# City of Seattle

**Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections**
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

**SECOND RECOMMENDATION OF THE**
**WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

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| Project Number: | 3022095 |
| Address: | 1602 15th Avenue West |
| Applicant: | Michael Chen of MacKenzie |
| Date of Meeting: | Wednesday, August 31, 2016 |
| Board Members Present: | Katherine Idziorek (Chair)<br>Christine Harrington<br>Homero Nishiwaki |
| Board Members Absent: | Boyd Pickrell<br>Janet Stephenson |
| DPD Staff Present: | Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner |

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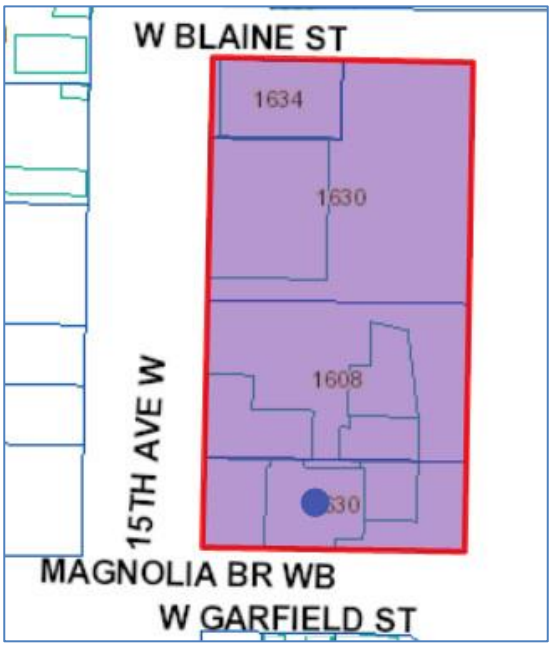
**SITE & VICINITY**

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| Site Zone: | Industrial Commercial, 45-Foot Height Limit (IC-45) |
| Nearby Zones: | (North) IC-45<br>(South) IC-45<br>(East) Single Family 9600 Minimum Lot Size (SF 9600)<br>(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 be 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.

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 3, 2016**

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:

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| **Mailing Address:** | **Public Resource Center**<br>700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000<br>P.O. Box 34019<br>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**

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 3, 2016**

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)

**FIRST RECOMMENDATION August 3, 2016**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were expressed at the First Recommendation meeting.

**PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

**FIRST RECOMMENDATION August 3, 2016**

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. **Massing**. The Board expressed concern about the massing of the proposal, concluding that it did not meet the objective of breaking down the mass and reducing perceived height, bulk, and scale. The Board reiterated this point as a priority and requested the following development:
    a. Along 15th Ave W, the structure is recessed approximately five-feet near the center of the elevation and treated with green metal panel. The Board agreed this modulation should be increased to further emphasize the perception of the project as two structures. (CS2-C, DC2-A)
    b. In consideration of pedestrian safety along 15th Ave W, the Board agreed the modulation should happen at floors two and up so as to maintain a consistent street edge and ensure pedestrian safety (PL2-B).
    c. Clearly illustrate this response in the next Recommendation packet.

2. **Landscape**. The Board discussed the landscaping along 15th Ave W that included Arborvitae adjacent the west elevation and street trees in tree grates in the right-of-way.
    a. The Board did not support the proposed Arborvitae and recommended the installation of lush and robust landscaping to provide greater visual interest. The Board suggested vertical plantings, such as Vine Maple or Dogwood trees. The landscape along 15th Ave W should also include a variety of layers and produce seasonal interest. (CS2-A, CS2-B)
    b. The Board recommended a continuous planter strip be provided along 15th Ave W rather than the proposed tree grates, and street trees should be planted the length of the 15th Ave W frontage (CS2-A, CS2-B).
    c. Include a landscape plan in the next Recommendation packet.

