



**FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE
SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Project Number: 3027128-LU

Address: 8803 M L King Jr Way South

Applicant: Christine Goodwin, Nicholson Kovalchick Architects

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, January 09, 2018

Board Members Present: Julian Weber (Chair)
Sharon Khosla
Robin Murphy
Charles Romero

Board Members Absent: Carey Dagliano Holmes
David Sauvion (recused)

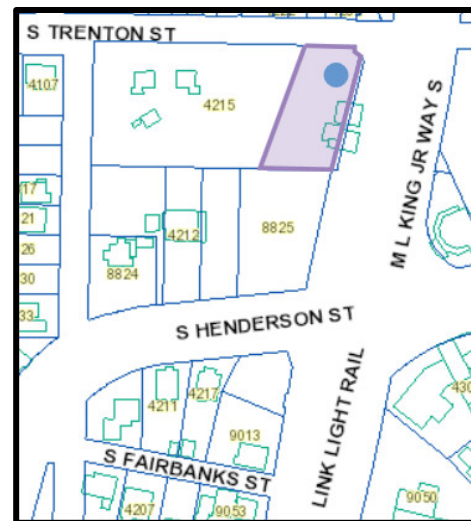
SDCI Staff Present: Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)

Nearby Zones: (North) Lowrise 2 (LR2)
(East) SF 5000
(West) SF 5000
(South) Neighborhood Commercial 3
Pedestrian (NC3P-40)

Lot Area: 12,525 square feet (sq. ft.)



Current Development:

The site is vacant property.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development includes commercial use to the south (retail); and residential uses to the north and west (townhouse development and single family residences). A City of Seattle-owned greenbelt (Chief Sealth Trail) is positioned kiddy corner and across the streets north and east of the project site (South Trenton Street and M L King Jr Way South).

This corner property is located within the Rainier Beach Residential Urban Village and is situated on the southwest corner of South Trenton Street and M L King Jr Way South. There is a mix of smaller one and two-story buildings comprised of institutional and commercial uses in immediate vicinity of the project along M L King Jr. Way South to the south. The neighborhood character is in transition. Varied architectural styles and building exteriors are present in this area which is moderately pedestrian and transit oriented due to its close proximity to bus transit, light rail and a light rail station (Rainier Beach) along M L King Jr Way South.

Access:

Vehicular access to the subject property is possible from both M L King Jr. Way South and South Trenton Street.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The site slopes from the southwest down towards the northeast. Existing vegetation consists of several mature trees and overgrowth. A portion of the site (southwest corner area) is mapped Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) Steep Slope.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of two, four-story, five-unit non-residential buildings (10 live-work units). A total parking quantity of five stalls is planned onsite.

The subject site is proposed to be created under short plat application 3026975 which is currently being reviewed by SDCI. Another parcel subject to this short plat application is west of this project site and involves a Master Use Permit (MUP) application for a townhouse development proposal at 4215 South Trenton Street (3025113). Shared vehicular access is also being proposed between the two projects.

This project includes a request to rezone the project site from SF 5000 to NC3-40. The applicant has outlined this rezone intent and related legislation information (identified as the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan Update) in the design packet for reference only.

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

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 25, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Representative of the Rainier Beach Action Coalition (RBAC):
 - Felt that the proposed residential project fails to meet the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan's purpose and objectives as outlined in the EDG design packet (pg. 5).
 - Encouraged a development that has more opportunities for communal gathering spaces and amenities onsite.
 - Concerned that the development conflicts with the intent of a transit oriented development model.
 - In consideration of Design Guideline CS3.A.3, encouraged a design that does not emulate the townhouse development north of the project site but establishes a positive context for the neighborhood to build upon in the future.
 - Encouraged the design team to utilize neighborhood community groups as a resource to aid in creating a placemaking opportunity (Design Guideline CS3.B.1) for this site which supports the neighborhood's vision.
 - Felt that overall site security, waste area location and the residential entries on M L King Jr Way South should be scrutinized.
- In consideration of the project site's immense size and proximity to the Rainier Beach light rail station, stated it could accommodate non-residential development of a grander scale (i.e. community center, church, supermarket). Concerned that the proposed residential development would hinder the neighborhood's efforts to accommodate future commercial use that would create a vibrant, walkable experience in conjunction with the existing commercial business center surrounding the Station.
- Appreciated the applicant's thorough context analysis of the project site.
- Liked the acknowledgment of Chief Sealth Trail as an integral park site and encouraged further exploration of methods (bike parking, wider paths, etc.) that could establish circulation connections between the Trail and the project site; as well as throughout the site itself.

