



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3021621

Address: 2014 Fairview Avenue

Applicant: Ryan Cheng, ZGF Cotter

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, December 01, 2015

Board Members Present: Murphy McCullough (Chair)
Grace Leong
Alan McWain

Board Members Absent: Anjali Grant
Gundula Proksch

DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King

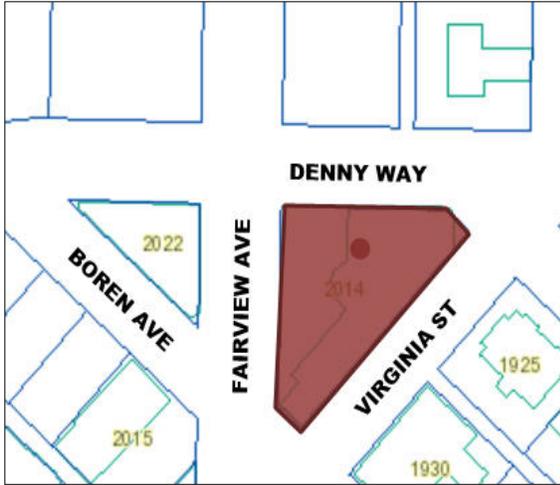
SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: DMC 240/290-400

Nearby Zones: North: SM-SLU 240/125-400
South: DMC 340/290-400
East: DMC 240/290-400
West: DMC 240/290-400

Lot Area: 24,459 sq. ft.

Current Development: 1-2 story commercial structure



Surrounding Development: The subject site is located on a triangular block bound by Denny Way to the north, Fairview Avenue N to the west, Boren Street along the southwest and Virginia Street to the southeast. The subject lot and lots to the east and west are zoned Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC 240/290-400). Lots directly south are zoned DMC 340/290-400. To the north, across Denny Way, zoning transitions to Seattle Mixed South Lake Union (SM-SLU 240/125-400). The site contains one parcel with existing early 1-2 story 20th-century commercial structures. To the north, within the South Lake Union Urban Center, is the Mirabella, a 12-story residential building. To the west are two existing City of Seattle Landmark Structures, the Fashioncraft Building/Recovery Café and the Old Norway Hall. To the southwest is a two story commercial building. The site is relatively flat with approximately 3 feet in grade change from the north property line to the south corner, the high point of the site.

The surrounding development includes sites proposed for development. To the northwest and southeast are three developments, each proposing two towers (1120 Denny Way, 1901 Minor Avenue and 1200 Stewart). In addition the Denny Substation is currently under construction one block to the northeast along Denny.

The Denny Triangle area is transitioning from low rise type commercial and residential buildings to residential towers, office development, and hotel uses. Newer development is contemporary in design, with simple forms, large areas of glazing, and permanent materials such as precast concrete. Older development is a mix of building types, ranging from early 20th century masonry and wood frame construction to 1970's auto-oriented 1 story buildings with large surface parking lots.

Fairview Avenue N is a major north/south connector for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles traveling between South Lake Union and Downtown. Boren Avenue is major vehicular corridor between South Lake Union and Capitol Hill. Denny is principal arterial dividing the Denny Triangle from the South Lake Union Neighborhoods. Denny also provides the connection between Downtown and I-5. Virginia Street is a minor arterial street. The area is served by frequent bus transit, as well as bus and light rail transit in the Convention Center station a few blocks to the southeast.

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

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review application to allow a 41-story building containing 445 unit residential units above 10,000 square feet of commercial space. Parking for 315 vehicles will be provided below grade.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: December 1, 2015

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3021621) 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 3021621), 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:

- Concerned insufficient parking is provided for residential units.
- Stated that the Denny Substation sign will be visible along Virginia Avenue to 2nd Avenue. Street trees on Virginia Street should be located to maintain sign visibility.
- Mirabella residents would like to meet with development team.
- Felt streetscape design should accommodate a large number of pedestrians on each street and rapid ride uses on Fairview Avenue. Additional setbacks may be warranted along Denny Street.
- Would like to see the tower located to the south in order to minimize shadow impacts on the Mirabella.
- Would like to see the building rotated 45 degrees to increase privacy between proposed units and Mirabella units.
- Would like for Mirabella resident's to have access to the podium amenity space.

