



## RECOMMENDATION OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020381

Address: 3046 17th Avenue West

Applicant: Diana Wellenbrink, Diagonal D Architectural and Structural Design

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, April 20, 2016

Board Members Present: Katherine Idziorek (Chair)  
Jill Kurfurst (substitute)  
Homero Nishiwaki  
Janet Stephenson

Board Members Absent: Christine Harrington  
Boyd Pickrell

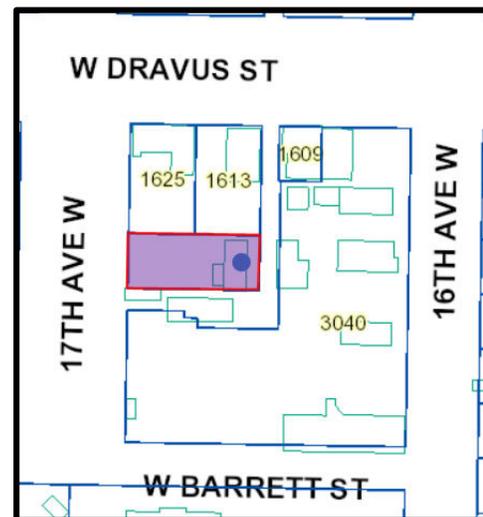
SDCI Staff Present: Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed/West Dravus area (SM/D 40-85)

Nearby Zones: (North) SM/D 40-85  
(South) SM/D 40-85  
(East) SM/D 40-85  
(West) Commercial 2 (C2-40)

Lot Area: 6,010 square feet (sq. ft.)



**Current Development:**

The project site is vacant property.

**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

Surrounding development includes one and two-storied commercial restaurant buildings with accessory surface parking to the north; and, a seven-story mixed-use commercial/residential building to the south and east (the Slate Apartments).

This mid-block site is situated on the east side of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and across the street from a City Park (Interbay Athletic Field). The neighborhood is a mingling of commercial uses inclusive of restaurants, offices, retail and a grocery store. The neighborhood is evolving with blocks in vicinity of the subject site having seen significant development comprised of residential and commercial uses in the past several years. Other amenities in the area include the Interbay golf course and Interbay P-Patch garden.

This mid-block site is situated on the east side of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and across the street from a City Park (Interbay Athletic Field). The neighborhood is a mingling of commercial uses inclusive of restaurants, offices, retail and a grocery store. The neighborhood is evolving with blocks in vicinity of the subject site having seen significant development comprised of residential and commercial uses in the past several years. Other amenities in the area include the Interbay golf course and Interbay P-Patch garden.

**Access:**

Vehicular access to the subject site is possible from 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and an existing improved alley that abuts the site's east and south boundary lines.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:**

The site's topography is characterized as having gradual grade changes along 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue West approximately 1.5' north to south and approximately 8' east to west. The entire site is mapped Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) Liquefaction prone and Abandoned Landfill.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a seven-story mixed-use structure with five levels of residential use (59 small efficiency apartment units) over two levels of parking and ground-level residential lobby area and commercial space (1,070 sq. ft. of retail or office). A total parking quantity of 17 stalls is planned within the structure and accessed via the alley.

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 19, 2015**

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3020381) at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>.

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
P.O. Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Some members of the public attended this Early Design Guidance meeting but no public comment was offered at this meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION April 20, 2016**

The design packet includes materials presented at the Recommendation meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3020381) at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Some members of the public attended this Recommendation meeting but no public comment was offered at this meeting.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 19, 2015

