



# City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections  
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN  
REVIEW

## FIRST RECOMMENDATION OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020176 (Convention Center Addition) \*

Address: 1600 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Applicant: LMN Architects, for Pine Street Group

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, May 03, 2016

Board Members Present: Anjali Grant (Acting Chair)  
Peter Krech (substitute)  
Grace Leong  
Gundula Proksch

Board Members Absent: Murphy McCullough (recused for this project)  
Alan McWain

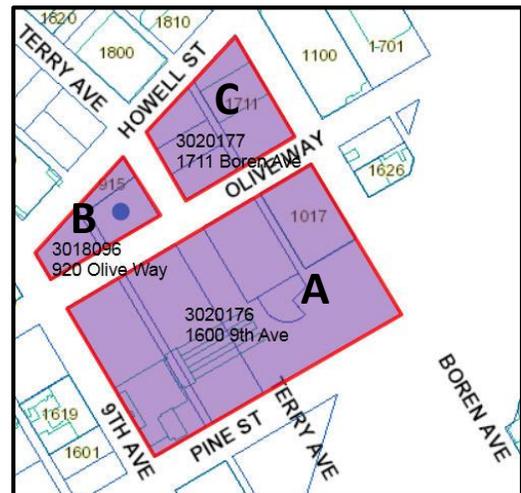
DPD Staff Present: Garry Papers, M. Arch, Senior Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC 340/290-400; Downtown Mixed Commercial, 340 ft non-residential maximum height

Nearby Zones: (North) DMC 340/290-400  
(South) DMC 340/290-400  
(East) DMC 340/290-400  
(NC3P-85 across I-5)  
(West) DOC2 500/300-500

Lot Area: 3020176 Site A: 202,509 sq ft.  
3018096 Site B: 25,551 sq ft.  
3020177 Site C: 50,979 sq ft.



\*:This Recommendation report applies only to Site A above. Sites B and C have separate reports.

### **Current Development:**

The majority of site A consists of a bus and light rail marshalling yard and station, mostly recessed below adjacent grades, plus a 2 story commercial building at the northeast corner. Site B consists of an alley and 2 one-story commercial buildings and surface parking lots. Site C consists of an alley and one, one story commercial building wrapped by surface parking lots.

### **Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The largest site A has the Paramount Theatre at its southwest, and one 14 story apartment tower at its northeast, and the rest of the south and east sides face vacant land and the sunken I-5 freeway corridor. There are existing and proposed towers to the north and west of the larger 3-block project area, including office, hotel and residential projects 14-40 stories tall. The surrounding Denny Triangle neighborhood consists of mixed commercial structures and parking lots, rapidly transitioning to tall, dense mixed use structures, consistent with zoning and planning policies.

The project site is a physical and urban design 'hole' in the dense downtown fabric, and is located between two connector streets (Pine and Olive) which bridge the I-5 trough, which is the edge between downtown density and the mid-rise, mixed use fabric of the Capital Hill and First Hill neighborhoods to the east and south.

### **Access:**

Pedestrian access is from the surrounding sidewalks on the following streets: Pine, Olive and Howell running east-west; 9<sup>th</sup> Ave, Terry and Boren running north-south. Terry Street and alleys were previously vacated from Site A, so vehicular access to it must be off one of the four surrounding street frontages. The two alleys and Terry segment between Olive and Howell are operational at the moment, but are proposed to be fully vacated concurrent with this project; those vacations are assumed to have occurred for the purposes of this Design Review.

### **Environmentally Critical Areas:**

None

**NOTE: This Recommendation report is for the Convention Center Addition project only on Site A. The reports for the three Early Design Guidance (EDG) meetings combining all three sites A, B and C, start on page 3. The specific Recommendation report for Site A begins on page 33.**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Site A: The proposed development on double-block site A is a 5 level, approximately 200 ft tall structure containing 1.23 million gross sf, comprised of: 250,000 sf of exhibition space; 120,000 sf of meeting rooms; a 60,000 sf ballroom; and associated lobbies, service and support.

Approximately 25,000 sf of ground level commercial/retail is proposed at the building perimeter. The facility is a detached addition to the Washington State Convention Center. Parking for 700-800 cars is located within the primary structure, with two street access points at the mid-block on Boren Avenue and Olive Way. Loading docks and trash/services are below grade, accessed by a ramp that enters and exits on the adjacent Site C.

### **FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) May 19, 2015**

The Design Proposal booklet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

The booklet 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)

### **INTRODUCTION TO EDG #1:**

This EDG meeting intentionally focused on context and urban design analysis, for the public and Downtown Design Review Board (the Board) to provide early input and guidance about important contextual concerns, and how context might influence and inspire the building forms and/or program. At EDG#2, the applicants will provide the typical EDG massing options, respond to EDG#1 guidance, and the Board will identify the Priority Downtown Guidelines at that time.

NOTE: While the drawings and general Board comments refer to the co-development towers that may occur above Sites B and C, those two towers are not submitted for detailed review at this time. If and when they are proposed to move forward, they would receive separate reviews, public notice and MUP numbers.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Stated the project appears overly program-driven and not adequately responsive to context yet.
- Supported more pedestrian activating uses on all street level frontages, as they all are heavily used connectors between neighborhoods.
- Concerned that floor slabs and large blank walls appear to occur along many pedestrian eye levels, and the floors should adjust to prevent that.
- Stated the project lacks an overarching goal or idea for such a large and impactful structure.
- Regretted the urban analysis did not include emphasis on the smaller grain of the neighborhoods to the east.
- Emphasized that the sidewalks on Pine and Olive are key connectors and are crowded now, and the project should widen those sidewalks and add amenity to them.

- Reiterated the need for consistent pedestrian activation and practical uses along the sidewalks, since most pedestrians will not be attending actual conventions.
- Impressed by other convention centers designed by the architects (Vancouver, BC in particular) and stressed that Seattle deserves the same or better, particularly in terms of activation, transparency, sustainability and nighttime beauty.
- Emphasized that Pine Street should be lined with continuous retail, and that the ‘pop-up’ retail spaces shown were not viable.
- Requested the project develop how it functions as “a civic building”.
- Requested more public open space(s) and attention to the large roof.
- Stressed how the structure will be visible from streets and public viewpoints to the east, in particular 4 Columns Park.
- Stated the project should exhibit a smaller grain, compatible with the character and pattern of adjacent neighborhoods.
- Submitted the project is large but should not be a singular ‘icon’.
- Stated the terminus of the Terry Green Street should not be a parking or vehicle entrance.
- Opposed to the large truck portal on Boren, across from a residential building.
- Asked for more nature and green elements in the project, such as small parks and tree clusters, as there “are no parks in Denny triangle”.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the five Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX):

All page references are to the EDG#1 booklet dated 5/19/2015; Citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

### FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE May 19, 2015

#### 1. Respond to Views & Influences from Adjacent Context:

- a. **Context Analysis:** The Board appreciated the complete context inventory provided (especially the multiple perspectives, pg. 54-65), and applauded many of the applicant stated goals such as: “Engage the downtown urban framework...Create a welcoming street presence...Integrate mixed uses such as retail...Enrich urban diversity...Create a unique (Seattle and PNW) experience”. Tangible follow through on these commendable goals will be the applicant test for future Board meetings. (A1)
- b. **Viewpoints:** The Board noted this large building will be seen from many vantage points, with differing scales and fields-of-view; the Board was particularly concerned with the wide-angle views from neighborhoods to the east and south, where intervening buildings do not (and likely never will) moderate the size and bulk of the proposed structure (pg. 60/61). The Board supported the stated ‘collage of S,M,L scales to mitigate an XXL building’. (B1; C2)

- c. **Street Grid:** The Board agreed the project should acknowledge the street grid shift at Howell, and recognize how the building form will be visible at the street end views down 9<sup>th</sup> & Terry Avenues from the north (pg 62/63). The Board emphasized these two streets are designated Green Streets, connecting the site to SLU and Lake Union with pedestrian, bike and landscaping enhancements. These Green Streets are the only 'public open space' contemplated in the rapidly densifying and open space deficient Denny Triangle district. (A1; B1)
- d. **Connections:** Pedestrian movement along all adjacent streets was a prime focus of Board considerations; special emphasis was on the Pine Street 'hillclimb' and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since some joint convention events will link the proposed Convention Center Expansion (CCX) and the existing Convention Center, the segment of 9<sup>th</sup> between Pike and Pine will be heavily loaded with pedestrian groups, and how those crowds of pedestrians are received at the southwest corner and along the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave frontage was emphasized. (B3, D1)

The Board suggested that streetscape improvements on 9<sup>th</sup> between Pine and Pike, and 'intersection repair' at Pike and 9<sup>th</sup> might become off-site Public Benefits through other city reviews.

NOTE: Since the project involves street vacations, it will receive Design Commission (DC) review of the public realm and benefits; the Board received a memo from DC staff based on the EDG booklet.

- e. **Landmarks:** The Board noted the adjacent Paramount Theatre is a designated city landmark and functions as a key way-finding marker; the project massing should respect and possibly defer to the Paramount (pg. 59), opening up light and views to the theatre's rich north facade (see #6 on pg. 11 and 63). This guidance might coincide with comments under 2d below. (B2; B3)
- f. **Prominent Corners:** The Board agreed the southwest corner should generously recess to accommodate crowds from Pine and 9<sup>th</sup> (see 1d), possibly with exterior decks above to optimize views up and down Pine Street (pg. 39, and building section shown at meeting). The Board agreed both east corners will be highly visible to many neighborhoods south and east (and to users of the freeway) and they should be 'pedestrian beacons' to help bridge the I-5 gap (pg. 60, 64); the Board supported the retail shown at those corners and encouraged they be larger (pg. 51/52). The northwest corner will be extra visible because of the grid shift, and should respond to the axial street view down 9<sup>th</sup> (pg. 63). Finally, the northeast corner also deserves attention, as Olive Way is a key pedestrian link to Capitol Hill, regardless of the one-way, eastbound vehicular flows. (B1; B3; C1; C4)

## 2. Massing & Public Realm:

- a. **Vertical Programming:** The Board appreciated the complex building program and supported the challenge of a new 'vertical convention center prototype'. The Board

applauded retention of the existing streets rather than an even larger super block, but was concerned about the scale compatibility of even the resulting double-block form (347 ft x 565 ft footprint) in a fabric largely made up of quarter block and smaller masses (pg 10). (A1; B2)

Regarding the physical massing model shown, the Board was glad to hear that ‘carving of the CCX volume is possible’, to explore various ways to achieve the correct ‘collage of S,M,L scales’. The Board supported exterior decks to populate the large facades, and internal light-wells for the program, but not if such private assets are at the expense of street level needs for the public realm. This pivotal 3 block, 6.4 acre project will be an exercise in balancing a large internal program and external urban design priorities. (B4)

- b. **Mitigate the I-5 Gap:** The Board agreed the project should knit the adjacent neighborhoods together. The large and fully visible south and east walls will be seen within the fabric beyond of smaller, more vertical downtown buildings (pg 60/61), therefore massing modulation and façade scaling techniques will be especially critical on those elevations. (A1; B2; B4; C2)
- c. **Terry Street & ‘Truck Plaza’:** The stated reason for the full vacation of the segment of Terry between Howell and Olive was to enable sizable and multiple truck maneuvering options there (from block C onto Olive, Howell and possibly Terry northbound). The Board was strongly opposed to creating a compromised streetscape or ‘truck plaza’ on a Green Street, or as a terminus of a Green Street that links downtown to Lake Union. After learning the preliminary size and number of truck movements, the Board was especially concerned about compromising Green Street continuity and safe, direct pedestrian movements between Howell and the proposed CCX building across Olive Way (also see 3e). (A1-Green Street Policies; B1; B3; E3)
- d. **Lobby and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interface:** The Board agreed that the primary CCX entries and lobby are best facing the southwest sun and along 9<sup>th</sup>, and they supported the stated intention to make that lobby highly permeable to the street and frequently open to the general public (the controlled zone being deep inside). The Board supported the two corners being described as transparent, tall and welcoming. However, the absence of a sizable setback or public open space along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street was a concern (pg 51), especially considering crowd surges from the proposed lobby. An open space ‘pearl’ (like Plymouth Pillars and Westlake Parks) on the Pine Street link between Cal Anderson and the Pike Market, would be a valuable open space addition (see 1c, and pg 39/left). (C4; D1;D3)

