



**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE
SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Project Number: 3029353

Address: 9201 Delridge Way Southwest

Applicant: Thomas Eng, Caron Architecture

Date of Meeting: Thursday, February 15, 2018

Board Members Present: Donald Caffrey (substitute chair)
Crystal Loya
Alexandra Moravec
Robin Murphy
Matt Zinski

SDCI Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial 1 – 40-foot height limit (C1-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-40
(South) C1-40
(East) C1-40
(West) Lowrise 3 (LR3)

Lot Area: 10,382-square feet



Current Development:

The subject site is currently occupied by a one-story commercial structure and surface parking. The site slopes down approximately eight feet from east to west and is bounded on three sides by right-of-way: 20th Ave SW at the west, SW Barton St at the north, and the combination of an alley and Delridge Way SW to the east.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The surrounding development and neighborhood character consists primarily of one- and two-story single-family development to the south and west, and four-story multi-family structures to the north. Commercial and industrial development fronts Delridge Way SW to the east.

Access:

Vehicular access is proposed from the existing alley abutting the site to the east.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance Application for a 4-story mini-warehouse structure with office and care taker unit. Parking for 12 vehicles to be provided. Existing structures to be demolished.

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 Public Resource Center

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

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE February 15, 2018**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Noted Design Guidelines CS2, *Urban Pattern and Form*, PL1, *Public Life*, and DC1, *Design Concept* as priority considerations.
- Described the neighborhood as consisting of many new families, so suggested open, accessible open spaces.

- Described the site as being at the center of the Westwood Urban Village.
- Described a neighborhood effort to develop the site east across Delridge Way SW as a small pocket park. Noted that efforts include conversations with the Seattle Department of Transportation to develop wayfinding solutions. In response to this effort, recommended the project improve the pedestrian experience along SW Barton St to encourage pedestrian traffic to and from the pocket park.
- Recommended treating the east elevation to avoid a blank wall condition facing east, toward the pocket park.
- Recommended design that will encourage eyes on the street.
- Noted that truck traffic will approach the south from SW Roxbury St to the south.
- Described the context as highly walkable.
- Noted that pedestrian circulation, particularly crossing Delridge Way SW, is a concern.
- Described the context as residential.
- Described Delridge Way SW as having a large volume of pedestrian traffic.
- Concerned about pedestrian-vehicle interactions.
- Described the neighborhood as containing uses offering opportunity for activity in the evenings.
- Referenced the Delridge Neighborhood Plan, recommending the applicant review this plan.
- Noted the view of Mt. Rainier from the neighborhood.
- Described the existing street pattern as triangular.
- Concerned that the architectural concept of modulated boxes will not contribute positively to the neighborhood.
- Recommend a design that will enhance a walkable neighborhood.
- Concerned that the vegetation on the green screens will not grow four stories tall.
- Recommended uses at grade that will activate the street: a café was suggested.

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 and bicycle storage standards, for example, 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.

The Board emphasized the importance of: designing safe pedestrian-vehicle interactions at the alley and sidewalk; articulating a clear expression of the architectural concept; and responding to the residential character of the neighborhood.

1. **Context, Site, and Public Life:** The Board acknowledged public comment highlighting the residential character of the neighborhood while emphasizing the importance of an active street front with adequate room for pedestrian traffic to pass and avoid conflict with vehicles. In summary, the Board supported elements of the Option 2 and 3 ground floor programs, as described below. Develop the ground floor program to respond to the goals of activating the street and reducing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts at the alley.
 - a. **Option 1** (EDG Packet, pages 15-25): The ground floor plan proposed office space at the northwest corner, stretching along 20th Ave SW and SW Barton St. A vestibule at the northeast corner offered pedestrian in/egress out onto the alley. Immediately to the south of this vestibule was a surface loading zone and vehicular entrance to the garage. The Board agreed that reducing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts is an important consideration, particularly at the alley, and for this reason, the Option 1 ground floor was the least preferred option.
 - b. **Option 2** (EDG Packet, pages 26-33): The ground floor of Option 2 also focused the office at the northwest corner of the ground floor. However, with a nearly 1,000-square foot reduction in size, the office did not extend as generously along SW Barton St as Option 1. The vehicle loading space was moved into the parking garage, and the vestibule was moved to 20th Ave SW. The entrance to the parking garage was located at the furthest south portion of the site, off the alley. This ground floor program required a departure for location of surface parking adjacent a street-level, street-facing façade (see further discussion below). The Board supported the location of loading zone within the parking garage with entrance to the garage at the south end of the site off the alley and recommended maintaining the garage entry location as shown.
 - c. **Option 3** (EDG Packet, pages 34-40): The ground floor proposed office space at both the northwest and northeast corners with vestibule in between. The loading zone was located again within the parking garage, with entrance to the garage further north in the alley, close to the entrance for the northeast corner office. This ground floor program required a departure for depth of a commercial use (see further discussion below). The Board supported the location of uses along 20th Ave S and SW Barton St, while expressing concern that the location of the loading zone and entrance to the parking garage required the most amount of vehicle maneuvering in proximity to pedestrian circulation at the northeast corner.