1. **Design Concept, Architectural Expression and Massing:** The design and siting of the new commercial/residential development should have a strong architectural presence, complement the architectural style of the neighboring building and respect adjacent properties. (CS2.A.2, CS2.D.1, CS2.D.5, CS3.2)
  - a. The voiced unanimous support for the preferred design scheme Concept 3 (Energy). The Board felt that the preferred design massing had the most potential and appreciated the design progression. Therefore, the Board proposed that design scheme Concept 3 should move forward to Master Use Permit (MUP) submittal with the following guidance:
    - i. The Board was generally supportive of the big picture massing moves with the vertical circulation (stair towers) sited on the north side of the building and that the building is essentially a box wrapped around those big circulation elements. The Board stated that the success of this design model will be very dependent upon achieving a cohesive shell. The Board found the precedent inspirational images shown in the EDG design packet (pgs. 16, 17 and 29) very compelling. Consequently, the Board encouraged the applicant to consider simplifying, refining and reducing the massing moves; and commit to achieving a “simple box with a textured and beautiful wrap.” (DC2.B, DC2.C)
    - ii. The Board stated that the cladding and overall treatment of the façade should be refined and the materials should add texture and depth, especially on the blank walls. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board would like to review a refined material selection and material details that would result in an interesting and unique building that will stand out as the “jewel box” tucked amongst the surrounding building (Slate Apartments). (DC2.C, DC2.D, DC4.A)
    - iii. The Board expressed concern that the highly visible southwest corner massing appeared unresolved. The Board stated it is imperative that the southwest corner, in conjunction with the west and south facades as they meet, should have some design logic and consistency to them. (DC2.B, DC2.C)
  - b. The Board was very supportive of the applicant’s design intent to create a music room as an amenity for the residents to enjoy. (DC3.B.1)
  - c. At the EDG meeting, the applicant’s materials and presentation illustrated a lobby mezzanine area described as the “Werner’s Family Memory Gallery.” The Board praised the intended purpose of this space which is to honor the past property owner (Mr. Werner) and other members of the neighborhood. The Board encouraged the applicant to explore methods (signage, public art, design cue, etc.) that could also express this unique gesture to the Werner Family on the building’s exterior with the intent that this great gesture will be visible to pedestrians. (CS3.B)

## **2. 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue West Frontage and Streetscape:**

- a. The Board stated that the architectural expression of the ground-level front façade should be consistent with the overall architectural concept. The Board asked the applicant to explore techniques (i.e. utilize glazing to maximize openness) that differentiate the ground floor from upper floors in a distinctive and refined manner. (PL3.C, DC2.C.1)
- b. The Board appreciated the applicant's intent to provide a ground-level commercial space and requested that more transparency is applied on the alley side at the ground-level of the south façade that faces the neighboring building's (the Slate Apartments) residential lobby. (CS2.D.5, PL3.C, DC2.B, DC4.A)
- c. At the EDG meeting, the Board discussed the merits of connected versus separate access to the building's commercial and residential entries, streetscape landscaping and usable open space at the ground-level (outdoor seating). The Board did not reach consensus about the direction of the landscape/hardscape treatment at the ground-level. Although no deliberate direction was given, Board consensus was that the building access and landscape/hardscape treatment at the ground-level should be an extension and reinforcement of the overall architectural concept. (CS2.B, PL3.A, PL3.C, DC4.D)
- d. The board recognized that the subject site's west property line is setback approximately 14' from the existing sidewalk edge and understood that landscape, hardscape and any design elements (outdoor seating, lighting, bike parking, etc.) located within the right-of-way are within the purview of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). Therefore, the applicant was directed to address all proposed streetscape design directly with SDOT during the initial MUP review process and provide street improvement design specifics at the Recommendation meeting. (CS2.B, PL3.A, PL3.C, DC4.D)