The Board discussed this important frontage & public realm interface at length: additional ground level space for the Green Street treatment and CCX events to spill out was agreed to have potential; the proposed retail ‘market hall’ –if open typical hours –was supported in order to activate the 300+ ft long façade when no CCX events are happening. Even a tall, transparent wall looking into an often empty lobby

with just escalators was agreed to not be genuinely activating; the hours and degree of public porosity into the lobby and what public attractors are within will be critical. (C1-2)

- e. **Massing Options for EDG #2:** The Board looks forward to three massing options at the next meeting that respond to all major context influences, yet manifest three clear, and distinct design concepts; suggestions for those might be: a) Program-driven/code compliant; b) Subtractive, slices and notches; c) Additive, volumes and voids. A hybrid is certainly plausible, as the primary Block A is alone 4.5 acres in size, and this site has uniquely different east and west view prospects (see 1b). (A2; B4)
- f. **Roof Design:** The Board stressed the very large roof is a “5<sup>th</sup> Elevation” which will be visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. The 4+ acres provides a major opportunity for a combination of: sizable sustainable strategies; useable open space for users; canvas for an exceptional landscape design; and/or possible public realm in a dense, park deficient district. The Board cautioned that these uses should determine roof structural considerations, rather than the structural cost being used to eliminate a superior design or use. (A2; D1; D2)

### 3. Perimeter Street Edges & Ground Floors: (B3-3; C1; C3; C4; D1-1; E1)

- a. **Ground Floor Edges:** The Board agreed all street edges in this central location must be done well, with no street sacrificed as a designated ‘back-of-house’. To maximize pedestrian interaction and provide legitimate uses for all Seattleites not only CCX users, all ground level frontages should: minimize the number and length of blank walls; interject regular lengths of retail or porous, activating uses; reasonably step floors with the adjacent sloping sidewalks to permit regularly spaced doors; and integrate any mandatory services, exit doors or other blank elements in a highly artful manner. The Board agreed maximum transparency is good, but pedestrians looking into closed and frequently empty lobby spaces does not equal diverse and consistent activation.
- b. **Pine Street:** The Board agreed this sidewalk is a very heavily traveled link uphill to Capitol Hill, and it likely deserves additional width via a setback, a consistent curbside landscape amenity, and definitely requires more substantial retail activation than the small ‘pop-ups’ indicated on pg 52/left.
- c. **Boren Avenue:** The Board supported the 4 retail corners and stretching that activation along all of Boren, and visually minimizing any vehicle portals along both block fronts of Boren Avenue, particularly the east truck portal into site C.
- d. **Olive Way:** The Board was concerned this important pedestrian street lacked consistent retail activation. Any elevators or blank walls should be staggered with intermittent retail or similar activation. Perimeter services should be pushed inward rather than interior parking/services pushing out to the sidewalk.

- e. **Terry Avenue Green Street Terminus:** The Board was unanimously opposed to a vehicle portal as the terminus of the Terry Green Street (regardless of the outcome of the streetscape issues in 2c above), and instead advised a major pedestrian entry be on axis, and link into the public lobby facing 9<sup>th</sup>. Any parking portal on this frontage should be shifted east.
- f. **Howell Street:** Like Olive, this street is an important stitch between the CCX and the rapidly infilling district to the north, so it requires interesting uses and facades on all block faces that reinforce pedestrian movements both east-west and north-south.
- g. **Site C, Northeast Block:** The Board agreed the truck movements appear to overwhelm this block and retail should be maximized and fill in the corners and every available part of the perimeter. The Board seeks SDOT technical corroboration that the truck movements are absolutely the smallest necessary, and all curb cuts and portals should be minimized in width and façade presence.
- h. **Sites B & C; Co-development:** The Board supported planning ahead and requested more details to ensure viable cores, lobbies, and loading space will be possible on the two blocks. The potential for public open space at the interesting hinge of the two street grids should be explored on the west ‘point’ of the northeast Block B (see 1c/f).

#### 4. General:

- a) The Board was intrigued by the applicant’s statement that this CCX represented a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Convention facility, geared toward generation “z”, and requested more development of what that means for the physical form and expression of this project.
- b) The Board agreed the objective must be much more than filling the existing void with a large block of self-serving program; the site is at a crossroads of scales, views and neighborhoods and there is an obligation to also improve connections, enhance the public realm, and add substantial and dynamic uses that serve all pedestrians.

<b>SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) July 21, 2015</b>
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 P.O. Box 34019  
 Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## INTRODUCTION TO EDG #2:

This EDG#2 meeting focused on massing options for all 3 blocks, since the two co-development blocks between Olive and Howell are now full parts of the review. The Board also provided guidance on the design development of the primary convention center block, and those EDG#2 comments are listed in **BOLD** under each restated topic from the EDG#1 guidance.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

- Stated the project should include a public, pedestrian pass through of the double block, like the current Convention Center provides, preferably from Pine to Olive/Terry.
- Supported more pedestrian activating uses on all street level frontages, as they all are heavily used connectors between neighborhoods.
- Stated the project should incorporate an LRT station or bus stops that provide direct access for convention visitors and workers in the surrounding district.
- Stated the project turns its back on the Boren Street pedestrian experience; should design as though the I-5 noise and void will not be a permanent condition.
- Regretted the design did not include more emphasis on the smaller grain of the neighborhoods to the east, and that the project has 'no relationship to the east'.
- Stated the proposal lacks a vision merited by its critical location between downtown, Denny Triangle and Capitol Hill.
- Stated the project has minimal street level uses that would foster civic life and engagement; the program 'box' is too dominant.
- Regretted the large, expensive proposal does not do more to be a civic icon on par with others such as the Central Library, Olympic Sculpture Park, or Central Waterfront.
- Stated the proposal should better integrate with the surroundings and do more to heal the scar of the freeway, as the first Convention Center did with Freeway Park.
- Requested the applicants meet directly with PPUNC, 'as promised'.
- Emphasized that the 'micro-retail' on the existing Convention Center is not successful, and the proposal should have more consistent and deep retail on the street levels.
- Stated the Boren and Olive facades look like afterthoughts, and large detailed elevations are needed to confirm pedestrian scale, activation and interest.
- Noted the streetscape designs were not lush, and the highly visible roof had no design.
- Supported the deep modulations and warm tones of the visible ceilings and soffits shown on the 9<sup>th</sup> avenue perspectives.
- Concerned the highly transparent Pine street façade is too tall and flat, and it is highly visible to the east and south.
- Requested consistent pedestrian activation and unique shops for visitors along the sidewalks, especially Pine which is the prime connector, since 'Pike is so unfriendly'.
- Stated the ground level looks 'abandoned, with only 10% retail', and the Terry terminus was 'mean'.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the five Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX):

All page references below are to the EDG#2 booklet dated 7/21/2015; citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

## **SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 21, 2015**

### **5. Respond to Views & Influences from Adjacent Context:**

- a. **Context Analysis:** The Board appreciated the complete context inventory provided (especially the multiple perspectives, pg. 54-65), and applauded many of the applicant stated goals such as: “Engage the downtown urban framework...Create a welcoming street presence...Integrate mixed uses such as retail...Enrich urban diversity...Create a unique (Seattle and PNW) experience”. Tangible follow through on these commendable goals will be the applicant test for future Board meetings. (A1)

**At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how centrally located and visible the structure will be, thus the project forms and architectural character should express a memorable and civic identity, yet not appear alien or out of scale.**

- b. **Viewpoints:** The Board noted this large building will be seen from many vantage points, with differing scales and fields-of-view; the Board was particularly concerned with the wide-angle views from neighborhoods to the east and south, where intervening buildings do not (and likely never will) moderate the size and bulk of the proposed structure (pg 60/61). The Board supported the stated ‘collage of S,M,L scales to mitigate an XXL building’. (B1; C2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board appreciated the multiple and detailed perspective views provided, and recommended additional views for the next meeting, from more distant viewpoints on Capitol Hill and First Hill, along the Boren and Olive facades, and other public viewpoints.**

- c. **Street Grid:** The Board agreed the project should acknowledge the street grid shift at Howell, and recognize how the building form will be visible at the street end views down 9<sup>th</sup> & Terry Avenues from the north (pg 62/63). The Board emphasized these two streets are designated Green Streets, connecting the site to SLU and Lake Union with pedestrian, bike and landscaping enhancements. These Green Streets are the only ‘public open space’ contemplated in the rapidly densifying and open space deficient Denny Triangle district. (A1; B1)

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the strong cantilevered form that punctuates the grid shift as viewed south down 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg 62,63), and the setback, canted lower levels on the southeast corner of block B, which open views and pedestrian movement from Terry to the CCX lobby entry (pg 47). The applicants should provide**

**massing studies which set back the entire tower form at that corner to improve those same views to the CCX, and enhance light to the Terry Plaza.**

- d. **Connections:** Pedestrian movement along all adjacent streets was a prime focus of Board considerations; special emphasis was on the Pine Street 'hillclimb' and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since some joint convention events will link the proposed Convention Center Expansion (CCX) and the existing Convention Center, the segment of 9<sup>th</sup> between Pike and Pine will be heavily loaded with pedestrian groups, and how those crowds of pedestrians are received at the southwest corner and along the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave frontage was emphasized. (B3, D1)

The Board suggested that streetscape improvements on 9<sup>th</sup> between Pine and Pike, and 'intersection repair' at Pike and 9<sup>th</sup> might become off-site Public Benefits through other city reviews.

NOTE: Since the project involves street vacations, it will receive Design Commission (DC) review of the public realm and benefits; the Board received a memo from DC staff based on the EDG booklet.

**At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how the project forms, public realm and street edges must be generous and respond to the current (ie Pine Street) and projected increases (developments to north and west) in pedestrian street activity, and movement desire lines, especially through the double block. The sidewalk widths may need to be widened from the currently shown code minimums on Pine, Boren and Olive.**

- e. **Landmarks:** The Board noted the adjacent Paramount Theatre is a designated city landmark and functions as a key way-finding marker; the project massing should respect and possibly defer to the Paramount (pg 59), opening up light and views to the theatre's rich north facade (see #6 on pg 11 and 63). This guidance might coincide with comments under 2d below. (B2; B3)

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the size and location of the southwest entry plaza, and the associated step backs on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg 69,79), which provide space and scale transitions to the landmark Paramount, with refinement guidance under 6d below.**

- f. **Prominent Corners:** The Board agreed the southwest corner should generously recess to accommodate crowds from Pine and 9<sup>th</sup> (see 1d), possibly with exterior decks above to optimize views up and down Pine Street (pg 39, and building section shown at meeting). The Board agreed both east corners will be highly visible to many neighborhoods south and east (and to users of the freeway) and they should be 'pedestrian beacons' to help bridge the I-5 gap (pg 60, 64); the Board supported the retail shown at those corners and encouraged they be larger (pg 51/52). The northwest corner will be extra visible because of the grid shift, and should respond to the axial street view down 9<sup>th</sup> (pg 63). Finally, the northeast corner also deserves

attention, as Olive Way is a key pedestrian link to Capitol Hill, regardless of the one-way, eastbound vehicular flows. (B1; B3; C1; C4)

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed both east corner points remain visually weak. Although the southeast 40 ft. retail height is supported, the retail porosity of both corners should be enhanced, and there should be more vertical presence relative to the tall mass above. The ground level corner setback shown at 9<sup>th</sup> and Boren is essential; a similar one is possibly desirable at Boren and Olive.**

## **6. Massing & Public Realm:**

- a. **Vertical Programming:** The Board appreciated the complex building program and supported the challenge of a new 'vertical convention center prototype'. The Board applauded retention of the existing streets rather than an even larger super block, but was concerned about the scale compatibility of even the resulting double-block form (347 ft x 565 ft footprint) in a fabric largely made up of quarter block and smaller masses (pg 10). (A1; B2)

Regarding the physical massing model shown, the Board was glad to hear that 'carving of the CCX volume is possible', to explore various ways to achieve the correct 'collage of S,M,L scales'. The Board supported exterior decks to populate the large facades, and internal light-wells for the program, but not if such private assets are at the expense of street level needs for the public realm. This pivotal 3 block, 6.4 acre project will be an exercise in balancing a large internal program and external urban design priorities. (B4)

**At the EDG#2, the Board applauded the large scale physical model and its use as a dynamic study tool. The Board supported the preferred CCX concept of the central mass-box with three stepped and legible volumes on the north, south and west sides. The transparency of the west and south layers is critical to lightening the massive form (pg 69) however more information on the materiality of the north volume (along Olive) is needed. The multiple roof decks and balconies shown were supported, and strongly encouraged to be publically accessible when an event is not occurring, or at least certain securable portions at typical (8-8 or 10-10) public hours (dedicated public elevator to balconies shown on Pine, etc).**