- Asked the design team to seek opportunities (allowances from the Code or code departures from the Board) that minimize the backing distance required for parking stalls with the intention of providing a greater buffer along South Trenton Street.
- Voiced support for a development that does not include vehicular access from 42nd Avenue South. Encouraged street improvements to the abutting streets to allow for enhanced pedestrian safety.
- Asked the design team to consider providing more affordable residential units on the subject site.

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. Concerns with off-street parking, traffic and construction impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCI and are not part of this review. Concerns with building height calculations, affordable housing and bicycle storage standards are addressed under the City’s zoning code and are not part of this review.

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, Architectural Character and Massing:** The design and siting of the new residential development should create a sense of place and establish a desirable context in the Rainier Beach neighborhood, be oriented to the corner and respect adjacent properties. (CS2.A, CS2.C.1, CS2.D.4, CS3.A)
 - a. The Board voiced unanimous support for the preferred design scheme Option 3 and proposed that design scheme Option 3 move forward to Master Use Permit (MUP) submittal with the following guidance:
 - i. In reviewing the Rainier Beach neighborhood context analysis outlined in the design packet (pg. 5) and given the project site’s proximity to the light rail station, the Board agreed with public sentiment that pursuit of a zoning designation that would allow for commercial use is appropriate. The Board acknowledged that it was beyond their purview to provide feedback concerning the rezone aspect of this proposal but did encourage the development team to consider pursuit of a zoning designation that would allow for commercial development at this site. (CS2.A, CS3.A, CS3.B)
 - ii. It is imperative that the development provide opportunities for community gathering spaces. The Board supported the conceptual design direction of the community amenity area for Option 3 illustrated in the design packet (pgs. 30

and 36). Further Board commentary regarding communal areas are offered below for item #3b. (PL3.B.4, DC1.A.2, DC3.B)

- iii. The Board recognized that due to the existing sloped, vegetated topography and surrounding unimproved streets, development siting would be challenging. The Board requested to review detailed building/site sections and floor plans with focused attention to ground floor livability, accessible entries and second level/terrace connections to the adjacent streets, interior court and south property line. (CS1.C, CS1.D, CS2.B, CS2.D)
- b. The Board stated that future design should be compatible with the existing architectural context and establish a positive context for others to build upon in the future. Thus, the Board advised the applicant to be mindful of the neighborhood context during the selection of exterior materials and color palette. (CS3.A, DC4.A)

2. M L King Jr Way South Frontage and Streetscape:

- a. The Board felt that the proposed massing forms abutting M L King Jr Way South from the ground-level perspective were successful due to the creation of defensible space with the inclusion of physical barriers (low concrete walls, planters, stoops) at the street edge transitioning to each unit's entries as noted in the design packet (see top and bottom photos on pg. 32). Conversely, the Board felt that further exploration of varied roof forms and the addition of secondary elements into the façade design are necessary in the next design iteration to create a strong visual presence and architectural interest along M L King Jr Way South. (CS2.A, CS2.D.4, PL3.B, DC2.C)
- b. In general, the Board was supportive of a centralized path between the two building masses. The Board encouraged exploration of methods/design features that create a generous and accessible pedestrian connection (widened path, ramps, etc.) to the adjacent property (west site). (PL1.B, PL2.A, PL2.D, DC1.A, PL3.B)

3. South Trenton Street Frontage and Streetscape:

- a. The Board appreciated the preliminary information concerning the waste/recycling storage location and access that had been illustrated in the design packet (pg. 36) and conveyed in the presentation. The Board observed that locating the waste storage area near the vehicular entrance abutting South Trenton Street may be impactful to the South Trenton Street public realm and advised the applicant to give focused attention to this concern. The Board requested that specifics concerning waste storage, location, access and feedback from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) should be presented to the Board at the next meeting. (PL1.B.1, DC1.C.4)
- b. The Board stated that the ground-level treatment of the corner edge condition along South Trenton Street (large landscaped buffer and signage (monument sign)) was appropriate. The Board commented that this corner is not an appropriate location for communal gathering. (CS2.C.1, PL2.D, PL3.B, DC4.B)
- c. The Board emphasized that the north façade abutting South Trenton Street be well composed with fenestration and secondary elements that add depth and interest to this visible façade. (CS2.B, CS2.C.1)

