



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3024625

Address: 3825 Bridge Way N

Applicant: Public 47 Architects

Date of Meeting: Monday, September 26, 2016

Board Members Present: Ivana Begley (Chair)
Joe Hurley
James Marria
Blake Williams

Board Members Absent: Eric Blank

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

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: LR3 (Low-rise 3)

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3
(South) LR3
(East) NC2P-40
(West) LR3

Lot Area: 8,095 sq ft



Current Development:

The nearly triangular lot is half surface parking and has a 1 story commercial structure on the west portion, adjacent to the alley.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

A two-story apartment occupies the adjacent site to the north. Several 3 and 4-story multi-family structures are to the west across the alley. The surrounding neighborhood has a diverse mix of styles, scales and uses, including older commercial structures and more recent townhouses and apartment complexes along busy Bridge Way N.

Access:

Pedestrian access is from the two adjacent sidewalks, on Bridge Way N and the short portion of Woodland Park Avenue N. Vehicular access is from the improved alley to the west.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is a 5 story apartment building, consisting of about 34 units, with no commercial uses or parking.

NOTE: The applicant showed an alternative or Option 4 in the EDG booklet that anticipated a Living Building Pilot (LBP) incentive program that might be adopted by the City of Seattle. Since the EDG meeting, City Council adopted ordinance 125163, which establishes the Living Building Pilot program, effective 10/7/16. The applicant may integrate aspects of the LBP code into their subsequent Master Use Permit (MUP) application, with the understanding that the new aspects may generate additional comments and guidance from the Design Review Board at subsequent meetings. The Board focused on Options 1-3, and did NOT implicitly endorse any aspect of the LBP Option 4 at this meeting.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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

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PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported the 'high-design' and compact unit sizes of the preferred option.
- Encouraged an interactive street edge with human scale and relatable design features between the building and sidewalks, promoting neighborhood interaction.
- Supported the redevelopment of a 'dormant site', but concerned about pedestrian safety and sight lines at the sharp corner of the alley.
- Supported the sustainable features and encouraged the project become a showcase for Seattle.

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

- Concerned that a 5 story structure is incompatible with the neighborhood context.

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. (Guideline Citations)

[Page references] below are to the EDG booklet dated 9/26/16.

1. Massing and Form:

- a. The Board discussed the three massing alternatives and agreed the preferred Option 3 creates a gateway and strong bar form defining the diagonal street, but that singular form requires more modulation study, and also a level of premium materials and detailing [similar to pg 37] to be successful. (CS2-A; DC2-C; DC4-A)
- b. In addition to the scale and shadows afforded by proposed balconies shown on pg 38/upper, the Board encouraged study of larger modulating notches in the form such as shown on pg 37/lower right. (DC2-B&C)
- c. The Board agreed the Option 3 mass was at the comfortable limit of height for this site and along Bridge Way, and they agreed an additional floor of the provisional Living Building Pilot Option 4 makes a form noticeably taller (than Option 3) in the context, and if pursued, that form may require top floor stepbacks or other scale adjustments. (CS2-D; DC2-A2)

2. Bridge Way Ground Level & Streetscape:

- a. The Board supported the setback ground level along Bridge Way, to create a floating bar above, but unanimously agreed that residential ground level should be interactive with the sidewalk and not include sunken moat units [31/lower left], or a tall continuous wall along the sidewalk (both shown pg 38/41). (PL3-B)
- b. The Board supported the primary residential entry and lobby at the west end [39] and that covered entry plaza being a stepped or cut-away corner [38/ lower right] for visibility and pedestrian safety at the alley. (PL3-A; PL4-A)
- c. The Board agreed the bar form should step with the sloping grade along the street, in particular at the west end, not hitting grade as shown on 31/upper right. (CS1-C)

3. Alley Edge & Courtyard:

- a. The Board agreed the Option 3 north courtyard [31] requires careful study to maximize sunlight penetration, plant viability, and to be a usable amenity during short winter days. The Board encouraged possible stepping of the north form to lift the levels to the sun, and recover units possibly impacted by the recommended notching of the south bar (see guidance 1b above). (CS1-B2; DC3; PL1-C)
- b. The Board agreed there should be a carefully designed fence, planter and/or buffer along the alley, and consider the courtyard shown on pg 39 to multi-function as a move-in/out staging space, since no loading or parking is proposed. (DC1-C4)

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 the 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. (Guideline Citations)

At the time of the Early Design Guidance the following departures were identified:

1. **Rear Setback (SMC 23.45.518.A):** The Code requires apartments in the LR zones to have a rear setback of 10ft minimum when adjacent to an alley (on this site, the “rear” of the site is the property line along the alley). For their preferred Option 3, the applicant proposes the 45 ft wide west end of the bar to full occupy the setback zone (0ft setback), to the alley property line.

The Board indicated receptivity to this departure as the 50ft remainder of the site along the alley provides an essentially unbuilt courtyard of open space for light and air to the neighbors (or a lower building form depending on revisions cited in the guidance 3a above). (DC2-2)

2. **Projections in Required Setbacks (SMC 23.45.518.H.3.a):** The Code allows bay and balcony projections into any required setback, if those projections are no more than 2 ft

deep, and no closer than 5ft to any lot line. The applicant proposes 2ft deep balconies on the majority of the Bridge Way façade, but they would be 3ft from the lot line (there is a separately required 5ft minimum setback along Bridge Way N).

The Board indicated cautious receptivity to this departure, because the 2ft deep balconies provide valuable scale, shadows and interest on a large façade, but the balconies should not be enlarged in area, and the resolution of the ground level interaction described in guidance 2a above should be solved. (DC2-C)

NOTE: The departure #3 on booklet pg 41 was not addressed by the Board at this meeting, as it pertains to the Living Building Pilot ordinance not in effect at the time.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide Design 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

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-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-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-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.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

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.

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

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.

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-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-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-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-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

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.

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.

BOARD DIRECTION

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