City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

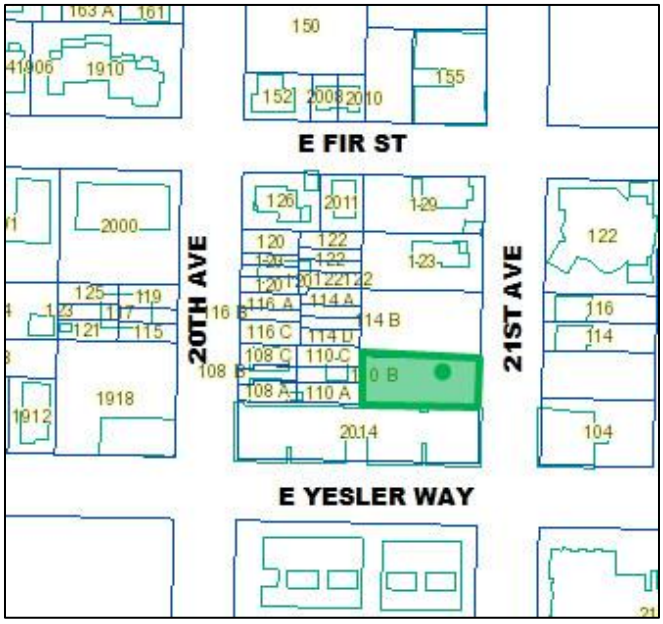
DESIGN REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION OF THE
EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number:	3025782
Address:	111 21st Avenue
Applicant:	Alex Kenton, GGLO Design
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, November 01, 2017
Board Members Present:	Curtis Bigelow (Chair) Barbara Busetti Andrew Haas Kenny Pleasant
Board Members Absent:	Melissa Alexander
SDCI Staff Present:	Crystal Torres, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone:	Lowrise 3
Nearby Zones:	(North) LR3 (South) LR3 (East) LR3 (West) LR3
Lot Area:	6,400 sq. ft.



Current Development:
The development site is comprised of one parcel, located mid-block along 21st Avenue just north of E Yesler Way. There are no structures on site and mature vegetation is currently present on site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:
The development site is located in the Central Area of Seattle, one block northeast of Pratt Park. The neighborhood has a well-established network of parks and open spaces with over twelve large parks and public spaces located within a ten-minute walk of the development site. The blocks in the immediate vicinity contain mostly multi-family apartment buildings with a few churches, community centers, and single-family homes in the area. There are also a few small, neighborhood serving retail establishments located nearby.

Access:
The development site located mid-block along 21st Avenue and is not accessible via an alley. Nearby, E Yesler Way is well trafficked by multiple bus routes providing access to Downtown, Coleman Park, Rainier Beach and north to the University of Washington and the U-District. A continuous network of sidewalks exists throughout the neighborhood, connecting the development site to public transit in the immediate vicinity.

Environmentally Critical Areas:
There are no Environmentally Critical Areas on site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is to allow two, four-story structures containing a total of 29 apartment units.

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 Address:	**Public Resource Center** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000 P.O. Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019
Email:	PRC@seattle.gov

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE March 22, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT
There were no comments from the public offered at this meeting.

There were no design related public comments received in writing prior to the meeting.

The following comments from the Seattle Department of Transportation were submitted to SDCI in writing prior to the meeting:

- The Seattle Municipal Code requires street trees. SDOT Urban Forestry recommends American Hornbeam trees located in the existing planting strip.
- SDOT also recommends consolidating curb cuts, where possible, to reduce the impact on the pedestrian network.

