



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3023101

Address: 1101 8th Avenue

Applicant: Perkins + Will Architects

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Board Members Present: Dan Foltz (Acting Chair)
Barbara Busetti
Christina Orr-Cahill
Sarah Saviskas

Board Members Absent: Curtis Bigelow
Natalie Gualy

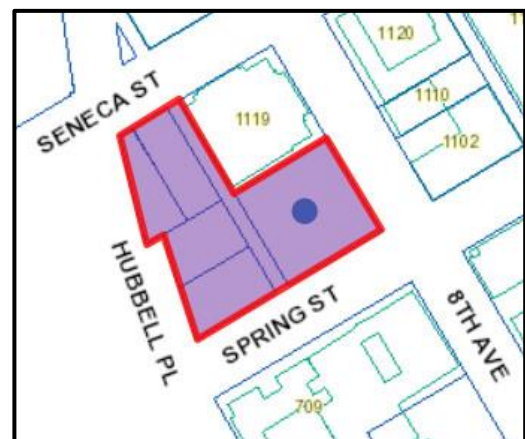
SDCI Staff Present: Garry Papers, RA, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: HR (High Rise)

Nearby Zones: (North) HR
(South) NC3-160
(East) HR
(West) HR

Lot Area: 41,084 sq ft
(including the 16ft wide public alley)



Current Development:

Surface parking lot

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The ¾ block parking lot wraps around the Town Hall cultural facility, a designated city Historic Landmark. Several 10-30 story residential buildings are located across the streets to the north and east. A 3-story religious facility occupies the block to the south, and the I-5 freeway trench is across Hubbell Place to the west. The surrounding mixed use neighborhood is characterized by a range of residential, cultural, medical and hotel uses, in structures of diverse styles, scales and vintage.

Access:

Pedestrian access from the 4 surrounding streets: Hubbell Place, 8th Avenue, Seneca and Spring Streets. Vehicular access from the platted alley crossing the site, north-south.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A residential development is proposed with 550 units in 2, 32 story towers, and 2,000 sq. ft. of ground level retail. Parking for 410 vehicles will be located in shared, below grade garage. Project proposes a vacation of the alley between Seneca St and Spring St.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

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

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 public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported a large plaza at the northwest corner of the site, providing valuable open space in a densifying neighborhood and reinforcing the link across the I-5 gap. (PL1A)
- Encouraged additional pedestrian amenities along the 8th Avenue “Park to Park Path”.
- Requested excellent weather protection and wayfinding. (PL2)
- Supported retail uses along 8th Avenue, and townhouses, if provided, on Spring Street.
- Encouraged consideration of transit stops at Seneca & 8th Avenue.
- Would like to see abundant lighting and fixtures matching the pedestrian scale lighting along 8th Avenue (Staff note: improvements in the ROW are primarily an SDOT review responsibility)
- Applauded the applicant for meeting with Town Hall, collaborating with them and integrating Town Hall access and concerns into the site design.
- Encouraged the design to relate to the human scale found in the Town Hall building.
- Supported both towers at 300 ft height, to ensure a bigger plaza.
- Very concerned that the ground floors have almost no retail, which does not support neighborhood services and retail for the sizable population growth, nor provide eyes-on-the-street security.
- Suggested ground floor townhouses like in Vancouver BC, and concerned that retail spaces would remain empty for too long.
- Stated the proposed facades were too flat, glassy and boring, and encouraged more façade texture, modulation and scale.
- Supported the plaza but concerned the rest of the west frontage did not anticipate a future lid or buildings over the I-5, and it was not pedestrian friendly.

SDCI staff also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Tower shade and shadows should be mitigated by tower shaping.
- Generous public plazas should surround the Town Hall, especially the south side.
- Provide abundant ground floor commercial, ideally for a large restaurant or grocer, for better neighborhood mix.

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. (Applicable Guidelines)

All [page references] below are to the 10/19/16 EDG booklet.

1. Massing & Building Forms:

- a. The Board agreed the first 2 massing options appeared token, and that massing Option 3 was the most successful, with smaller floor plates that create more slender proportions and more daylight penetration. The Board also supported the modulation and clearly expressed “vertical tubes” shown on pg 58-61; the more complex vertical and horizontal jogs shown on p 57/right were promising to the Board, but more complete tower and podium perspectives are needed. (DC2)
- b. The Board agreed the first 3-4 floors of the tower podiums were critical to be well scaled, and should display intentional responses to the Town Hall landmark (proportions, materiality, etc), as all three forms frame the plaza. The Board recommended future tower elevations include the full and detailed Town Hall elevations. The east tower podium might possibly be more solid as it defines the 8th Avenue street edge in a cohesive way with the existing Town Hall street elevation. (CS3-A-1)
- c. The Board expressed concern that several proposed projects and towers are re-shaping the west facing skyline of First Hill, and recommended a large scale study of all proposed towers be included as context informing the profiles and skyline design of the subject towers. (CS2-A)

2. Podium, Ground Floors & Activation: The Board strongly expressed major concerns with the proposed ground floor and streetscape [62,66], and unanimously agreed the proposed ground floor uses were too residentially-dominant, had little porosity, and did not activate the surrounding streets or plaza.

