City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number:	3028322
Address:	1103 Summit Ave.
Applicant:	Jay Janette, Skidmore - Janette
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, November 15, 2017
Board Members Present:	Eric Blank (Chair) Anita Jeerage Brian Bishop
Board Members Absent:	James Marria
SDCI Staff Present:	David Landry, AICP, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: High Rise (HR)

Nearby Zones: (North) HR/MIO-160-HR
(South) HR/NC3P-160NC2P-65
(East) HR
(West) HR

Project Area: 7,200 Square Feet (sq. ft.)

Overlay Districts:

- First Hill Urban Center Village
- Frequent Transit Corridor (No Minimum Parking Requirement)

Current Development:
The proposal site is located at the northwest corner of Spring Street and Summit Avenue in the First Hill neighborhood district. The site is currently used as a surface parking lot for Virginia Mason Medical Center.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:
The proposal site is located within the First Hill neighborhood district which is in the First Hill Urban Center a designated Urban Village overlay district. Historically First Hill rose in popularity for wealthier residences in the late 1890s due to its close proximity to downtown Seattle. First Hill also became the location of several important churches, clubs, hotels, schools, entrepreneurs, and residences for civic leaders from the 1890s until around 1914. Many of these early buildings were demolished as the area transitioned to denser, larger-scale apartment houses, commercial buildings and institutional uses; including Harborview Medical Center, Swedish Medical Center, and Virginia Mason Medical Center. One such building, located to the south of the project is the 22-story, Spring Street Condominiums, a masonry brick structure built in 1929. Another building located to the north is the five-story Tuscany apartment building, built of reinforced concrete in 1926 and expanded in 1928, which featured colored plaster, brick and tile, with cast stone window sills. Other historical buildings in the area include a two-story medical office building at the northeast corner of Seneca and Summit Avenue, built in 1948 and a single-story medical/dental office located on the southeast corner of Spring St. and Summit Avenue, built in 1956. More recent development includes the 33-story First Hill Plaza Condominium tower, located on Spring Street between Summit Avenue and Boylston Avenue and built in 1986.

The densely developed First Hill neighborhood is also characterized by an abundance of tree coverage and lush vegetation along the streets, which adds to the area's unique character.

Access:
Access to the site which is currently a surface parking lot is either west off of Summit Avenue or via a north-south running alley located to the west of the development site.

Environmentally Critical Areas:
The site is not located in an Environmentally Critical Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Design Review Early Design Guidance application proposing a seven-story apartment building with six live-work units at street level. No parking proposed. Existing surface parking lot to be demolished.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE October 26, 2017

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3028322) 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

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported Option A but felt it needed modifications so that it fits better within the existing neighborhood fabric.
- Requested that the building be designed using light colored brick or stone and cornice elements.
- Balconies should be eliminated or placed flat against the building.
- Building should have a wider street facing setback.
- Live-work spaces should not be transparent as there should not be views into cluttered living areas.
- Project does not respect the historic character of one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city.
- Design does not meet the level of design excellence the design guidelines requires.
- Stated that some photographs represented in the packet were not actually of buildings in the vicinity but rather of the Pike-Pine corridor which has a very different visual aesthetic.
- Suggested that building examples such as The Marlborough building and other historic building should have been included in the EDG packet.
- Current design is an uninspired proposal that needs several improvements.
- Proposed design is not compatible with the precedent images presented in the EDG packet.
- Lighting on the roof deck should be restrained and mindful of surrounding buildings.
- Landscaping should be abundant, well designed and maintained, reflecting neighboring design.
- Building signage should be in scale with the neighborhood.
- Loading area off the alley appears to be inadequate in size.
- Recommended enforcing all setback requirements on all four sides of the building to allow for an appropriate loading zone, room for landscaping, which is compatible with the neighborhood.
- Commented that the landscaping makes this neighborhood a special place in the City.
- Asked that the Board hold the applicant accountable for to reinforce the design response to adjacent properties and to take cues from the best examples on First Hill.
- Requested that the Design Review Board require that the applicant provide a robust tree canopy on both Spring Street and Summit Avenue.