**The Board agreed the Pine Street elevation is a fully and highly visible wall to the community, and appears to be overly flat for a 500 ft long, 200 ft tall wall (pg 88). The balconies and vertical elevators shown are critical to create intermediate scales. Additional modulation elements and 'chiseling' are also recommended especially at the lower levels. The specific materiality of this south-facing glass volume should be explained in detail at the next meeting, in terms of reflectivity, glass patterns/color, energy performance and shading.**

- b. **Mitigate the I-5 Gap:** The Board agreed the project should knit the adjacent neighborhoods together. The large and fully visible south and east walls will be seen

within the fabric beyond of smaller, more vertical downtown buildings (pg 60/61), therefore massing modulation and façade scaling techniques will be especially critical on those elevations. (A1; B2; B4; C2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the proposed east façade (pg 88) presents an exciting super-window and visible ballroom ceiling to the neighborhood, but the middle and street levels are entirely too blank and lack intermediate scales. This elevation should be treated like any other pedestrian street, and not assume the I-5 culvert is a permanent condition. The Board also recommended the long meeting room balcony have greenery and/or glazing to make it attractive to users and the vicinity.**

- c. **Terry Street & ‘Truck Plaza’:** The stated reason for the full vacation of the segment of Terry between Howell and Olive was to enable sizable and multiple truck maneuvering options there (from block C onto Olive, Howell and possibly Terry northbound). The Board was strongly opposed to creating a compromised streetscape or ‘truck plaza’ on a Green Street, or as a terminus of a Green Street that links downtown to Lake Union. After learning the preliminary size and number of truck movements, the Board was especially concerned about compromising Green Street continuity and safe, direct pedestrian movements between Howell and the proposed CCX building across Olive Way (also see 3e). (A1-Green Street Policies; B1; B3; E3)

**At the EDG#2, the Board restated concerns about the quantity and timings of truck movements on the Terry plaza, and requested more detailed information on those operations (the 26 of 30 days per month shown on pg 116 was very concerning, but the actual hours and frequency of truck movements is needed). The Board generally endorsed the design approach to pedestrianize and minimize vehicular impacts on the plaza – to design for ‘pedestrians first’. The Board agreed this space is a critical visual and pedestrian link from the Terry Green Street to the CCX facility, and its streetscape and adjacent building walls must be fully composed; the street-level image on pg 47 presented many concerns about large, blank ground level loading doors, and visual terminus. Also see comments under 7e.**

**Staff NOTE: As a formal street vacation request, this portion of Terry Avenue will receive full future review by SDOT and the Design Commission, and they will have detailed input on the plaza surface and former ROW streetscape design; the Board has purview over the adjacent private building walls and thus are commenting on the activation and materials of the frontages, regardless of the eventual streetscape design.**

- d. **Lobby and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interface:** The Board agreed that the primary CCX entries and lobby are best facing the southwest sun and along 9<sup>th</sup>, and they supported the stated intention to make that lobby highly permeable to the street and frequently open to the general public (the controlled zone being deep inside). The Board supported the two corners being described as transparent, tall and welcoming. However, the

absence of a sizable setback or public open space along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street was a concern (pg 51), especially considering crowd surges from the proposed lobby. An open space ‘pearl’ (like Plymouth Pillars and Westlake Parks) on the Pine Street link between Cal Anderson and the Pike Market, would be a valuable open space addition (see 1c, and pg 39/left). (C4; D1;D3)

The Board discussed this important frontage & public realm interface at length: additional ground level space for the Green Street treatment and CCX events to spill out was agreed to have potential; the proposed retail ‘market hall’ –if open typical hours –was supported in order to activate the 300+ ft long façade when no CCX events are happening. Even a tall, transparent wall looking into an often empty lobby with just escalators was agreed to not be genuinely activating; the hours and degree of public porosity into the lobby and what public attractors are within will be critical. (C1-2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly supported the southwest entry plaza, but recommended the two open sides slope or step with the adjacent sidewalks to maximize pedestrian access and diagonal desire lines. The Board also agreed both building plaza edges needed retail activation besides the retail and adjacent CCX entry doors shown (even if these doors are open during public hours to the ‘mixing zone’ as stated). Added retail activation at the southeast corner of this plaza will also address the recommendation for more Pine activation (7b).**

**The Board agreed the two-sided market hall along Pine Street will succeed only if the adjacent public ‘mixing zone’ has a natural flow-through circulation from Pine to Olive. The steep 14ft tall, narrow stairs shown on Olive and the recessed, hidden doors at the upper landing are not welcoming or easy to use. The Board recommended the Olive stairs be widened and possibly the ‘mixing zone’ volume project at that street, with the stairs internal. More gradual stepped floors of the mixing zone should be studied, even if impacting ceiling heights below. The narrow stairs to Pine were not essential, thus providing more retail continuity on that street.**

- e. **Massing Options for EDG #2:** The Board looks forward to three massing options at the next meeting that respond to all major context influences, yet manifest three clear, and distinct design concepts; suggestions for those might be: a) Program-driven/code compliant; b) Subtractive, slices and notches; c) Additive, volumes and voids. A hybrid is certainly plausible, as the primary Block A is alone 4.5 acres in size, and this site has uniquely different east and west view prospects (see 1b). (A2; B4)

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the applicant-preferred massing scheme for both the CCX structure and the two co-development blocks (pg 92-94), with important refinements to the co-development blocks found under 7g and 7h.**

- f. **Roof Design:** The Board stressed the very large roof is a “5<sup>th</sup> Elevation” which will be visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. The 4+ acres provides a major

opportunity for a combination of: sizable sustainable strategies; useable open space for users; canvas for an exceptional landscape design; and/or possible public realm in a dense, park deficient district. The Board cautioned that these uses should determine roof structural considerations, rather than the structural cost being used to eliminate a superior design or use. (A2; D1; D2)

**At the EDG#2, the Board restated the need for a creative and multi-purpose design for the large and visible roof (pg 95); a complete landscape design, preferably with some usable space and public access, should be provided at the next meeting.**

## **7. Perimeter Street Edges & Ground Floors: (B3-3; C1; C3; C4; D1-1; E1)**

- a. **Ground Floor Edges:** The Board agreed all street edges in this central location must be done well, with no street sacrificed as a designated 'back-of-house'. To maximize pedestrian interaction and provide legitimate uses for all Seattleites not only CCX users, all ground level frontages should: minimize the number and length of blank walls; interject regular lengths of retail or porous, activating uses; reasonably step floors with the adjacent sloping sidewalks to permit regularly spaced doors; and integrate any mandatory services, exit doors or other blank elements in a highly artful manner. The Board agreed maximum transparency is good, but pedestrians looking into closed and frequently empty lobby spaces does not equal diverse and consistent activation.

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the street level program and design required the most attention, as the response to clear EDG#1 guidance was not sufficient on almost all frontages. The Board recommended frequent doors and actual porosity where humans move from sidewalks into building spaces, not simply 'visual porosity' or transparency. The 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage design shown (pg 61) has the best potential; the Board supported the storefront modulation and setbacks shown, but recommended more depth for the street facing portions of the split level retail (pg 66 shows 12 ft) to ensure this critical Green Street frontage is successful and lively. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- b. **Pine Street:** The Board agreed this sidewalk is a very heavily traveled link uphill to Capitol Hill, and it likely deserves additional width via a setback, a consistent curbside landscape amenity, and definitely requires more substantial retail activation than the small 'pop-ups' indicated on pg 52/left.

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly reiterated this street frontage is critical to provide consistent retail activation on a busy pedestrian link to Capitol Hill. The retail amount/consistency shown is a very inadequate link, as the context diagram on pg 71 clearly shows. The Board recommended more retail depth (where customers enter the space) and more linear retail frontage in the middle and west block face, well beyond the approximately 25% shown (pg 71; code requires 75%).**

**The Pine retail should read more as tall pavilions along the street that provide scale. Setbacks between them, for cafes and select smaller views into the pre-function atrium, which should possibly be narrowed to afford more retail depth, at least at sidewalk levels (see 6d). Daylight into the pre-function atrium can occur above the more contextually-critical retail pavilions, which can be interspersed between any escalators and landings; the pavilion roofs could provide public view decks, internally and to the street. Large scale, detailed elevations and sections of the prefunction atrium are needed at the next meeting.**

- c. **Boren Avenue:** The Board supported the 4 retail corners and stretching that activation along all of Boren, and visually minimizing any vehicle portals along both block fronts of Boren Avenue, particularly the east truck portal into site C.

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Boren street level is important to pedestrians and the nearly continuous blank walls shown were of major concern (pg 88, 93). The Board recommended shallow 'pop-up' retail here rather than on Pine, or at a minimum, a continuous layer for display windows, artful wall treatments, and narrow landscape planters at the building edge (plus the lush curbside planter). Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- d. **Olive Way:** The Board was concerned this important pedestrian street lacked consistent retail activation. Any elevators or blank walls should be staggered with intermittent retail or similar activation. Perimeter services should be pushed inward rather than interior parking/services pushing out to the sidewalk.

**At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Olive street level should have more retail frontage, especially near the Terry intersection, and pedestrian activation along the length. The freight elevators might be exposed as pedestrian interest and a visual feature on the elevation, if they are of glass or a similar dynamic treatment. Wall treatments similar as described above for Boren, should be employed on any necessary blank walls. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- e. **Terry Avenue Green Street Terminus:** The Board was unanimously opposed to a vehicle portal as the terminus of the Terry Green Street (regardless of the outcome of the streetscape issues in 2c above), and instead advised a major pedestrian entry be on axis, and link into the public lobby facing 9<sup>th</sup>. Any parking portal on this frontage should be shifted east.

**At the EDG#2, the Board was disappointed the parking portal did not move, and did not accept the rationale provided; the portal shown continues to be an unsatisfactory terminus for the Terry Green Street (pg 47). The Board restated it should be shifted, or further façade and scale techniques must be developed to mitigate the portal presence, yet provide a suitably scaled visual terminus. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

**The Board supported the two pedestrian crosswalks of Olive at Terry, but agreed the 'receiving uses' of employee and parking entries are not suitable for a Green Street. The Board recommended replacing these with retail, or a prominent and gracious forecourt/entry that leads Green Street pedestrians west to the stairs/escalators at the north end of the 'mixing zone' (see comment 6d); this would truly implement the applicant diagram on page 36, blue arrow.**

- f. **Howell Street:** Like Olive, this street is an important stitch between the CCX and the rapidly infilling district to the north, so it requires interesting uses and facades on all block faces that reinforce pedestrian movements both east-west and north-south.

**At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the placement and linear amount of active uses along Howell (pg 92, left) appears sufficient, and expects the applicant to pursue further increases in the amount and depth of 'retail orange' graphically shown on both blocks B and C. The Board agreed the screening of the truck ramp portion in the middle of block C must be sophisticated and provide excellent pedestrian interest. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.**

- g. **Site C, Northeast Block:** The Board agreed the truck movements appear to overwhelm this block and retail should be maximized and fill in the corners and every available part of the perimeter. The Board seeks SDOT technical corroboration that the truck movements are absolutely the smallest necessary, and all curb cuts and portals should be minimized in width and façade presence.

**At the EDG#2, the Board restated the above technical checks are still needed. The Board agreed the office massing shown was bulky and squat, and recommended studies that increase the reading of two more slender volumes that slip past each other, east-west. The offset at the top of each volume might be more substantial to improve the legibility, plus the south volume might register to Olive to enhance the grid shift, and thus create a consistent, sunnier podium stepback along Olive. The Board agreed the tower should not lap down to grade on the Howell elevation, and the podium needs a clear expression, possibly taller than 1 story on the north and south sides.**

- h. **Sites B & C; Co-development:** The Board supported planning ahead and requested more details to ensure viable cores, lobbies, and loading space will be possible on the two blocks. The potential for public open space at the interesting hinge of the two street grids should be explored on the west 'point' of the northeast Block B (see 1c/f).

**At the EDG#2, the Board supported the basic massing of preferred block B, with a tall podium, expressed gasket and the tower proportions. The Board supported the generous set back at grade at the west with the adjacent activating retail, but agreed the overall form should better respond to the visual axis down Olive onto the 'flat iron' building and site condition. Also see comments under 5c.**

## 8. General:

- a) The Board was intrigued by the applicant's statement that this CCX represented a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Convention facility, geared toward generation "z", and requested more development of what that means for the physical form and expression of this project.

