



FINAL RECOMMENDATION 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, September 06, 2017

Board Members Present: Homero Nishiwaki, Acting Chair
Patreese Martin
Stephen Porter
Brian Walters

Board Members Absent: Christine Harrington

SDCI Staff Present: Magda Hogness

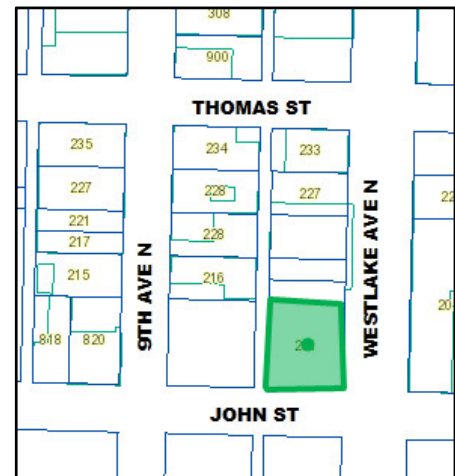
SITE & VICINITY

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 7-story residential structure is being constructed 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 a 7-story hotel containing 264 rooms and ground-level retail space. The proposal includes demolition of an existing 12,960 sq. ft. structure.

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

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE June 15, 2016

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.

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 provided the following siting and design guidance.

- 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)

FIRST RECOMMENDATION April 26, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were offered at the Recommendation meeting:

- Would like to collaborate on the pedestrian lighting and street furniture as a representative of the SLU Community Council, working on the Market to Mohai pedestrian corridor.
- Supported the interesting project for the neighborhood.
- Stressed the importance of pedestrian lighting that is comfortable and safe.
- Would like to see an adequate sidewalk at least 8' in width.
- Concerned that meeting rooms will likely have shades pulled and will not contribute to streetscape along John St, a green street.
- Supported the proposed hotel drop off location off John St.
- Supported the simple, clean look of the roof design. Noted there will be quite a few people looking down on the roof from nearby buildings.
- Would like to see a wayfinding element added for the hotel drop off zone.
- Interested in seeing the project incorporate sustainability into the modular construction.

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PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Revised massing and EDG Guidance:** The Board discussed the evolution of the proposed massing option from the EDG massing option reviewed at the EDG meeting and unanimously supported the revised massing. The Board agreed the revised massing built on the best qualities of the previous massing options, including a tall base expression with a 3' setback along all street facing facades. The Board also strongly supported the addition of a generous corner setback. (CS2-C-1, PL1, PL3, DC2)

2. Architectural Concept, Façade Composition and Materials: The Board provided direction on the façade composition, transparency and materials.

- a. The Board approved the development of the 17' tall transparent base and the detailing of the columns and soffit along each street facing façade. (CS2-B-2, PL1-B, PL2-B-3, PL3-C-2, DC2-B-1)
- b. The Board also supported the proposed glazing along the alley and encouraged increasing the proportion of the glazing to read as storefront. However, the Board also acknowledged safety concerns related to vehicular impact and did not recommend this change as a condition. (PL3-C-2, DC2-B-1)
- c. The Board strongly supported the quality of materials proposed and cohesive approach to detailing, including the staggered pattern and the added texture of the exposed fasteners of the equitone panels. (DC2-B-1, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)
- d. For the north blank wall, the Board supported the proposed monochromatic treatment using two contrasting tones of high quality equitone panels. The Board approved the crisp appearance and the differentiation of the stair tower with contrasting tone and panel pattern. (DC2-B-2, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)
- e. Related to the blank wall along Westlake, the Board recommended aligning with the regular rhythm of the adjacent storefront and supported the related departure, provided that the egress door is of a high-quality. (DC2-B-2, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)
- f. In order to add depth to the upper facades, the Board recommended a condition to expand the window depth created by protruding the window flashing/fin by 3" to a 7" minimum, similar to the image shown on page 24 of the packet. (DC2-A, DC2-B-1, DC2-C-2, DC4-A-1)
- g. The Board supported the modified orientation and selection of art. Of the proposed art concepts shown, the Board indicated their preference for the bold and active alternate, referred to as "*Joggers*," presented at the meeting. (DC2-B, DC2-D-2)

3. Arrangement of uses: The Board reviewed the arrangement of uses along the street frontages and related departures.

- a. The Board approved of the depth and openness of the lounge area and supported the departure request as the design allows for layers of activities to occur and opportunities to visually connect to the pedestrian realm. (CS2-B-2, PL3-C-1)
- b. The Board agreed with public comment regarding the ground level character and arrangement of uses along John St. While discussing the related departure, the Board recommended removing the middle meeting room from the John St frontage and eliminating enclosed walls. The Board supported the related departure, provided the meeting room is omitted, as the resulting design locates more active spaces along John St and has the potential to better engage with the pedestrian realm. (DC1- A, PL3-C-1)

4. Streetscape and Landscape: The Board was supportive of the thoughtful approach to the varied street frontages including the expanded curb bulb at the Westlake and John Street corner and the intent to retain the mature horse chestnut trees.

