



RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3028619

Address: 2870 S Hanford St

Applicant: Constanza Marcheselli, Runberg Architecture Group

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, January 30, 2018

Board Members Present: Julian Weber, Chair
Don Caffrey, Substitute
Carey Dagliano-Holmes
David Sauvion

Board Members Absent: Sharon Khosla
Charles Romero

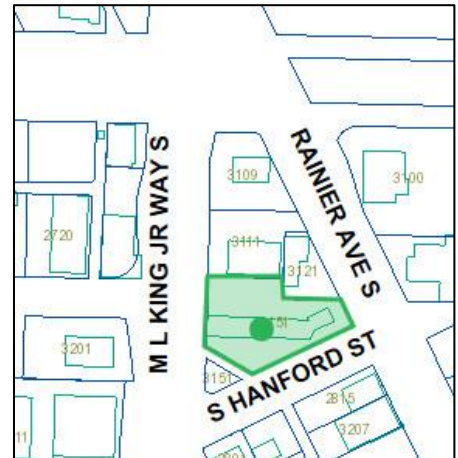
SDCI Staff Present: Abby Weber

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed – North Rainier 85 (SM-NR 85)

Nearby Zones: (North) SM-NR 85
(South) SM-NR 85
(East) SM-NR 65
(West) Lowrise 3 Residential Commercial (LR3 RC)

Lot Area: Approx. 17,895 SF



Current Development:

The irregular, triangular site is currently developed with a commercial carwash facility. The existing structure is 1-2 stories in height, with carwash stations at the ground level and office above.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The site is located in the Mount Baker Hub Urban Village, approximately 1-block southeast of the Mount Baker Link Light Rail Station and 1-block southwest of Franklin High School. The elevated light rail tracks run parallel to the site along Martin Luther King Jr Way S. Rainier Ave S is heavily vegetated with mature street trees. Both streets also provide bus service; a bus stop is located in the right-of-way adjacent to the site along Martin Luther King Jr Way S.

The neighborhood is characterized by a mix of lowrise residential, commercial and mixed-use developments. Many existing commercial uses are auto-oriented with surface parking lots located between the structures and the adjacent right-of-way. Recent development is trending towards midrise mixed-use structures that are contemporary in design and built to the property line.

Access:

Existing vehicular access occurs from S Hanford St via three curbs cuts and Martin Luther King Jr Way S via one curb cut. Vehicular access is proposed to occur from S Hanford St. Pedestrian access is proposed to occur from each street frontage.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The site is located in a liquefaction prone area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for an eight-story building with 95 residential units and approx. 8,200 sq. ft. ground level human services use. Parking for five vehicles to be provided. Existing structures are proposed to be demolished.

The design packets include information presented at the meetings, and are available online by entering the project number at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packets are also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI:

Mailing Public Resource Center
Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported the project and the requested departures, as proposed.
- Supported the design of the project.
- Encouraged the applicant to set aggressive goals for reduced carbon emissions (Net Zero) and energy consumption, and advocated for the 2031 Washington State Energy Code. Noted that long term environmental goals are parallel to affordable housing objectives in terms of long term durability and low energy costs.

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

- Strongly supported the proposed development as it is well-designed and well-located, and provides much needed affordable, family-sized housing in a transit-oriented community in close proximity to schools, shopping and recreation opportunities.

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. Massing Options & Architectural Concept

- a. The Board reviewed the respective merits of massing Options B and C. Ultimately, the majority of the Board supported Option C - the applicant's preferred massing option - since the design of the courtyard functions well, blank wall conditions are minimized, and the concept is clearly expressed. (CS3-I-ii, DC2-B, DC3-C)
- b. The Board supported the architectural concept of "carving", the consistency of application of the concept, and resulting modulation. While the Board generally appreciated the subtleness of the facade treatment, they encouraged further carving or modulating the north façade and corners to allow opportunities for additional glazing and to mitigate blank wall conditions. (CS2-I-iii, CS2-II-iii, CS3-I-ii, DC2-B, DC2-C)
- c. The Board supported the precedent imagery provided on page 41 of the Early Design Guidance Packet, and encouraged further development of the design in this direction. (CS2-I -iii, CS3-I-ii, DC2-B, DC2-C)

2. Façade Composition & Blank Wall Conditions

- a. The Board discussed the high-visibility and prominence of the site, and its potential to serve as a gateway or neighborhood hub. The Board noted that the southeast corner of the proposed development is obscured by mature street trees along Rainier Ave S, whereas the southwest corner is exposed along Martin Luther King Jr Way S and therefore has a greater potential to serve as a northbound gateway. (CS2-I-i, CS2-I-ii)
- b. The Board noted that the north facades will likely be highly visible for an extended period of time, and the exposed large blank facades are in contrast with neighborhood gateway goals. To mitigate blank wall concerns, the Board recommended carving away portions of the north façades in a manner consistent with the overall architectural concept. Particularly, at the northwest corner where additional modulation provides an opportunity to create an "iconic" identifying architectural element. (CS2-I-ii, CS3-I-ii, DC2-B)
- c. The Board noted that the composition of the north facade was more successful for massing Option C since the central courtyard breaks down the large expanse of blank wall. (DC2-B-2)
- d. The Board requested additional information and graphic renderings at the Recommendation phase, to provide a clear understanding of the amount of glazing, façade treatments, and scale of "carved" voids and modulation. (CS2-I-ii, CS3-I-ii, DC2-B)