**At the EDG#2, the Board heard the response to what 5<sup>th</sup> generation means, but still had difficulty seeing how this is tangibly expressed in the proposed building. The proposal does offer high transparency out to the context, but the building does not appear more 'welcoming and open' to the public than a typical facility, nor does the perimeter or land locked mixing zone provide 'engagement between the event and the city' (pg 117, last paragraph). More tangible follow through on these assertions is needed at future meetings.**

- b) The Board agreed the objective must be much more than filling the existing void with a large block of self-serving program; the site is at a crossroads of scales, views and neighborhoods and there is an obligation to also improve connections, enhance the public realm, and add substantial and dynamic uses that serve all pedestrians.

**At the EDG#2, the Board summarized that while the proposed CCX massing has improved, and has shifts, transparency and the beginnings of scale modulations that respond to context, it needs much more refinement, particularly on the south side. While the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue street level and plaza have potential, the ground floor edges on all three other streets require substantially more program space and effort to provide genuine activation, porosity, and pedestrian scale. The Co-development proposals are promising, but also require massing refinements and more detailed design of all pedestrian level facades.**

### THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (EDG) October 6, 2015

The Design Proposal booklet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

The booklet 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)

### INTRODUCTION TO EDG #3:

This EDG#3 meeting focused on how the applicants responded to DRB guidance from the EDG#2, and other Board comments generated by the submittal exhibits. In addition to the EDG#3 booklet posted on the city site above, the applicants displayed two large scale models; one showing the entire 3 subject blocks with detailed surrounding context, and a second that showed the lower levels of the CCX building at a larger scale. The detailed comments from the Board provided at EDG# 3 are listed in **bold italic** under each restated topic from the EDG#2 guidance.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Stated that the buildings are too large and out of scale with the character of Capitol Hill.
- Suggested that the project needs a better transition to Capitol Hill.
- Concerned that the small changes are only at the sidewalk perimeter and do not address the need to break down the building bulk; the ‘large and X-large’ scales are not needed.
- Suggested the green/art wall along Boren is merely dressing up a bad design.
- Stated that the ‘public mixing zone’ dead ends on both ends, not reaching the streets.
- Felt the Capitol Hill facing façade is a negative.
- Concerned the Olive elevation is too flat and shows too many back of house facilities.
- Suggested the project should be brought back for a future EDG meeting.
- Questioned the viability of commercial retail space at the mid-block on Olive.
- Supported the publically visible stairs along Pine but concerned that the stair soffit creates a wide, oppressive element overhanging the sidewalk.
- Stated that the full block of parking and a two block long façade is oppressive.
- Stated that the project is a recipe for a huge night time dead zone.
- Suggested that retail alone is not persuasive in creating life in the city.
- Stated the visible parking plates along Olive are bad and the parking portal at the terminus of Terry is in the wrong location.
- Supported the southeast plaza as opening up a valuable corner and providing a generous welcome spot on the path between the two CC phases.
- Encouraged the integration of other civic and community, street-activating uses besides retail, such as childcare, hotel, branch library, police storefront, transit stops, etc.

## **PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the five Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX):

All page references below are to the EDG#3 booklet dated 10/06/2015; citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

### **FINAL EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE October 6, 2015**

#### **9. Respond to Views & Influences from Adjacent Context:**

- a. **Context Analysis:** At the EDG#1, the Board appreciated the complete context inventory provided (especially the multiple perspectives, pg. 54-65), and applauded many of the applicant stated goals such as: “Engage the downtown urban framework...Create a welcoming street presence...Integrate mixed uses such as retail...Enrich urban diversity...Create a unique (Seattle and PNW) experience”. Tangible follow through on these commendable goals will be the applicant test for future Board meetings. (A1)

At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how centrally located and visible the structure will be, thus the project forms and architectural character should express a memorable and civic identity, yet not appear alien or out of scale.

***At the EDG#3, the Board discussed design elements at the pedestrian scale in great detail, and the recommendation to manifest pedestrian scale and interest at all locations on all perimeters of all three blocks, using varied materials, added activities or nodes for users near passive spaces, visual interest and texture at all loading doors (when closed), vehicle portals and non-retail frontages.***

***The Board agreed the building façade along Boren needs to be more visually compelling, at both the pedestrian levels and the middle zones which are seen from multiple vantage points. The full width green wall shown was not supported, and a greater use of vertical and horizontal compositional elements was recommended at both scales on this highly visible elevation.***

- b. **Viewpoints:** At the EDG#1, the Board noted this large building will be seen from many vantage points, with differing scales and fields-of-view; the Board was particularly concerned with the wide-angle views from neighborhoods to the east and south, where intervening buildings do not (and likely never will) moderate the size and bulk of the proposed structure (pg 60/61). The Board supported the stated ‘collage of S, M, L scales to mitigate an XXL building’. (B1; C2)

At the EDG#2, the Board appreciated the multiple and detailed perspective views provided, and recommended additional views for the next meeting, from more distant viewpoints on Capitol Hill and First Hill, along the Boren and Olive facades, and other public viewpoints.

***At the EDG#3, the Board appreciated the multiple perspective views provided, but recommended additional views along Terry Avenue looking toward the Olive façade that is the Terry Green Street terminus, developing an intentional and scaled elevation response to that terminus condition, and showing the pedestrian edges of Terry Avenue and the adjacent building ground floors in detail. This might require 2-3 perspectives.***

- c. **Street Grid:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the project should acknowledge the street grid shift at Howell, and recognize how the building form will be visible at the street end views down 9<sup>th</sup> & Terry Avenues from the north (pg. 62/63). The Board

emphasized these two streets are designated Green Streets, connecting the site to SLU and Lake Union with pedestrian, bike and landscaping enhancements. These Green Streets are the only 'public open space' contemplated in the rapidly densifying and open space deficient Denny Triangle district. (A1; B1).

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the strong cantilevered form that punctuates the grid shift as viewed south down 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg. 62,63), and the setback, canted lower levels on the southeast corner of block B, which open views and pedestrian movement from Terry to the CCX lobby entry (pg. 47). The applicants should provide massing studies which set back the entire tower form at that corner to improve those same views to the CCX, and enhance light to the Terry Plaza.

***At the EDG#3, the Board was generally in support of a sizable (approximately 38' x 59') public plaza at the northeast corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Olive (as shown on pg. 45, upper right), as it occupies and marks a special pedestrian crossroads location. The Board will review the detailed design features of this plaza at subsequent meetings. See comments under 12h for the podium massing adjacent to this plaza. See Departure # 4 for Board comments about the projections proposed along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street.***

- d. **Connections:** At the EDG#1, the pedestrian movement along all adjacent streets was a prime focus of Board considerations; special emphasis was on the Pine Street 'hillclimb' and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since some joint convention events will link the proposed Convention Center Expansion (CCX) and the existing Convention Center, the segment of 9<sup>th</sup> between Pike and Pine will be heavily loaded with pedestrian groups, and how those crowds of pedestrians are received at the southwest corner and along the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave frontage was emphasized. (B3, D1)

The Board suggested that streetscape improvements on 9<sup>th</sup> between Pine and Pike, and 'intersection repair' at Pike and 9<sup>th</sup> might become off-site Public Benefits through other city reviews.

NOTE: Since the project involves street vacations, it will receive Design Commission (DC) review of the public realm and benefits; the Board received a memo from DC staff based on the EDG booklet.

At the EDG#2, the Board reiterated how the project forms, public realm and street edges must be generous and respond to the current (ie Pine Street) and projected increases (developments to north and west) in pedestrian street activity, and movement desire lines, especially through the double block. The sidewalk widths may need to be widened from the currently shown code minimums on Pine, Boren and Olive.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed support for the various voluntary edge setbacks shown on pg 16/right, and for the southwest plaza and its east edge***

***creating a welcoming seating terrace/steps as shown on pg 43. The project's public realm and street edges beyond the property line, within SDOT purview, should be generous and respond to pedestrian street activity.***

- e. **Landmarks:** At the EDG#1, the Board noted the adjacent Paramount Theatre is a designated city landmark and functions as a key way-finding marker; the project massing should respect and possibly defer to the Paramount (pg. 59), opening up light and views to the theatre's rich north facade (see #6 on pg. 11 and 63). This guidance might coincide with comments under 2d below. (B2; B3)

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the size and location of the southwest entry plaza, and the associated step backs on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue (pg. 69,79), which provide space and scale transitions to the landmark Paramount, with refinement guidance under 6d below.

***At the EDG#3, the Board agreed the plaza, roof terrace, and setback box-form above the CCX entrance, as shown on pg 38, create a respectful massing relationship with the Paramount, however at the next meeting the Board will scrutinize the materials and flex hall level functions (pg 50 left) that define this key public open space, at all vertical levels. See 11 i for comments on the plaza.***

- f. **Prominent Corners:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the southwest corner should generously recess to accommodate crowds from Pine and 9<sup>th</sup> (see 1d), possibly with exterior decks above to optimize views up and down Pine Street (pg. 39, and building section shown at meeting). The Board agreed both east corners will be highly visible to many neighborhoods south and east (and to users of the freeway) and they should be 'pedestrian beacons' to help bridge the I-5 gap (pg. 60, 64); the Board supported the retail shown at those corners and encouraged they be larger (pg. 51/52). The northwest corner will be extra visible because of the grid shift, and should respond to the axial street view down 9<sup>th</sup> (pg 63). Finally, the northeast corner also deserves attention, as Olive Way is a key pedestrian link to Capitol Hill, regardless of the one-way, eastbound vehicular flows. (B1; B3; C1; C4)

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed both east corner points remain visually weak. Although the southeast 40 ft. retail height is supported, the retail porosity of both corners should be enhanced, and there should be more vertical presence relative to the tall mass above. The ground level corner setback shown at 9<sup>th</sup> and Boren is essential; a similar one is possibly desirable at Boren and Olive.

***At the EDG#3, the Board agreed the east retail corners are larger, have adequate transparency and porosity, and show taller, glass proportions to the overall mass; further increases of these attributes are welcome, as the pg 32 perspective demonstrates. Setbacks or notches at the 2 busy Boren sidewalk corners may still be warranted (pg 30), and the 'bakery' entry doors should shift a bit west off the busy***

***corner. The Board strongly supported the large floor area, and taller, transparent northwest corner retail as shown on pg 42 and 46.***

## **10. Massing & Public Realm:**

- a. **Vertical Programming:** At the EDG#1, the Board appreciated the complex building program and supported the challenge of a new 'vertical convention center prototype'. The Board applauded retention of the existing streets rather than an even larger super block, but was concerned about the scale compatibility of even the resulting double-block form (347 ft. x 565 ft. footprint) in a fabric largely made up of quarter block and smaller masses (pg. 10). (A1; B2)

Regarding the physical massing model shown, the Board was glad to hear that 'carving of the CCX volume is possible', to explore various ways to achieve the correct 'collage of S,M,L scales'. The Board supported exterior decks to populate the large facades, and internal light-wells for the program, but not if such private assets are at the expense of street level needs for the public realm. This pivotal 3 block, 6.4 acre project will be an exercise in balancing a large internal program and external urban design priorities. (B4)

At the EDG#2, the Board applauded the large scale physical model and its use as a dynamic study tool. The Board supported the preferred CCX concept of the central mass-box with three stepped and legible volumes on the north, south and west sides. The transparency of the west and south layers is critical to lightening the massive form (pg. 69) however more information on the materiality of the north volume (along Olive) is needed. The multiple roof decks and balconies shown were supported, and strongly encouraged to be publically accessible when an event is not occurring, or at least certain securable portions at typical (8-8 or 10-10) public hours (dedicated public elevator to balconies shown on Pine, etc.).

The Board agreed the Pine Street elevation is a fully and highly visible wall to the community, and appears to be overly flat for a 500 ft. long, 200 ft. tall wall (pg. 88). The balconies and vertical elevators shown are critical to create intermediate scales. Additional modulation elements and 'chiseling' are also recommended especially at the lower levels. The specific materiality of this south-facing glass volume should be explained in detail at the next meeting, in terms of reflectivity, glass patterns/color, energy performance and shading.

