



# City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections  
Nathan Torgelson, Director



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3023379

Address: 201 Westlake Ave N

Applicant: Case Creal of Gensler for CitizenM Hotel

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Board Members Present: Katherine Idziorek, Acting Chair  
Jill Kurfirst, Substitute  
Homero Nishiwaki

Board Members Absent: Boyd Pickrell  
Christine Harrington  
Janet Stephenson

SDCI Staff Present: Magda Hogness

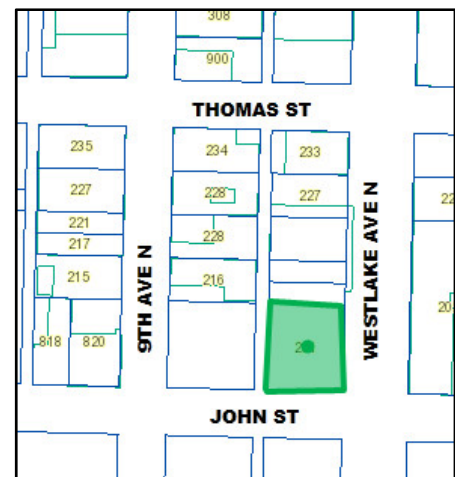
### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed (SM-SLU 160/85-240)

Nearby Zones North: SM-SLU 160/85-240  
South: SM-SLU 240/125-240  
East: SM-SLU 160/85-240  
West: SM-SLU 160/85-240

Lot Area: 12,916 sf

Access: The property currently has vehicular access off John St and the alley.



### Current Development:

A one-story commercial building currently occupies the site.

### **Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The site is located in the southwest edge of the larger South Lake Union neighborhood, referred to as the Denny Park area. Denny Park, Seattle's first and oldest park, is located one block to southwest and is identified as a Heart Location in the South Lake Union Design Guidelines.

This area is characterized by office, institutional, and residential structures. Substantial new developments have been recently constructed or are under review for this immediate area. To the north is a four story commercial building. A surface parking lot lies to the west just across the north/south-running alley. A 7-story structure containing 129 apartment units and 6,000 sf of retail is being proposed on this surface parking lot under project number 3019939. Across John St to the south, are proposals for an 18-story office tower, 3-story commercial structure, 41-story residential tower and a 2-story commercial structure under projects 3017320 and 3017321.

The site has street frontage on Westlake Ave N and John Street, a designated Green Street. Westlake is a vehicular and transit corridor with streetcar and transit service. A few blocks further to the north, the busy arterials of Mercer and Broad Streets provide a clear break with the rest of the South Lake Union neighborhood.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is proposing an eight-story building containing 244-269 hotel rooms and 6,200 sq. ft. of ground level retail space.

### **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE June 15, 2016**

The packet includes materials 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 SDCl:

**Mailing Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019

Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following comment was offered at the EDG meeting:

- Strong support for the proposed art piece; has the potential to say we are an art oriented community.

## 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.

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE June 15, 2016

- 1) **Massing & Relationship to Context:** The Board recognized the proposed modular construction as unique and commended the applicant for the studies which show different massing configurations working within this framework to respond to the site conditions. The Board strongly supported Scheme Three, as the courtyard location best responds to the context and the massing addresses the different streetscape conditions and minimizes blank walls. The Board directed the applicant to proceed with their preferred option. (CS1-I, CS2-A, CS2-B, CS2-C-1, DC2)
- 2) **Architectural Concept and Frontages:** The Board supported the conceptual response to each frontage condition and gave guidance for the design development.
  - a. The Board strongly supported the 2-story structural glazing and the design concept of integrating the inside and outside activities. The Board recommended keeping the storefront system as clean as possible and agreed the columns should be set back, disengaged with the storefront system to allow for the maximum transparency. (CS2-B-2, PL3-C-2, DC2-B-1)
  - b. The Board also requested studying if the courtyard space will be visible to the pedestrian through the 2-story structural glazing. If the space is visible the Board encouraged more transparency to allow for views of daylight coming from the courtyard space. (CS2-B-2, DC1-A-4)
  - c. The Board supported the lack of overhead canopy as it avoids bifurcating the 2-story glazing and recommended developing a concealed, integrated gutter system. (PL2-C-2, PL3-C-2)
  - d. The Board agreed that the 2-story glazing should be pulled back further to emphasize the hierarchy of the massing and provide weather protection. The Board recommended a setback of 5' along Westlake and noted 3' would be acceptable though it is narrow for comfort. (CS2-B-2, PL1-B, PL3-C-2, DC2-B-1)
  - e. The Board supported the proposed art along John and recommended wrapping the art into the alley. The Board noted that this corner can be pushed forward to mitigate the increased setback along Westlake and increase visibility from the nearby Denny Park. (CS2.I.iv, CS2-B-2, PL1-B, PL3-II, PL4-A)
  - f. The Board discussed the roofscape and related departure and agreed the projecting rooftop feature clad in red color creates a sculptural composition. The Board noted this feature has potential to be used as a compositional tube and encouraged the vertical core expression to continue and connect down to the highly transparent base. (PL3-C-2, DC2-I-I, DC2-B-1)