4. Vehicular/Bicycle Parking and Access:

- a. The Board voiced concern that the site circulation is primarily vehicular focused and emphasized that connective opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists is important. The Board stated that this aspect of the design should be strengthened throughout the site and looks forward to reviewing the next design iteration that addresses this concern. (PL2.B, PL2.D, PL4.B.3)

FINAL RECOMMENDATION January 9, 2018

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting (with Board responses in *italics*):

- Commented that there is minimal on-street parking availability surrounding the subject site and asked if guest and/or customer parking spaces will be provided on the site.
The Board Chair clarified that parking requirements are beyond the Board's purview and explained that questions concerning parking requirements/standards should be directed to the SDCI Land Use Planner.
- Expressed concern regarding the safety of the bicycles located in the bike shelter.
- Inquired about the live-work units' functionality and confirmed that there is opportunity for the "work" space in each live-work unit to be separated from the "live" spaces.

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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, Architectural Character and Massing:** The design and siting of the new non-residential development should create a sense of place and establish a desirable context in the Rainier Beach neighborhood, be oriented to the corner and respect adjacent properties. (CS2.A, CS2.C.1, CS2.D.4, CS3.A)
 - a. The Board evaluated the presented building design and was pleased that the use typology had evolved since EDG from solely residential (townhomes) to a non-residential use (live-work), which the Board felt was appropriate for this site due to its proximity to the light rail station and presence on M L King Jr Way South. The Board

was also pleased with the evolution of the favored massing scheme (Option 3) stating that the four-story massing was an appropriate response to the existing surrounding commercial/residential context and anticipated scale of development. The Board noted that past concerns pertaining to community gathering areas, roof forms and north façade composition had been addressed appropriately in the final design. (CS2.A, CS3.A)

- b. The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed materials and color palette identified in the design packet and on the physical material/color samples' board presented to the Board at the Final Recommendation meeting. Board discussion focused on whether the proposed materials and color palette were supportive of a community identity. Ultimately, the Board concluded that the proposed design was appropriate given the use of high quality materials (brick, cedar siding, wood veneer panel ("Prodema"), etc.) and the establishment of a transitional area vernacular. (CS3, DC4.A)
- c. The Board reviewed the siding color between the bays on each building's east façade (grey) and debated if a more contrasting color would be appropriate. The Board agreed that the front east-facing façade was well articulated as presented and encouraged the applicant to consider exploration of another color palette that could further differentiate the bays from the façade. The Board declined to recommend this guidance as a condition. (DC2.B, DC4.A)
- d. The Board was satisfied with the conceptual signage and lighting designs as illustrated in the Recommendation packet (pgs. 28-29); and commented that the blade signage for future non-residential uses in the "work" area of each live-work unit is subtle and appropriate. (DC4.B, DC4.C)

2. M L King Jr Way South Frontage and Streetscape:

- a. The Board was pleased with the design evolution of the centralized path between the two building forms. (PL1.B, PL2.A, PL2.D, PL3.B, DC1.A)
- b. The Board commented that the entry sequencing from the M L King sidewalk edge to each live-work entry was generally successful. The Board also had positive comments about the design of each unit's rear west-facing entries.

3. South Trenton Street Frontage and Streetscape:

- a. The Board reviewed the trash/recycling storage enclosure near the driveway entry abutting South Trenton Street, arranged to straddle the shared property line between the subject site and the neighboring site to the west. The Board understood from the applicant that the presented storage enclosure's location/design was not compliant with the Land Use Code storage waste location requirements per SMC 23.54.040.E and confirmed that modifications to this code standard are within the purview of SDCl in consultation with SPU as a Type I Decision-not within the purview of the Board as a code departure request. However, the Board voiced support for the shared trash enclosure, observing that the shared trash enclosure for both properties was a more successful design and sited to accommodate better access for both future residents and service providers (pg. 45). The Board also appreciated the inclusion of high-quality materials (board-formed concrete, cedar siding, perforated metal panel, etc.) at the trash enclosure. (DC1.B, DC1.C.4, DC2.C)