***At the EDG#3, the Board again appreciated the large models and restated the Pine Street elevation is highly visible, but agreed that the projecting stair form is effective at breaking up the previous flatness, and becoming the memorable, 'signature' for the CCX. It should be treated as a distinct sculptural move, possibly by adding a unique texture to that south glazing layer, and/or emphasizing the soffit color/material more. The Board was not convinced the soffit should be mirrored, but agreed this southeast facing elevation should remain bright and well-lit on all evenings (not only during events).***

- b. **Mitigate the I-5 Gap:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the project should knit the adjacent neighborhoods together. The large and fully visible south and east walls will be seen within the fabric beyond of smaller, more vertical downtown buildings (pg 60/61), therefore massing modulation and façade scaling techniques will be especially critical on those elevations. (A1; B2; B4; C2)

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the proposed east façade (pg. 88) presents an exciting super-window and visible ballroom ceiling to the neighborhood, but the middle and street levels are entirely too blank and lack intermediate scales. This elevation should be treated like any other pedestrian street, and not assume the I-5 culvert is a permanent condition. The Board also recommended the long meeting room balcony have greenery and/or glazing to make it attractive to users and the vicinity.

***At the EDG#3, the Board supported the Boren corners, ground level modulations, layering and voluntary setbacks as shown on plan pg 30. However the middle green wall façade garnered much Board concern: The Board stated smaller extents of green wall may be successful, but the entire wall needs to be visually compelling with distinct horizontal and vertical composition and material variation (possibly mixing the three options shown on pg 29 rather than all one), especially at lower levels. Shaped and textured forms or truly sound attenuating materials should be integrated into most of this facade to mitigate the freeway noise.***

- c. **Terry Street & ‘Truck Plaza’:** At the EDG#1, the stated reason for the full vacation of the segment of Terry between Howell and Olive was to enable sizable and multiple truck maneuvering options there (from block C onto Olive, Howell and possibly Terry northbound). The Board was strongly opposed to creating a compromised streetscape or ‘truck plaza’ on a Green Street, or as a terminus of a Green Street that links downtown to Lake Union. After learning the preliminary size and number of truck movements, the Board was especially concerned about compromising Green Street continuity and safe, direct pedestrian movements between Howell and the proposed CCX building across Olive Way (also see 3e). (A1-Green Street Policies; B1; B3; E3).

At the EDG#2, the Board restated concerns about the quantity and timings of truck movements on the Terry plaza, and requested more detailed information on those operations (the 26 of 30 days per month shown on pg. 116 was very concerning, but the actual hours and frequency of truck movements is needed). The Board generally endorsed the design approach to pedestrianize and minimize vehicular impacts on the plaza – to design for ‘pedestrians first’. The Board agreed this space is a critical visual and pedestrian link from the Terry Green Street to the CCX facility, and its streetscape and adjacent building walls must be fully composed; the street-level image on pg. 47 presented many concerns about large, blank ground level loading doors, and visual terminus. Also see comments under 7e.

**Staff NOTE:** As a formal street vacation request, this portion of Terry Avenue will receive full future review by SDOT and the Design Commission, and they will have detailed input on the plaza surface and former ROW streetscape design; the Board has purview over the adjacent private building walls and thus are commenting on the activation and materials of the frontages, regardless of the eventual streetscape design.

***At the EDG#3, The Board restated the design approach for the plaza along Terry Avenue between Howell and Olive should be pedestrian first, ensuring north/south connections when vehicles are present and creating a usable space during CCX events. Therefore the sidewalks on both sides should be consistent connectors and generous, outside any required truck movements (which should be minimized); the sidewalks, planting buffers and setbacks shown on pg 48 were supported. The Board also restated this space is a critical visual and pedestrian link from the Terry Green Street to the CCX facility.***

***The Board still had concerns about the quantity and timing of truck movements on the Terry plaza, and supported the eroded ground floor massing at the Block B southeast corner, but recommended the presence of the loading doors be more subordinate to the corner entrance lobby (pg 61).***

- d. **Lobby and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interface:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed that the primary CCX entries and lobby are best facing the southwest sun and along 9<sup>th</sup>, and they supported the stated intention to make that lobby highly permeable to the street and frequently open to the general public (the controlled zone being deep inside). The Board supported the two corners being described as transparent, tall and welcoming. However, the absence of a sizable setback or public open space along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Green Street was a concern (pg. 51), especially considering crowd surges from the proposed lobby. An open space ‘pearl’ (like Plymouth Pillars and Westlake Parks) on the Pine Street link between Cal Anderson and the Pike Market, would be a valuable open space addition (see 1c, and pg. 39/left). (C4; D1;D3)

The Board discussed this important frontage & public realm interface at length: additional ground level space for the Green Street treatment and CCX events to spill out was agreed to have potential; the proposed retail ‘market hall’ –if open typical hours –was supported in order to activate the 300+ ft. long façade when no CCX events are happening. Even a tall, transparent wall looking into an often empty lobby with just escalators was agreed to not be genuinely activating; the hours and degree of public porosity into the lobby and what public attractors are within will be critical. (C1-2)

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly supported the southwest entry plaza, but recommended the two open sides slope or step with the adjacent sidewalks to maximize pedestrian access and diagonal desire lines. The Board also agreed both

building plaza edges needed retail activation besides the retail and adjacent CCX entry doors shown (even if these doors are open during public hours to the 'mixing zone' as stated). Added retail activation at the southeast corner of this plaza will also address the recommendation for more Pine activation (7b).

The Board agreed the two-sided market hall along Pine Street will succeed only if the adjacent public 'mixing zone' has a natural flow-through circulation from Pine to Olive. The steep 14ft tall, narrow stairs shown on Olive and the recessed, hidden doors at the upper landing are not welcoming or easy to use. The Board recommended the Olive stairs be widened and possibly the 'mixing zone' volume project at that street, with the stairs internal. More gradual stepped floors of the mixing zone should be studied, even if impacting ceiling heights below. The narrow stairs to 9th were not essential, thus providing more retail continuity on that street.

***At the EDG#3, the Board agreed the revised southwest plaza edges were more welcoming, but the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue stair should be expanded. The Board supported the expanded retail at the northwest corner and the revised, gradual Olive stairs, as shown on pg 45, that provide a more welcoming entrance and Olive address for the Mixing Zone.***

***STAFF clarification: the Mixing Zone was stated to be fully open to the public when there are no CCX events, and during CCX events the ticketed demising line is at the yellow "registration" zone east of the Mixing Zone shown on pg 49; Board support for the entire CCX ground level strategy is contingent on this mixing zone being fully public, to activate the 9th Avenue corners and Green Street frontage with two-sided retail, and to create a viable 'public atrium', in lieu of any public terraces at upper levels.***

- e. **Massing Options for EDG #2:** The Board looks forward to three massing options at the next meeting that respond to all major context influences, yet manifest three clear, and distinct design concepts; suggestions for those might be: a) Program-driven/code compliant; b) Subtractive, slices and notches; c) Additive, volumes and voids. A hybrid is certainly plausible, as the primary Block A is alone 4.5 acres in size, and this site has uniquely different east and west view prospects (see 1b). (A2; B4)

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the applicant-preferred massing scheme for both the CCX structure and the two co-development blocks (pg. 92-94), with important refinements to the co-development blocks found under 7g and 7h.

***At the EDG#3, the Board supported the overall massing scheme for the CCX structure as presented, with important revisions along Olive discussed under departure #1. The Board supported the Block B west plaza and massing as shown on pg 61, and more importantly via the model; the Board recommended more perspectives of this block from the west, to confirm a superior response to the 'flatiron' condition.***

***The Board supported the 3-part tower massing of block C, but recommended the vertical recesses be deeper. The Board agreed the block C office podium was less well resolved, and recommended the height, scale and stepping of the podium needs more study, possibly a more dramatic change of materials and/or taller, deeper offsets at the gasket to the tower. The two-story scale along Olive and part of Boren (shown on pg 27) was more successful than the one on Howell.***

- f. **Roof Design:** At the EDG#1, the Board stressed the very large roof is a “5<sup>th</sup> Elevation” which will be visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. The 4+ acres provides a major opportunity for a combination of: sizable sustainable strategies; useable open space for users; canvas for an exceptional landscape design; and/or possible public realm in a dense, park deficient district. The Board cautioned that these uses should determine roof structural considerations, rather than the structural cost being used to eliminate a superior design or use. (A2; D1; D2).

At the EDG#2, the Board restated the need for a creative and multi-purpose design for the large and visible roof (pg. 95); a complete landscape design, preferably with some usable space and public access, should be provided at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board acknowledged that the only public open spaces are at several ‘at-grade’ locations, and the upper roof terraces are exclusively for users of the CC events, or for rental by public organizations/events. Therefore, the Board stressed that each and every public space ‘at grade’ must be as permeable and welcoming as possible for the majority of event and non-event occasions (see 10d Clarification above). Regardless of public access, the Board will review the specific landscape design elements and other features for all roof decks (as diagrammatically shown on pg. 19) at subsequent meetings.***

#### **11. Perimeter Street Edges & Ground Floors: (B3-3; C1; C3; C4; D1-1; E1)**

- a. **Ground Floor Edges:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed all street edges in this central location must be done well, with no street sacrificed as a designated ‘back-of-house’. To maximize pedestrian interaction and provide legitimate uses for all Seattleites not only CCX users, all ground level frontages should: minimize the number and length of blank walls; interject regular lengths of retail or porous, activating uses; reasonably step floors with the adjacent sloping sidewalks to permit regularly spaced doors; and integrate any mandatory services, exit doors or other blank elements in a highly artful manner. The Board agreed maximum transparency is good, but pedestrians looking into closed and frequently empty lobby spaces does not equal diverse and consistent activation.

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the street level program and design required the most attention, as the response to clear EDG#1 guidance was not sufficient on almost all frontages. The Board recommended frequent doors and actual porosity where humans move from sidewalks into building spaces, not simply ‘visual porosity’ or transparency. The 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage design shown (pg. 61) has the best potential;

the Board supported the storefront modulation and setbacks shown, but recommended more depth for the street facing portions of the split level retail (pg. 66 shows 12 ft.) to ensure this critical Green Street frontage is successful and lively. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed that the project's street level programming and design elements require the most on-going attention and follow through. The building ground floor along 9<sup>th</sup> as shown in plan and elevation on pg 40, was improved and supported. The portion of Pine shown on pg 36 was supported, especially the number, amount and vertical scale of the five retail 'pavilions'.***

- b. **Pine Street:** The Board agreed this sidewalk is a very heavily traveled link uphill to Capitol Hill, and it likely deserves additional width via a setback, a consistent curbside landscape amenity, and definitely requires more substantial retail activation than the small 'pop-ups' indicated on pg. 52/left.

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly reiterated this street frontage is critical to provide consistent retail activation on a busy pedestrian link to Capitol Hill. The retail amount/consistency shown is a very inadequate link, as the context diagram on pg 71 clearly shows. The Board recommended more retail depth (where customers enter the space) and more linear retail frontage in the middle and west block face, well beyond the approximately 25% shown (pg. 71; code requires 75%).

The Pine retail should read more as tall pavilions along the street that provide scale. Setbacks between them, for cafes and select smaller views into the pre-function atrium, which should possibly be narrowed to afford more retail depth, at least at sidewalk levels (see 6d). Daylight into the pre-function atrium can occur above the more contextually-critical retail pavilions, which can be interspersed between any escalators and landings; the pavilion roofs could provide public view decks, internally and to the street. Large scale, detailed elevations and sections of the pre-function atrium are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board strongly reiterated that it is critical to provide a strong and consistent pedestrian link between Capitol Hill and 9<sup>th</sup> by activating the street with a continuous edge of retail or other elements that provide pedestrian interest. The Board supported the jogs and setbacks shown on pg 34 & 36, but was concerned about the approximately 130 ft long 'vacant space' between the west retail and plaza on pg 34. The Board recommended the two-bay green recess remain, but incorporate seating that allows pedestrians to look down into the prefunction spaces, while retaining some green relief. The Board also recommended all four bays of glass adjacent to the escalators incorporate elements of scale and visual interest, possibly integrated with a kinetic interior artwork or other feature to stimulate pedestrians; the Board did not consider escalators to qualify for that, but the stair shown next to windows is preferred.***

- c. **Boren Avenue:** At the EDG#1, the Board supported the 4 retail corners and stretching that activation along all of Boren, and visually minimizing any vehicle portals along both block fronts of Boren Avenue, particularly the east truck portal into site C.