3. Courtyard

- a. The Board generally supported the design of the upper level exterior courtyard as proposed, however, the Board recommended the use of reflective materials and colors on adjacent facades to bring light into the space. (CS1-B-2, DC3-C-2)
- b. The Board was concerned about noise impacts within the courtyard resulting from Light Rail Transit, and they recommended engaging an acoustics consultant to review the matter. The Board noted that landscaping and forms should also be designed to minimize noise impacts. (DC3-B-1, DC3-B-4, DC3-C-2)
- c. The Board was concerned about the exposed columns and level 3 bridge within the void along the south facade as these elements detract from the success of the architectural concept. The Board recommended that the bridge should be designed to be highly transparent. (DC2-C-2, DC3-C-2)

4. Pedestrian Experience

- a. The Board encouraged further developing the ground-level of the northwest corner along Martin Luther King Jr Way S as a pedestrian gateway between the site and the Light Rail station. The treatment should reflect the interior public resources, and be consistent with the overall architectural concept. (CS2-B-2, PL1-III-i, PL3-C-1, DC2-C)
- b. The Board noted that the ground-level facades and interior uses should be highly transparent, create a strong connection to the public realm, and engage passers-by. The Board requested eye-level graphic renderings at the Recommendation phase, to illustrate these qualities. (CS2-B-2, CS2-III-i, PL3-C-1)

5. Solar

- a. In response to public comment, the Board prioritized Design Guideline CS1-B, Sunlight and Ventilation. The Board supported the proposed rooftop solar. (CS1-B-1)

RECOMMENDATION January 30, 2018

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported the design of the courtyard, and noted it will be a nice visual from the street-level and public realm.
- Appreciated the applicant's commitment to the North Rainer Neighborhood Plan, particularly in regard to sustainability; would like to see further exploration of ways to support environmental sustainability through design.
- Pleased with the project design development since the time of EDG.
- Noted that the project is well designed and reflective of what the community would like to see in the Mt. Baker Neighborhood, including affordable housing opportunities close to light rail.

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 recommendations.

1. Massing & Architectural Concept

- a. The Board reviewed the evolution of the building mass and architectural concept and generally felt the final design responded well to the Early Design Guidance (EDG), particularly the volumetric moves and "carved" modulation. The Board, however, was concerned that the treatment of the "field" – the facade areas clad in light gray fiber cement panel – failed to meaningfully break-up the perceived bulk or contribute to a human-scale as articulated by the Board at the EDG. Additional guidance provided below. (CS2-I-iii, DC2-A-2, DC2-B-1)
- b. The Board supported the additional upper-level "carving" that occurred in response to Early Design Guidance, and noted that the treatment of the "carved" portions of the façade is successful. (DC2, DC2-A-2, DC2-B-1, DC2-C-1)
- c. In agreement with public comment, the Board supported the overall design of the "carved" courtyard space as perceived from the public realm. (CS2-B-2, CS2-I-iii)

- d. The Board was concerned about the lack of perspective graphics depicting distant views since the project site is highly visible from the light rail and MLK Jr Way S, however, declined to request further study. (CS2-I-iii)

2. Façade Composition & Materiality

- a. The Board supported the treatment of the ground-level facade as it activates and engages the pedestrian realm through the rhythm of materials. (CS2-III-i, DC2-B-1, DC2-C-1)
- b. The Board supported the composition and treatment of the interior facades as it brightens the upper-level courtyard space. The Board particularly supported the simplicity of the singular accent color, as well as the pattern of accent panels and limited range of forms. (DC2-B-1, CS1-B-2)
- c. The Board appreciated the shifting windows within the “field” – the portions of the facade clad in light gray fiber cement panel – and attempt to enliven the facade using color accent panels, however, they questioned the success of this composition and material treatment. The Board was generally concerned that the consistent pattern of material reveals failed to create visual movement or reduce perceived bulk, and the width of the accent panels may be too narrow to be legible. The Board ultimately encouraged further exploration of a unified facade expression that relates to the interior courtyard-facing facades, and recommended a condition that the number of color accents be reduced within the "field". (DC2, DC2-B-1)
- d. The Board reviewed the black vinyl window alternative as presented by the applicant, but ultimately supported the white vinyl windows as proposed in the Recommendation Packet as it better relates to the overall architectural expression. (DC2-B-1)

3. Blank Walls

- a. The Board maintained the position that the north facades will be highly visible for an unknown period, as discussed at the Early Design Guidance phase. While the Board appreciated the additional “carving” on the north façade, they were concerned it does not fully alleviate the blank wall condition. (CS3-I-ii, DC2-B)
- b. The Board did not support the proposed alternative treatment as shown on page 31 of the Recommendation Packet. (DC2-B)
- c. The Board was particularly concerned about the large expanse of blank wall on the two portions of the north façade on either side of the courtyard. The Board recommended a condition that large-scale artistic murals be incorporated in these two locations. The Board specifically prioritized Design Guideline CS3-B-1, Placemaking, and stated the murals should contribute to a sense of place and relate to the local neighborhood context. (CS3-B-1, DC2-B-2)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departures will be based on the departures’ 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 Recommendation, the following departures were requested:

