



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020027

Address: 2234 2nd Avenue

Applicant: Jeff Walls of Studio19 Architecture

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, January 19, 2016

Board Members Present: Murphy McCullough (Chair)
Anjali Grant
Grace Leong
Alan McWain
Gundula Proksch

Board Members Absent: None

DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory

SITE & VICINITY

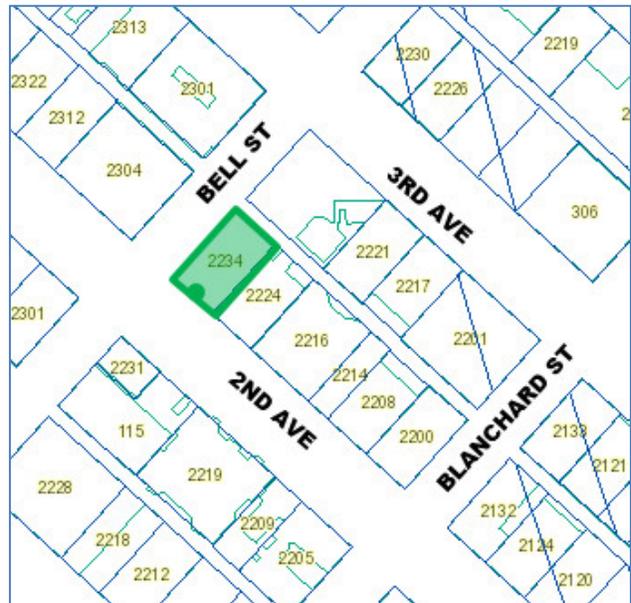
Site Zone: Downtown Mixed
Residential/Residential 85/65 Height Limit
(DMR/R 85/65)

Nearby Zones: (North) DMR/R 125/65
(South) DMR/R 85/65
(East) DMR/R 125/65
(West) DMR/R 85/65

Lot Area: 6,480 square feet

Current Development:

The subject site currently contains a one-story brick structure containing a restaurant use.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development consists of residential and commercial uses of a variety of architectural patterns. The site is bounded by Regrade Park, Bell Street, and 2nd Avenue. The neighborhood character consists of a variety of architectural styles including contemporary uses of geometry, color, and materials and traditional expressions of symmetry and scale. Notable structures near the site include: Wayne Apartments; RKO Distributing Co. Building; William Tell Hotel; and the MGM Building.

Access:

Proposed vehicular access is the alley to the east, adjacent Regrade Park. Pedestrian access to the ground floor uses will be via Bell Street and 2nd Avenue.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance application proposing an 8-story structure containing 63 residential units above 3,200 sq. ft. of commercial and below grade parking for 16 vehicles.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3020027) 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

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were expressed at the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Described Belltown as having an eclectic, independent, and historic character;
- Encouraged the reuse of existing structures;

- Suggested sustaining Belltown’s culture and diversity;
- Noted that *Friends of Historic Belltown* is pursuing a nomination for the historic landmark designation for the existing structure on site;
- Suggested taking design cues from structures other than the one on the northeast corner of Bell St and 2nd Ave;
- Encouraged a design compatible with Wayne Apartments, abutting to the south along 2nd Ave;
- Noted that architectural style, façade composition, and streetscape are important considerations for this site; and
- Encouraged a design that retains the brick façade and alleyway of the existing structure.

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. **Site Planning and Public Realm.** The site is bound by 2nd Ave, Bell St, and Regrade Park.
 - a. The Board discussed the character of the neighborhood, and the vitality of small retail spaces. The Board supported the ground floor program of Concept 3 as it provided two small retail spaces divided by the residential lobby. The proposal was described as making a bold gesture by wrapping the retail space to the alley and Regrade Park, which was supported. The Board recommended further exploration and refinement of the ground floor programming with a design of human scale that engages the pedestrians with the activities occurring within the building. (A1-1, C1-1, C4-1)
 - b. While the ground floor of each concept was supported, the Board agreed the lobby should be on 2nd Ave or Bell St and not the alley (A1-1, C4-2)
 - c. Landscaping will be an important component of responding to Regrade Park and Bell St. The Board agreed the early concepts appear to be responsive and recommended creative landscape treatments at building entrances. Include landscaping details in the Recommendation packet. (C4-1, C4-2, C1-III, D2-1, D2-I, D3-II)
 - d. The concepts explored various locations for the rooftop deck. The Board did not express a preference for the location of the roof deck, but commented that a roof deck at the west portion of the roof would offer views and the opportunity for pedestrians to see the deck from the street. (A1-1, A1-I, D1-3)
 - e. The Board recommended that adequate lighting be provided to promote the feeling of personal safety in the immediate area, particularly near Regrade Park. Include a lighting plan in the Recommendation packet. (D5-1, D6-1)

2. **Architectural Concept.** The Board complimented the three concepts, describing them as well thought out, each with much potential.
 - a. The Board preferred the proposed massing of Option 1 as it appeared to best respond to all sides: 2nd Ave, Bell St, and Regrade Park. The Board recommended

the project be designed as a whole and not emphasize only the corner of 2nd Ave and Bell St. (A1-1, B1-I, B1-II, B1-III, B1-IV, B2-1, B2-2, B3-1).