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. **Height, Bulk, and Scale:** The Board agreed that the massing of all the schemes exhibited similar scale and proportions, which they believed were appropriate for the site. There was a consensus among the Board that Option 3 provided the best response in terms of height, bulk, and scale, but the Board was concerned with the overall execution of the courtyard between the two masses. The Board directed the applicant to move forward in the development of Option 3, with adherence to the following guidance:

    a. The Board supported the layout of the two structures as presented in Option 3 with the open courtyard space between the two. They preferred the break in the massing provided by having a courtyard fully open above rather than Option 2 which presented a partially covered courtyard. (**CS1-B- 2. Daylight and Shading, DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses**)

    b. The Board supported the strong street edge created by the proposed massing, highlighting how it related to and continued the street edge language of the Clairemont Apartments. However, the Board further discussed the setback commenting that exploration of either a greater setback to create more contrast from the Clairemont or a reduced setback to create a stronger continuation of the Clairemont street edge should be analyzed**. (CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites, CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning)**

2. **Courtyard Space and Amenity Areas**: The Board discussed in detail the courtyard space as shown in Option 3 and was concerned with the number of different uses present in the courtyard. The Board recognized the potential of the courtyard space but stated that not enough information was shown on how the courtyard would function.

    a. The Board supported the notion of providing residents of the Clairemont Apartments access to the courtyard space. The Clairemont Apartment building is owned by the same owner as the project site, creating an opportunity for shared amenity space for the project site. (**PL3-B-4. Interaction**)

b. The Board strongly recommended the applicant incorporate the pass-through connection to 20th Avenue proposed in Option 2 in their development of Option 3 and have it relate to the courtyard space. (**PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure**)

c. The Board was concerned with the location of the parking spaces and considers this a major issue in terms of the overall functionality of the courtyard. The Board directed the applicant to provide a circulation diagram with the turn radius for the vehicles to demonstrate the how the parking spaces work in relation to the rest of the courtyard. (**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts**)

d. The Board was concerned with the current design and location of the bike storage area in the courtyard. They believed traveling through the courtyard to park the bikes was not ideal, and stated that if there is a location for bike storage inside of the building, people would be more inclined to use that space and not the one in the courtyard. **(PL4-B-1. Early Planning)**
    a. The Board suggested the applicant explore a design of the bike storage area that does not clash with the courtyard. (**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities**)
    b. The Board strongly recommended the applicant provide clear and easy access to a secure bike room. It was suggested that this could be a screened enclosure and not transparent. (**PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel**)

e. The Board suggested the applicant provide more clarity on how the outdoor amenity area located at the west end of the site functions in relation to the rest of the project. (**DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features**)

3. Streetscape, Access, and Entries:

a. The Board was not concerned with having pedestrians utilize the driveway as a means of entering the project site, stating that vehicular traffic should be minimal with only three parking spaces provided. However, the Board recommended the detailing the driveway with special pavement marking a pedestrian pathway signaling that pedestrians are welcome to use it. (**PL1-B Walkways and Connections, PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding, DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials**)

b. The Board was concerned with the ground level uses surrounding the courtyard, stating that having the lobby and amenity areas adjacent to the courtyard felt more appropriate than the residential units. (**PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential, DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit**)

c. The Board discussed the lobby and residential entry along the street, expressing some concern for the seemingly same treatment of each entrance. As these are different uses, the Board encouraged distinguishing the entries at the project design evolves. (**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives**)

d. The Board expressed concern that the lobby space along the street lacked activation, as the space was not designed to be a lounge area and appeared only to house the mail room. The Board strongly encouraged exploration of further engaging this space by creating a stronger relationship to the driveway/pedestrian path; or potentially tying across the courtyard and

create a cohesive experience from the front lobby through the courtyard to the rear interior amenity space. (**DC1-A-1. Visibility, DC1-A-4. Views and Connections**)

e. The Board further strongly emphasized the need to create a pleasant pedestrian experience as the courtyard is a significant part of the concept. Additionally, activating the lobby area to create an engaged entry and pedestrian focused atmosphere/space are critical. (**DC1-A-1. Visibility, DC1-A-4. Views and Connections**)

4. **Materials:** The Board strongly supported the proposed material palette (wood, masonry, and glass) shown in the precedent images and encouraged the applicant to incorporate these durable high-quality materials throughout the project. The Board also recommended the applicant utilize the materials to juxtapose the old (Clairemont) and new, and to use that as a guiding force as they pick up design details and cues tying the old and new together, but not mimicking the old. (**CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together, DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials**)

5. **Recycling/Waste Enclosures:** The Board was concerned with how the project addressed the location of the trash enclosures as it was not shown in the proposal. The Board expressed that the location of the trash must be easily accessible and directed the applicant to explore locations on site other than the courtyard. (**DC1-C-4. Service Uses**)

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION July 26, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Central area's Land Use Committee provided comments in support of the project, commenting on the unique design that stands apart from the typical development being constructed in the neighborhood.