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. Tower Form.** The Board discussed the tower location and form at length. Ultimately the Board supported the proposed tower location, which creates a strong presence on the corner of Denny and Fairview. The Board agreed that the tower and podium connection needed resolution.
 - a. The Board appreciated the graceful and elegant tower form, which incorporates both geometric and organic shapes. The form includes a spine, which holds the movement, facing downtown. The balconies then swing the tower in two separate directions in order to maximize the sense of movement facing Lake Union (A1.1, A2.1, and B4.1).
 - b. The Board supported the subtlety of the balcony movement, stating the design creates a sense of discovery (A1.1, A2.1, B4.1).
 - c. The Board noted the building corners are greater than 90 degrees, and the entire tower form is softened by the decks. The Board felt the softened form must be protected in all parts of the building as the design progresses (A1.1, A2.1, and B4.1).
 - d. The Board would like to see the podium integrated into the graceful curvilinear tower form (A1.1, A2.1, and B4.1).
 - e. The Board agreed the thinnest portion of the decks should be usable by residents. The Board cautioned that once the decks are used they will not appear as pristine as renderings suggest. The applicant may consider adding some opacity to the decks. The Board agreed that a balance of solid and glass would require additional study (A2.1, B4.2).
- 2. Roof.** The Board agreed that the tower form should be continued to the top of the roof.
 - a. The Board expressed support for the roof form presented on page 97 of the Early Design Guidance Packet. The Board agreed the two rings, located further off center, created a lighter finish to the top of the structure while also providing shade for south facing amenity deck (A2.1, B4.1).
- 3. Ground Floor.** The applicant's aspirations include an open retail amenity space experience on the first 2 floors of the structure.
 - a. The Board agreed that the retail space should be informed by the inspirational experience pictures in packet. The Board would like to better understand how the

space will programmed to achieve a successful porous space. The Board noted that both 400 Fairview and Via6 provide good examples of successful open retail (C1.1, C1.2, C1.3, C3.1, and C4.1).

- b. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested additional information on how the retail will function within the podium architecture, which should be informed by the tower form (C1.1, C1.2, C1.3, C3.1, and C4.1).
- c. The Board cautioned that successful retail would require extensive transparency and thoughtful entry locations. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested additional information on how the retail will meet and spill onto the street (C1.1, C1.2, C1.3, C3.1, and C4.1).

4. Streetscape. The Board acknowledged that the building is surrounded by major streets, each with a distinct character.

- a. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board requested further detail on the proposed street level landscaping. The Board supported the concept of sinuous landscaping, which will help reinforce the tower architecture, but noted that the landscaping must be well-developed in order for pedestrians experience the gesture (D1.1 and D1.2).
- b. The Board agreed the overhead weather protection should reinforce the tower architecture while balancing the needs of the community, incorporating as much overhead weather protection as possible (C5.1).
- c. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board requested a study showing the location of the canopy departure request in relationship to the ground floor programming and street tree location (C5.1).
- d. The Board expressed early support for overhead weather protection on Virginia Street. The Board agreed transparency and overhead weather protection would help create successful retail spaces (C1.1, C1.2, C1.3, C3.1 C5.1, and D1.1).
- e. The Board suggested the applicant follow up with Mirabella residents, determine the location of the public benefit feature for 1200 Howell Street and determine the location of the proposed SCL sign (C1).

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](#).

SITE PLANNING AND MASSING

A1 Respond to the Physical Environment: Develop an architectural concept and compose the building's massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found nearby or beyond the immediate context of the building site.

A1.1. Response to Context: Each building site lies within a larger physical context having various and distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond.

