



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020534

Address: 1405 Dexter Ave N

Applicant: Heather Hargesheimer, Weinstein A+U

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, January 13, 2016

Board Members Present: Christine Harrington  
Katherine Idziorek  
Homero Nishiwaki  
Boyd Pickrell  
Janet Stephenson

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

### SITE & VICINITY

**Site Zone:** SM-85

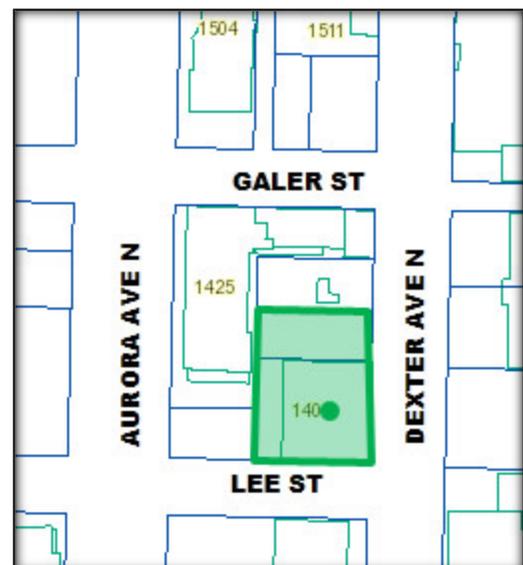
**Nearby Zones:** (North) SM-85, NC3-40 and C1-65  
(South) SM85  
(East) SM-SLU 85/65-125  
(West) SM85 and LR3

**Lot Area:** 19,239 sq. ft.

**Current Development:** A one story commercial building constructed in 1920 and a surface parking lot.

**Access:** The site abuts Dexter Ave N, and Lee St which dead ends near the west side of the site.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:** Steep slope, Potential Slide and Known slide.



**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:** The lot directly to the north is owned by King County and houses a Metro sewer pump station. This parcel is developed below grade and has a small park with seating for the public at grade. North of that lot and directly to the west is a multi-story condo development built in 1992. To the south across Lee St is a proposed 8 story mixed use building under MUP #3017425. Across Dexter to the east is a proposed 6 story residential use structure under MUP# 3016871.

The neighborhood is a mixture of residential and office buildings from many eras. This part of the east side of Queen Anne slopes rapidly down to Lake Union, providing views to the east. Dexter Avenue N. is a busy arterial that has been reconfigured to provide designated bike lanes which are heavily used. The neighborhood is in transition with older structures being replaced by larger multifamily and mixed use buildings.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed development is for a nine story mixed use structure with approx. 95-100 residential units, 4,300 sq. ft. of retail space and approx. 95-115 below grade parking spaces.

### **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE January 13, 2016**

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3020534) 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**

At the Initial EDG Meeting the following public comments were offered:

- Asked if there will be street parking.
- Encouraged the applicant to consider and try to minimize the 'urban canyon effect'.
- Quersted how the zone transition will happen.

### **PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE: January 13, 2016

- 1. Massing and Design:** The Board affirmed that the preferred Option 3 is the best massing in response to the surrounding development and streetscape. The Board appreciated the set back at the street-level along Dexter Ave N. and the balconies, and noted the design will need these and secondary elements to make the design work. The Board was concerned about the blank wall on the north elevation. The Board encouraged using the proposed concrete structural system to provide a design beyond a box by using the structure to enhance the design of the massing, balconies and slab edge detailing. (CS3.A.2, DC2.B.1, DC2.B.2, DC2.C.1) The Board provided the following guidance:
  - a. Maintain the lower level setback along Dexter Ave N, and the vertical rhythm of the notches and balconies on the street facing facades. (PL1.B.2, DC2.C.1)
  - b. Provide a design with secondary elements and strong detailing. (DC2.C.1)
  - c. Use the proposed concrete construction to provide opportunities to enhance the massing, balconies and detailing. (CS3.A.2, DC2.B.1)
  - d. Provide a dynamic expression on the north elevation to enhance the visual experience from Dexter Ave N. Consider a patterning of ‘windows’ , texture and a playful character of the design. (DC2.B.1 &2)
  - e. Supported the concept of a ‘shell’ wrapping glassy, artful, textured facades. (CS3.A.2)
  
