



# City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development  
D. M. Sugimura, Director



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020563

Address: 1001 John St

Applicant: Collins Woerman for Mack Urban

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, September 30, 2015

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

Board Members Absent: Katherine Idziorek, recused

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

### SITE & VICINITY

**Site Zone:** SM (Seattle Mixed) 240/125-400

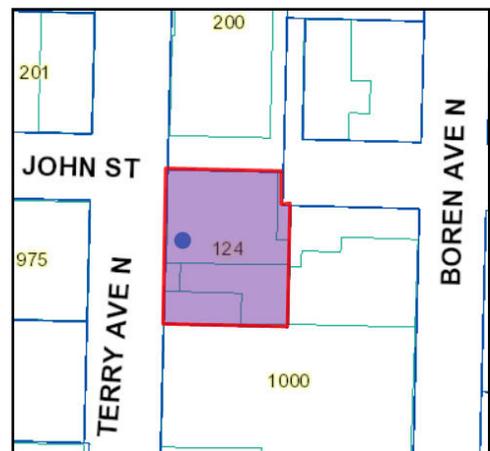
**Nearby Zones:** (North) SM160/85-240  
 (South) SM 240/125-400, DMC240/290-400  
 (East) SM240/125-400, SM160/85-240  
 (West) SM240/125-400, SM160/85-240

**Lot Area:** Approx. 18,450 sq. ft.

**Access:** The site has access from Terry Ave N and John St.

**Current Development:** The site is current developed with a five story commercial structure constructed in 1925.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:** None



**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:** The subject site occupies the southern 33' of vacated John St between Terry Ave N and existing John St. The northern 33' of vacated John St is part of the site directly to the north. The vacated John St portion has no structure, while the remainder of the site is occupied by a three story commercial structure. Across Terry Ave N is a recently built 7-story apartment complex. Further south across Terry Ave N is a 3-story commercial building and surface parking. The site has a proposal (MUP #3018935) for a 40 story residential tower with a 4-story podium building, over retail space. On the northwest portion of the block an 11-story office structure was recently completed.

The site directly to the south and east is occupied by two structures; an 8-story office building (a former Seattle Times building) and a small one story commercial building. This site has a proposal for two residential towers under MUP # 3021279.

The site is located within the South Lake Union Neighborhood Design Guideline area with Terry Ave N identified as a "heart location". As well, Terry Ave N has a Street Concept Plan.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is for development of a 37 story residential tower over a 5-story podium with 430 residential units. The podium will include residential units, parking and commercial space along Terry Ave N. Parking for 300 vehicles will be located in the podium and below grade with access from Terry Ave N. A publically assessable hillclimb elevator will climb the approx. 52' elevation gain between Terry Ave N and John St.

## **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE September 30, 2015**

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number 3020563 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)

## **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The applicant presented three options, which can be seen in the EDG packet.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Members of the public were present at the meeting and offered the following comments.

- Supported the project.

- Supported Option B Board and encouraged the Board to consider guidelines CS2, CSD1c?
- Encouraged further tower separation with their proposed project to the south and east.
- Requested a 25' setback on the south and east side of the tower.
- Expressed support for the departures.

## **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: September 30, 2015**

- 1. Tower Massing and Design: The Board supported the applicant's preferred Option C tower massing, with its tower location allowing for a publically assessable plaza providing views above Terry Ave N, and open space along vacated John St, and the hillclimb elevator feature. The Board noted that the tower location is not ideal for the proposed development to the east, but the location is justified as it provides the hillclimb connection and maintains the view corridor from John St. The Board did encourage the applicant to consider the proposed neighboring development. (CS2.B.1 & 2, CS2.I.i)**
  - a. Provide contrast through a variety of high quality materials on the tower; simply changing the glass color is not sufficient. (DC4.A.1)
  - b. Consider the proposed development on the adjacent site to the east and south. (CS2.D.5)
- 2. Podium Massing and Design: The Board supported the podium massing along Terry Ave N which will be level at John St. above. The Board stated the podium massing scale along Terry Ave N and being level with John St are good design moves for views and access to the hillclimb elevator. (CS2.I.i,**
  - a. Design the public assessable plazas and hillclimb elevator to invite the public. (PL1.A.2, PL1.B.3)
- 3. Hillclimb Feature: The Board encouraged and supported the hillclimb elevator but expressed concern about its visibility and accessibility to the public. The Board questioned if a stair between the 52' elevation difference was possible but after discussion realized it was not a feasible option for this development. (CS2.B.1 & 2, PL1.B.1, PL2.D.1)The following guidance was offered:**
  - a. Explore alternative locations of the hillclimb elevator so the elevator will remain visible from Westlake Ave N and from John St. and have a strong presence and connection to Terry Ave N. (PL2.D.1, DC1.A.1)
  - b. Design the Terry Ave N entry to the elevator to be more welcoming and read and feel like a publically accessible feature. (PL3.A.4, PL1.A.2)