## **3. North, East and West Facades:**

- a. The Board acknowledged that visible blank walls will need to be addressed due to their prominence and visibility from the public realm and surrounding existing commercial/residential developments. The Board also stated that the proposed stair towers at the north façade should be more expressed. The Board expects to review details pertaining to any landscaping and/or design treatments (material texture, pattern, glazing, colors, etc.) proposed to address this concern at the Recommendation meeting. The Board encouraged the applicant to review the proposed development at 1518 West Dravus Street as a good example to emulate for addressing a blank wall facade condition on stair towers at the property line. (DC2.B, DC4.A, DC4.D)
- b. It is important that the future massing design be respectful to the surrounding properties, particularly the neighboring mixed-use development to the east and to the south (Slate Apartments). The Board expects the applicant to explain and demonstrate how the new building will respond to those adjacency pressures (i.e. privacy, light, outdoor activities, etc.). Providing a cross elevation to the overall overlay of the existing neighboring building's elevations with the proposed design to illustrate how they juxtapose (window study) and elevation/perspective views was

noted by the Board as the preferred method to illustrate how the design meets this guidance. (CS2.D.5, PL3.B.1, DC2.C.)

#### **4. Vehicular Parking Access and Bicycle Storage:**

- a. The Board stated that the visual impact of the garage entrances should be minimized on applicable facades. Consequently, the Board requested that the garage openings be decreased in width as much as possible. The Board noted that there is an exception in the Land Use Code that will allow narrower openings for two-way traffic and encouraged the applicant to inquire about this code citation. (DC1.C.2)
- b. The Board stated that it is important that future bike facilities are usable and secure. Therefore, the Board voiced an expectation to review details pertaining to the bike facilities (quantity, layout, location, access, etc.) at the Recommendation meeting. (PL4.B.2)

### **RECOMMENDATION April 20, 2016**

#### **1. Design Concept, Architectural Expression and Massing:** The design and siting of the new commercial/residential development should have a strong architectural presence, complement the architectural style of the neighboring building and respect adjacent properties. (CS2.A.2, CS2.D.1, CS2.D.5, CS3.2)

- a. The Board reviewed the final building design and was very pleased with the evolution of the favored design option (Concept 3-Energy). The Board commended the design team for successfully responding to the Board's guidance offered at the past EDG meeting concerning massing, architectural expression, materials and neighboring adjacency concerns. (DC2.B, DC2.C, DC2.D, DC4.A)
- b. The Board voiced strong support for the proposed material/color palette identified in the design packet and on the physical material/color samples board presented to the Board at the Recommendation meeting. The Board liked that the proposed materials add interest and texture to the design. (DC2.B, DC2.C, DC2.D, DC4.A)
- c. The applicant's materials included horizontal guard railings surrounding the roof deck area; above the southwest corner massing; and, at the residential balconies on the structure's north and south facades. The Board supported the location of the guardrails but expressed that the horizontal guardrail design surrounding the corner bench above the southwest corner massing and elsewhere on the building may create potentially unsafe conditions for residents/visitors (climbing apparatus). Ultimately, the Board requested that the future guardrails should be constructed as illustrated in the design packet (pg. 33) with high quality materials in keeping with the remaining material palette (pg. 21). If safety concerns are realized during further design development, the Board suggested art panels (i.e. laser cut panels) comparable to those design elements that are already proposed be installed in other locations of the building (pg. 25-26) as an equivalent alternative to the horizontal guard railings. (DC2.C, DC4.A)
- d. The Board was very pleased with the design evolution of the "Werner's Family Memory Gallery" within the building and on the building's exterior (pgs. 25-26, 34). The Board commended the design team on contributing positive and unique architectural character to the neighborhood. (CS3.B, DC4.A)

## **2. 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue West Frontage and Streetscape:**

- a. The Board was pleased that the design had evolved to include increased glazing at the ground-level front façade (structural glazing) and at the ground-level south façade facing the neighboring building's (the Slate Apartments) residential lobby. The Board agreed that past concerns regarding ground-level architectural expression and transparency had been addressed successfully. (CS2.D.5, PL3.C, DC2.B, DC2.C.1, DC4.A)
- b. The Board voiced general support of the conceptual lighting design and signage design as illustrated in the Recommendation design packet and presented at the Recommendation meeting. The Board further stated that future residential signage should be more legible and future commercial signage should be integrated with the design as much as possible. (PL2.B, DC4.B, DC4.C)
- c. Board comments regarding the integration of the front plaza landscaped area with the building entrance sequencing at ground-level illustrated in the design packet (pgs. 32-33 and 43) were very positive and expressed that the proposed landscape/hardscape/design elements integrated well with the streetscape. (CS2.B, PL3.A, PL3.C, DC4.D)

