



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3022598

Address: 620 Terry Avenue

Applicant: Ankrom Moisan Architects

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Board Members Present: Natalie Gualy (Chair)
Barbara Busetti
Dan Foltz
Tina Orr-Cahall
Amy Taylor

Board Members Absent: Curtis Bigelow

SDCI Staff Present: Garry Papers, M.Arch, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: HR – (Highrise, multifamily)

Nearby Zones: (North) HR
(South) HR
(East) HR
(West) HR

Lot Area: 28,800 sq ft



Current Development:

The half-block site has two 3 story residential structures, surface parking lots, two garages off the alley, and a private garden plot.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The site is located in the mixed use First Hill Urban Center Village, uphill and east of downtown. The neighborhood is comprised of older residential, commercial, religious and medical facilities; Harborview Hospital is to the southwest on James Street, and the Frye art museum is across Cherry Street to the north. The vicinity is transitioning, with multiple residential projects proposed, including an 8 story full block structure to the south, two 40 story towers to the northwest, and a 6 story structure to the southeast across the alley. The 4 story Old Colony condominium building is located to the northeast across the alley.

Access:

Pedestrians access the site from the three surrounding streets: James and Cherry Streets, and Terry Avenue. Terry Avenue is a designated Green Street. Vehicles access is from the existing, through-block improved alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is a 24 story, senior living apartment structure, consisting of 243 units, independent and assisted living but no skilled nursing services on-site. Various tenant amenity areas and lobby are proposed at the ground level, with amenity decks on level 5 of the podium and the tower top. Parking for 191 vehicles is below grade; parking and loading access is proposed off the alley.

The design packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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

Mailing **Public Resource Center**

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Stated the alley is heavily used by neighboring pedestrians and recommended the loading and vehicle access be off the adjoining streets rather than the alley (several concurred) [Staff clarified that Code requires vehicle access off the alley].
- Encouraged the alley façade to be thoughtfully designed and use quality materials, and not be an ugly leftover facing the neighboring windows.
- Appreciated the proposed 4 ft setback of the alley walls, but recommended the setback be larger and all the way to grade (several concurred).
- Supported the 4 story podium and recommended no taller a podium, as it will shade and overwhelm the existing condo.
- Recommended as much as possible of the James Street frontage be true commercial, and open to all neighborhood users direct from the street (many concurred).
- Noted that there are 900+ units proposed in the immediate vicinity, generating demand for walkable services, and recommended more ground level retail and services.
- Noted there are low windows on the alley of the adjacent condo; suggested vehicle movements and noise be minimized, and the new building be designed to direct headlights away from those windows.
- Recommended notching the corners of the alleys to maximize light into the alley.
- Lamented there was not much difference in the three applicant-provided massing options, and that the ground level options were also identical (several concurred).
- Stated there should have been a massing option with a taller, thinner tower, with less wide overall shadow impacts.
- Noted the nearby religious and cultural facilities. The design should generate special uses and streetscape treatments that respond to the exceptional location; however, the proposal is generic.
- Supported the low podium to the north, and the proposed tower form toward the south of the half-block, to minimize shadows on the museum and condo.
- Encouraged all mature trees be retained.
- Applauded the building setback and Green Street treatment shown (several concurred).
- Agreed the Green Street treatment was promising, but recommended no vehicle drop-offs should erode that widened 'linear park'; passenger loading might be OK on Cherry Street.
- Reiterated that up to 5,000 new units (including Yesler Terrace) will be built in the vicinity, so ground level uses should be mostly true, welcoming commercial, rather than the proposed auditorium and similar uses which are utilized by the building or tenants.
- Stated the Green Street is a long-standing community complement for the density, and it should provide usable, functional recreation assets, not simply visual, green relief.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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 (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance. [EDG booklet page references]

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE May 25, 2016

1. Massing & Tower Placement:

- a. Tower Location: The Board agreed with the public comments that the options were not substantially different. The Board agreed the tower form should be placed towards the south of the block, but it should leave a generous and usable podium deck on the south end that gets consistent sunlight in the mornings, most of the year. The option 3 south deck appears small [p 30], and used only for gardens [48]. At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant should provide detailed landscape designs of all upper terraces to verify their amenities and function. (CS1-B.2, CS2-D.1, DC3-B.4)
- b. Tower Form: The Board agreed the option 3 form is the most promising, especially the offset parapets and the deep vertical seams that differentiate the two 'sliding boxes' [see pg 31, 36]. The Board also agreed the tower should not exceed the Code 110ft maximum facade length. (DC2-A.2, DC2-C.1)
- c. Tower and Podium: The Board agreed the angled corner shown on the east 'tower-half' provides formal interest and drama at the ground plane, but a better location for this form would be at the southwest street corner, rather than a mid-block alley. The proposed rain water gardens could remain at the alley corner. (CS2-C.1; DC2-B.1)

2. Ground Floor, Podium & Access:

- a. James Street: The Board supported public comment to provide true commercial uses along all or most of the James frontage, with a strong, transparent and porous corner activator/café at the sunny, southwest corner. The uses should have direct access from the sidewalk, high transparency, and step with the slight slope. (PL3-C.1)
- b. Terry Avenue Activation: the Board supported the highly transparent ground floor along Terry, even if the transparency looks into secured building spaces, as depicted on pg 39. The Board supported a strong and legible primary residential entrance. (PL3-A.2; PL3-C.2)
- c. Podium Setback: The Board agreed with public comment that the 4ft deep podium setback should be full length along the alley and extend fully to grade. (CS2-D.5)

- d. Podium Materials: The Board agreed with the public comment that all alley materials should be high quality and part of an intentionally designed facade to the neighbors, incorporating safe, consistent, but indirect lighting. (CS2-D.5, DC4-A.1)
- e. Parking Access: The Board agreed that alley parking access should be shifted to the south end of the block, to minimize noise and movements adjacent to the low, existing windows of the Old Colony building. Direct headlights into any adjacent alley use can be avoided by angling the ramp approach, or locating it opposite a blank wall. The Board regretted that no ground floor options, or for the parking ramp were provided, but recommended presenting genuine options and studies of all vehicle movements, loading, drop-off's, etc with the MUP application and at subsequent Board meetings. (CS2-D.5)

3. Streetscape & Setback Landscaping:

- a. Green Street Reinforcement: The Board agreed with the public comment that the drop-off shown on Terry [pg 46] presented too large of a paved interruption (10 x 50+ ft) in the Green Street linear park. The Board recommended a smaller drop off on Cherry or James, even if it generates a secondary pedestrian entrance. A full curb cut onto the site was strongly discouraged, and the alley should be used for vehicle access, with the mitigations previously described. (PL1-A.1; DC3-A.1; DC4-D.4)
- b. Setbacks: The Board strongly supported the 11ft building setback along Terry Street, resulting in a 30 ft zone to curb, and generously wide planters along the curb and building edge [pg 46]. The Board also supported the diverse, paved gathering spaces at the entrance and two corners, as depicted on pg 39-41. These street mixing zones are a crucial component for the population of the building, and the landscape designs should provide ample seating, furnishings and features. (PL1-A.2; PL1-B.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-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

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-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.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

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

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

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.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses: In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer’s markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

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

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

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-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

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-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

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-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation: Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

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.

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-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

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.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

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 size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) 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(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no departures were requested; the Board did not endorse the massing option #2 which suggested a façade length departure, or any massing that would exceed the Code maximum façade length of 110 ft.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, three of the five Board members recommended moving forward to MUP application, in response to all the guidance contained herein.