- b. The Board reviewed the ground-level treatment of the northernmost building's corner edge condition along South Trenton Street which had evolved to be comprised of a private live-work patio framed by an accessible ramp pathway contained by low-height concrete walls and terraced planters. The Board discussed the merits of creating an exterior direct connection to the patio space for informal public gathering. Ultimately, the Board majority recommended that, given the patio's size and location in proximity to intersection, the use and design of that space as presented and illustrated in the design packet (pg. 12) was more appropriate. (CS2.C.1, PL2.A, PL2.B, PL3.B)
- c. The Board agreed that the fenestration, the secondary elements, and the angled bay with deck from the second story living level on the northernmost building's north façade facing South Trenton Street added depth and visual interest at the prominent corner. (CS2.B, CS2.C.1)
- d. The Board recommended a condition in response to a blank wall condition on the north façade of Building G as described in requested departures #1 and #2. (PL3.B, DC2.B.1, DC4.D.3, See Departures #1 & #2)

4. Vehicular/Bicycle Parking and Access:

- a. The Board appreciated the bike shelter design intended for resident and guest bicycle parking positioned behind the live-work buildings (Bldg. H), a distance from the site's sidewalk edges abutting each street. However, the Board was concerned about the lack of visible bike parking presence abutting the subject property's street fronts—especially M L K Jr Way South which is considered a transit-oriented street. The Board strongly encouraged additional bike parking to be installed along M L K and/or on South Trenton Street in proximity to the Chief Sealth (bike/pedestrian) Trail north of the subject site. The Board understood that any bike racks proposed within the right-of-way (R.O.W.) must be authorized by SDOT. Also, the Board acknowledged the applicant's initial feedback from SDOT that bike racks within the M L K Jr Way South R.O.W. was not supported. Thus, the Board urged the design team to share their input about increased bike parking within the public realm with SDOT when requesting again to allow additional bike racks to be installed within the identified R.O.W.s, as well as create additional bike storage on their project site that is visible to the public from the abutting streets. The Board declined to recommend this guidance as a condition. (PL4.B)

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 **FINAL** Recommendation the following departures were requested:

1. **Street-level Development Standards - Blank Facades (SMC 23.47A.008.A.2):** The Code requires blank segments of a street-facing façade between 2' and 8' above the sidewalk not exceed 20' in width. The total of all blank façade segments may not exceed 40% of the

width of the façade of the structure along the street. The applicant proposed the northernmost live-work unit in Building G have a street-level façade comprised of blank segments that exceed 40% of the width of the applicable portion of façade abutting South Trenton Street (57%). The applicant explained that the arrangement of the glazing follows the function of the building allowing the prominent commercial corner to be highly transparent while the more private functions (bathrooms/hallway) are less transparent. The applicant also reasoned that additional glazing on this façade would be screened by planters and an accessible ramp that are proposed to abut and wrap the building from north to west.

The Board reviewed the subject live-work unit’s interior ground-level floor layout in consideration with the unit’s exterior north façade and agreed that this departure is an appropriate response to the context. However, the Board voiced concern about the expansiveness of blank façade that would be visible to pedestrians. Thus, the Board unanimously recommended that SDCI grant the requested departure to achieve an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Guidelines PL3.B Residential Edges and DC2.B.1 Façade Composition subject to the following condition:

The plants (shrubs) in the planters abutting the street-level north façade of the northernmost live-work unit in Building G shall be planted at full maturity (4’ minimum in height) to minimize the appearance of blank facade to pedestrians. (PL3.B, DC2.B.1, DC4.D.3)

- 2. Street-level Development Standards - Transparency (SMC 23.47A.B.2):** The Code states that for a structure containing a non-residential use, 60% of the street-level, street-facing façade between 2’ and 8’ above the sidewalk shall be transparent. The applicant proposed the street-level, street-facing façade of the northernmost live-work unit in Building G be less than 60% transparent (39% transparency). The applicant’s justification for this departure request is analogous to Departure #1.

The Board considered this departure and requested Departure #1 concurrently and agreed that this departure would also result in an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Guidelines PL3.B Residential Edges and DC2.B.1 Façade Composition. Thus, the Board unanimously recommended that SDCI grant the requested departure subject to the same condition noted above for Departure #1.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide 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-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-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

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.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

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.

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

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-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-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-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-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

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-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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS - BOARD DIRECTION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Tuesday, January 09, 2018, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, January 09, 2018 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 the following condition:

1. The landscaping (shrubs) in the planters abutting the street-level north façade of the northernmost live-work unit in Building G shall be planted at full maturity (4' minimum in height) to minimize the appearance of blank facade to pedestrians. (PL3.B, DC2.B.1, DC4.D.3)