



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3024101

Address: 2016 23rd Avenue S.

Applicant: Kusi Chaijumroonpun, Caron Architects for Joana Chong, Developer

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, October 18, 2016

Board Members Present: Charles Romero, Chair
Sharon Khosla
Carey Dagliano-Holmes
David Sauvion

Board Members Absent: Julian Weber

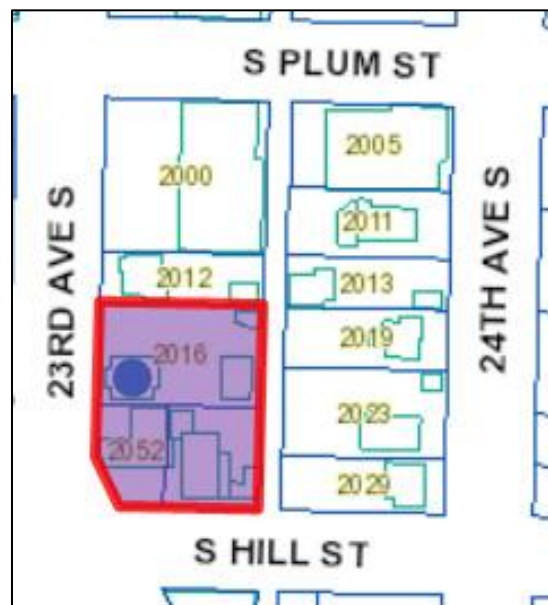
SDCI Staff Present: Josh Johnson
Sean Conrad
Brandon Cummings

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial (C1-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-65
(South) C1-65
(East) C1-40
(West) C1-65

Lot Area: 17,659 sq. ft.



Current Development:

The development site is comprised of three parcels at the junction of Rainier Avenue S. to the southwest, 23rd Avenue S. to the west, and S. Hill Street to the south. The parcels are occupied by a commercial building and two single-family structures.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The site is located along Rainier Avenue S. and to the west of MLK where there is access to both light rail and numerous bus stops. The neighborhood is a mixture of single-family residences and small businesses. In general, the area is underdeveloped in relation to the zoning potential of the neighborhood and the proposed project would be one of the first developments on the block to utilize the C1-65 zone.

Access:

Vehicular access occurs at the alley accessible from S. Hill Street. There are existing sidewalks along S. Hill Street and 23rd Avenue S. Proposed closing of S. Hill Street at intersection with Rainier Avenue S. will create pedestrian green space adjacent to site.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The site contains the Liquefaction Prone Critical Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is to allow a 6-story building containing 100 apartment units with 5,000 sq. ft. of retail space located at ground level. Parking for 42 vehicles to be provided below grade. Existing buildings to be removed.

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 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

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Concerned that the area has a history of businesses failing due to a lack of public parking provided for retail.
- Concerned that the proposed project is not compatible with the one story single family residence to the north of the property. The developer should explore the option of developing that site as well.

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

- The project should be combined with the property to the north, a single-story residence.

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 and Articulation:** The Board focused their discussions on the applicant's preferred scheme, Option 3, which proposed two large interlocking massing elements with an entry plaza to serve as public open space. The two masses are comprised of apartments and short term stay units. The Board unanimously directed the applicant to proceed forward with the preferred Option 3 with the condition that the massing treatment shown continue along the north and east façades. The Board also noted that they expect to see all elevations included with any future submittals. (DC2-A-2, DC2-D-1, DC2-C-3)
 - a. The Board supported the two volumetric elements which represented the two types of units identified in the proposal.
 - b. The Board noted that there needs to be consistency between the two massing elements, especially in the relationship between the ground and upper floors, and that the use of articulation in the upper floors can be used to break up the overall massing volumes.
- 2. Plaza Location and Primary Entries:** The location of the public plaza and primary entries for both the residential and commercial spaces were areas of concern for the Board. The Board also discussed how the proposed closure of S. Hill Street at that intersection provided a unique opportunity along the south façade to increase activity and visibility.
 - a. The Board strongly supported more activation along S. Hill Street at grade and on the upper levels of the building. Establishing a stronger connection between the plaza and S. Hill Street was recommended as this could bring more visibility to that façade and the project could serve as a gateway to the central area of the city. (CS2-B-2, CS2-B-3)

- b. The Board expressed concern over the commercial entries/experience from a comfort and safety perspective as there was no screen or landscape buffer shown in the proposal. (PL2-B-2)
 - c. There was a consensus from the Board that the applicant should revisit the design and/or location of primary residential entry for the project. They discussed how its current configuration at the back of the public plaza is problematic and that it could benefit from some form of vertical expression in the upper floors. (PL3-A)
- 3. Interior Layout of Spaces:** The Board discussed the current plan configuration of preferred Option 3 and expressed concerns over the layout of the interior spaces, location of the primary entries, and lack of architectural wayfinding elements. The Board agreed that developing legible entrances should be a priority moving forward. (PL2-D-1)
- a. The design of the primary entry and main focal point of the preferred scheme was discussed in detail as the Board did not support the proposed location of the bike storage area and secondary staircase. The Board strongly suggested a redesign of this area to place more emphasis on the residential lobby and entry. (PL3-A-1)
 - b. The Board discussed how locating the units for the more permanent residents along S. Hill Street would allow for more public engagement and provide better views to Mt. Rainier. (DC1-A, PL2-B-1)
 - c. The Board strongly suggested greater emphasis on the design and layout of the ground floor commercial spaces around the plaza. They expressed that this aspect of the project should be strong and easily identifiable given that no retail parking will be provided. (CS2-A-2)
- 4. Impact of Mt. Baker Rezone:** The Board strongly supported the applicant studying how the Mt. Baker Rezone would impact the surrounding area and the potential design implications it could have on the proposed project. It was discussed that the rezone would significantly impact retail in the area, which could influence the design layout of the ground floor retail spaces. The Board also suggested the applicant visualize what the surrounding area could look like 20 years from now as a result of the rezone and design their proposal accordingly. They reiterated that this proposal has the potential to set a precedent in terms of massing treatment, materials, and how it addresses adjacent uses for subsequent development to follow. (CS3-A-4)
- 5. Secondary Architectural Elements:** The Board recommended the use of secondary architectural elements throughout the meeting and how they could be used to strengthen the design of the proposal. It was mentioned that the precedent examples provided by the applicant had very strong secondary architectural elements and that the current proposal should pay the same attention to these details. The Board also supported the use of secondary architectural elements to break up the perception of mass, especially where the project neighbors less intense development. The Board also discussed how these elements can be used to provide equal treatment on all façades and instructed the applicant to provide elevations from all directions moving forward. (DC2-A-2, DC2-C-1, DC2-B, DC2-D)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No departures were requested at this time.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-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-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.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-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-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-C Retail Edges

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.

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-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-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.

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.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application, under the condition that the applicant continue the massing treatment on both the North and East façade of the building.