- Proposal is not respectful to its historical neighbors and it fails to preserve what is unique about this Seattle neighborhood.
- Project should enhance the tree canopy on the Spring Street side of the proposal site.
- Suggested that the metal siding and fiber cement are an insult to the area's historic neighbors.
- Suggested that the applicant look at the Cobb and Wells building that uses brick to fit into the context of the neighborhood as well as the mixed use Broadway building apartments that uses tiles to match the terra cotta façade of the Blick Art building.
- Suggested that the building should use a midblock entry location.
- Worried that there will be a change in the character and nature of the sidewalk from the rest of the neighborhood.
- Not in favor of the setback departures as the building would enter the public domain with a setback pattern which is several feet different from other buildings in the area resulting in a mismatched sidewalk.
- Suggested that any colors used for this new project needs to compliment the colors that are already present 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. 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.

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, Scale:** The Board appreciated the diagrams which depicted the maximum capacity of the site and the applicant's preferred option. The Board also agreed that the proposed bulk of the building is proportional to the size of the site and its neighboring buildings. However, the Board felt that the unit sizes are driving the exterior design of the project. The Board gave guidance to develop a design concept by starting with massing proportions, and then taking cues from the neighborhood. **(CS2-A-1, CS2-A-2, CS3-A-1)**

2. **Options:** The Board stated that any of the proposed building options would be compatible with the neighborhood. However, the Board was least supportive of Option C, as it was the least interesting in terms of its overall design elements. The Board noted that the materials chosen for all three options did not demonstrate how these options are the best design approach or response to neighborhood context. The Board advised developing a contemporary design approach with a nod to the materials and proportions of the historical

buildings in the neighborhood. The proposed articulation should also be modified to respond to the neighborhood context. **(CS2-A-1, CS2-A-2)**

a. The Board gave guidance to develop the design with additional building fenestration, detailing and a different choice in materials. **(CS3-A-1, CS2-A-2, DC4-A)**
b. In agreement with public comment about using a midblock entry, the Board requested a study of entry options and nearby context. **(CS2-C-2)**
c. The Board requested further review and consideration of landscaping and sidewalk treatments that response to existing neighborhood patterns. **(CS2-B-3, DC4-A, DC4-D)**

3. **Streetscape:** The Board requested additional information about the Live-Work units. The applicant should demonstrate whether these units will be designed to function as primarily residential apartments, or live-work. **(CS2-B-2, CS3-A-3)**

4. **Landscaping:** The Board agreed with the public sentiment that landscaping should be abundant, well designed and maintained, and reflecting neighborhood character. The Board strongly encouraged the development of a landscaping plan in response to these items.
   a. The Board requested clear and specific information about the type and location of landscaping elements, along with a maintenance and irrigation plan designed to make it a functioning landscape. **(PL1-B-3, DC4-A, DC4-D)**
   b. The Board strongly encouraged the applicant to provide larger caliper trees than the minimum required. **(DC4-D)**

5. **Materials:** The Board agreed that the use of fiber cement is not an appropriate response to the context at this location, or for scale of this building. The Board noted that the use of high quality materials compatible with the neighborhood is reflected in the priority Design Guidelines. The Board also agreed that the use of metal siding as a primary material is out of character with the neighborhood, unless it is used in small areas. **(CS3-A-1, CS3-A-3)**
   a. The Board asked the applicant to continue their investigation of their fenestration patterns and demonstrate how the proposed relates to the neighborhood context. **(CS3-A-3, DC2-B-1, DC4-A)**
   b. The Board requested that the applicant provide a couple of diagrams of different buildings within a couple block radius, as suggested by the community during public comment. The proposed fenestration design for this building should be responsive to context, not driven by unit sizes. **(CS2-A-2, CS3-A-1, DC4-A, DC2-B-1)**
   c. At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant should demonstrate how the fenestration detailing takes into account the location of vents, and incorporates high quality materials that reflect the neighborhood character. **(CS2-A-2, DC4-A-1)**