- b. Speaking to the immediate context, the Board noted buildings that express an articulation of parts, while others a continuous skin with punched windows. The Board agreed the project should respond to the neighborhood context, and recommended exploration of continuing the storefront language of 2nd Avenue with a contemporary tower above. Use of glass was supported. Scale, mass, texture, and materials will be important elements of expressing the architectural concept. Include these details in the Recommendation packet. (A1-1, B1-I, B1-II, B1-III, B1-IV, B2-1, B2-2, B3-1)
- c. Portions of the building will be visible from all sides. For this reason, the Board recommended all facades be carefully detailed to clearly express the architectural concept. The concept should be the applicant's interpretation of the Belltown character. (A1-1, B1-I, B1-II, B1-III, B1-IV, B2-1, B2-2, B3-1)

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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](#).

SITE PLANNING AND MASSING

A1 Respond to the Physical Environment: Develop an architectural concept and compose the building's massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found nearby or beyond the immediate context of the building site.

A1.1. Response to Context: Each building site lies within a larger physical context having various and distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Develop an architectural concept and arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. a change in street grid alignment that yields a site having nonstandard shape;
- b. a site having dramatic topography or contrasting edge conditions;
- c. patterns of urban form, such as nearby buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
- d. access to direct sunlight—seasonally or at particular times of day;
- e. views from the site of noteworthy structures or natural features, (i.e.: the Space Needle, Smith Tower, port facilities, Puget Sound, Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains);
- f. views of the site from other parts of the city or region; and
- g. proximity to a regional transportation corridor (the monorail, light rail, freight rail, major arterial, state highway, ferry routes, bicycle trail, etc.).

ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B1.I. Compatible Design: Establish a harmonious transition between newer and older buildings. Compatible design should respect the scale, massing and materials of adjacent buildings and landscape.

B1.II. Historic Style: Complement the architectural character of an adjacent historic building or area; however, imitation of historical styles is discouraged. References to period architecture should be interpreted in a contemporary manner.

B1.III. Visual Interest: Design visually attractive buildings that add richness and variety to Belltown, including creative contemporary architectural solutions.

B1.IV. Reinforce Neighborhood Qualities: Employ design strategies and incorporate architectural elements that reinforce Belltown's unique qualities. In particular, the neighborhood's best buildings tend to support an active street life.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B3.I. Respond to Nearby Design Features: The principal objective of this guideline is to promote scale and character compatibility through reinforcement of the desirable patterns of massing and facade composition found in the surrounding area. Pay particular attention to designated landmarks and other noteworthy buildings.

a. Respond to the regulating lines and rhythms of adjacent buildings that also support a street-level environment; regulating lines and rhythms include vertical and horizontal patterns as expressed by cornice lines, belt lines, doors, windows, structural bays and modulation.

b. Use regulating lines to promote contextual harmony, solidify the relationship between new and old buildings, and lead the eye down the street.

c. Pay attention to excellent fenestration patterns and detailing in the vicinity. The use of recessed windows that create shadow lines, and suggest solidity, is encouraged.

THE STREETScape

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C1.I. Retail Concentration: Reinforce existing retail concentrations;

C1.II. Commercial Space Size: Vary in size, width, and depth of commercial spaces, accommodating for smaller businesses, where feasible;

C4 Reinforce Building Entries: To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce building entries.

C4.1. Entry Treatments: Reinforce the building's entry with one or more of the following architectural treatments:

a. extra-height lobby space;

b. distinctive doorways;

- c. decorative lighting;
- d. distinctive entry canopy;
- e. projected or recessed entry bay;
- f. building name and address integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
- g. artwork integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
- h. a change in paving material, texture, or color;
- i. distinctive landscaping, including plants, water features and seating
- j. ornamental glazing, railings, and balustrades.

C4.2. Residential Entries: To make a residential building more approachable and to create a sense of association among neighbors, entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street and easily accessible and inviting to pedestrians. The space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors. Provide convenient and attractive access to the building's entry. To ensure comfort and security, entry areas and adjacent open space should be sufficiently lighted and protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

C6 Develop the Alley Façade: To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, develop portions of the alley facade in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.

C6.1. Alley Activation: Consider enlivening and enhancing the alley entrance by:

- a. extending retail space fenestration into the alley one bay;
- b. providing a niche for recycling and waste receptacles to be shared with nearby, older buildings lacking such facilities; and
- c. adding effective lighting to enhance visibility and safety.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C6.III. Architectural Concept:

- g. In designing a well-proportioned and unified building, the alley facade should not be ignored. An alley facade should be treated with form, scale and materials similar to rest of the building to create a coherent architectural concept.

