City of Seattle

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

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number:	3019132 & 3020339
Address:	1000 6st Avenue S & 1001 6th Avenue S
Applicant:	Urban Visions
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, August 25, 2015
Board Members Present:	Julian Weber, Chair Carey Dagliano-Holmes Drew Hicks
Board Members Absent:	Charles Romero David Sauvion
DPD Staff Present:	Michael Dorcy

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: IC85-160

Nearby Zones: (North) IDM 150/85-1500
(South) IC85-160
(East) IC85-160
(West) IC85-160

Lot Area: West site: 28,000 SF
East site: 7,200 SF
Total: 273,652 SF

Current Development:

West site: Several small-scale commercial buildings & surface parking lots.
East site: One group of four small, connected commercial buildings.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The two sites lie within the embrace of the I-90 Express lanes which begin at street level where S. Dearborn Street, Seattle Boulevard S. and 5th Avenue South intersect, then rise and head southwest before bending in the sweeping arc of a 90 degree turn to join with I-90, well above both the streets that comprise the grid below and multiple lanes of I-5 . Bisecting the two large development sites, and located at grade well below the multi-ribboned and layered array of I-90 on and off ramps, is 6th Avenue S. Airport Way S. lies to the east of the east site, set within a northwest/southeast alignment that imparts a triangular shape to that "half" of the proposal site.

Perhaps a distance of two blocks due west of the development site, the Colossus scale of entertainment structures exserts itself dramatically. Dominated by CenturyLink Field, an exhibition center and Safeco Field, this playground and gathering area exudes a scale that matches that of the megalithic elevated transportation highway system that surrounds the site and feeds the megalopolis.

North and west of the site and north of the site are located the Pioneer Square and the Chinatown/ International District Urban Center Villages, generally of a much smaller and finer scale of buildings, many of special significance and irreplaceable character.

Access:

Primary vehicular access to the west site is both from 6th Avenue S. the alley and 1st Av W. Vehicle parking on the east site is located directly off the alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no ECAs on either of the two sites.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The development objectives for the two sites located at 1000 and 1001 6th Avenue S. are to construct over time a campus of 6 multistory buildings containing over a million square feet of ground-floor retail and above grade office space with parking for up to 1211 vehicles.

It is the developers' preliminary intention to qualify for the City of Seattle's Living Building Pilot Program. The project is also being proposed as a "Major Phased Development," as defined in

SMC 23.84A.025, and which meets the criteria of SNC 23.50.015.

MAJOR PHASED DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

A Major Phased Development proposal is subject to the provisions of the zone in which it is located, in this case IC-85/160, a nonce designation of these sites and a small surrounding area within the array of zoning types. It must also meet a set of threshold criteria, including meeting a minimum size of five acres in contiguous parcels or containing a right-of-way within. The project must propose a single, functionally integrated campus, containing more than a single building and provide a minimum total gross floor area of more than 200,000 square feet. The first phase of development must consist of at least 100,000 square feet in gross building floor. A Major Phased Development shall not be approved unless it is demonstrated that anticipated environmental impacts are not significant or if significant can be monitored and effectively mitigated through conditions imposed to mitigate impacts over the extended life of the permit. The extended life of the permit to build out the phased development shall not exceed 15 years.

LIVING BUILDING PILOT PROGRAM

In order to participate in the Program, a project would have to:

- Seek full Living Building Challenge certification or LBC Petal Cerification plus meet Seattle specific energy and water conservation requirements;
- Use the Energy Use Intensity (EUI) targets established in the Seattle Energy Code Target Performance Path;
- As demonstrated after one year of full occupancy, the EUI must be 25 percent below RUI targets set in the Energy Code's Target Performance Path or EUI established by the Director;
- Simplify the requirements for water use;
- Participate in Seattle's Design Review Program; and
- Be located outside the Shoreline District.

Early Design Guidance, August 25, 2015

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3019132 & 3020339) 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

The proposal is for the eventual development of six buildings, three on either side of 6th Avenue S. Three massing schemes were presented, with the first option showing six 8-9 story office buildings arrayed as bars on an east/west axis, three on either side of 6th Avenue S. They would be conventional office towers, rectangular in shape. Open space would be the leftover ground between buildings, unfortunately mostly in the shade throughout the day. It was further pointed out that the floorplates would be relatively small. And the office buildings so arrayed did not align with the ambient urban context.

A second proposed option showed two long, slightly bent structures, aligned in the north/south direction on either side of 6th Avenue S. The scheme allowed for large floorplates and was good for daylight penetration. On the negative side, the project would be difficult to "phase" and the one central open space would be canyon-like and hard to be deployed at a truly human scale.

A third option had two configurations or alternatives, one without (Option 3a) and one with (Option 3B), an additional 15% FAR that would be provided by meeting the requirements of the Living Building Pilot Program. Each option treated the ground plane spaces and upper office towers as separate geometries in separate orientations, creating a variety of floorplate sizes and options, which would allow for offset building cores and connections. Large and inviting open spaces were provided and offered both within the interstices of the buildings and as roof decks. This option was described as being "easy to phase" and as producing "a Stadium-scale iconic group of buildings."