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

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. **Design Concept:** The Board approved of the adjustments and modifications to the design, especially the site plan since EDG. The Board echoed the public's support for the unique and thoughtful design which breaks the mold from typical projects of this typology; successfully refining the midblock

project to create a well-designed precedent for the neighborhood. **CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence, CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites, CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale, CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods**

2. **Courtyard Space and Amenity Areas**:
    a. At EDG, the Board supported the architectural concept of splitting the massing into two smaller buildings which flanked an interior courtyard. However, the Board expressed substantial concern revolving around the inclusion of parking within the courtyard area and encouraged removal the non-required spaces in order to resolve programming conflicts. At Recommendation, the Board was highly supportive of the removal of these parking spaces as this resolved the relationship of the amenity area and adjacent interior uses. The Board commended the design team for the thoughtful improvements made to the courtyard area including internalizing and keeping a separate entry for the trash, providing interior bike storage, removing the parking, providing a seat wall, improving the relationship of the uses adjacent to the courtyard area. **CS2-D-4. Massing Choices, DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit**
    b. The Board recommended a condition to revisit the exact relationship of hardscape to proposed uses. The Board suggested that the design team continue with decking for residential portions and masonry type treatment for non-residential portions. The Board was amenable to different configurations that expanded the decking and residential portions to the seated wall within the center courtyard. **DC1-A-2. Gathering Places**
    c. The Board was highly supportive of the through-connection provided on the south side of the site which successfully resolved the interaction of bicyclists and pedestrians with a thoughtfully designed stair and ramping system. Pleased with the circulation improvements, the Board offered a suggestion for integrating a tire ramp, but declined to recommend a condition. **PL2-A Accessibility, PL1-B Walkways and Connections**
    d. The Board commended the design team on resolving the circulation pathway and recommended a condition to provide an equally thoughtful treatment of the landscaping edge along the south edge of the circulation path. The Board also encouraged the design team to be thoughtful with the treatment of the wall behind the landscaping. **DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials**

3. **21st Ave Street Frontage:**
    a. At EDG the Board directed the applicant team to design the front elevation to distinguish between the lobby and residential unit, as well as investigate the location of the front setback in relation to the Clairemont and context along the street. At Recommendation, the Board supported the treatment of the front façade and proposed setback. **CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning, DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest**
    b. The Board discussed the lobby and expressed some concern that the lobby would be a dead space. However, after a thoughtful discussion the board felt a “quiet” lobby was appropriate on this residential street. **CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence**

4. **Materials:**
    a. The Board unanimously supported the proposed material palette presented at Recommendation including metal siding, stained wood, fiber cement lap and painted siding, sealed concrete, aluminum decks and railings, and metaling coping and flashing as shown on

page 30-31 of the Recommendation packet. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

b. The Board supported the integration of color, commending the design team on the elegant application which added warmth and interest to the neutral palette. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

c. The Board recommended a condition to update elevations and material application, removing the corner boards treatment as shown on page 11 of the Recommendation packet. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

5. **Landscaping and hardscaping:** The Board supported the variety of landscaping and hardscape treatments which further added interest to the circulation pathways. The Board noted that the courtyard and roof top patios are designed to provide great social amenity spaces and respond well to the Design Guidelines. **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

FINAL RECOMMENDATION November 1, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was given.