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Boren street level is important to pedestrians and the nearly continuous blank walls shown were of major concern (pg. 88, 93). The Board recommended shallow 'pop-up' retail here rather than on Pine, or at a minimum, a continuous layer for display windows, artful wall treatments, and narrow landscape planters at the building edge (plus the lush curbside planter). Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed that Boren Avenue is an important pedestrian link, however the current design shown on pg 30 - especially below the meeting level balcony - is not supporting pedestrians or the mid-range visibility across the freeway (pg 32/33). Some elements are promising: the retail corners, adjacent deep reveals, the stepped low planting walls.***

***The central "large" scale green wall was not supported. The Board recommended the multiple exit doors be 'hidden' but other material, visual and compositional interest - rather than continuous greenery - occupy all the wall surface below the canopy levels. See 10 b for more comments on this wall above ground level.***

- d. **Olive Way:** At the EDG#1, the Board was concerned this important pedestrian street lacked consistent retail activation. Any elevators or blank walls should be staggered with intermittent retail or similar activation. Perimeter services should be pushed inward rather than interior parking/services pushing out to the sidewalk.

At the EDG#2, the Board strongly agreed the Olive street level should have more retail frontage, especially near the Terry intersection, and pedestrian activation along the length. The freight elevators might be exposed as pedestrian interest and a visual feature on the elevation, if they are of glass or a similar dynamic treatment. Wall treatments similar as described above for Boren, should be employed on any necessary blank walls. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board strongly supported the addition of mid-block retail along Olive Way, and the highly transparent treatment of the nearby employee entrance and parking lobby (see pg 44). The Board did not support exposing the parking ramps to the Olive façade, but was enthusiastic about translucent glass at the exit stair towers, and especially at the northwest and larger northeast elevators, showing the movement behind. The Board agreed the Olive stair/ramp into the 'mixing zone' is a crucial activator, and widening/deflecting the east edge of the opening toward the Terry axis should be studied (see diagram pg 48, lower left).***

***The Board agreed the parking portal on Olive, shown at the Terry axis on pg 16, appears overly prominent because the rest of that terminus elevation is not a***

***deliberate composition, responding to the visual axis of the Green Street. If this portal is not shifted off axis, the Board recommended further elevational studies and an intentional composition, confirmed by perspectives noted under 9b.***

- e. **Terry Avenue Green Street Terminus:** At the EDG#1, the Board was unanimously opposed to a vehicle portal as the terminus of the Terry Green Street (regardless of the outcome of the streetscape issues in 2c above), and instead advised a major pedestrian entry be on axis, and link into the public lobby facing 9<sup>th</sup>. Any parking portal on this frontage should be shifted east.

At the EDG#2, the Board was disappointed the parking portal did not move, and did not accept the rationale provided; the portal shown continues to be an unsatisfactory terminus for the Terry Green Street (pg. 47). The Board restated it should be shifted, or further façade and scale techniques must be developed to mitigate the portal presence, yet provide a suitably scaled visual terminus. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

The Board supported the two pedestrian crosswalks of Olive at Terry, but agreed the ‘receiving uses’ of employee and parking entries are not suitable for a Green Street. The Board recommended replacing these with retail, or a prominent and gracious forecourt/entry that leads Green Street pedestrians west to the stairs/escalators at the north end of the ‘mixing zone’ (see comment 6d); this would truly implement the applicant diagram on page 36, blue arrow.

***At the EDG#3, The Board supported the crosswalks and tabled intersection shown on pg 47, while those ROW improvements are for SDOT review and confirmation. See 11 e above for comments on the Terry terminus. The Board agreed the block B loading doors should be reduced and less prominent on Terry, and recommended additional perspective renderings (see comments under 9b).***

- f. **Howell Street:** Like Olive, this street is an important stitch between the CCX and the rapidly infilling district to the north, so it requires interesting uses and facades on all block faces that reinforce pedestrian movements both east-west and north-south.

At the EDG#2, the Board agreed the placement and linear amount of active uses along Howell (pg. 92, left) appears sufficient, and expects the applicant to pursue further increases in the amount and depth of ‘retail orange’ graphically shown on both blocks B and C. The Board agreed the screening of the truck ramp portion in the middle of block C must be sophisticated and provide excellent pedestrian interest. Large scale, detailed elevations are needed at the next meeting.

***At the EDG#3, the Board re-affirmed that the screening of the truck ramp in the middle of block C (pg 59), and any perimeter back-of-house on either block (pg 60), should be a sophisticated glass design, providing an excellent pedestrian experience and interest by using varying patterns or materials.***

- g. **Site C, Northeast Block:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the truck movements appear to overwhelm this block and retail should be maximized and fill in the corners and every available part of the perimeter. The Board seeks SDOT technical corroboration that the truck movements are absolutely the smallest necessary, and all curb cuts and portals should be minimized in width and façade presence.

At the EDG#2, the Board restated the above technical checks are still needed. The Board agreed the office massing shown was bulky and squat, and recommended studies that increase the reading of two more slender volumes that slip past each other, east-west. The offset at the top of each volume might be more substantial to improve the legibility, plus the south volume might register to Olive to enhance the grid shift, and thus create a consistent, sunnier podium 'stepback' along Olive. The Board agreed the tower should not lap down to grade on the Howell elevation, and the podium needs a clear expression, possibly taller than 1 story on the north and south sides.

***At the EDG#3, the Board applauded the sizable decreases in the two truck portals (48 ft on Boren; 26 ft on Terry), and supported the approach of integrating the doors into the podium bays, as shown on pg 58/59. See 10 f for office podium comments.***

- h. **Sites B & C; Co-development:** At the EDG#1, the Board supported planning ahead and requested more details to ensure viable cores, lobbies, and loading space will be possible on the two blocks. The potential for public open space at the interesting hinge of the two street grids should be explored on the west 'point' of the northeast Block B (see 1c/f).

At the EDG#2, the Board supported the basic massing of preferred block B, with a tall podium, expressed gasket and the tower proportions. The Board supported the generous set back at grade at the west with the adjacent activating retail, but agreed the overall form should better respond to the visual axis down Olive onto the 'flat iron' building and site condition. Also see comments under 5c.

**At the EDG#3, the Board supported the massing and development of block B, with a tall podium, expressed gasket and the tower proportions. Also see comments under 10 e.**

- i. **9<sup>th</sup> Plaza edge/greenery/steps:** At the EDG#3, the Board agreed *the stairs leading up to the plaza from 9<sup>th</sup> were too narrow, and the wide, long berm actually creates a barrier (see pg 43/left). The Board recommended widening the stairs, similar to those along Pine, incorporating smaller planters to maintain some Green Street character, and easing back the planter and bench at the corner to accommodate diagonal pedestrian desire lines from the busy crosswalks to the primary CCX entrance doors.*

## 12. General:

- a) **5<sup>th</sup> Generation Facility:** At the EDG#1, the Board was intrigued by the applicant's statement that this CCX represented a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Convention facility, geared toward generation "z", and requested more development of what that means for the physical form and expression of this project.

At the EDG#2, the Board heard the response to what 5<sup>th</sup> generation means, but still had difficulty seeing how this is tangibly expressed in the proposed building. The proposal does offer high transparency out to the context, but the building does not appear more 'welcoming and open' to the public than a typical facility, nor does the perimeter or land locked mixing zone provide 'engagement between the event and the city' (pg. 117, last paragraph). More tangible follow through on these assertions is needed at future meetings.

*At the EDG#3, the Board appreciated the further clarification of the meaning of 5<sup>th</sup> generation, emphasizing an "open, welcoming facility". While the Board reluctantly acknowledged there are no places open to the general public (without paying rental) above the ground floor, the Board supported the following stated attributes which improve public welcome and porosity: the revised 'mixing zone' is genuinely public with generous openings on three sides; the street edges have consistent and variable voluntary setbacks that expand the sidewalk and layer the building edge; there are at least four sizable, usable corner plazas (9<sup>th</sup>/Pine; 9<sup>th</sup>/Howell; Boren/Howell; Olive/Terry), and others may emerge.*

- b) **Scaling a double-block in a central, fine grained location:** At the EDG#1, the Board agreed the objective must be much more than filling the existing void with a large block of self-serving program; the site is at a crossroads of scales, views and neighborhoods and there is an obligation to also improve connections, enhance the public realm, and add substantial and dynamic uses that serve all pedestrians.

At the EDG#2, the Board summarized that while the proposed CCX massing has improved, and has shifts, transparency and the beginnings of scale modulations that respond to context, it needs much more refinement, particularly on the south side. While the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue street level and plaza have potential, the ground floor edges on all three other streets require substantially more program space and effort to provide genuine activation, porosity, and pedestrian scale. The Co-development proposals are promising, but also require massing refinements and more detailed design of all pedestrian level facades.

*At the EDG#3, the Board summarized that the project's site plan and massing have improved, the corners along Olive and Boren are stronger, and that some areas of transparency are adequate. However the Board also stated that other areas still need additional refinement. Several key edges of the ground floor perimeter need more attention. The lower and middle façade along Boren should be much more visually compelling. The Board stated that the massing refinements to the Co-*

*development blocks are going in the right direction, but need further refinement at the podium, gasket and facades along Howell and Olive for block C.*

**FIRST RECOMMENDATION: May 3, 2016**

The Design Proposal booklet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

The booklet 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)

**INTRODUCTION TO RECOMMENDATION #1:**

This Recommendation #1 meeting addressed only Site A, the proposed Convention Center Addition Building (CCX) on the double block bounded by 9<sup>th</sup> and Boren Avenues, Pine Street and Olive Way. The meeting focused on how the applicants responded to DRB guidance from the EDG#3, and other Board comments generated by the 5/03/16 submittal exhibits. In addition to the Recommendation #1 booklet posted on the city website above, the applicants displayed two large scale models; one showing the entire 3 subject blocks with detailed surrounding context, and a second that showed the CCX building at a larger scale.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Stated the large, top project roof will be visible from surrounding towers and Capitol Hill, and it should have an intentional design, possibly with colors.
- Supported the highly transparent facades shown, but questioned how eventual blinds, drapes or sun-shading will change the exterior appearance.
- Supported the project and its 24/7 uses and lighting that will activate the street, adding life and safety to the surrounding streets.
- Stated the design has evolved well and is an impressive and beautiful design.
- Suggested more retail space and street trees along the entire Pine Street frontage.
- Stated the southwest plaza should be more open and welcoming, and encouraged at least one roof deck to be open to the general public.
- Encouraged all the surrounding sidewalks to be generous and provide a 10ft minimum clear walking width.
- Applauded the improvement to the Boren Avenue façade, and the revised massing elements which provide a variety of scales.
- Encouraged the Pine Street edge and Boren setback landscaping to be more pedestrian-engaging.

- Expressed concern that many proposed materials are prosaic and require sophisticated details and execution to manifest the refinement a ‘landmark’ deserves; requested the project return for another recommendation meeting.
- Encouraged a more sophisticated development of the Olive façade at the Terry Avenue terminus, better integrated into the material language of the rest of the building.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the four Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following design guidance for the Convention Center expansion (CCX) Site A:

All page references below are to the Recommendation#1 booklet dated 5/03/2016; citations in parenthesis are to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

### **FIRST RECOMMENDATION May 3, 2016**

- 1) **General:** The Board agreed the CCX project had made significant progress and responded well to the EDG guidance. The following aspects were strongly supported and should not be dramatically modified or deviate from what was shown [key reference pages listed]:

- a) The floor size, scale, transparency and street access of the four retail corners.
- b) The stepped and transparent character of the “signature” projecting south stair, including the projecting fins and absence of signage on any part of the west face [70].
- c) The flex hall volumes, including their fenestration, joint patterns and luminous silver aluminum material, which fully wraps at all soffit and return conditions [68,69,73].
- d) The signature projecting, west meeting hall, and its black, high gloss ribbed cladding, east balconies [57/right], and deeply recessed windows [68,69].
- e) The inclusion of multiple warm, wood or wood-like interior elements that are complementary to the predominantly neutral, cool exterior material palette, including many ceilings and soffits, retail and the signature stair [54/55, 61, 67-70].
- f) The stated diversity, quality, rigidity and detailing of the metal panels, louvers, translucent panels and ribbed metal cladding, which covers vast surfaces and a majority of the building volumes [73].
- g) The planters and amount of green relief shown on building facades [68,69,73,74].

### **2) Pine Street Elevation & Ground Floor Plan:**

- a) The Board supported the floor area sizes and alternation of enclosed merchants and open decks basically at sidewalk grade, as shown on page 89, but agreed exploration of the elevations at the middle-east portion on Pine is warranted. The three fragmented and stepped roofs could be combined to create a single, taller scale that provides an intermediate datum for the projecting stair above to play off of.

