



City of Seattle

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

DESIGN
REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3019339

Address: 1255 Harrison Street

Applicant: Brian Runberg, Runberg Architects

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, December 16, 2015

Board Members Present: Boyd Pickrell, chair
Janet Stephenson
Homero Nishiwaki
Katherine Idziorek

Board Members Absent: Christine Harrington

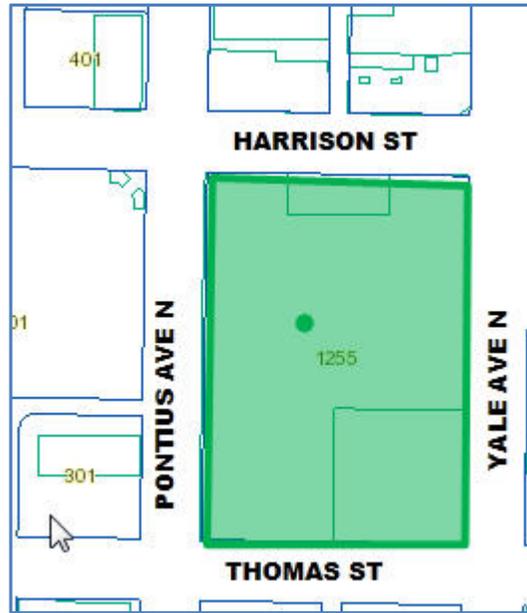
DPD Staff Present: Holly J. Godard

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed 85 (SM 85)

Nearby Zones: (North) Seattle Mixed 85 (SM 85)
(South) Seattle Mixed 85 (SM 85)
(East) Seattle Mixed 85 (SM 85)
(West) Seattle Mixed 85 (SM 85)

Lot Area: 92,160 square feet



Current Development:

Current development is a warehouse and small parking area.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The area is a mix of midrise residential uses and commercial buildings. Cascade Park, a full block sized park, is across the Pontius Avenue North to the west.

Access:

Access is available on all streets.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) identified on the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proponents plan to build a mixed use development with approximately 400 residential units, commercial areas and underground parking for approximately 300 vehicles.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 1, 2015

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3019339) 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 architect presented urban context information, transportation planning information and South Lake Union planning framework information culled from several City planning documents. A strong concept was illustrated and explained that focuses on the native island landscapes of Puget Sound with special focus on the look and feel of the San Juan Islands. Area context and site opportunities and constraints were presented.

Three massing alternatives were presented for this one block site. Site design priorities include working with SPU on biofiltration swales at the site both east and west edges. Ground related housing along three sides of the block with a large central amenity space for residents is contemplated. The project will embrace Cascade Park open space amenities and green street/festival street concepts surrounding the site.

Alternative A is a static double loaded U-shaped building with a courtyard opening to the south. Alternative B breaks the housing and commercial space into more interesting and dynamic forms. The north and south ends of the west massing bend to ease the block corners. This massing gives a sense of the building bending out to meet Pontius Ave N. Alternative C plus the building back from Pontius Ave North midblock which seems to allow Cascade Park to flow onto the site. Other forms are suggested in this alternative with a lower southeast corner building and various entries into the central courtyard.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public made the following comments:

- Our priority is the park. Make design decisions to enhance Cascade Park.
- The plaza on the SW corner is a very good idea.
- Keep the courtyard entrances varied and open, not dark tunnels.
- Try to create curb bulbs and mid-block crossing on Thomas and Harrison.
- Keep abreast of new Cascade Park plans with low level pedestrian lighting and carry that idea across the street to this project.
- The interior plaza looks like it could be a great amenity
- Retail uses will request parking.
- The preferred scheme layout is good because it appears to have interesting angles and movement.
- Cascade Park is a destination park and many people come to park in the area.

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.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 1, 2015

1. Urban pattern and Form

- a. Use adjacent sites, streets, crossings, and Cascade Park to make connections and reflect the neighborhood character. Strengthen the most desirable South Lake Union forms and reinforce community gateways. Reinforce identified “heart locations” to build identifiable urban framework. Carefully design the northeast corner with more

sidewalk space and a gracious response to Saint Spiridon. (CS1 SLU I, CS2 B, 1,2,3.CS2 SLU i.iii,iv.)