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. **Response to Recommendation Conditions:** The Board supported responses to all conditions from Recommendation 1 including:
   a. The improved relationship of the hardscape and proposed uses which further resolved the identification of amenity areas vs. circulation pathways. **DC1-A-2. Gathering Places**
   b. Landscaping treatment along the south edge which further softened the entry experience. **DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials**
   c. Removal of the corner trim elements as requested which resulted in a more cohesive façade composition. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

2. **Departures:**
   a. The Board discussed the new requested departures and supported the reduced setbacks to accommodate balconies and projections, as this animated the façade and added to the overall architectural expression and composition. **CS2-D. Height, Bulk, and Scale; DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest**
   b. The Board discussed the reduced average side yard setback which they unanimously supported, as this resulted in a stronger massing response to the site and neighborhood, as well as allowing for a more generous and usable courtyard. **DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features; CS2-D. Height, Bulk, and Scale**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES
The Board's recommendation on the requested departures 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 departures.

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

1. **Front Yard Setback (23.45.518.A [Table A]):** The Code requires a 5'-0" minimum front yard setback for apartments in Lowrise zones. The applicant proposes to reduce the front yard setback from 5 ft. to 3 ft. for portions of the façade above 16'.

   The Board voted unanimously in favor of the requested departure as the resulting design responded to the existing street edge of the surrounding context, specifically responding to the adjacent Clairmont building. CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings

2. **Average Side Yard Setback (23.45.518.A [Table A]):** The Code requires an average 7'-0" side yard setback for apartments in Lowrise zones. The applicant proposes to reduce the average side yard setback from 7' to 5'3" for portions of the façade above 16'.

   The Board voted unanimously in favor of the requested departure as the resulting design provides a better massing relationship to site and neighboring building. In addition, the Board supported the added value of the center courtyard in breaking up the bulk and scale of the project, as well as creating a more interesting building rhythm. DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features; CS2-D. Height, Bulk, and Scale

3. **Upper level setbacks (SMC 23.45.518.L.2)** The Code requires structure with a 40' height limit to provide a 16' setback above 44'. The applicant proposes a 3' setback along the east upper level setback.

   The Board voted unanimously in favor of the requested departure as the resulting design responded to the existing street edge of the surrounding context, specifically responding to the adjacent Clairmont building. CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, DC2-C3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings

4. **Structure width and façade length-- Maximum Façade Length (23.45.527.B.1):** The Code requires the maximum combined length of all portions of façades within 15' of a lot line that is neither a rear lot line nor a street or alley lot line shall not exceed 65 percent of the length of that lot line, except as specified in subsection 23.45.527.B.2. In this case the code allows for a façade length of 83'-2", the applicant proposes a façade length of 89'-8".

   The Board voted unanimously in favor of the requested departure as the resulting design provides a better massing relationship to site and neighboring building. In addition, the Board supported the added value of the center courtyard in breaking up the bulk and scale of the project, as well as creating a more interesting building rhythm. DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features; CS2-D. Height, Bulk, and Scale

5. **Unenclosed decks and balconies (SMC 23.45.518.I)** The Code allows decks and balconies to project a maximum of 4' into a required setback if each one is 1) no closer than 5' to any lot line; 2) no more than 20' wide; and 3) separated from other decks and balconies on the same façade of the structure by a distance equal to at least ½ the width of the projection. The applicant's proposal complies with criteria 2 and 3, but proposes balconies 0' from the east lot line and balconies 1'-3" from the north lot line.

   The Board voted unanimously in favor of the requested departure as the balconies provide both visual interest and provide further relief of the massing. CS2-D. Height, Bulk, and Scale; DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest

6. **Projections permitted in required setbacks and separations (SMC 23.45.518. H.1)** The Code allows cornices, eaves, gutters, roofs and other forms of weather protection to project into required setbacks and separations a maximum of 4 feet if they are no closer than 3 feet to any lot line. The applicant proposes canopies 0' from the east lot line.

   The Board voted unanimously in favor of the requested departure as the canopies provide weather protection, visual interest, and further relief of the massing. In addition, the Board supported how the canopy roof overhand along the street continues the cornice line of the Claremont. CS2-D. Height, Bulk, and Scale; DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest

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-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites: Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

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-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

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.

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

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.

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-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

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-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

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-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-C Design

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

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-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

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Wednesday, November 01, 2017, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Wednesday, November 01, 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.