- 2. Streetscape and Landscaping:** The Board was very supportive of the proposed retail spaces that flank the residential entry, including the small corner retail space at Dexter Ave N and Lee St. They were concerned about the visibility of the proposed corner retail space entry on Lee St. (PL1.B.2, PL2.B.3, PL3.A.4, PL3.C.1)
  - a. Design the residential entry to be a legible element of the Dexter Ave N facade. (PL3.A.4)
  - b. Maintain the retail spaces, especially the small corner retail space to activate the street. (PL3.II.ii)
  - c. Maintain the shapes and sizes of the proposed retail space. (DC1.A.1)
  - d. Consider how the retail spaces can spill out to the streetscape. (PL1.I.iii)
  - e. Provide two different landscaping schemes. Consider how dogs will use these spaces and design accordingly. (DC4.D.1)
  - f. Provide landscaping on Dexter to provide a buffer for pedestrians and pets. (DC4.D.1)
  
- 3. Service Entries:** The Board stated their concerns that Lee Street will be consumed by the two proposed curb cuts and parking/service entries. They noted that other projects on sloping streets have been able to provide access to parking and service functions with one curb cut. The Board directed the applicant to provide an analysis demonstrating why they need two curb cuts and to minimize the vehicle access area on Lee St, as the ‘lower’ parking entry is impacting the retail space at the corner. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.2, DC1.C.4)

**The Board indicated that the bike storage location is sensible but they were concerned about way finding, access and safety. Provide further information on how the access to bike storage will work. (PL4.B.1, PL4.B.2)**

- a. Reduce the area used for access to parking and services on Lee St. (DC1.C.2)
- b. Design the parking entry to maintain the proposed retail space and have less impact on the retail space at the corner. (DC1.C.4)
- c. Design Lee St to be attractive for pedestrians. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.4)

**For the Recommendation meeting:**

- Provide an analysis of why two curb cuts on Lee St are needed. As part of the study provide to scale plans showing access to parking and the service functions with only one curb cut.
- Provide a large scale elevation detail of what the street level elevation at Lee St will look like.
- Provide further information on how the access to bike storage will work.
- Provide two landscaping schemes.

**DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide and South Lake Union 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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**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

**CS1-C Topography**

**CS1-C-1. Land Form:** Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

**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.

**CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

**CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-1. Corner Sites:** Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

**CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design:** Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

**CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods:** In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

**PUBLIC LIFE**

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

**PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes:** Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

**PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities:** Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

**PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

**PL2-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage:** Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces:** Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

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

**PL3-A Entries**

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

**PL3-C Retail Edges**

**PL3-C-1. Porous Edge:** Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

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

**PL3-II Human Activity**

**PL3-II-ii. Active Facades:** Design facades to encourage activity to spill out from business onto the sidewalk, and vice-versa.

**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**

**DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.**

**DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-1. Visibility:** Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

**DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation**

**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design:** Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

**DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts:** Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

**DC1-C-4. Service Uses:** Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

**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 Façade Composition**

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

**DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.**

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

**DC3-I Landscaping To Reinforce Design Continuity With Adjacent Sites**

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

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

**DC4-B Signage**

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

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

to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

**DC4-C Lighting**

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare:** Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

**DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

**DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials:** Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, two departures were requested:

1. **Curb Cuts (SMC23.48.035.E.):** The Code states permitted access shall be limited to one two-way curb cut. The applicant proposed two 22' wide curb cuts on Lee St. One curb would provide ingress/egress for vehicle parking. The second curb cut would provide ingress/egress for parking for vehicles and bike storage and solid waste storage.

The Board indicated that more information would be needed to determine if the additional curb cut is warranted. They directed the applicant to provide additional materials (see guidance above) at the Recommendation meeting. The Board noted they will make their determination based on how attractive the street level of Lee St. is, how access to bike storage will work and the strength of the street level design at the corner of Lee St and Dexter Ave N.

2. **Transparency and Blank facade Requirements (SMC23.48.014.D.1.c):** The Code requires for non-classified streets with a slope of the street frontage facade greater than 7.5%, a minimum of 22% of the street-level street facing facade between 2' and 8' above the sidewalk, to be transparent. The applicant is proposing approx. 17-18% transparency along Lee St.

The Board indicated they needed more information to determine if they would support this departure. They directed the applicant to provide additional materials (see guidance above) at the Recommendation meeting. The Board noted they will make their determination based on how attractive the street level of Lee St. is, how access to bike storage will work and the strength of the street level design at the corner of Lee St and Dexter Ave N.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Early Design Guidance meeting, four Board members recommended the project move forward with MUP application and one Board member abstained.