2. Connectivity

Enhance the proposed open spaces and add to public life by creating networks of interaction that are public, semi public and semi private project-wide. (PL1 A 1, 2; B1,3.SLU I, ii)

3. Street-level Interaction

Create strong relationships between buildings and the street. Design for a sense of security and privacy. Create places where residents may interact. Design site entry, commercial and individual entries that are well-articulated, hierarchical and coordinated. (PL3 A4, B 1,2,4 SLU III i)

4. Architectural Concept

The Board was supportive of the preferred alternative and directed the applicant to further develop the varied massing as shown in the preferred alternative. Continue to respond to neighboring churches by easing back the building and providing more open space, create a design dialog between Cascade Park and this proposal, create a unified architectural composition to express the concept, create human scale and use texture, color and surprise. (DC2 A,B,D,E)

5. Open Space Concept and Exterior Elements and Finishes

Create a landscape that can serve many purposes for residents, reflect the concept, create community and relate to Cascade Park. Use high quality, durable building materials with a variety of texture and pattern. (DC3 SLU II; DC4 A)

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-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.

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.

CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

CS1-I Responding To Site Characteristics

CS1-I-i. Sustainable Design: New development is encouraged to take advantage of site configuration to accomplish sustainability goals. The Board is generally willing to recommend departures from development standards if they are needed to achieve sustainable design. Refer to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* (LEED) manual which provides additional information

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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

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.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics

CS2-I-i. Views: Encourage provision of “outlooks and overlooks” for the public to view the lake and cityscapes. Examples include provision of public plazas and/or other public open spaces and changing the form or facade setbacks of the building to enhance opportunities for views.

CS2-I-iii. Gateways: Reinforce community gateways through the use of architectural elements, streetscape features, landscaping and/or signage. Gateways can be defined through landscaping, artwork, and references to the history of the location that create a sense of place. Gateways are transition locations, places that mark entry or departure points to a neighborhood for automobiles and pedestrians. They are sites that create opportunities for identification, a physical marker for the community to notice they are entering a special place. Methods to establish gateways should consider the site’s characteristics such as topography, views or surrounding building patterns. Elements could include building out to meet the corner where appropriate, or tools such as:

- a. setbacks to allow for pedestrian friendly spaces;
- b. signage;
- c. landscaping;
- d. artwork;

e. facade treatments.

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

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.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

PL1-I Human Activity

PL1-I-ii. Pedestrian Network: Reinforce pedestrian connections both within the neighborhood and to other adjacent neighborhoods. Transportation infrastructure should be designed with adjacent sidewalks, as development occurs to enhance pedestrian connectivity.

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-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-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

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-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

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 Facade Composition

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

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

DC2-I Architectural Concept and Consistency

DC2-I-i. Roofscape Design: Design the “fifth elevation” — the roofscape — in addition to the streetscape. As this area topographically is a valley, the roofs may be viewed from locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, views from outside the area as well as from within the neighborhood should be considered, and roof-top elements should be organized to minimize view impacts from the freeway and elevated areas.

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 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.

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-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

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.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

DC3-I Landscaping To Reinforce Design Continuity With Adjacent Sites

DC3-I-i. Sustainable Landscaping: Encourage landscaping that meets LEED criteria. This is a priority in the Cascade neighborhood.

DC3-I-ii. Native Vegetation: Where appropriate, install indigenous trees and plants to improve aesthetics, capture **water and create habitat**.

DC3-I-iii. Tree Retention: Retain existing, non-intrusive mature trees or replace with large caliper trees.

DC3-I-iv. Water Features: Water features are encouraged including natural marsh-like installations.

DC3-I-v. Lighting: Reference the City of Seattle Right Tree Book and the City Light Streetscape Light Standards Manual for appropriate landscaping and lighting options for the area.

DC3-II Landscaping To Enhance The Building and/or Site

DC3-II-i. Integrated Artwork: Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.

DC3-III Landscape Design To Address Special Site Conditions

DC3-III-i. View Orientation: Landscaping should be designed to take advantage of views to waterfront and downtown Seattle.

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-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

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.

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 the following departures were requested:

1. **Upper level setback (23.48.012A1 & 2):** The Code requires set back 15 feet above 45 feet. The applicant proposes to not set back the full 15 feet.

The Board indicated they are favorable to the departure request with further information from the applicant on how this departure helps the project better meet guidance.

2. **Setback at Ground Level (23.48.014 A.3 .b):** The Code requires a 12 foot setback. The applicant proposes variable setback to create variety in building orientations.

