noted that the removal of the exceptional trees the right-of-way should result in larger caliper street trees proposed in the landscape plan (DC4-D).

3. Minor Avenue N and Pontius Avenue N. The Board agreed that the context of Minor and Pontius are appropriate for ground level residential units.

- a) The Board directed the applicant to provide a buffer between the unit and the sidewalk. The buffer should provide a feeling of shelter and protection for units from the sidewalk. The buffer may include landscaping and/ or stoops (PL3-B, PL3-III).
- b) Design the scale and texture of the ground level to provide a positive pedestrian experience (DC2-D).
- c) The Board agreed below grade units facing the sidewalk are not appropriate for the urban neighborhood (PL3-B).

- 4. Architectural Concept and Materials.** The Board discussed the upper level massing and architectural concept at length. The Board noted that the visibility of this site warranted variation in massing and roof lines.
- a) At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board would like to see greater variability in massing, which may include modulation, varied roof line and/or parapet heights (CS2-C, CS3-A, CS3-I).
 - b) The Board supported the concept of a base, middle and top and the 2nd level amenity space gasket. However, the Board agreed that the design of the ground level was of primary importance and the revised façade may require changes or removal to the gasket/amenity level (CS2-B).
 - c) The Board directed the applicant to investigate a higher degree of variability in composition of each of the two building facades, which may include two unique architectural compositions (CS2-C3).
 - d) The Board noted that fiber cement is not appropriate for a uniform massing concept or the context at this site (DC4-A).
- 5. Finer Grain Analysis.** The Board requested additional analysis of the massing and site design, and demonstration of how the design includes a relationship to the adjacent context.
- a) At the second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board would like to see more information on the treatment of the north façade in relationship to existing building and courtyard (CS2-D5).
 - b) The Board required additional detail showing how the building responds to the Stack House entry at the street (PL1-A).

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-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

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-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites: Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

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.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics

CS2-I-iv. Heart Locations: Several areas have been identified as “heart locations.” Heart locations serve as the perceived center of commercial and social activity within the neighborhood. These locations provide anchors for the community as they have identity and give form to the neighborhood. Development at heart locations should enhance their central character through appropriate site planning and architecture. These sites have a high priority for improvements to the public realm. A new building’s primary entry and facade should respond to the heart location. Special street treatments are likely to occur and buildings will need to respond to these centers of commercial and social activity. Amenities to consider are: pedestrian lighting, public art, special paving, landscaping, additional public open space provided by curb bulbs and entry plazas. See full guidelines for Heart Locations

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-I Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility

CS3-I-i. Facade Articulation: Articulate the building facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that relate to the existing structures or existing pattern of development in the vicinity.

CS3-II-vi. Cascade Character: Respond to the unique, grass roots, sustainable character of the Cascade neighborhood. Examples of elements to consider include:

- a. community artwork;
- b. edible gardens;
- c. water filtration systems that serve as pedestrian amenities;

d. gutters that support greenery.

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-2. Pedestrian Volumes: Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

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.

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.

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.

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-C-2. Design Integration: Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces: Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

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.

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-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.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-II Human Activity

PL3-II-ii. Active Facades: Design facades to encourage activity to spill out from business onto the sidewalk, and vice-versa.

PL3-II-iii. Coordinate Retail/Pedestrian Activity: Reinforce retail concentrations with compatible spaces that encourage pedestrian activity.

PL3-II-iv. Activity Clusters: Create businesses and community activity clusters through colocation of retail and pedestrian uses as well as other high pedestrian traffic opportunities.

PL3-III Transition Between Residence and Street

PL3-III-i. Residential Entries: Consider designing the entries of residential buildings to enhance the character of the streetscape through the use of small gardens, stoops and other elements to create a transition between the public and private areas. Consider design options to accommodate various residential uses, i.e., townhouse, live-work, apartment and senior-assisted housing.

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-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-B Architectural and Facade Composition

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-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.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

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-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-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.

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-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-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

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 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 the project return for another meeting in response to the guidance provided.