## **3. North, South and East Facades:**

- a. The Board reviewed the north and south ground-level wall facades and stated that further design was necessary in order to alleviate the harshness of the large expanses of concrete that will be visible from the public realm and surrounding existing commercial/residential developments. Therefore, the Board recommended a condition that a portion (1/4 minimum) of the ground-level north and south facades include landscaping, or artistic treatment (i.e., painted art illustration), or texture (i.e. embedding metal cutouts from other art elements on the site, board-formed concrete, etc.) or a combination of design treatments to add human scale and texture to those identified blank facades. (DC2.B, DC4.A, DC4.D)
- b. The Board reviewed the stair tower designs at the north façade and felt that the expression of the roof elements above the stair towers was heavy and not well integrated with the building's design concept. The Board stated that further design exploration was necessary and offered the following design strategies to assist in better integrating the stair towers and addressing the blank façade condition:
  - Extend the wood and light band on the northwest tower element further up to engage with the steel lid;
  - Treat the tower roof in a similar language to the ground-level canopies in terms of expression and depth (refined, minimalist and sleek appearance);
  - Intentionally incorporate the railings/art panels that are used elsewhere on the building in lieu of the deeper roof elements;
  - Remove the roof on the northeast stair tower;
  - Incorporate windows on the west face of the northeast stair tower at the courtyard; and
  - At the north outdoor terrace area on the third level, replace the solid wall connection to the northeast tower with railing so that the raised wall of concrete would solely occur between the bio-retention planters only (i.e.

mimic the railing connection to the northwest stair/elevator tower (pg. 23). (DC2.B, DC4.A)

- c. The Board appreciated reviewing the section study of the adjacent property (Slate Apartments) and expressed that the angled bays applied to the building's south wall façade would assist to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in the neighboring building. Additionally, the Board advised the applicant to work with the land use planner to create a window elevation study to better illustrate that privacy concerns have been fully addressed. (CS2.D.5, PL3.B.1, DC2.C.)

#### **4. Vehicular Parking Access and Bicycle Storage:**

- a. The Board reviewed the garage door designs and confirmed that the garage openings had been decreased in width (20' to 16') per an exception in the Land Code that allows for narrower garage entrance openings for two-way traffic. The Board expressed that this design modification and the garage door details were an appropriate response that should assist in minimizing the visual impact of the garage openings. (DC1.C.2)
- b. The Board acknowledged that outstanding concerns/questions voiced at the EDG meeting concerning the future bike facilities (quantity, layout, location, access, etc.) had been addressed/resolved in the final building design. (PL4.B.2)

### **DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

<b>CONTEXT &amp; SITE</b>
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**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

**CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood**

**CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence:** Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

**PL3-A-2. Common Entries:** Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

**PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy:** Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

**PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential:** Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

**PL3-B-4. Interaction:** Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

**PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.**

**PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists**

**PL4-B-1. Early Planning:** Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

**PL4-B-3. Bike Connections:** Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

**DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

**DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

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

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

**DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

**DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

**DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials:** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

#### **DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

At the time of the Recommendation, the Board confirmed that no departures were requested.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **BOARD DIRECTION**

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Wednesday, April 20, 2016, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Wednesday, April 20, 2016 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with the following condition:

1. A portion (1/4 minimum) of the ground-level north and south facades should include landscaping, or artistic treatment (i.e., painted art illustration), or texture (i.e. embedding metal cutouts from other art elements on the site, board-formed concrete, etc.) or a combination of design treatments to add human scale and texture to those identified blank facades that will be visible from the public realm and surrounding existing commercial/residential developments. (DC2.B, DC4.A, DC4.D)