- b) The Board accepted the landscape planter with 3 trees at the midblock, provided there is the adjacent, recessed paved area where pedestrians can freely access the glass wall and look down into the below-grade lobbies [65/left]. If subsequent SIP reviews require planters and/or street trees outside the property line, this planter width may have to be reduced to ensure and maintain a minimum 12 ft wide walking surface along the full length of busy Pine Street. The Board has consistently supported very generous sidewalks around the entire building and concurs with public comments on this issue.
- c) The Board agreed the projecting stair fins, mullions and expressed 'exoskeleton' along this entire south façade [68, 70], provide needed texture and scale to very large surfaces, and a similar approach could be employed on other glass elevations.
- d) If the soffit under the stair is mirrored [70], the retail roofs and canopies below will require careful design as a visible, reflected surface; the Board had mixed reactions to the mirror in such a strategic location, and detailed light/glare analysis is recommended.

### **3) Boren Avenue Elevation & Ground Floor Plan:**

- a) The Board strongly supported the revised elevation with large flex-hall windows and transparent windows into various workshops and staff spaces at the north end [73, 93]. These spaces will be visible to pedestrians on the steep sidewalk, even though they are higher than grade, and should be transparent.
- b) The Board agreed the steep sidewalk climb warrants the addition of pedestrian resting points adjacent to the sidewalk; benches or seating are recommended at the paved portion for the exit stairs, and another resting recess/feature is advisable at the middle of the planter outside the workshops [93], at roughly third-points (Note: existing projects on steep downtown sidewalks provide landings, assist rails, etc).
- c) The Board concurred with the public comment and recommended all exit doors and the parking portal gate [53] be designed with artful treatments and materials consistent with the overall refined palette presented [86]. The ground level wall of "textured concrete" is still relatively prominent, so the texture should display multiple scales, tones and shadow-play.

### **4) Olive Way Elevation & Ground Floor Plan:**

- a) The Board strongly supported the largely transparent, 2-story ground level shown on pg 91 and 69, and the translucent panels at the elevators and stairs near the northeast corner. The mid-block retail and parking lobby shown are a minimum acceptable amount of mid-block activators, and the exit stair elevations west of the parking lobby should be enhanced with more pedestrian visual interest.
- b) The Board strongly endorsed pedestrians being able to look down into the below-grade lobbies (see 2b above), and recommended the wide planter at this location [91] be eliminated or substantially narrowed for a substantial length of the open void.
- c) The Board agreed the green planter trays provide texture and scale [64/2, 69,74], and a distinctive material for the Terry Avenue terminus, but concurred with public comment and strongly recommended more vertical green mass be concentrated in

the lower and west portions of the actual Terry street axis. This vertical green could help screen the full height blank walls of the exit stairs. Full height 'terrariums' should be explored, that emphasize the experiential quality for people in the interior lobbies and meeting rooms.

- d) The Board recommended all exit doors and the parking portal gate [74] be designed with artful treatments and materials consistent with the refined palette presented.
- e) Consistent with EDG guidance, the Board recommended doors into the northwest corner "market" be considered to activate the Olive portion of the busy street corner.

#### **5) 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Elevation & Ground Floor Plan:**

- a) The Board struggled to comprehend the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue ground plane because spot elevations relative to the sidewalk were not provided. The Board agreed the merchants inside this façade should basically step with grade, and no portion of visible raised plinth/floor level shall be more than the stated 38" height [61]. The Board recommended large scale cross sections at several points on the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage, and spot elevations on all plans, be provided at subsequent meetings.
- b) The Board agreed physical porosity along all of 9<sup>th</sup> is critical, to maximize the sense of public welcome and access, and supported the extra-large, and frequent (6 shown) operable sections shown, and they must open down to the sidewalk or plinth level. The Board agreed café tables and open views should animate this building edge (not shelving or solid counters), and any guardrails should be as minimal as possible.
- c) The Board unanimously agreed a single entry recess at the mid-block was not sufficient, and the one shown was very shallow; it does not signify the 3<sup>rd</sup> entrance to the market hall. This important entrance should be deeper and/or wider with more pedestrian accommodation, and the 9<sup>th</sup> façade should have at least one more usable recess or porch which can be publically accessed from the sidewalk (consistent with EDG#3 booklet pg 40).NOTE; the 40 ft long exit stair recess shown does not qualify for this porch, but it does provide a desirable visual break.
- d) The Board recommended pockets, strips and/or walls of green vegetation along some portions of the building edge along the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage, to create a legible Green Street character on both sides of the sidewalk, especially since 65% of the curbside length is shown as paved [95] (see departure #3). These planters could be integrated with the three recesses (exits, central entry, one added).

#### **6) 9<sup>th</sup> & Pine Plaza:**

- a) The Board agreed the CCX primary entrance is recessed, low-scaled and has a deep overhang, therefore requiring careful design to ensure the entrance is visible, easily accessible and welcoming [68]. All materials, elements and lighting in the plaza and adjacent building should maximize these attributes. The Board agreed the plaza should read as an extension of the sidewalk with fewer walls/barriers.

- b) The Board supported the wide, flexible cascade of seating/steps shown along 9<sup>th</sup> [95], and agreed a similar approach is warranted along the western half of the plaza at Pine Street (as was shown and endorsed at EDG#3, booklet pg 43).
- c) The Board unanimously agreed the sign and plinth shown at the strategic corner [68] was visually and physically obstructive and should be deleted. The round base shown at the east end of the plaza is acceptable but its diameter should be adjusted to ensure wide, generous pedestrian flows to the four entry doors.
- d) The Board agreed the flex hall soffit over the entrance should be wrapped in the “light reactive” metal, and generous lighting should be designed into the forms.
- e) The Board recommended additional large scale cross sections and perspectives to verify the plaza scale and perimeter will achieve the above character.

**7) Roof Plan:**

- a) Consistent with a public comment and Board guidance at the EDG#1 (see EDG report item 2f), all roof surfaces, even if changed from a green roof, deserve an intentional design treatment with patterns, colors and/or textural variations, as it is a “5<sup>th</sup> elevation” visible from many adjacent towers and neighborhoods. This also applies to the highly visible level 8 event terrace.

**8) Lighting:**

- a) The Board applauded the described intent to provide ambient lighting throughout the building when events are not occurring [114 text and 116-119], and to generously light all the ground level spaces at all evening times, to animate the sidewalks. The Board recommended a more complete and comprehensive lighting description, including any special, variable lighting at the translucent panels and/or ceiling lighting [118], and all specific fixtures or light covers for predominant exterior locations; the handrail, pole lights and integrated canopy lights shown [116,118] are a promising start.

**9) Signage:**

- a) The Board supported the concept of a “connecting wall” that is a datum for primary visitor orientation and signage, as diagrammed on pg 120, but agreed a more detailed and comprehensive signage plan is needed at subsequent meetings.
- b) As described under 6c above, the Board did not support the “landmark” corner sign on the page 120 diagram, but did agree a more building-integrated sign might occur on the “connecting wall” shown as a yellow dot-matrix on pg 113. The height and density of this wall or matrix should be studied carefully in the perspectives noted under 6e, and the public views down into the exhibit lobbies from the plaza should be maintained.

## 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 final recommendation will be reserved until the final Board Recommendation meeting.

At the time of the **First** Recommendation, the following possible departures were identified:

1. **Façade Modulation – (SMC 23.49.058.B):** The Code requires façades above 85 ft high to have maximum lengths as follows, unless they are set back 15 ft or greater from the property line, or are separated by inset modulations that are 15 ft minimum deep x 60 ft minimum length: 86-160 ft = 155 ft long; 161-240 ft = 125 ft long; 241-500 ft = 100 ft long; 501+ ft = 80 ft long.

The applicant proposes: **a)** the projecting stair element on the Pine street facade to be 312 ft long and setback 7ft, in the 155 ft maximum length zone; **b)** the 577 ft long façade along Olive way to have multiple recessed modulations above 85 ft, all code compliant except one portion that is 272 ft long and only 2ft setback, and another portion which is 193 ft long, and 10 ft setback; **c)** one portion of the Boren façade which is 213 ft long with 0 setback, in the 125 and 155 ft maximum length zones.

**The Board indicated: a) receptivity for the signature stair element to exceed the maximum length, provided it displays the materials and projecting scale elements shown on REC#1 booklet pg 70; b) receptivity for the two portions on Olive to exceed the maximum façade length, provided they display the material variety and fenestration patterns shown on pg 91; c) receptivity for the signature ballroom element to exceed the maximum façade length, provided it displays the high transparency, lightness and material variety shown on pg 93. The Board agreed all the above departures contributed to deeper offsets between forms, facades of many scales and a more cohesive design, while providing massing modulation. (B2, B4, C2)**

2. **Green Street Upper Level Setback - (SMC 23.49.058.G.2):** 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a designated Green Street. The Code requires a continuous 15 ft setback above 45 ft on the entire frontage of a Green Street. The applicant proposes most of this required area above 45 ft to be setback from 16 - 170 ft, but the 60 x 60 ft projecting meeting room façade at the 100 ft height has a 0 setback.

**The Board indicated receptivity for this signature element to have no setback, because it provides a dramatic modulation, marks the kink in the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue view axis when viewed from the north [69], and is a relatively small proportion of the façade. (B1,C2)**

3. **Green Street Setback and Landscape - (SMC 23.49.058.F.4):** 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a designated Green Street. The Code requires a 2ft wide setback from the street lot line, and requires 50% of that setback area to be landscaped. The applicant proposes a continuous 2 ft setback at grade, but proposes to pave that entire area, and add the 350 sq ft amount of required landscape area to the curbside planting bulbs in the street right of way.

**The Board appreciated the 2 ft setback but noted it is used to provide a minimally acceptable sidewalk width (12ft), not enhance the Green Street character. The Board did not support the complete elimination of landscaping along the building edge, as it results in a 350 ft long hardscape, especially considering the adjacent curb edge shown is predominantly paved [130], rather than a wide landscape zone typically found on Green Streets. The Board recommended pockets or strips of landscaping be added along the building edge, possibly in concert with the porches described under Recommendation #1 item 5d above. (B1, D2, D3)**

4. **Blank Façade Limits – (SMC 23.49.056.D):** The Code limits the length of non-transparent or blank facades between 2 and 8 ft above the sidewalk grade, per the following street classifications: Class 1 Pedestrian streets (Olive, 9<sup>th</sup> and Pine); maximum blank length of 15ft and maximum total of 40% of façade length. Class 2 Pedestrian streets (Boren); maximum blank length of 30ft and maximum total of 75% of façade length.

The applicant proposes: **a)** on 577ft long Olive facade (Class 1), two portions in excess of 15ft: one a grouping of exit doors of 45ft, and one with translucent elevator windows of 108 ft; **b)** on the 375 ft long Boren façade (Class 2), 2 portions in excess of 30ft: one a grouping of exit doors of 32ft, and one a 165ft length of exit doors and blank concrete wall; **c)** on the 354 ft long 9<sup>th</sup> façade (Class 1), a grouping of exit doors of 42ft, in excess of 15ft.

**The Board indicated: a) receptivity for the two façade portions provided they have the fenestration and material variety shown on pg 73 and 91, and the exit doors/wall shown on pg 74 receive more pedestrian visual interest and/or translucent panels; b) receptivity for the 32 ft portion, and cautious receptivity for the 165ft portion, provided the concrete wall and exit doors are refined per the comments under 3c above; c) receptivity for grouped exits doors of 42 ft. The Board agreed consolidated exit doors were preferable in this case, to preserve longer stretches of uninterrupted, activating windows, provided the doors themselves receive an artful surface treatment. (C1, C3)**

5. **Overhead Weather Protection - (SMC 23.49.018):** The Code requires continuous weather protection along all street frontages, 8 ft minimum width, at a height 10 – 15 ft above the adjacent sidewalk. Canopies are not required above driveways or landscaped areas. The applicants propose: **a)** on the Boren elevation: deleting a canopy over the exit door pavement (between planters); **b)** on the Boren elevation: having portions of canopies that wrap the corners between 15 and 18 ft tall; **c)** on the Pine Street elevation,

one portion of level canopy that is from 15-20ft tall, and the roof/canopies of the retail pavilions range from 15-36ft high.