Develop an architectural concept and arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. a change in street grid alignment that yields a site having nonstandard shape;
- b. a site having dramatic topography or contrasting edge conditions;
- c. patterns of urban form, such as nearby buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
- d. access to direct sunlight—seasonally or at particular times of day;
- e. views from the site of noteworthy structures or natural features, (i.e.: the Space Needle, Smith Tower, port facilities, Puget Sound, Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains);
- f. views of the site from other parts of the city or region; and
- g. proximity to a regional transportation corridor (the monorail, light rail, freight rail, major arterial, state highway, ferry routes, bicycle trail, etc.).

A1.2. Response to Planning Efforts: Some areas downtown are transitional environments, where existing development patterns are likely to change. In these areas, respond to the urban form goals of current planning efforts, being cognizant that new development will establish the context to which future development will respond.

A2 Enhance the Skyline: Design the upper portion of the building to promote visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline. Respect existing landmarks while responding to the skyline’s present and planned profile.

A2.1. Desired Architectural Treatments: Use one or more of the following architectural treatments to accomplish this goal:

- a. sculpt or profile the facades;
- b. specify and compose a palette of materials with distinctive texture, pattern, or color;
- c. provide or enhance a specific architectural rooftop element.

A2.2. Rooftop Mechanical Equipment: In doing so, enclose and integrate any rooftop mechanical equipment into the design of the building as a whole.

ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

B1 Respond to the neighborhood context: Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.

B1.1. Adjacent Features and Networks: Each building site lies within an urban neighborhood context having distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond.

Arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. a surrounding district of distinct and noteworthy character;
- b. an adjacent landmark or noteworthy building;
- c. a major public amenity or institution nearby;
- d. neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;

- e. elements of the pedestrian network nearby, (i.e.: green street, hillclimb, mid-block crossing, through-block passageway); and
- f. direct access to one or more components of the regional transportation system.

B1.2. Land Uses: Also, consider the design implications of the predominant land uses in the area surrounding the site.

B4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building: Compose the massing and organize the interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.

B4.1. Massing: When composing the massing, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- a. setbacks, projections, and open space;
- b. relative sizes and shapes of distinct building volumes; and
- c. roof heights and forms.

B4.2. Coherent Interior/Exterior Design: When organizing the interior and exterior spaces and developing the architectural elements, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- d. facade modulation and articulation;
- e. windows and fenestration patterns;
- f. corner features;
- g. streetscape and open space fixtures;
- h. building and garage entries; and
- i. building base and top.

B4.3. Architectural Details: When designing the architectural details, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

- j. exterior finish materials;
- k. architectural lighting and signage;
- l. grilles, railings, and downspouts;
- m. window and entry trim and moldings;
- n. shadow patterns; and
- o. exterior lighting.

THE STREETScape

C1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction: Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.

C1.1. Street Level Uses: Provide spaces for street level uses that:

- a. reinforce existing retail concentrations;
- b. vary in size, width, and depth;
- c. enhance main pedestrian links between areas; and

d. establish new pedestrian activity where appropriate to meet area objectives. Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity.

C1.2. Retail Orientation: Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will “spill-out” onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

C1.3. Street-Level Articulation for Pedestrian Activity: Consider setting portions of the building back slightly to create spaces conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining. Further articulate the street level facade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience via:

- e. open facades (i.e., arcades and shop fronts);
- f. multiple building entries;
- g. windows that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior;
- h. merchandising display windows;
- i. street front open space that features art work, street furniture, and landscaping;
- j. exterior finish materials having texture, pattern, lending themselves to high quality detailing.

C3 Provide Active — Not Blank — Facades: Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.

C3.1. Desirable Facade Elements: Facades which for unavoidable programmatic reasons may have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest. Enliven these facades by providing:

- a. small retail spaces (as small as 50 square feet) for food bars, newstands, and other specialized retail tenants;
- b. visibility into building interiors;
- c. limited lengths of blank walls;
- d. a landscaped or raised bed planted with vegetation that will grow up a vertical trellis or frame installed to obscure or screen the wall’s blank surface;
- e. high quality public art in the form of a mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, relief, etc., installed over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface;
- f. small setbacks, indentations, or other architectural means of breaking up the wall surface;
- g. different textures, colors, or materials that break up the wall’s surface.
- h. special lighting, a canopy, awning, horizontal trellis, or other pedestrian-oriented feature to reduce the expanse of the blank surface and add visual interest;
- i. seating ledges or perches (especially on sunny facades and near bus stops);
- j. merchandising display windows or regularly changing public information display cases.

