



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3019904

Address: 1208 Republican St

Applicant: Joshua Scott, kōz Development

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, August 12, 2015

Board Members Present: Boyd Pickrell (Chair)  
Christine Harrington  
Kate Idziorek  
Homero Nishiwaki  
Janet Stephenson

Board Members Absent: None

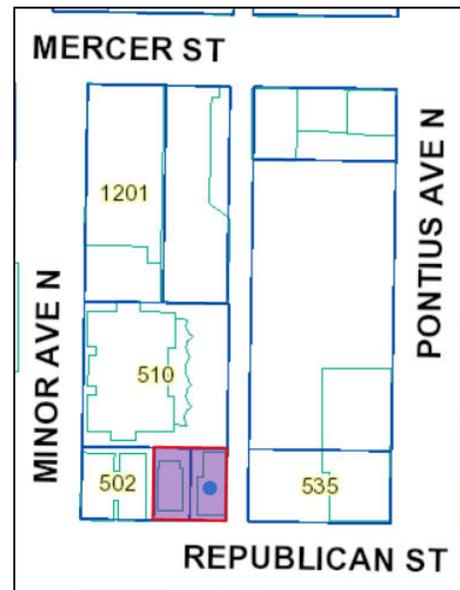
DPD Staff Present: BreAnne McConkie, Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed Residential 55' height limit for commercial uses, 85' height limit for residential uses (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: 3,600 square feet (sq. ft.)



### **Current Development and Site Characteristics:**

The site consists of two parcels both of which are currently vacant. Pedestrian access to the site is proposed from Republican St. and the adjacent alley to the east. The site has a notable slope from east down to west with the high point adjacent to the alley.

### **Neighborhood Context:**

The proposal is located in the South Lake Union Urban Center specifically in the Cascade Sub-area. The site is located on Republican St. between Minor Ave N and Pontius Ave N and is approximately one block south of the I-5 Mercer St. on/off ramp.

The South Lake Union neighborhood has undergone significant redevelopment in recent years. The immediate context surrounding the site includes a mix of large-scale contemporary mixed-use, residential, and commercial structures as well as traditional mixed-use masonry structures and a small number of early 20<sup>th</sup> century single-family wood structures that have been converted to commercial uses.

### **Environmentally Critical Areas:**

There are no Environmentally Critical Areas onsite.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposal is a 7-story apartment building containing 44 Small Efficiency Dwelling Units. No parking is proposed.

### **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 12, 2015**

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at the following 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 DPD:

**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)

## PUBLIC COMMENT

There were a few members of the public present at the Early Design Guidance meeting. Members of the public provided comments and identified the following issues:

- Owned the adjacent building and has no intention of redeveloping it.
- Noted that 5 of the 10 units in the adjacent building to the west have windows facing east (towards the proposed development) and favored a design that would maximize light and airflow to the existing neighboring building.
- Expressed concern with the blank wall along the west façade adjacent to the existing building and stated support for the west facing façade to be more interesting and pleasant to view for the neighboring units.

## 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.

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- 1. Massing & Siting:** At EDG, the Board discussed the massing alternatives at length and directed the applicant to move forward with a hybrid of Option 2 and 3. **(CS2-C-2, CS2-D-5)**
  - a. In general, the Board supported the siting, orientation, and configuration of the upper floors (above floor 3) in Option 3. The tower placement should be shifted to the east, as shown in Option 3, allowing for more openings and fenestration along the western façade, maximizing daylight to western units and creating a more interesting western façade. **(CS2-C-2, CS2-D-5, DC2-B-1, DC2-B-2)**
  - b. As shown in Option 2, the design should locate the lobby and primary entrance on the first level at the southwest corner of the site. The entry at this location should create a sense of activity, provide better access to the bicycle facilities, and result in a better relationship between the basement/ground floor units and the street. **(CS2-C-2, PL3-A-1, PL3-A-2, PL3-B-2)**
  - c. As presented in Option 2, the building should include a greater setback along the west property edge at the lower three levels with a setback of no less than 3'6", although a larger setback was encouraged. **(PL3-B-1, DC2-B-2, CS2-D-5)**
- 2. Arrangement of Uses & Ground Floor Resolution:** At EDG, the Board expressed concern with the units below and partially below ground in Option 3. Specifically, the Board noted that the units and associated window wells along Republican St. created an undesirable relationship between the building and the right-of-way and directed the applicant to resolve how the ground floor units could better relate to the street. **(PL3-B-1, PL3-B-2, PL1-III-I, CS2-C-2)**
  - a. The Board directed the applicant to consider shifting the bike storage area and/or orientation to improve accessibility to the bike area and further reduce window wells and negative impacts associated with the basement units. **(PL3-B-1, PL3-B-2)**

