



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3024224

Address: 5458 California Ave SW

Applicant: Andrew Finch, Finch Design and Production

Date of Meeting: Thursday, June 01, 2017

Board Members Present: Matt Zinski, Chair
Donald Caffrey
Crystal Loya
Alexandra Moravec
Robin Murphy

Board Members Absent: None

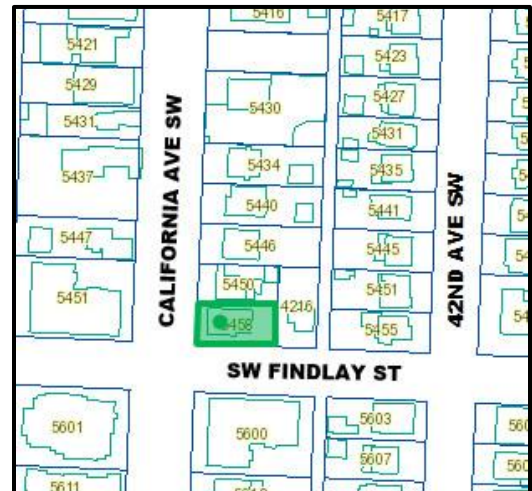
SDCI Staff Present: Crystal Torres, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial (NC2-30)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2-30
(South) LR3-RC
(East) SF 5000
(West) SF 5000

Lot Area: 5,000 sq. ft.



Current Development:

There is currently a single-story structure located on the project site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The project site is located on the northeast corner of SW Findley and California Ave SW in the West Seattle Neighborhood. The West Seattle Junction is located north of the project site and to the South is the Morgan Junction. These larger commercial nodes are characterized by one to two-story commercial buildings with brick exteriors. Both nodes have smaller parks as well. Also near the project site is the 68 acre Camp Long. The Alaska Junction Urban Village has seen a number of new mixed-use buildings adding density to the neighborhood.

Access:

Access is currently located along SW Findlay Street. Proposed pedestrian access is proposed along both California Ave SW and SW Findlay Street, no vehicular access is proposed.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

No mapped environmentally critical area on site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance to allow six, 3-story live-work units totaling 9,000 sq. ft. Existing structures to be demolished.

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 comments were offered:

- Questions regarding whether the project will be renter or owner occupied.
- Concerned with impacts to on-street parking and traffic.
- Concerned with service and emergency vehicle access.
- Concerned with conflicts between pedestrians, school buses, and garbage staging.
- Concerned with the impacts to light and air access on adjacent buildings.
- Concerned with potential removal of existing fence and security gate.
- Concerned with proposed massing response to adjacent neighbors related to views, noise, and privacy.
- Concerned with proposed building typology.
- Concerned with the number of proposed units and lack of parking.
- Concerned with the demolition of the potentially historic structure.
- Concerned with the impacts to the existing bus stop during construction.

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/Design Concept:** The Board supported Option B and provided the following guidance:
 - a. The Board supported the massing of Option B as the singular building better fits in with the existing fabric. **CS2-C, CS2-D**
 - b. The Board supported the separation of residential entries at the rear and live/work entries along the street. **PL3-B-1, PL3-B-3**
 - c. The Board supported the proposed setbacks provided by Option B as this option proposed a more substantial buffer along both the north and east lot lines. **CS2-D-5**
 - d. The Board supported Option B as the structure better followed the rhythm of neighborhood setback creating strong street edge and providing a greater buffer from the bus stop along California Ave. **CS2-A-2**
 - e. The Board discussed the blank wall and requested additional design information related to this wall at the next meeting. The Board discussed the importance of material and scale to breakdown this façade. **DC2-B-2**
 - f. The Board supported the entries along Findlay and setting back at the bus stop, however, they also discussed the importance of further resolving the corner to address the double-faced corner live/work unit condition. At the Recommendation phase, further resolve the California face of the building to better hold the corner, as well as, more detail of fenestration and materials, especially highlighting the corner unit. **CS2-C-1, DC2-B-1, DC2-D, DC2-C**

- g. The Board supported the stepped slab entries along Findlay connecting the live/work units to the sidewalk. **CS1-C, PL2-A-1**
- h. At the next meeting, provide a public perspective and a window study/privacy for adjacent building and option B. **CS2-D-5**

2. Security/Lighting:

- a. Further clarify the intention to gate the site and how this would be located and designed.
- b. At the next meeting and site lighting for security. **PL2-B, DC4-C**

3. Landscaping:

- a. The Board discussed the roof top amenity spaces and encouraged further detailing the space to provide maximum privacy, locating active areas toward the street and planting to provide buffer from adjacent residential structures. **CS2-D-5, PL1-C-1**
- b. The Board requested additional information regarding the proposed ground floor landscaping and hardscape be provided at the next meeting. **DC4-D**

4. Garbage:

- a. The Board directed further resolution of the garbage staging area and to accurately show the area on the plans. **DC1-C**

5. Signage:

- a. At the next meeting provide details on the lighting and signage for the live/work businesses. **DC4-B, DC2-C**

RECOMMENDATION June 1, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were offered:

- Supported the amount of transparency.
- Concerned that there is a lack of activation along California Ave.
- Expressed support for the departure only if the design truly created a stronger design response to the site conditions along California Ave.
- Concerned with CPTED issues.
- Suggested more trees be added along California Avenue to break up the large façade.
- Concerned with the proposed steel gates. Suggested the gate should be designed to be special and not a standard gate.