**The Board indicated: a) a canopy is not required over the Boren exit doors, which are infrequently used and a short canopy would be awkward in the middle of the planter zone; b) receptivity to limited increases in the 15ft canopy height to uniformly wrap corners; c) receptivity to limited increases in the 15ft canopy height to align with the scale of the important retail “storefronts”, however the Board agreed 20-36 ft does not provide pedestrian protection from wind-driven rain on a very exposed elevation; the Board recommended large scale sections and plans be used to ensure a minimum 8ft overhang is provided, even if a secondary canopy not associated with the roof forms (also see comment 2a). (B4, C5)**

6. **Denny Triangle Setback and ROW Landscaping – (SMC 23.49.056.F.1.b):** This project is within the Denny Triangle Urban Center Village, where the Code requires a minimum 18” wide landscape strip in the right of way along the entire length of the street lot line, except at building entrances or driveways; the exception areas cannot exceed 50% of the total length of the lot line. The applicant proposes: **a)** along Pine Street, a minimally compliant length of landscape planters (221 ft equals 50%), and all planters are 6-15ft wide, but 36% of the length is proposed at the curb edge, not the lot line (this is allowed per alternative SMC 23.49.056.F.1.b); **b)** along Boren Avenue, a compliant length of landscape planters (133ft equals 53%) along the curb edge, 5ft wide. The applicant seeks Board endorsement of the staggered planter arrangement.

**The Board indicated general receptivity to the informal, staggered arrangement of curb edge and building edge planters, and the generous planter widths shown, but cautioned that the paved walking width between planters should be consistent and generous along Pine, and maintained at the 10ft shown on Boren. Since the property line runs down the middle of these sidewalks, SDOT review of the ROW components must be coordinated with the setback and planter dimensions to ensure generous pedestrian walking widths, and a code-required amount of landscape. (D2, D3, D6)**

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

At the EDG#2, the Board identified the following **Downtown Design Guidelines of highest priority for this specific project**, while all guidelines remain applicable. The Priority Downtown Guidelines are summarized below; for the full text please visit the [Design Review website](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/howeare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm) and <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/howeare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm>

<b>SITE PLANNING AND MASSING</b>
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**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.).

**A1.2. Response to Planning Efforts:** Some areas downtown are transitional environments, where existing development patterns are likely to change. In these areas, respond to the urban form goals of current planning efforts, being cognizant that new development will establish the context to which future development will respond.

**ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION**

**B1 Respond to the neighborhood context: Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.**

**B1.1. Adjacent Features and Networks:** Each building site lies within an urban neighborhood context having distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. a surrounding district of distinct and noteworthy character;
- b. an adjacent landmark or noteworthy building;
- c. a major public amenity or institution nearby;
- d. neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
- e. elements of the pedestrian network nearby, (i.e.: green street, hillclimb, mid-block crossing, through-block passageway); and
- f. direct access to one or more components of the regional transportation system.

**B1.2. Land Uses:** Also, consider the design implications of the predominant land uses in the area surrounding the site.

**B3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area.: Consider the predominant attributes of the immediate neighborhood and reinforce desirable siting patterns, massing arrangements, and streetscape characteristics of nearby development.**

**B3.1. Building Orientation:** In general, orient the building entries and open space toward street intersections and toward street fronts with the highest pedestrian activity. Locate parking and vehicle access away from entries, open space, and street intersections considerations.

**B3.2. Features to Complement:** Reinforce the desirable patterns of massing and facade composition found in the surrounding area. Pay particular attention to designated landmarks and other noteworthy buildings. Consider complementing the existing:

- a. massing and setbacks,
- b. scale and proportions,
- c. expressed structural bays and modulations,
- d. fenestration patterns and detailing,
- e. exterior finish materials and detailing,
- f. architectural styles, and
- g. roof forms.

**B3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level:** Consider setting the building back slightly to create space adjacent to the sidewalk conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, sitting, or dining. Reinforce the desirable streetscape elements found on adjacent blocks. Consider complementing existing:

- h. public art installations,
- i. street furniture and signage systems,
- j. lighting and landscaping, and
- k. overhead weather protection.

**B4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building: Compose the massing and organize the interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.**

**B4.1. Massing:** When composing the massing, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- a. setbacks, projections, and open space;
- b. relative sizes and shapes of distinct building volumes; and
- c. roof heights and forms.

**B4.2. Coherent Interior/Exterior Design:** When organizing the interior and exterior spaces and developing the architectural elements, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- d. facade modulation and articulation;
- e. windows and fenestration patterns;
- f. corner features;
- g. streetscape and open space fixtures;
- h. building and garage entries; and
- i. building base and top.

**B4.3. Architectural Details:** When designing the architectural details, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- j. exterior finish materials;
- k. architectural lighting and signage;
- l. grilles, railings, and downspouts;
- m. window and entry trim and moldings;
- n. shadow patterns; and
- o. exterior lighting.

## THE STREETScape

**C1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction: Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.**

**C1.1. Street Level Uses:** Provide spaces for street level uses that:

- a. reinforce existing retail concentrations;
- b. vary in size, width, and depth;
- c. enhance main pedestrian links between areas; and
- d. establish new pedestrian activity where appropriate to meet area objectives. Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity.

**C1.2. Retail Orientation:** Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will “spill-out” onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

**C1.3. Street-Level Articulation for Pedestrian Activity:** Consider setting portions of the building back slightly to create spaces conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining. Further articulate the street level facade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience via:

- e. open facades (i.e., arcades and shop fronts);
- f. multiple building entries;
- g. windows that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior;
- h. merchandising display windows;
- i. street front open space that features art work, street furniture, and landscaping;
- j. exterior finish materials having texture, pattern, lending themselves to high quality detailing.

**C2 Design Facades of Many Scales: Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material compositions that refer to the scale of human activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.**

**C2.1. Modulation of Facades:** Consider modulating the building facades and reinforcing this modulation with the composition of:

- a. the fenestration pattern;
- b. exterior finish materials;
- c. other architectural elements;
- d. light fixtures and landscaping elements; and
- e. the roofline.

**C3 Provide Active — Not Blank — Facades: Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.**

**C3.1. Desirable Facade Elements:** Facades which for unavoidable programmatic reasons may have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest. Enliven these facades by providing:

- a. small retail spaces (as small as 50 square feet) for food bars, newstands, and other specialized retail tenants;
- b. visibility into building interiors;
- c. limited lengths of blank walls;
- d. a landscaped or raised bed planted with vegetation that will grow up a vertical trellis or frame installed to obscure or screen the wall’s blank surface;
- e. high quality public art in the form of a mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, relief, etc., installed over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface;
- f. small setbacks, indentations, or other architectural means of breaking up the wall surface;
- g. different textures, colors, or materials that break up the wall’s surface.
- h. special lighting, a canopy, awning, horizontal trellis, or other pedestrian-oriented feature to reduce the expanse of the blank surface and add visual interest;
- i. seating ledges or perches (especially on sunny facades and near bus stops);
- j. merchandising display windows or regularly changing public information display cases.

**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.**

**D1.1. Pedestrian Enhancements:** Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk, pedestrian enhancements should be considered in the resulting street frontage. Downtown the primary function of any open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide access into the building and opportunities for outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.

- a. All open space elements should enhance a pedestrian oriented, urban environment that has the appearance of stability, quality, and safety.
- b. Preferable open space locations are to the south and west of tower development, or where the siting of the open space would improve solar access to the sidewalk.

- c. Orient public open space to receive the maximum direct sunlight possible, using trees, overhangs, and umbrellas to provide shade in the warmest months. Design such spaces to take advantage of views and solar access when available from the site.
- d. The design of planters, landscaping, walls, and other street elements should allow visibility into and out of the open space.

**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

**D1.3. Residential Open Space:** Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

- i. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
- j. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
- k. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
- l. play areas for children;
- m. individual gardens; and
- n. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight.

**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.

**D2.2. Consider Nearby Landscaping:** Reinforce the desirable pattern of landscaping found on adjacent block faces.

- m. plant street trees that match the existing planting pattern or species;
- n. use similar landscape materials; and
- o. extend a low wall, use paving similar to that found nearby, or employ similar stairway construction methods.

**D3 Provide Elements That Define the Place: Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable “sense of place” associated with the building.**

**D3.1. Public Space Features and Amenities:** Incorporate one or more of the following a appropriate:

- a. public art;
- b. street furniture, such as seating, newspaper boxes, and information kiosks;
- c. distinctive landscaping, such as specimen trees and water features;
- d. retail kiosks;
- e. public restroom facilities with directional signs in a location easily accessible to all; and
- f. public seating areas in the form of ledges, broad stairs, planters and the like, especially near public open spaces, bus stops, vending areas, on sunny facades, and other places where people are likely to want to pause or wait.

**D3.2. Intersection Focus:** Enliven intersections by treating the corner of the building or sidewalk with public art and other elements that promote interaction (entry, tree, seating, etc.) and reinforce the distinctive character of the surrounding area.

## VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING

**E2 Integrate Parking Facilities: Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.**

**E2.1. Parking Structures:** Minimize the visibility of at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and streetscape. Where appropriate consider incorporating one or more of the following treatments:

- a. Incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses at street level to reduce the visual impact of parking structures. A depth of only 10 feet along the front of the building is sufficient to provide space for newsstands, ticket booths, flower shops, and other viable uses.
- b. Use the site topography to help reduce the visibility of the parking facility.
- c. Set the parking facility back from the sidewalk and install dense landscaping.
- d. Incorporate any of the blank wall treatments listed in Guideline C-3.
- e. Visually integrate the parking structure with building volumes above, below, and adjacent.
- f. Incorporate artwork into the facades.
- g. Provide a frieze, cornice, canopy, overhang, trellis or other device at the top of the parking level.
- h. Use a portion of the top of the parking level as an outdoor deck, patio, or garden with a rail, bench, or other guard device around the perimeter.

**E2.2. Parking Structure Entrances:** Design vehicular entries to parking structure so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building. Subordinate the garage entrance to the pedestrian entrance in terms of size, prominence on the street-scape, location, and design emphasis. Consider one or more of the following design strategies:

- i. Enhance the pedestrian entry to reduce the relative importance of the garage entry.
- j. Recess the garage entry portion of the facade or extend portions of the structure over the garage entry to help conceal it.
- k. Emphasize other facade elements to reduce the visual prominence of the garage entry.
- l. Use landscaping or artwork to soften the appearance of the garage entry from the street.
- m. Locate the garage entry where the topography of the site can help conceal it.

**E3 Minimize the Presence of Service Areas: Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, and the like away from the street front where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.**

**E3.1. Methods of Integrating Service Areas:** Consider incorporating one or more of the following to help minimize these impacts:

- a. Plan service areas for less visible locations on the site, such as off the alley.
- b. Screen service areas to be less visible.
- c. Use durable screening materials that complement the building.
- d. Incorporate landscaping to make the screen more effective.
- e. Locate the opening to the service area away from the sidewalk.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

At the conclusion of the First Recommendation meeting, the Board unanimously recommended the project return for another meeting in response to all the aspects of the guidance provided above, which should be read for the complete context of all Board guidance.

All aspects of Board guidance should be addressed. In addition, the following drawings and studies shall be provided in the next DRB booklet, and preliminary studies and guidance responses should be reviewed prior with the planner:

- 1) **Pine Street Stair and Materials:** If the soffit under the stair is mirrored [70], the retail roofs and canopies below will require careful design as a visible, reflected surface; the Board had mixed reactions to the mirror in such a strategic location, and detailed light/glare analysis is recommended (item #2d above).
- 2) **9th Avenue modulation and Pedestrian Amenity:** Large scale cross sections at several points on the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage, and spot elevations on all plans, shall be provided at subsequent meetings, to ensure the guidance described under #5 above.
- 3) **Plaza and Entrance:** Large scale sections, plans and perspectives to verify plaza scale, lighting and perimeter revisions, to ensure the guidance under #6 above.
- 4) **Lighting:** A complete and comprehensive lighting description, including any special, variable lighting at the translucent panels and/or ceiling lighting [118], and all specific fixtures or light coves for predominant exterior locations.
- 5) **Signage:** A detailed and comprehensive signage plan is needed at subsequent meetings, including details about any building-integrated signage and/or the “connecting wall” shown as a yellow dot-matrix on pg 113. The height and density of this wall or matrix should be studied carefully in the perspectives noted under 6e, and the public views down into the exhibit lobbies from the plaza should be maintained.
- 6) **Canopies:** Large scale sections and plans to ensure a minimum 8ft overhang is provided within the 10-18 ft height zone, even if it is a secondary canopy not associated with the taller roof forms on Pine Street (also see departure 5 and Board comment 2a).