- b. The Board noted that the ground floor units along the north portion of the building would have direct access to adjacent outdoor space and directed the applicant to further develop these outdoor spaces. **(PL3-B-2, DC2-B-1)**
- c. For the next meeting, the applicant should provide a detailed resolution of the ground floor for all sides of the building and a site plan that includes neighboring properties. **(CS2-D-5, PL3-B-1, PL3-B-2)**
- d. The applicant should provide street level perspectives and street elevations to demonstrate how the proposal relates to the existing neighboring properties to the east and west. **(CS2-C-2, CS2-D-5, PL3-B-1, PL3-B-2)**

**3. Architectural Expression & Blank Facades**

- a. At EDG, the Board expressed general support for the architectural concept shown in the applicant’s preferred Option (Option 3) including the exaggerated projecting frames with recessed areas creating relief within the frames. The Board noted that the architectural concept could be more cohesive and further simplified because of the relatively small size of the building. **(DC2-B-1, DC2-B-2, DC4-A-1)**
- b. Clarity in architectural composition was identified as a priority. The massing should inform the exterior design with material expression and architectural features better relating to the massing, emphasizing the larger gestures and massing moves. **(DC2-B-1, DC4-A-1)**
- c. The Board noted the bays did not feel compatible with the architectural concept presented and directed the applicant to explore usable balconies as an alternative and/or in addition to. **(DC2-B-1)**
- d. For the blank facades, the Board directed the applicant to incorporate artful treatments and/or landscaping, specifically along the western façade at the lower levels. **(DC2-B-2, DC4-A-1)**
- e. The use of light colors should be incorporated at strategic locations to reflect and maximize light into adjacent units. **(DC4-A-1)**
- f. For the next meeting, the applicant should provide a landscape plan, conceptual lighting, and signage plan. **(PL1-III-i, DC4-A-1, DC4-B-1)**

**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](#).

<b>CONTEXT &amp; SITE</b>
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**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-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites:** Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

**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.

**PUBLIC LIFE**

**PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL1-III Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances**

**PL1-III-i. Public Realm Amenity:** New developments are encouraged to work with the Design Review Board and interested citizens to provide features that enhance the public realm, i.e. the transition zone between private property and the public right of way. The Board is generally willing to consider a departure in open space requirements if the project proponent provides an acceptable plan for features such as:

- a. curb bulbs adjacent to active retail spaces where they are not interfering with primary corridors that are designated for high levels of traffic flow;
- b. pedestrian-oriented street lighting;
- c. street furniture.

**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-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.

**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-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.

**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-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.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departure 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. The Board’s recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance the following departure was requested:

1. **Upper Level Setback (SMC 23.48.012.C):** For lots abutting an alley in the SM/R 55/85 zone, the code requires portions of a structure greater than 25 feet in height to be set back a minimum of 1 foot from the alley lot line for every 2 feet of additional height above 25 feet, up to a maximum setback of 15 feet measured from the alley lot line. The applicant proposes a 2 foot setback along the alley lot line with a voluntary upper level setback along the western property line.

The Board indicated early support for the requested departure and directed the applicant to include an additional setback at the lower levels along the western property line. The requested departure and shift in upper level mass would result in fenestration along the western façade, maximizing daylight to western units, creating a more interesting visible western façade, and providing a greater setback to existing development west of the site. The departure has the potential to better meet the Design Guidelines PL3-B: Residential Edges and DC2-B-2: Blank Walls.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **BOARD DIRECTION**

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