



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

Record Number: 3032373-EG

Address: 2538 Beacon Avenue South

Applicant: Jeff Walls of Studio 19 Architects

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, September 25, 2018

Board Members Present: Charles Romero (chair)
Carey Dagliano Holmes
Chris Colley
David Bader

Board Members Absent: Jhomar Small

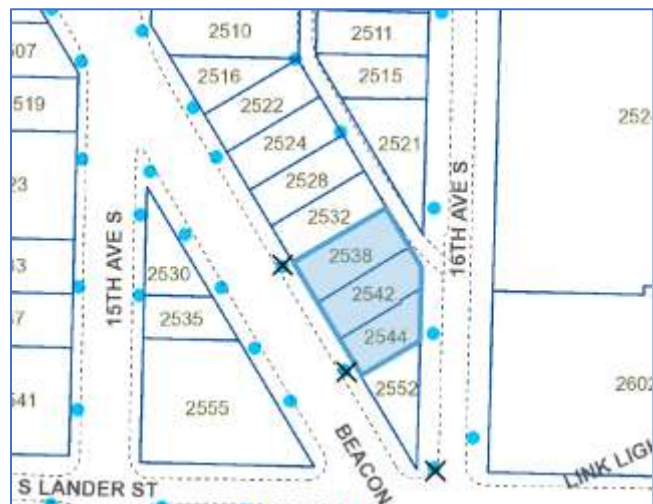
SDCI Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a pedestrian overlay, 65-foot height limit, and incentive zoning (NC2P-65(4.0))

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2P-65 (4.0)
(South) NC2P-65 (4.0)
(East) NC2P-65 (0.75) and NC2-40
(West) NC2P-65 (4.0)

Lot Area: 11,125-square feet



Current Development:

The site is located between Beacon Ave S and 16th Ave S, approximately xx-feet north of the intersection with S Lander St/S Roberto Maestas Festival St. The Beacon Hill Light Rail Station is at this intersection, and El Centro del la Raza is across 16th Ave S to the east. The site currently contains three structures with vehicular access from the alley off 16th Ave S. All existing structures on site are proposed for demolition.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development consists of a variety of uses including: the Beacon Hill Light Rail Station; community organization and center, *El Centro de la Raza*; Plaza Roberto Maestas and S Roberto Maestas Festival Street; grocery stores such as Beacon Hill Market; and newly proposed mixed-use development *Beacon Crossing* along Beacon Ave S.

Access:

Vehicular access for the 22 parking stalls is proposed from the alley. The primary residential entry fronts 16th Ave S, and pedestrian access to the retail is proposed from Beacon Ave S.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes one, six-story structure containing 84 units, 3,360-square feet of retail fronting Beacon Ave S, and 22 parking stalls accessed from the alley.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the record number (3032373-EG) 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 the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (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 September 25, 2018**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Recommended smaller retail spaces fronting Beacon Ave S.
- Identified walkability as a top priority.
- Suggested using signage for wayfinding for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Surmised that the building will stand alone for some time, and be highly visible from the south.

- Supported the preferred option’s use of massing moves.
- Recommended reducing the south mass.
- Recommended increasing the size of the roof deck.
- Supported option 1, but felt the proposed passthrough would not be well utilized and could present a safety challenge.
- Concerned with proposed mechanical equipment at the roof, finding it often makes the building appear larger or taller.
- Supported the lobby passthrough for residents, shown in option 1.
- Noted accessibility as a top priority.
- Concerned with pedestrian and vehicular movements.