1. **Upper-Level Setback Requirements in North Rainier (SMC 23.48.435):** The Code requires any portion of a structure greater than 45-feet in height to set back from the lot line 1-foot for every additional 2-feet of height, up to a maximum of 15-feet. The applicant proposes to encroach into the required setback along a segment of Rainier Ave S the full height of the building, stepping back an additional 2-foot 1-inch above 115-feet.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the requested departure as the proposed design successfully engages the Rainier Ave S frontage, and the upper-level “carved” modulation contributes to a consistent overall architectural expression. (CS3-I-ii: Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes (Mt. Baker), DC2-B-1: Architectural and Facade Composition)

2. **Sight Triangles (SMC 23.54.030.G.1):** The Code requires a sight triangle on both sides of the driveway for two-way driveways less than 22-feet wide, and shall be kept clear of any obstruction for a distance of 10-feet from the intersection of the driveway with the sidewalk. The applicant proposes to encroach into the required setback by 9-feet.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the requested departure as the resulting design reduces the impact of the garage entry on building aesthetics and the pedestrian realm, and the proposed convex mirrors further minimize impacts on the pedestrian experience and promote pedestrian safety. (CS2-II-iii: Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces on Triangular Lots, DC1-C-2 Parking and Service Uses Visual Impacts, DC1-C-4: Parking and Service Uses)

3. **Nonresidential Use Driveway Width (SMC 23.54.030.D.2.a.2):** The Code requires a driveway width of 22-feet for two-way traffic for nonresidential uses. The applicant proposes to allow a nonresidential driveway width of approximately 11-feet 9-inches.

The Board unanimously recommended approval of the requested departure from driveway width requirements since the narrower driveway creates a stronger connection to the public realm by increasing transparency and visual interest at the street-level. (CS2-B-2: Urban Pattern and Form – Connection to the Street, CS2-III-i: Relationship to The Block – Setting Precedent, CS2-II-iii: Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces on Triangular Lots)

4. **Nonresidential Use Parking Space Requirements (SMC 23.54.030.B.2.a):** For nonresidential uses, the Code requires that a maximum of 25-percent of the parking spaces be striped for small vehicles and a minimum of 75-percent of the parking spaces

be striped for large vehicles. The applicant proposes to allow 4 small parking spaces and 1 large parking space.

The Board recommended approval of the requested departure as it minimizes impacts to the interior arrangement of uses and helps to maximize interior gathering spaces. (DC1-A-2: Gathering Places)

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

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-A Energy Use

CS1-A-1. Energy Choices: At the earliest phase of project development, examine how energy choices may influence building form, siting, and orientation, and factor in the findings when making siting and design decisions.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

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.

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-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.

Mount Baker Town Center Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I. Location in The City and Neighborhood

CS2-I-i. Capitalize on opportunities for establishing a new neighborhood hub on sites within and adjacent to the Town Center.

CS2-I-ii. “Gateway” sites abound throughout the neighborhood, and have the potential to provide a sense of arrival to the neighborhood or to a particular place. Identified

“gateway” sites include the corners at the intersections of Rainier Ave., MLK Way, McClellan St., and Mount Baker Blvd.; and at Bayview St. to the north, and along McClellan St. to the east and west of the Town Center. Buildings at gateway sites should present strong forms that strengthen the corners through massing and height.

CS2-I-iii. New buildings should set a positive precedent for future development with quality design.

CS2-II. Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces.

CS2-II-iii. On triangular lots at the intersection of Rainier Ave. and MLK, buildings should be designed to create an active, porous facade on both sides, with minimized parking and service entrances.

CS2-III. Relationship to The Block

CS2-III-i. New development should set a good precedent for future redevelopment on the block by building to the sidewalk, providing active street level uses, and minimizing surface parking.

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

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.

Mount Baker Town Center Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-I. Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-I-i. Where viable, new development should consider designs that include small commercial spaces or spaces adaptable to small, independently-owned, local businesses.

CS3-I-ii. The designs of the first several new developments in the Mount Baker Town Center will require especially careful attention. Thoughtful, high-quality design will be critical for the new development, because they will set the context for quality design for future development.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

Mount Baker Town Center Supplemental Guidance:

PL1-III. Outdoor Uses & Activities

PL1-III-i. Incorporate playful features and details that engage passersby and create memorable spaces.

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

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

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-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

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-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

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-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.

DC3-C Design

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

BOARD DIRECTION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Tuesday, January 30, 2018, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, January 30, 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 conditions:

1. Reduce the number of color accents on the portions of the façade clad in light gray fiber cement panel. (DC2, DC2-B-1)
2. Incorporate two large-scale artistic murals, which contribute to a sense of place and relate to the local neighborhood context, on the portions of the north façade on either side of the courtyard. (CS3-B-1, DC2-B-2)