



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020850

Address: 3501 Rainier Ave S

Applicant: John Woodworth, SMR Architects on behalf of DESC

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, October 27, 2015

Board Members Present: Julian Weber, chair
Carey Dagliano Holmes
Drew Hicks
Charles Romero

Board Members Absent: David Sauvion

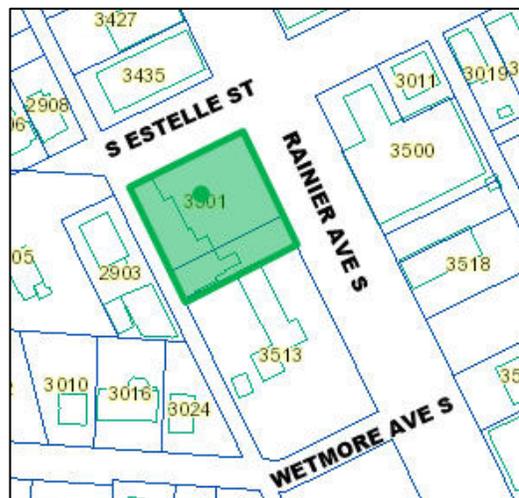
DPD Staff Present: BreAnne McConkie, DPD Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial 1 with a 65' height limit (C1-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-65
(South) C1-65
(East) C1-65
(West) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)

Lot Area: 14,400 sq. ft.



Current Development:

The site contains two one-story structures surrounded by surface parking and is currently being used as an auto service and used tire resale location.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The Site is located on the southwest corner of Rainier Ave S and S Estelle St. The surrounding development includes auto repair shops, multi-family buildings, and single family homes. The neighborhood is in transition with some larger mixed-use, multi-family developments to the north and south.

Access:

Vehicle access to the site is proposed from the adjacent alley to the west. The primary pedestrian access is proposed from S Estelle St.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The entire site is mapped as a Liquefaction Prone Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance for a 6-story building containing 91 units. Parking for 4 vehicles to be provided at grade. Existing structure to be demolished.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

At the EDG meeting, members of the public provided the following comments:

- Requested the number and types of units, tenant mix, and parking utilization in the owner's other similar project and wanted to know if the tenants typically had cars.
- Stated a preference for commercial character at grade along Rainier even if the use was not commercial. Thought retail was an interesting possibility.
- Expressed excitement for new development and was supportive of not having retail, because it likely wouldn't be successful in that location.

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.

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1. Massing & Façade Articulation:

- a. The Board expressed general support for the Applicant's Preferred Option, noting that it provided the greatest amount of light and air to the units and outdoor courtyard and created a successful massing transition to the less intensive zone to the west. The Board noted they would support additional stepping to the west. (CS1.B.2, CS2.D.3&4)
- b. The Board supported the proposed siting and setback along Rainier Ave S, noting that the existing mature street trees were a great asset to the neighborhood. (CS1.D.1, DC3.C.1)
- c. The Board supported the larger scaled façade composition and articulation along Rainier Ave S because of the intensity of this frontage, and stated that the S Estelle St façade should be more pedestrian scaled and detailed. (DC2.B.1, DC2.C.1&2, DC2.D.1&2)
- d. The Board noted that the precedents shown were successful because the reveals and changes in plane were much deeper and dramatic, as opposed to the relatively minor 12'-24' changes in plane in the Applicant's Preferred Option. Deeper recesses and reveals, and more dramatic plane shifts should be included where materials and colors change. (DC2.B.1, DC2.C.1, DC4.A.1)
- e. The street-level fenestration should be designed to maintain transparency and a strong visual connection. The Board encouraged integrated window treatments to maintain a sense of transparency while providing some privacy to the street-level offices. (DC2.B.1, PL2.B.3)

2. Corner, Entry, & Arrangement of Uses:

- a. The Board supported the entry location on Estelle and noted that the corner massing and secondary architectural elements should be incorporated to further emphasize the entry and pedestrian arrival experience. (PL3.A.1&2)

- b. The Board stated that the corner was not strong enough in the Applicant’s Preferred Option and directed the Applicant to further develop the corner to have a more prominent massing and identity. Deeper recesses and reveals, and/or greater modulation should be included to emphasize and celebrate the corner. (DC2.A.1, CS2.C.1)
- c. The Board stated that the proposed double height corner lounge should be expressed on the façade. (DC2.A.1, CS2.C.1)
- d. The Board noted that circulation made up a large percentage of the ground floor and stated a preference for uses to be arranged in a way that would have a more active presence on the street. The programming should be further developed to place more active uses adjacent to the street and minimize street frontage for less active uses, such as circulation spaces and the staff lounge. (PL3.C.1&2)

3. Parking & Amenity Space: The Board discussed the parking structure at length and noted that while it helped to mitigate the privacy and noise impacts from the outdoor amenity space and provided a scale transition to the adjacent single family zone, it should be better integrated into the building and site design.

- a. The Board directed the applicant to explore alternative configurations for the parking including physically attaching it via breezeway or shifting it towards the north to attach to the building, integrating it into the ground floor of the building, or rotating it to create more of a courtyard. For the next meeting, the Applicant should provide additional study on the possible parking configurations. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.2&3)
- b. If the garage stays as a detached structure, it should maintain the quality detail, human scale, and transparency of what was presented at EDG. (DC4.A.1, DC2.D.1&2)
- c. The parking structure should be further developed and integrated into the amenity space. The roof should be treated as a fifth façade and the structure should be fully integrated into the amenity space. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.2&3)
- d. The Board directed the applicant to explore the possibility of amenity space on the roof of the garage. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.2&3)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

CONTEXT & 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-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-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-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

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.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

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.

DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children’s play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

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-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

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).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

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

At the time of the Early Design Guidance the following departure was requested:

1. **Setback Abutting a Lot Line of a Residentially-Zoned Lot (23.47A.014.B.3.a):** For a structure containing a residential use, the Code requires a 15' setback for portions of structures above 13' in height to a maximum of 40'. The applicant proposes a 2' encroachment into the required setback on the second level.

The Board indicated support for the requested departure noting that the greater setback on levels three through six resulted in a better zone transition and shifted a greater amount of mass away from the single family zone, better achieving guidelines CS2.D.3. Zone Transitions and CS2.D.4. Massing Choices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

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