- a. The Board supported the applicant stated intention to have floors step with the grade across the site, to maximize the engagement of the buildings with the site. (DC3-A)
- b. The Board agreed all ground floors should better activate the 2 adjacent mews, the plaza, and all street edges, with frequent doors, access and human scale composition; this also supports user and pedestrian safety. The proposed perimeter landscaping is acceptable [62], provided it is interrupted with generous patios and numerous access points for pedestrians to directly enter uses and activate the project perimeter. The Board recommended enlarged elevations of all 8 podium faces, including the Town Hall and adjacent cross street context, be included in the MUP drawings and subsequent meetings. (PL2-B; PL3-B)
- c. The Board agreed with several public comments that the ground floor should incorporate much more retail area, which should be located along 8th Avenue, and possibly stretch along the east-west mews reinforcing a primary pedestrian access from 8th to the plaza [66/right]. The Board supported a cafe retail space activating the south plaza edge, as described by the applicant at the meeting. (DC1-A)

- d. The Board agreed the two residential lobbies could be situated on the corners of the north-south mews, but unanimously agreed the primary doors for both should face the street and have legible, pedestrian-scaled entrances. (PL3-A)
- e. The Board did not agree with one public comment to locate townhouses on all ground levels, because they recommended more active uses and large transparency at the ground levels. However, the Board was receptive to townhouses possibly along portions of Spring Street or Hubbell. (PL3)
- f. The Board agreed the entire Hubbell elevation requires more careful study, including the vehicle ramp and uses that support pedestrians. Consistent with public comment, the Board recommended the project not ignore the Hubbell frontage and not reinforce the current barrier of I-5. (CS2-B)

3. Mews Operations & Design:

- a. The Board recognized that Town Hall deliveries and ADA drop-offs would likely occur off the north-south mews, but agreed that vehicular access should be minimized and discouraged, by operations management and design features. The Board supported the flexible use of the plaza, but recommended bollards, speed bumps, and other traffic calming features be employed on this mews and the plaza. The mews and plaza should read as pedestrian-first. (DC1-B)
- b. The Board expressed major concerns that the mews would be taken over as a general vehicular drop off for the residential lobbies, and recommended the below -grade vehicle entrance from Hubbell be designed to allow short-term vehicle drop offs, if they are not possible at the Spring Street curb. (DC1-C)
- c. The Board agreed the space between the Town Hall and the adjacent new podium [62,63] should be redesigned to be welcoming to pedestrians entering from 8th, and to afford more light to the adjacent Town Hall windows. The stairs shown on pg 62 should be studied to be more gradual and welcoming for all abilities. (PL2)

4. Plaza, Streetscapes, & Lighting:

- a. The Board supported the conceptual landscape design for the northwest plaza, including the water features, the preliminary materiality and plantings, and references to Freeway Park [62-65]. The Board recommended more zoomed in shadow studies to confirm activity areas corresponding to sun access. (CS1-B; DC3-B)
- b. The Board supported a lush but pedestrian-supportive streetscape, especially along Spring and 8th, and the filling in of gaps in the street trees. (DC4-D)
- c. Echoing public comment, the Board supported a complete and abundant lighting strategy for the plaza, mews and street edges, especially for Town Hall activities in the evening. (DC4-C)

- d. The Board endorsed efforts with SDOT to improve all pedestrian crossings at Seneca and Hubbell, to improve links between the proposed plaza and First Hill to Downtown. (PL2)

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 the following departure was identified:

1. **Minimum Setbacks for HR Zones (SMC 23.45.518.C):** The Code requires portions of a structure greater than 45ft in height to be set back a minimum 10 ft from any street or alley property line, and a minimum 20ft from any abutting property line (at Town Hall in this case). The applicant proposes the predominant facades of building portions above 45 ft height to be: 0ft the property line on Spring Street, Hubbell Place and 8th Avenue; west tower is at the 10 ft alley setback line; east tower is 18ft from the alley property line (leaving a 44ft wide gap where code requires a minimum 36ft one); and west tower is at the setback line abutting the Town Hall property line. Minor modulations and recesses are proposed in all the above facades.

NOTE: The Code citation and text on booklet pg 76/left was mistaken; the correct code citation is above.

The Board acknowledged public comment regarding the relationships of the towers to Town Hall, and indicated cautious receptivity to the amount of tower forms above 45ft encroaching into the street setbacks, pending more detailed drawings showing the following: a) large scale elevations and sections of the tower-to-Town Hall relationship, enhancing the pedestrian space (possibly more than 27ft wide) and light at the lower levels; b) zoom-in shadow studies of the block evaluating how the 44ft gap allows enhanced light penetration to the plaza (compared to code 36ft), and studies of tower plan shaping that improves overall light penetration; c) further refinements to all 8 tower facades to respond to modulation and scale guidance under 1a; d) detailed elevations of all podiums and tower floors, to verify the transition between them is graceful and the towers are not top-heavy. (CS2-D)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide Guidelines identified as Priority Guidelines by the Board 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-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

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-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-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

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-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.

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.

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-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

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.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

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.

PL2-D Wayfinding

PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding: Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

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-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses: Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

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.

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-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

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.

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.

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

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space 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.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

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-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

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.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

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.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application, with response to all the guidance herein. The Board explicitly stated that complete and responsive design development is essential for this large and prominent site, otherwise more than one Recommendation meeting could be inevitable. The Board strongly recommended multiple drawings and studies described herein (underlined at: 1a; 1b; 1c; 2b; 4a) be provided to staff during MUP review, and at subsequent meetings.