C4 Reinforce Building Entries: To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce building entries.

C4.1. Entry Treatments: Reinforce the building’s entry with one or more of the following architectural treatments:

- a. extra-height lobby space;
- b. distinctive doorways;
- c. decorative lighting;
- d. distinctive entry canopy;
- e. projected or recessed entry bay;
- f. building name and address integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
- g. artwork integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
- h. a change in paving material, texture, or color;
- i. distinctive landscaping, including plants, water features and seating
- j. ornamental glazing, railings, and balustrades.

C4.2. Residential Entries: To make a residential building more approachable and to create a sense of association among neighbors, entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street and easily accessible and inviting to pedestrians. The space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors. Provide convenient and attractive access to the building’s entry. To ensure comfort and security, entry areas and adjacent open space should be sufficiently lighted and protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

C5 Encourage Overhead Weather Protection: Project applicants are encouraged to provide continuous, well-lit, overhead weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.

C5.1. Overhead Weather Protection Design Elements: Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration given to:

- a. the overall architectural concept of the building
- b. uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections);
- c. minimizing gaps in coverage;
- d. a drainage strategy that keeps rain water off the street-level facade and sidewalk;
- e. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
- f. relationship to architectural features and elements on adjacent development, especially if abutting a building of historic or noteworthy character;
- g. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection;
- h. use of translucent or transparent covering material to maintain a pleasant sidewalk environment with plenty of natural light; and
- i. when opaque material is used, the illumination of light-colored undersides to increase security after dark.

PUBLIC AMENITIES

D1 Provide Inviting & Usable Open Space: Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

D1.1. Pedestrian Enhancements: Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk, pedestrian enhancements should be considered in the resulting street frontage. Downtown the primary function of any open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide access into the building and opportunities for outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.

- a. All open space elements should enhance a pedestrian oriented, urban environment that has the appearance of stability, quality, and safety.
- b. Preferable open space locations are to the south and west of tower development, or where the siting of the open space would improve solar access to the sidewalk.
- c. Orient public open space to receive the maximum direct sunlight possible, using trees, overhangs, and umbrellas to provide shade in the warmest months. Design such spaces to take advantage of views and solar access when available from the site.
- d. The design of planters, landscaping, walls, and other street elements should allow visibility into and out of the open space.

D1.2. Open Space Features: Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

- a. visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk;
- b. walking surfaces of attractive pavers;
- c. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;
- d. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably "spill out" and enliven the open space;
- e. areas for vendors in commercial areas;
- f. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;
- g. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and
- h. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks. residential open space

D1.3. Residential Open Space: Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

- i. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
- j. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
- k. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
- l. play areas for children;
- m. individual gardens; and
- n. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight.

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. Overhead Weather Protection (SMC 23.49.018 A1):** The Code requires continuous overhead weather protection along the entire street front unless the façade is setback 5 feet from the street property line. The applicant has requested a departure from overhead weather protection on each street front as shown on page 116 of the Early Design Guidance packet.

The Board requested additional study of the overhead weather protection departure request in relationship to the ground level programming, location of street trees and primary entries. The Board felt that a limited departure request was not entirely unreasonable but that overhead weather protection should be maximized for public benefit on each street frontage. The revised street level design must better meet the intent of Design Guideline C-1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction.

- 2. Blank Façade (SMC 23.49.056):** The Code requires that blank facades be limited to a maximum of 30 feet wide. The applicant has requested a 38.5 foot blank façade along Virginia Street.

The Board requested additional study of the location of blank façade in relationship to ground floor programming. The Board felt a blank façade departure request was not unreasonable but felt that the location of the request needed further study. The Board was very interested in creating vibrant and viable retail spaces at ground level which requires a high level of transparency. The revised street level design must better meet the intent of Design Guideline C1.3 Street-Level Articulation for Pedestrian Activity.

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.