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Concerns were raised regarding the 270-foot in length north building on the east site, set right up to the property line on Airport Way contributing to a canyon or a speedway effect on that street;
- Concerns were voiced about the shadow effect onto the neighboring building under separate ownership on Airport Way that was to remain and whose site was notched into the larger east site of the proposed development;
- There were general concerns regarding the entire campus array of buildings on sunlight and shadows outside the immediate site and on views through the site.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Following 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.

Major issues identified:

1. Massing: The Board was agreed that the design team had thoroughly explored and demonstrated the superiority of their preferred option for minimizing shading of courtyards and open spaces, for optimizing the potential for ground-level activation, and for weaving the elements of office building, street-level uses and open spaces into a campus-like texture. Option 3, in either articulation, was preferable over schemes 1 and 2 in achieving this set of layered goals. Off-setting the bases and the tower was a promising move, but some degree of upper building differentiation and modulation would be needed for a truly successful project. The Board would like to see more details of the ground floor treatments on individual spaces and transparencies, especially along those facades that did not face onto either 6th Avenue S. or Airport Way S. How would they contribute to the pedestrian experience within the campus? Achieving an acceptable pedestrian scale would be a challenge. The design team should explore bestowing a distinctive character to the individual buildings Careful design of fenestration and use of quality materials in the façade treatments will help to make the massing work. In general the Board agreed that the buildings were appropriately scaled for their location, but there remained many questions of how its all performed at a finer grain.
2. Relationships to the surrounding streets: Care would be needed to engage the two streets, 6th Avenue S. and Airport Way S. Balance was needed so the project would not turn too much in upon itself. The Board felt that the northeast building, due to its closeness to the street and unbroken length, appeared to place its shoulder against the public realm of Airport Way S. Might it not be preferable to push the entire façade further away from the street?
3. Interplay of proposed uses and their architectural expression at the street level: While some of the vignettes suggested human activity within the interstices between structure, it was not clear what interaction with the buildings themselves was intended. Was the main interaction a functional one of entry and access to the office spaces? Or was more intended? Additional vignettes at the time of the project's return to the Board would be helpful in clarifying the intended relationships.
4. The order and timing of development: The Board agreed that both Option 1 and Option 3 (A and B) were the most "phase-able" of the contemplated schemes. The order of development (both temporal and geometric), however, seemed a primary element in the equation for success of the overall project. Start at the north? Start at the south? Start in the middle? Complete the campus on one side of 6th Avenue before starting on the other? Or follow a scheme that would interlock development east and west of 6th Avenue S.? The Board would like to be briefed on thinking in this regard at the time of the Recommendation Meeting.

5. Living Building Challenge: The Board members would appreciate receiving greater clarity on how, more precisely, performance meeting the Living Building Challenge would affect the articulation of the various building and the landscape.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

Four departure requests were anticipated by the applicants. The first was from **SMC 23.50.055.B.2** which limits the size of any story above 85 feet to 25,000 square feet in area. Connected building A-B would exceed that maximum of 5 floors above 85 feet; and E-F would exceed the maximum on 4 floors above 85 feet. The Board acknowledged support of the requested departure.

The second departure was from **SMC 23.50.055.B.1.a & b,** which requires modulation on portions of facades above 65 feet in height if located more than 15 feet from street lot lines and requires modulation for facades exceeding lengths in Table A of 23.50.055. The Board expressed concern regarding the façade of "building D," set at the property line with Airport Way S, and the need the clear need to break up the perceived bulk of that building.

A third departure was requested from **SMC 23.50.055.A.2**.that sets façade setback limits by formula that would create a 600 linear foot façade, set 5 feet back from the lot line. The siting of buildings favored by the Board, incorporating large plazas and open-spaces amount to a setback larger that allowed by Code. The departure was supported by the Board members present.

The fourth departure from **SMC 23.50.039,B.1 & 3**, would require a minimum of 75% of street level of each street-facing façade to be occupied by uses listed in subsection 23.50.039.A, and require that those uses be within 10 feet of the lot line. The design has portions of the street-level facades set more than 10 feet from the street lot line. The Board indicated their support of this departure.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Uptown 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

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-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

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-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

.

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.

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-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-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

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.

BOARD DIRECTION

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

At the Recommendation Meeting the Board would like to see the following:

- more vignettes that would reveal details and the character of proposed retail spaces;
- details of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian entry sequences;
- details of how the Living Building Challenge elements would manifest themselves into the buildings, their design, choice of materials, etc., as well as into landscape contours and materials, etc.
- a closer detailing of the street-level and upper façade options for the NE building (bldg.D) on Airport Way S.; show in detail how it connects to the street;
- show how private and "public" areas of the open spaces are delineated;
- provide pertinent elements of a traffic study for the development;
- provide more information regarding the phasing or sequencing of the buildings and other improvements and clarify how these might relate to improvements to 6th Avenue S.

The recommendations summarized above were based on the design review packet for projects 3017667/3018170 dated Tuesday, August 25, 2015, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, August 25, 2015 Early Design Guidance meeting.

H:dorcym/des rev/3019132 & 3020339 EDG.docx