PUBLIC AMENITIES

D1 Provide Inviting & Usable Open Space: Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

D1.2. Open Space Features: Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

- a. visual and pedestrian access (including barrier- free access) into the site from the public sidewalk;
- b. walking surfaces of attractive pavers;
- c. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;

- d. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably “spill out” and enliven the open space;
- e. areas for vendors in commercial areas;
- f. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;
- g. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and
- h. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks. residential open space

D2 Enhance the Building with Landscaping: Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping— which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.

D2.1. Landscape Enhancements: Landscape enhancement of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below:

- a. emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;
- b. include a special feature such as a courtyard, fountain, or pool;
- c. incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture;
- d. distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation;
- e. soften the building by screening blank walls, terracing retaining walls, etc;
- f. increase privacy and security through screening and/or shading;
- g. provide a framework such as a trellis or arbor for plants to grow on;
- h. incorporate upper story planter boxes or roof planters;
- i. provide identity and reinforce a desired feeling of intimacy and quiet;
- j. provide brackets for hanging planters;
- k. consider how the space will be viewed from the upper floors of nearby buildings as well as from the sidewalk; and
- l. if on a designated Green Street, coordinate improvements with the local Green Street plan.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D2.1. Belltown-Specific Landscape Character: Landscape enhancement of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below, where appropriate:

- a. emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;
- b. use landscaping to make plazas and courtyards comfortable for human activity and social interaction;
- c. distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation, such as entry courtyards;
- d. provide year-round greenery — drought tolerant species are encouraged to promote water conservation and reduce maintenance concerns; and
- e. provide opportunities for installation of civic art in the landscape; designer/ artist collaborations are encouraged (e.g., Growing Vine Street).

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D3.I. Art and Heritage: Art and History are vital to reinforcing a sense of place. Consider incorporating the following into the siting and design:

- a. vestiges of Belltown Heritage, such as preserving existing stone sidewalks, curbs
- b. art that relates to the established or emerging theme of that area (e.g., Western, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Avenue street specific character.
- c. install plaques or other features on the building that pay tribute to Belltown history.

D3.II. Green Streets: Green Streets are street rights-of-way that are enhanced for pedestrian circulation and activity with a variety of pedestrian-oriented features, such as sidewalk widening, landscaping, artwork, and traffic calming. Interesting street level uses and pedestrian amenities enliven the Green Street and lend special identity to the surrounding area.

D3.III. Street Furniture/Furnishings along Specific Streets: The function and character of Belltown's streetscapes are defined street by street. In defining the streetscape for various streets, the hierarchy of streets is determined by street function, adjacent land uses, and the nature of existing streetscape improvements.

- c. 2nd Avenue: New installations on 2nd Avenue should continue the style of "limited edition" street art that currently exists between Cedar Street and Virginia Street.

D3.IV. Street Edge/Furnishings: Concentrate pedestrian improvements at intersections with Green Streets (Bell, Blanchard, Vine, Cedar between 1st and Elliott, Clay, Eagle, and Bay Streets). Pedestrian crossings should be "exaggerated," that is they should be marked and illuminated in a manner where they will be quickly and clearly seen by motorists.

D5 Provide Adequate Lighting: To promote a sense of security for people downtown during nighttime hours, provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building facade, on the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and on signage.

D5.1. Lighting Strategies: Consider employing one or more of the following lighting strategies as appropriate.

- a. Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.
- b. Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.
- c. Orient outside lighting to minimize glare within the public right-of-way.

D6 Design for Personal Safety & Security: Design the building and site to promote the feeling of personal safety and security in the immediate area.

D6.1. Safety in Design Features: To help promote safety for the residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors who enter the area:

- a. provide adequate lighting;
- b. retain clear lines of sight into and out of entries and open spaces;
- c. use semi-transparent security screening, rather than opaque walls, where appropriate;
- d. avoid blank and windowless walls that attract graffiti and that do not permit residents or workers to observe the street;
- e. use landscaping that maintains visibility, such as short shrubs and/or trees pruned so that all branches are above head height;

- f. use ornamental grille as fencing or over ground-floor windows in some locations;
- g. avoid architectural features that provide hiding places for criminal activity;
- h. design parking areas to allow natural surveillance by maintaining clear lines of sight for those who park there, for pedestrians passing by, and for occupants of nearby buildings;
- i. install clear directional signage;
- j. encourage “eyes on the street” through the placement of windows, balconies, and street-level uses; and
- k. ensure natural surveillance of children’s play areas.

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 Early Design Guidance, no departures were requested.

BOARD DIRECTION

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