



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3021541

Address: 5512 17th Avenue NW

Applicant: Kusi Chaijumroonpun, Caron Architecture

Date of Meeting: Monday, December 21, 2015

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil (Chair)
Marc Angelillo
Christopher Bell
Dale Kutzera
Keith Walzak

Board Members Absent: None

DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC3-85

Nearby Zones: North: NC3-65
South: NC3-85
East: NC3-85
West: NC3-85

Lot Area: 7,798 sq. ft.

Current Development: Commercial structure



Surrounding Development: The subject site is on the southeast corner of NW 56th Street and 17th Avenue NW. The subject lot and lots to the south, east and west are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-85). Lots to the north are zoned NC3-65. The site contains two parcels each with an existing commercial structure. The site is relatively flat with approximately 2 feet in grade change from the north property line to the south property line, the low point of the site. To the north and east are existing mixed use structures. To the south is a one story commercial structure. To the west, across 17th Avenue NW, is a new proposed mixed use development (DPD Project 3018670). The subject site is located within the Ballard Hub Urban Village and a Frequent Transit Service Corridor.

The proposal site is in an area of the Ballard neighborhood which is historically commercial and multi-family in character. The difference between the height and density of existing development and that allowed in the Neighborhood Commercial zone with height limits of 65 and 85 feet found in the area has resulted in a considerable amount of new multi-family development. The exiting character of the immediate area is a mix of older two and tree story commercial and multi-family residential development interspersed with newer projects with the same uses in six to eight story configurations. A mix of institutional and commercial buildings are located along NW Market Street and the blocks to the south of the site.

ECAs: No Environmentally Critical Areas have been identified on site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Application for a 7-story structure containing 90 small efficiency dwelling units, 2 live-work units and 1,840 sq. ft. of retail at ground level.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: December 21, 2015

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3021541) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 33021541), 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

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Preferred the third massing alternative which allows windows on the south façade.
- Felt parking should be provided on site.
- Noted that construction on the site will further reduce available street parking.
- Noted that 17th Avenue is a well used street and not a lightly used street as stated within the Early Design Guidance packet.
- Would like to see housing for working families.
- Expressed concern regarding the lack of air flow between buildings once this structure is constructed.

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. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

- 1. Massing and Architectural Concept.** The Board discussed each massing alternative at length. The Board noted the benefits of design option 2, which include a two story base expression. The Board agreed the two story base reduces the perceived height of the structure, but it is also predictable. Ultimately the Board agreed that design option 3, the preferred option, provided the better design solution for the site.
 - a. The Board felt that the 'Rubik's Cube' concept was unique and interesting. The Board noted that the massing, which provides a 1 story base expression, with double plate recesses, creates a simple, elemental form with good scale (CS3-A, DC2, DC4).
 - b. The Board supported balconies within the recesses but felt the balcony treatment must reinforce the cube expression (CS3-A2, DC2, DC4-A).
 - c. The Board noted the composition of the recesses must reinforce the overall cube architecture but also be located to maximize opportunities for southern exposure (CS1-B, CS3-A2).

- d. The Board favored the three story entry expression but expressed concerns regarding the material cladding. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board would like to better understand how the material cladding will create a seamless transition between the concrete and wood construction (PL3-A, DC2, DC4-A)
- e. The Board felt the parapet height should be reduced to the minimum necessary to reduce the overall height of the structure. (DC2-A2).
- f. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board would like to see how the blank wall along the south façade is treated (DC2-B2).

2. Ground Level. The Board agreed the preferred massing alternative, which locates the primary entry on 17th, provided the better design solution. The location of the entry breaks up the long façade and locates building services adjacent to the vehicular entry.

- a. The Board agreed that the base of the structure should be treated to reinforce the old Ballard character. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board requested additional information regarding materials, fenestration, overhead weather protection, lighting and signage (CS2-A, CS3, PL2-C, PL3-A, PL3-C, DC2, DC4).
- b. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested additional information showing how the building would relate to the adjacent building context along 56th Street (CS2-A, CS3-A).
- c. The Board agreed that the 5' voluntary sidewalk setback along 17th Avenue NW could be a good addition to the pedestrian realm. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested specifics on the treatment of this space to create a great pedestrian environment (PL1-B, PL2, PL3-C, DC2-D).
- d. The Board was pleased with the provided bike parking, but felt the design should explore a direct access from the street to the bike storage room (PL4).
- e. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested a ground floor and roof landscape/hardscape plan. The Board would like to better understand the treatment and programming of the ground level private amenity space and the rooftop common amenity space (DC3-B and C, DC4).

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

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on 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-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

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-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

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.

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

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-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-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.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

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

PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships

PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

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.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

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-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-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

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.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

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

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

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-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.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall 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, the following departures were requested:

- 1. Street-Level Uses (SMC 23.47A.005 C):** The Code states no more than 20% of the street-level street-facing facade shall contain residential uses in zone with a height limit of 85 feet or higher. The applicant proposes 24.8% residential use along NW 56th Street to accommodate utility uses at street level.

The Board expressed early support for the requested departure. The Board felt that the utility uses were located in the least impactful location. The project maintains active transparent uses on the entirety of 17th Avenue and the majority of 56th. The utility uses have been located next to the parking access for the adjacent building. The Board did request additional information showing how the utility room door will be treated to minimize visual impacts to the adjacent pedestrian sidewalk. The revised street level design must better meet the intent of Design Guideline DC1-C Parking and Service Uses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.