- g. The Board supported the proposed projecting entry identified by red color and encouraged adding another entrance on John. The Board noted there is potential for this additional entry to act as the terminus of the compositional tube. (CS2-B-2, PL3-A-1, PL3-C-1)
- 3) **Streetscape and Landscape:** The Board strongly supported the thoughtful landscaping approach to the varied adjacent street frontages, the proposed curb bulb and creation of small scale pedestrian seating areas. The Board requested more information about the strategy for hotel drop off at the next meeting and encouraged looking into bike facilities such as Bikeshare. (CS2.I.iv, CS2-B-2, PL1-B, PL1-C-1, PL1-III-I, PL4-B-2)
  - 4) **Materials and Detailing:** The Board supported the detail to texture shown in the façade precedence images and observed that a shifted planes approach or the use of simple high quality materials are both good strategies. (DC2, DC4-A)
  - 5) **Blank Walls and Proposed Art:** The Board strongly supported the idea of a large regional art piece as an end condition for the modular units. Recognizing that north façade will also be highly visible from Westlake, the Board requested more information about the frame detailing and pedestrian perspectives of this element for the next meeting. (DC2-B-2, DC2-D-2)

## 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](#).

<b>CONTEXT &amp; SITE</b>
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**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.**

***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

**CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics**

**CS2-I-iv. Heart Locations:** Several areas have been identified as “heart locations.” Heart locations serve as the perceived center of commercial and social activity within the neighborhood. These locations provide anchors for the community as they have identity and give form to the neighborhood. Development at heart locations should enhance their central character through appropriate site planning and architecture. These sites have a high priority for improvements to the public realm. A new building’s primary entry and facade should respond to the heart location. Special street treatments are likely to occur and buildings will need to respond to these centers of commercial and social activity. Amenities to consider are: pedestrian lighting, public art, special paving,

landscaping, additional public open space provided by curb bulbs and entry plazas. See full guidelines for Heart Locations

## PUBLIC LIFE

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

#### **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-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.

### **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.

#### **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.

**PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists**

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

**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-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-D Scale and Texture**

**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.

**South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:**

**DC2-I Architectural Concept and Consistency**

**DC2-I-i. Roofscape Design:** Design the “fifth elevation” — the roofscape — in addition to the streetscape. As this area topographically is a valley, the roofs may be viewed from locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, views from outside the area as well as from within the neighborhood should be considered, and roof-top elements should be organized to minimize view impacts from the freeway and elevated areas.

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

***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

**DC3-II Landscaping To Enhance The Building and/or Site**

**DC3-II-i. Integrated Artwork:** Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.

**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-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.

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

**DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan**

**DC4-E-1. Deconstruction:** When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

**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 Meeting the following departure was requested:

1. **Rooftop features (23.48.025.C):** The Code allows covered common amenity area to extend up to 15' above the maximum height so long as the combined area of all rooftop features does not exceed 25% of the roof area and also allows rooftop features to cover up to 65% of the roof area if no feature is located closer than 10' from the roof edge. The applicant proposes 3,340 sf of rooftop features (31% of the roof area) closer than 10' from the roof edge, including a roof terrace covered with a trellis at 18' above the height limit.

The Board recognized that rooftop will be visible from adjacent structures and unanimously indicated early support for the departure as the design has a sculptural quality and the potential to strengthen the architectural concept and expression of the building as a whole. (DC2-I-I, DC2-B-1)

## **BOARD DIRECTION**

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