The Board indicated they are favorable to the departure request and look forward to more information in the next meeting to understand if the departure helps the project better meet design standards.

BOARD DIRECTION

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

At the next meeting the Board would like to see the following fully and graphically articulated:

- Provide view of facades and streetscape at Yale Avenue North.
- Provide more views of the building at ground level.
- Provide views from the midblock area and other perspectives.
- Provide building and site planning responses to the important neighbors; Saint Spiridon and the Immanuel Lutheran Church.
- Provide views of the proposal from Cascade Park.
- Include the “Holland” project.
- Create a response to the Pontius Avenue Plans and partnering with those plans.

MUP Submittal

The applicant applied for the Master Use Permit June 12, 2015.

RECOMMENDATION – December 16, 2015

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Four member of the public were present. Their comments focused on the following:

1. Saint Spiridon is an important landmark and active cathedral. Relocate the sloped roof building to the northeast corner of the site to create a building form which defers to the cathedral.
2. Review the use pattern and hours for the gate operations so they are accessible and provide a level of security for residents.
3. The façade opposite the park is a good façade.
4. The plants in the swales need to be better suited to the condition than those in the block to the north.
5. Site lighting is important.
6. It is time for family units to be designed into the project. Windows and locks need to be considered for family safety. Multi bedroom units should be included in the project.

Places to store strollers and tricycles should be included. Family play areas should be included. A family friendly outdoor area should be included.

DESIGN BOARD DELIBERATIONS:

The Board discussed design and safety issues related to ground level entries, vehicle access and trash doors, building massing, proposal options, ground level and right of way interface, courtyard design, lighting, and departures. The Board identified the lower unit on the northwest corner and the public uses outside the windows and directed the applicant to create better screening for the unit for privacy or change the unit to commercial use. The Board directed the applicant to further design trash and access doors to be artistic doors with interesting materials, consider ground level paving design, and better landscaping next to the doors and sidewalk. The Board found the variety of entries to be interesting and reinforced the idea of the northeast entry to have the wood interior throughout the entryway and extending into the courtyard. The Board approved the courtyard design. The Board considered the southwest building and asked that the windows at each floor be reinstated into the design as previously shown to give some relief to the large façade. The Board asked about the large green roof considered for the building and conditioned the project to retain the green, living roof for the life of the project. After considered discussion the Board approved the south façades of the buildings on Thomas Street and Pontius Avenue N. The Board discussed the design departures shown in the matrix below. They felt the applicant had demonstrated that the departures help the project better meet guidance from the early design guidance meeting.

Departures

The applicant proposed development standard departures as shown in the matrix below.

	<i>Development Standard</i>	<i>required</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Departure amount</i>	<i>Board Action</i>
1	SMC 23.48.012.A1 &2 Upper level setbacks	15 feet setback above 45 feet at 1:2.	Intrusion into the setback area along the full length of the façade.	1,739 square feet	Recommend approval
2	SMC 23.48.014A.2.b General façade requirements	Minimum height for street facing	Facades at Harrison and Thomas	Approx. 10 feet.	Recommend approval with condition to retain green roof.

		facades is 25 feet.	retail below 25 feet		
3	SMC 23.48.014.A.3.b General façade requirements	Setback is limited to 12 feet.	Setback greater than 12 feet.	0-10 feet over the project facades.	Recommend approval
4	SMC 23.48.014.D.2 Blank facades.	Maximum 15 wide segments.	26 foot wide segment including garage doors.	11 foot additional blank segment	Recommend approval with increased high interest materials
5	SMC 23.54.030.F.1.b curb cut	20 foot maximum	30 feet	10 feet	Recommend approval with a more interesting ground plane at the driveway area.

Board Recommendation:

After considering the proposed design and the project context, hearing public comment, and reconsidering the previously stated design priorities, the Design Review Board members felt that all of the guidance that had been given in the previous meeting had been addressed by the applicant. In addition, the four (4) member Board supported the departure requests and **recommended approval with conditions** of the design to the Director. The conditions are as follows:

1. Retain the living plant green roof on the southwest building for the life of the project. (DC2-I)
2. Revise the project to provide interesting materials at the garage and loading dock doors and surrounding wall and ground plane.(DC4-A-1)
3. Create a landscape buffer at the northwest ground unit or change the unit to a retail use.(DC4-D)
4. Bring back the windows on the southwest building east façade as shown in earlier presentations.(DC2-B)