- c. Provide more open space at the Terry Ave N level at the elevator. This plaza space needs to be celebratory. (DC3.II.i, PL1.B.3)
4. **Terry Ave N Streetscape: The Board supported the moving of the Terry Ave N curb cut location to the south as it will provide for more retail space. The Board requested further design of a stronger residential entry concept on Terry Ave N, and to maintain the retail use provided on the street front. (PL3.A.2, DC1.A.1, DC1.C.2)**
    - a. Supported the retail location next to the hillclimb elevator. (DC1.A.1)
    - b. Provide a lobby presence on the street. (PL3.A.1 & 2, DC1.A.1)
    - c. Provide high end features, such as street furniture, etc. as part of the street design and to give legibility of a design that works with the rest of the street. (DC3.II.i)
  5. **John St Streetscape: The Board was split on the vehicle drop-off design concept off of John St and the related departure that would be needed to have a second project curb cut from John St (See Departure #4 at the end of the report). The following guidance was officered:**
    - a. Design a strong, clear, pedestrian connection between the upper level of the elevator and the residential lobby off of John St. (PL3.A.1 & 4)
    - b. Use the streetscape designs on John St. further to the east as a design cue for the street treatment. (PL1.A.1)

**For the Recommendation meeting provide the following:**

- Provide a plan showing all site lighting.

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

**CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics:** Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

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

**CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space:** Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

#### **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.

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

#### **CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics**

**CS2-I-i. Views:** Encourage provision of “outlooks and overlooks” for the public to view the lake and cityscapes. Examples include provision of public plazas and/or other public open spaces and changing the form or facade setbacks of the building to enhance opportunities for views.

**CS2-I-iv. Heart Locations:** Several areas have been identified as “heart locations.” Heart locations serve as the perceived center of commercial and social activity within the neighborhood. These locations provide anchors for the community as they have identity and give form to the neighborhood. Development at heart locations should enhance their central character through appropriate site planning and architecture. These sites have a high priority for improvements to the public realm. A new building’s primary entry and facade should respond to the heart location. Special street treatments are likely to occur and buildings will need to respond to these centers of commercial and social activity. Amenities to consider are: pedestrian lighting, public art, special paving, landscaping, additional public open space provided by curb bulbs and entry plazas. See full guidelines for Heart Locations

### **PUBLIC LIFE**

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

#### **PL1-A Network of Open Spaces**

**PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space:** Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

**PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life:** Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

#### **PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

**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-D Wayfinding**

**PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding:** Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

**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.

**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,

**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-A-2. Gathering Places:** Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

**DC1-A-3. Flexibility:** Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

**DC1-A-4. Views and Connections:** Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

**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-1. Below-Grade Parking:** Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

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

**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.

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

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

**DC3-II Landscaping To Enhance The Building and/or Site**

**DC3-II-i. Integrated Artwork:** Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.

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

**DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

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

**DC4-B Signage**

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

**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.

**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 four departures were requested.

- 1. Height- Rooftop Features (SMC23.48.010.H.7):** The Code states that rooftop features may cover up to 65% of the roof area provided that no rooftop features are located closer than 10' to the roof edge. The applicant proposes roof top features that are aligned with or closer than 10', to portions of the north, west and south building facades.

The Board members indicated early support for this departure, provided the roof coverage area does exceed the allowed 65% coverage. (DC2.B.1)

- 2. Upper Level Development Standards – Upper-level Setbacks. (SMC23.48.013.B.4.a):** The Code requires a podium height limit of 45'. As measured from Terry Ave N the applicant proposed a podium height 53' to 54'.

The Board members indicated early support for this departure, depending on how well the project responds to the Board guidance on the design of the publically assessable plazas. (CS2.B.2)

- 3. Upper Level Development Standards – Upper-level Setbacks. (SMC23.48.013.B.4.b):** The Code requires a podium area limit to 75% of the lot area. The applicant proposed a podium that will cover 100% of the lot area.

The Board members indicated early support for this departure, depending on how well the project responds to the Board guidance on the design of the publically assessable plazas. (CS2.B.2)

- 4. Curb Cut Width and Number (SMC23.48.034.E.1):** The Code limits permitted access to a site to one two-way curb cut. The applicant proposed a two way curb cut on Terry Ave N and a one way curb cut to access an on-site vehicle drop-off from John St.

The four Board members present were split on their support for this departure request. Two Board members supported the curb cut access, noting the site had a unique relationship to the abutting right-of ways with the site topography and the 'dead end' of John St. (CS2.B.1) The other two Board members were not supportive of access to a vehicle drop-off on site stating the concept did not fit within the surrounding urban context. (DC1.B.1)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### BOARD DIRECTION

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