- a. While the Board supported the design of the pedestrian seating elements, the Board also encouraged the applicant to work with the community group to provide a consistent identity for the Market to MOHAI pedestrian corridor. (PL1-A-1, PL1-B-2, PL2)
- b. In order to maintain a more open connection to the street and allow for ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, the Board encouraged removing the adjacent landscaping along John street, when the meeting room is omitted. The Board declined to make this item a condition of approval. (PL1-B-2, PL3-C-1)

5. Lighting, Wayfinding and Signage: The Board acknowledged the public comments related to wayfinding and lighting and recommended a condition to provide adequate lighting for pedestrians. The Board supported the overall lighting concept, in particular the red lighting at the main entry vestibule which reinforces wayfinding. While further developing the lighting, the Board encouraged working with the community for the Market to MOHAI pedestrian corridor. The Board also approved of the overall material, scale and location of the proposed upper signage related to the hotel function. (PL2-B-2, DC4-C)

6. Rooftop: Echoing public comment, the Board supported the clean design of the rooftop elevator overruns and mechanical screening incorporated with the stair tower. The Board encouraged treating the cladding consistently around the volume of stair tower and mechanical screening. (DC2-B-2, DC4-A-1)

FINAL RECOMMENDATION September 6, 2017

The presentation and materials shown in the April 26, 2017 Recommendation meeting did not include the request for a required departure, therefore an additional Recommendation meeting was required to present the departure to the Design Review Board for Recommendation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were offered at the Recommendation meeting:

- Supported the unique design and the modular construction; should be very interesting with visitors coming from all over the world.
- Noted the importance of the streetscape.
- Would like to see the most recent standards for pedestrian lighting incorporated; SDOT has lighting standards south of Denny, but those should also apply here.
- Would like to see the sidewalk be at least 8' wide.
- Preference for the previously proposed panel proportion.
- Would like to see additional wayfinding incorporated.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design.

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

- 1) Street Level Frontage and Related Departure:** The Board supported the arrangement of the café, bar, seating and lounge areas and the related departure as the design allows for opportunities to visually connect to the streetscape. In order to maximize the amount of ground level transparency, the Board preferred transparency rather than incorporating another entry to the café and lounge areas. The Board noted that the ground level uses will be open for the public to use and supported the proposed minimal hotel reception area. The Board also encouraged designing the reception area to maximize openness to the public, but declined to recommend a condition for this item. (PL3-C-2)

- 2) Response to Initial Recommendation Guidance and Conditions:** The Board discussed the changes between the previously approved design and revised design.
 - a. The Board supported the response to add depth to the upper facades by expanding the window flashing/fin to 8" from glazing to exterior cladding and unanimously agreed the previous condition was resolved. (DC2-A, DC2-B-1, DC2-C-2, DC4-A-1)
 - b. For the blank wall along Westlake, the Board continued to support the related departure which aligns the wall with the adjacent storefront proportions. The Board also approved of the proposed approach to resolve the related condition by cladding the egress door in the same dark gray Equitone panels as the surrounding facade. (DC2-B-2, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)
 - c. The Board supported the removal of the central meeting room along John and unanimously agreed their previous condition was resolved. The Board continued to support the departure request for required non-residential depth as the design has the potential to activate the pedestrian realm and transition to the sidewalk. (DC1-A, PL3-C-1)
 - d. The Board unanimously agreed the proposed lighting strategy satisfies the previous condition to provide adequate lighting for pedestrians. The Board commended the applicant for community outreach and continued to encourage working with the community for the Market to MOHAI pedestrian corridor. (PL2-B-2, DC4-C)

- 3) Materials and Detailing:** The Board discussed the new cladding pattern and acknowledged the related public comment. Noting the previous composition was composed as a super fine texture, the Board agreed that the larger scale of the panel proportion reads more as an architectural scale. In addition to addressing the larger scale of the urban block, the Board found that the larger panel related better to window proportions and provided a stronger overall composition. (DC2-B-1, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) were 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).

At the time of the Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Blank facade (23.48.040.B.2):** The Code limits blank facades located along the street level to 15'. The applicant proposes 16'-10 ¾" of blank wall façade in order to align with the regular rhythm of the adjacent storefront.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the departure request, provided the egress door is of a high quality as proposed, to uphold the visual appearance of the frontage. The Board supported the proposed approach to clad the egress door in the same dark gray Equitone panels as the surrounding facade. The Board agreed that following the storefront spacing and the proposed egress door treatment improves the composition of the entire façade and would better meet Design Guidelines DC2-B-1 Façade Composition and DC2-B-2 Blank Walls.

2. **Street Level Uses (23.48.040.C.1):** The Code requires qualifying street level uses along 75% of the Westlake Ave façade and 10% along the John St facade. The applicant proposes different street level uses which do not comply with the required uses, resulting in 0 linear ft of qualifying street level uses.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the departure request as the visibility, depth and openness of the café, bar, seating and lounge areas allow for transparency into the layers of the proposed activities. Since the ground level uses will be open for the public to use, the Board encouraged designing the reception area to maximize openness to the public. The resulting design better meets Design Guideline PL3-C-2 Visibility, and upholds opportunities to visually interact.

3. **Street Level Development Standards (23.48.040.C.3):** The Code requires non-residential depth to be at least 30'. The applicant proposes a 20'-5" interior depth for a portion of the Westlake Ave façade and 21' interior depth for the John St façade.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the departure, since the central meeting room along John was relocated for additional open lounge space, resulting in more active spaces along John than required by Code. The Board agreed the design has the potential to activate the pedestrian realm and transition to the sidewalk and better meet Design Guidelines DC1- A Arrangement of Interior Uses and PL3-C-1 Porous Edge.

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.

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. Rooftop Design: Design the “fifth elevation” — the rooftop — 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the RECOMMENDATION meeting, the Board recommended approval of the project.

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Wednesday, September 06, 2017, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Wednesday, September 06, 2017 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with no conditions.