6. **Balconies**: The Board agreed with the public comment that the balconies are too small to be usable and may only be used for storage. The Board gave guidance to redesign the balconies to either be Juliet balconies or larger balconies that can be used for a table and two chairs. **(DC2 A-2, DC2-C-1)**

7. **Departure:** The Board expressed initial support of the proposed alley setback departure, which they noted would allow for better landscaping at the street. However, the Board wanted to see a lush planting scheme that matches the landscaping of the existing

neighborhood. The Board also supported the front setback along Summit Avenue which they stated would allow the project to better relate to the neighboring building. **(PL1-B-3)**

a. The Board specifically requested clear diagrams of all departure requests at the Recommendation meeting.

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 these 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.

1. **Setbacks & Separation (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires that portions of a structure located in an HR zone less than 85 feet in height have a Side & Front (Street) setback of 5'-0" minimum, with an average of 7'-0," and an alley setback of 10'-0".

   The applicant is proposing a minimum Side & Front (Street) setback of 3'-0" along Spring St, or a 3 foot setback for a total length of 22 feet. The applicant is also requesting a 13 foot setback along Summit Ave., (a 13 foot setback for a total length of 27 feet). In addition, the applicant is also requesting a setback of 5' 6" setback for levels 1 and 2, and a 1'-0" set setback for a total length of 27 feet for the upper floors of the building amounting to 58% of the building façade.

   At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board indicated early support for the alley setback departure request as the departure would provide opportunities for a large landscape planting area. The Board stated that in supporting the departure, the planting scheme for the area would need to be lush, indicative of the existing landscaping in the neighborhood. **(CS2-B, PL3-B, DC4-D-1)**

   For the front setback along Summit Avenue, the Board was supportive of the small portion 13 foot setback to better relate to the neighboring building. **(CS2-B, PL3-B, DC4-D-1)**

   The Board was not in support of the proposed Spring Street setback departure. **(CS2-B, PL3-B, DC4-D-1)**

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 NEIGHBORHOOD

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give Seattle, the neighborhood, and/or the site its 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. Examples of neighborhood and/or site features that contributed to a sense of place include patterns of streets or blocks, slopes, sites with prominent visibility, relationships to bodies of water or significant trees, natural areas, open spaces, iconic buildings or transportation junctions, and land seen as a gateway to the community.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly. A site may lend itself to a "high-profile" design with significant presence and individual identity, or may be better suited to a simpler but quality design that contributes to the block as a whole. Buildings that contribute to a strong street edge, especially at the first three floors, are particularly important to the creation of a quality public realm that invites social interaction and economic activity. Encourage all building facades to incorporate design detail, articulation and quality materials.

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 carefully consider how the building will interact with the public realm. Consider the qualities and character of the streetscape— its physical features (sidewalk, parking, landscape strip, street trees, travel lanes, and other amenities) and its function (major retail street or quieter residential street)—in siting and designing the building.

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces. Evaluate adjacent sites, streetscapes, trees and vegetation, and open spaces for how they function as the walls and floor of outdoor spaces or "rooms" for public use. Determine how best to support those spaces through project siting and design (e.g. using mature trees to frame views of architecture or other prominent features).

CS2-C. RELATIONSHIP TO THE BLOCK SPACES

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. Consider using a corner to provide extra space for pedestrians and a generous entry, or build out to the corner to provide a strong urban edge 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 where it is already present, and respond to datum lines created by adjacent buildings at the first

three floors. Where adjacent properties are undeveloped or underdeveloped, design the party walls to provide visual interest through materials, color, texture, or other means.

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. Consider providing through-block access and/or designing the project as an assemblage of buildings and spaces within the block.

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-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

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-3. Design Objectives: 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. Visible access to the building's entry should be provided. Examples of pedestrian amenities include seating, other street furniture, lighting, year-round landscaping, seasonal plantings, pedestrian scale signage, site furniture, art work, awnings, large storefront windows, and engaging retail displays and/or kiosks.

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-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-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 through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

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.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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.

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-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

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-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

BOARD DIRECTION

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