City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Togelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

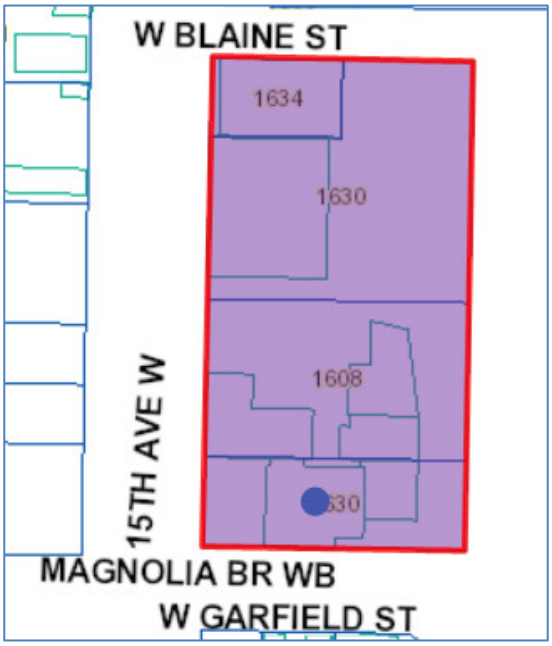
Project Number:	3022095
Address:	1602 15th Avenue West
Applicant:	Michael Chen of MacKenzie
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, February 03, 2016
Board Members Present:	Boyd Pickrell (Chair) Christine Harrington Katherine Idziorek Homero Nishiwaki
Board Members Absent:	Janet Stephenson
DPD Staff Present:	Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Industrial Commercial, 45-Foot Height Limit (IC-45)

Nearby Zones: (North) IC-45
(South) IC-45
(East) Single Family 9600 Minimum Lot Size (SF 9600)
(West) IC-45

Lot Area: 87, 817 square feet



Current Development:

The subject site currently consists of four separate tax parcels totaling approximately two acres. The site is

generally flat, with the exception of the northeast corner which contains steep slopes that rise approximately 25-feet to the eastern property line. Existing structures include a two-story wood frame structure, and a one-story and a two-story CMU building.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development and neighborhood character consists of early to mid-century one- and two-story structures and newer commercial development. Existing nearby uses include a car wash, work loft units, and retail. An unimproved right-of-way and greenbelt separate the subject site from single-family development (SF 9600 zoning) to the east. The change in elevation from the site to the SF 9600 zone to the east is approximately 200-feet.

Access:

The preferred option proposes vehicular access from 15th Ave W, W Blaine St, and W Garfield St. Pedestrian access to the office is provided via 15th Ave W.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

Liquefaction Prone, Steep Slope, and Potential Slide

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design review early design guidance proposing two 4 story buildings. Building A contains 102,331 sq. ft. of warehouse storage space. Building B contains 33,150 sq. ft. of warehouse storage space. Parking for 76 vehicles to located at and below grade in Building B and surface parking for 16 vehicles to be provided (for a total of 92 vehicles). Existing structures to be removed.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3022095) at this website:
http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Mailing Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were expressed at the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Expressed concern regarding the stability of the hillside adjacent the site to the east.
- Concerned about loss of the existing businesses on site.
- Questioned proposed access.
- Concerned about glare from exterior lighting.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

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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.

1. **Site Planning and Public Realm**. The preferred option proposes two structures with vehicular access from 15th Ave W, W Blaine St, and W Garfield St.
    a. The Board discussed the proposed vehicular access from 15th Ave W, noting that 15th Ave W has a bike lane at this location, and a traffic light exists at the intersection of 15th and W Garfield. The Board expressed concern about pedestrian and cyclist safety. The Board agreed that pedestrian safety is an important consideration that should inform the location of vehicular access, and access should be from W Blaine and W Garfield Streets only. Vehicular access from 15th Ave W was not supported. Vehicular access and pedestrian safety is of highest priority. (DC1-A, DC1-C)
2. **Massing and Architectural Concept**. The Board appreciated the preferred option and breaking the building into two structures. The Board agreed this separation reduced perceived bulk and scale and recommended the project proceed with two masses (CS2-D).
    a. The subject site has approximately 422-feet of frontage along 15th Ave W. The Board agreed that breaking down the mass will be challenging, and avoiding blank walls difficult. To respond to these conditions, the Board recommended robust landscaping along the 15th Ave W frontage in lieu of green screens on the façade (DC2-B, DC2-D).
    b. The Board recommended the architectural concept reflect the historical and/or contextual elements of the site and area. Super graphics and signage was suggested as a means of expressing context or other historical references. Plastic box signs should be avoided. (CS2-A, CS3-B)
    c. The location of the office entry at the northwest corner of the south building has an opportunity to create street activity and reduce the scale of the building. The Board recommended this entry be expressed using an ensemble of elements such as overhead weather protection, canopies, lighting, paving, and/or landscaping. This office entry should have a strong connection to the street. (CS2-B, PL3-A)

d. Upper level fenestration was supported by the Board (DC2-B).
e. In consideration of lighting, the Board noted that lighting should be used primarily for safety considerations, while also highlighting architectural and/or landscape elements. Include a lighting plan in the Recommendation packet. (DC4-C, PL2-B)

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-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

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-3. Full Block Sites: Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References: Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

PUBLIC LIFE

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-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

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-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.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

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.

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.

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.

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 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 Early Design Guidance, no departures were requested.

BOARD DIRECTION

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