3. **Artwork**. The subject site currently contains a glass tile manufacturing business. The project design proposed the use of this glass tile as artwork on the west façade.
    a. The Board supported use of this glass tile and recommended it be used at the office entry due to its small scale (CS3-B, PL3-A).
    b. The Board agreed that artwork on the west façade should be of a large scale and bold expression that evokes a sense of place (*super graphics* were suggested) (CS3-B).

c. The Board suggested locating the artwork within the green framed areas and be designed to serve as a contrast between the light gray within the frames and the dark gray of the upper levels (CS3-B), DC2-B.
d. The Board recommended that the artwork be integrated with the landscape concept along 15th Ave W (CS3-B)

4. **Office Entry**. The office entry was located at the northwest corner of the site, with direct access to the 15th Ave W sidewalk. The ensemble of elements demarcating this entry included steel and glass entry canopies, glass storefront windows, and green metal panel. The Board found the office expression to be successful. (PL3-A)

5. **Lighting**. Lighting was proposed along the perimeter of the structure to provide for safety and security and emphasizing the green metal panel treatment at the northwest and southwest corners.
   a. The Board expressed concern that there was a lack of lighting along 15th Ave W, and recommended lighting be added to accentuate the architectural concept and/or the artwork on the west façade. The lighting should be of a human scale. (PL2-B, DC4-C)
   b. The Board supported the proposed lighting fixtures that included black aluminum recessed, wall-mounted, and pole lighting (DC4-C).

**SECOND RECOMMENDATION August 31, 2016**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were expressed at the Second Recommendation meeting.

**PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

**SECOND RECOMMENDATION August 31, 2016**

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. **West Elevation and Blank Walls**. In response to the guidance provided at the first Recommendation meeting, the west elevation was revised to include a third arch element, additional fenestration, and greater upper level modulation.
   a. While the Board expressed frustration that the elevation had not provided solutions addressing their guidance from the previous meeting, the Board did acknowledge that the mass has been broken down further by increasing the gaskets and adding mass along the north façade. They agreed that the expression of the north façade was successful.
   b. The asymmetry of the recesses on the west elevation was supported.
   c. The southwest corner of the structure is notched, with an additional five-foot setback. It was noted that this area will contain some utilities such as a gas meter. The Board

requested additional information to understand the treatment of this area. Include in the next Recommendation packet street level perspectives of this area including the utilities.

d. The Board questioned the relationship between the interior functions and treatment of the west elevation. The floor plans should match the elevations to clearly articulate interior and exterior relationships.
e. The Board recommended the windows line up with corridors. The Board specified that display cases are not acceptable. The elevations should show the storage doors inside.

2. **West Elevation and Art**. In response to the guidance provided at the First Recommendation meeting, the office entry sequence and west elevation were revised to include additional glass tile framing the office entry and a third arch frame element and additional fenestration on the west elevation.
    a. The Board again supported the use of the glass tile from the current tenant, but would like to see more tiles used in a more artistic composition that is better integrated into the entry sequence. Increase the amount of tile and better integrate them into the entry sequence.
    b. Again, the Board supported the architectural concept of the frames or arches on the west elevation, but felt the arches frame or highlight large expanses of blank wall and this expansive blank wall is not acceptable. Instead, the Board wanted to see a substantial response to mitigate blank walls. Add articulation, a mural, or use material application or super graphics to create a sense of place. Look to the mural at CVS (at 531 Queen Anne Ave N) for inspiration.

3. **Landscape**. The landscaping concept along 15th and its relationship to the architectural concept was discussed at length. The six-foot landscape strip was supported.
    a. The repetition of columnar plantings (Irish Yews) was not supported by the Board. The Board reiterated their guidance for a landscape plan that includes native plantings, a variety of plantings and scale, and seasonal color. Eliminate the monotony of the landscaping along 15th and provide a landscape concept that contributes to the architectural concept and creates a sense of place.
    b. To further break up the monotony of the landscaping along 15th, the Board encouraged a variety of street trees. Work with SDOT to include a variety of street trees along 15th.

4. **Lighting**. At the First Recommendation meeting, the Board recommended lighting be added to accentuate the architectural concept and/or the artwork on the west façade. The lighting should be of a human scale. In response to this guidance, the lighting plan was revised to include LED lighting within the arch elements on the west elevation. As shown in the Recommendation packet (page 17), this lighting brightens the framed portions of the west elevation and provide light at the sidewalk.
    a. The Board was comfortable with the LED lighting, but would welcome landscape lighting as well to highlight plantings and provide human scale lighting.
    b. The parking lot lighting and exterior wall mounted fixtures were supported.

c. The combination of LED lighting and corridor lighting appeared to be successful. The Board requested additional information at the next meeting accurately describing the interior corridor lighting and window transparency.

**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 the Second Recommendation meeting, no departures were requested.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

## BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the SECOND RECOMMENDATION meeting, the Board recommended the project return for another meeting in response to the guidance provided.