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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. Architectural Concept:

- a. The Board maintained support for the preferred EDG massing option. At EDG the Board supported the massing for its simplicity, orientation, and the way it stepped up along Findlay. However, they wanted to see the corner condition further resolved with the goal of further activating this corner. **CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes**
- b. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board discussed the proposed design which visually activated this corner with large amounts of glazing. The Board supported the glazing at the corner and maintaining the entry to the live/work unit along Findlay, as this created a more contextual response to the bus stop. **CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence, CS2-C-1. Corner Sites**
- c. The Board further discussed the concept of three simple cubes commenting that this created clear and legible design intent. The Board acknowledged the care taken into detailing of the material application and aligning with fenestration; however, they were concerned that the large amount of transparency combined with the horizontality diminished the legibility and rhythm of the three- cube form as it moved up the hill. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**
- d. In order to reconcile the articulation of the façade with the massing concept the Board recommended the following conditions with the goal of reinforcing the three-cube form:
 - i. Change the light concrete board of the upper stories to match the dark panels as shown on page 8 of the Recommendation packet. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**
 - ii. Remove the horizontal mullions on the second and third story to match the window proportion of the 1st floor. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**

2. Live/Work Units:

- a. The Board appreciated the detailing of the live/work units, however, they expressed concern that the units appeared too residential in nature. The Board recommended the following conditions to further enhance the commercial character of the live/work units: **PL3-A Entries**
 - i. Utilize a fiber glass or store front window system which reflects a commercial character and use. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses**
 - ii. Utilize blade signage at the canopy of the live/work units rather than low signage as presented in the REC packet page 9. **DC4-B Signage**
 - iii. Landscaping should be further resolved to enhance the commercial character to allow for high visibility into the live/work units along Findlay. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses**
 - iv. Hardscaping at the live/work entries should be increased slightly to further the actual and perceptual access to live/work units. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses**

3. Materials

- a. The Board was highly supportive of the materials presented on page 24 of the REC packet. The Board clarified with the design team that fasteners would be concealed or painted to match the panel colors. In addition, the Board recommended the following conditions:
 - i. Any material along the first floor should be of higher quality than cement panel, such as the Prodema as shown on page 24 of the Recommendation packet. **DC2-D Scale and Texture**
 - ii. The gates along both California Ave and Findlay should be designed to further give identity to the project and of “artisanal” quality higher than a standard off the shelf gate. **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

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](#).

1. **Street-Level Transparency (SMC 23.47A.008.B.2):** The Code requires 60% of the street-facing façade between 2' and 8' above the sidewalk to be transparent. The applicant is proposing 48% transparency along Findlay Street and 26% on California Ave.

The Board unanimously supported the departure as the modified design for Findlay better anchored the previously floating roof top structure, as well as, created separation between the live/work units. In addition, the Board supported the departure along California Ave as the departure resulted in a stronger contextual response to the bus stop condition. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses, i., DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**

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-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.

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the 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-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL1-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.

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

PL2-A Accessibility

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

PL2-B Safety and Security

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.

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-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-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-C Retail Edges

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.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

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.

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

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-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.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

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

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-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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

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

1. Change the light concrete board of the upper stories to match the dark panels as shown on page 8 of the Recommendation packet. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**
2. Remove the horizontal mullions on the second and third story to match the window proportion of the 1st floor. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**
3. Utilize a fiber glass or store front window system which reflects a commercial character and use. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses**
4. Utilize blade signage at the canopy of the live/work units rather than low signage as presented in the Recommendation packet page 9. **DC4-B Signage**
5. Landscaping should be further resolved to enhance the commercial character to allow for high visibility into the live/work units along Findlay. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses**
6. Increase the hardscaping at the live/work entries to further the actual and perceptual access to live/work units. **PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses**
7. Any material along the 1st floor of the street facing facades must be of higher quality than cement panel, such as the Prodema as shown on page 24 of the Recommendation packet. **DC2-D Scale and Texture**
8. Design the gates along both California Ave and Findlay to further give identity to the project and of “artisanal” quality higher than a standard off the shelf gate. **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**