2. **Architectural and Design Concept.** As noted above, the Board acknowledged public comment describing the context as residential in character. With this description in mind, the Board discussed the proposed architectural concept.
 - a. The architectural concept was described as the creation of two uniform boxes, one stacked on top of the other, expressing the interior use in the exterior design (storage and service/office). The ground level is to be open and articulated with fine grain details and landscaping, while the upper level houses the storage units and would be more uniform expression. Texture and material are intended to add interest to the building (page 13, EDG Packet). The Board supported this architectural concept, agreeing that the project could be a beautiful sculptural object with simple massing and materiality to address scale. The Board agreed that Option 2 was the most successful at articulating this architectural concept with its simple and consistent forms.
 - b. While appreciating the simplicity and elegance of the architectural concept, the Board acknowledged public comment describing the context as residential in character and

request that the design respond appropriately to this context. With this input in mind, the Board offered the following design guidance.

- i. South Elevation. The site abutting directly to the south contains an existing cell tower, making the south façade of the proposed development highly visible. The porosity or transparency of the proposed development's southwest tower element, with its metal hexagon construction, offers opportunity for clear views of the design expression on the south elevation of this project. As such, the Board recommended the south elevation be carefully treated and that the architectural concept be clearly articulated at this location. Extending the architectural expression to this south elevation will ensure an appropriate response to the residential character of the neighborhood.
- ii. Northeast Corner and Base. As described above, the Board supported the massing of Option 2, finding it best articulated the architectural concept. In consideration of the public comment encouraging activation of the street and improvements for adequate circulation for pedestrians, the Board offered guidance related to the treatment of the street-level, street-facing facades and right-of-way improvements.
 1. Because the Board felt the office uses will likely not be a high activity-generating use, they recommended the application of high-quality materials with texture and human scale at the street-level facades (fiber cement panel would not be supported).
 2. The Board agreed that the application of glass along the entire base is not necessary, rather the proportion of glass and blank wall should read as intentional.
 3. The Board recommended overhead weather protection be applied in a thoughtful way that enhances the hierarchy of all architectural elements as a whole and reinforces proportions. This weather protection will contribute to the overall residential context and support pedestrian traffic to the future pocket park across Delridge Way SW to the east. Include in the Recommendation packet information describing the design of the future pocket park and describe how the design responds to this future condition.
 4. In further support of the future pocket park to the east and public request for safe pedestrian circulation, the Board recommended the SW Barton St sidewalk be as wide as possible. The proposed ground level greenspace along SW Barton St was supported in further pursuit of these objectives.
- iii. Articulate Interior Uses on the Exterior. In addition to supporting the expression of the architectural concept in Option 2, the Board also supported how well Option 2 expressed its own residential use on the exterior. This residential use, a caretaker's unit, was proposed at the southwest corner of Option 2. The Board supported this location of the caretaker's unit because it overlooked 20th Ave SW and beyond, to the lowrise residential development to the west. To emphasize this residential use and response appropriately to the residential character of the neighborhood, the Board recommended this caretaker's unit be further expressed on the façade. The Board suggested an inset balcony in lieu of the four windows shown, as the inset balcony would be in keeping with the architectural

concept. The four windows were described as unsuccessful in expressing the residential use.

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.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Street Development Standards, Average Depth of Non-Residential Space (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3.):** The Code requires that non-residential uses shall extend an average depth of at least 30-feet and a minimum 15-feet from the street-level street-facing façade. If the combination of the requirements from this section and SMC 23.47A.005 result in a requirement that an area greater than 50% of the structure's footprint be dedicated to non-residential use, the Director may modify the street-facing façade or depth requirement, or both, so that no more than 50% of the structure's footprint is required to be non-residential. The applicant proposes a reduction to this requirement to allow an average depth of 17-feet, 7-inches along 20th Ave SW and 22-feet, 9-inches along SW Barton St. The applicant also notes that the requirements from the above-mentioned code sections would require 55% of the structure's footprint to be non-residential. (see page 41 of the EDG Packet). This departure was requested for Option 3.

The Board indicated preliminary support for the request with careful treatment of the street-level street facing façades. Elements of texture and human scale should be applied. Furthermore, the Board supported the office uses at the northwest and northeast corners. (PL3, *Street-Level Interaction*)

2. **Parking Access (SMC 23.47A.032.B.1.b):** The Code requires that street-level parking within a structure be separated from the street-level, street-facing façade by another permitted use. The applicant proposes an exception to this standard to allow parking within the structure to not be separated from the street-level street-facing façade by another use along SW Barton St. This departure was requested for Option 2.

The Board indicated preliminary support for the departure request. The Board acknowledged that the goal is not to have cars at grade, but agreed that the impacts could be mitigated with a successful façade at grade, including elements of texture and human scale. Furthermore, the Board supported the northwest corner office use at grade. (DC1 *Project Uses and Activities*)

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-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-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-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

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-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.

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

PL2-C Weather Protection

PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage: Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

PL2-C-2. Design Integration: Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces: Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

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-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

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 façades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all façades 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 façades 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 façades 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.

DC2-C-3. Fit with Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials: Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

BOARD DIRECTION

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