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 record number 3032373-EG: <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. **Concepts.** The Board began their deliberation with discussion of the three concepts and response to neighborhood context.
 - a. **Concept 1.** (*CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces, PL1-I Residential Open Space, DC3-C Design*)
 - i. Two elements of Concept 1 were discussed, each offering a type of through block connection: the first a ground level pedestrian walkway along the north property line; and the second, a residential lobby and lounge space in the building (EDG Packet, page 18). Both would provide pedestrians and/or residents the opportunity to travel between Beacon Ave S and 16th Avenue.
 - ii. Appreciating the response to the local network of open spaces (EDG Packet, page 7), the Board raised questions regarding safety and concluded that the ground level walkway along the north property line was not necessary given the site’s proximity to the corner.
 - iii. The internal programming with residential lobby on Beacon Ave S extending through to a residential lounge at 16th Avenue was described as a positive feature of the ground floor program.

- b. Concept 2. (CS2-B *Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces*, PL1-I *Residential Open Space*, DC3-C *Design*)
 - i. The Board discussed the ground plane of Concept 2 along Beacon Ave S, with a large central residential lobby flanked by two retail spaces, and a nearly 15-foot deep by 73-foot wide ground level plaza area. The Board noted the existing strong street edge along Beacon Avenue S and agreed that a plaza area along Beacon Ave S was not an appropriate response to the context and did not support Concept 2.
 - c. Concept 3. (CS2-B *Adjacent Sites, Streets*, DC1-B *Vehicular Access and Circulation*, DC3-C *Design*)
 - i. The Board supported the preferred Concept 3 and the following elements, agreeing they responded appropriately to the existing context:
 1. Strong street edge along Beacon Ave S with one continuous retail space that offered flexibility to divide the space into smaller retail spaces, as was recommended in public comment;
 2. The ground level open space at 16th Avenue, serving as an endpoint to the existing network of open spaces to the east;
 3. The major massing moves to break up perceived bulk and scale; and
 4. The location of access to the parking garage.
2. **Ground Plane.** Focusing attention on Concept 3, the Board offered guidance related to the ground plane including 16th Avenue, Beacon Avenue South, and vehicular access.
- a. 16th Avenue. (CS2-B *Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces*, PL1-I *Residential Open Space*, PL2-D *Wayfinding*, PL3-B *Residential Edges*, DC3-C *Design*)
 - i. The Board supported the ground level open space at 16th Avenue because it offered a logical continuation or terminus or place for respite amid the existing network of open spaces surrounding: El Centro de la Raza, Plaza Roberto Maestas, S Roberto Maestas Festival Street, and the Beacon Hill Light Rail Station (EDG Packet, page 7). The Board described the ground level open space as an appropriate response to the residential nature of 16th Avenue and supported further development of this design.
 - ii. The Board recommended further exploration and careful design of this area to ensure adequate wayfinding for pedestrians and activation of the space.
 - iii. The Board noted the two ground level residential units at the north end of the ground level open space were separated from the open space by a landscape buffer.
 - iv. While this configuration could be supported with intentionally designed, rich landscaping to provide a buffer or security for the units while engaging the space, the Board recommended exploration of removing these units and providing a different use (such as amenity area) to further activate the open space.
 - b. Beacon Avenue South. (CS2-B *Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces*, PL1-I *Residential Open Space*, PL3-I *Human Activity*, DC3-C *Design*)
 - i. Given the existing character along Beacon Avenue South, the Board supported Concept 3's strong street edge and slight setback.

- ii. Activation of the street was identified as a priority, and the Board supported the opportunity for retail to spill out into the sidewalk at the slight setback.
 - iii. The Board recommended exploration of providing a larger setback to allow for greater activation at the sidewalk.
 - c. Vehicular Circulation. (PL2-D *Wayfinding*, DC1-B *Vehicular Access and Circulation*)
 - i. The vehicular access to the parking garage was proposed from the alley, north of the ground level open space, which was supported by the Board. However, due to its proximity to the ground level open space, the Board identified pedestrian safety as a priority and requested the following be presented at the next meeting: a study of the relationship of vehicular access and adjacent and proposed open spaces. Include a broader look at the context, demonstrating general access patterns and the project’s proposed safety measures.
 - ii. How wayfinding is integrated into the design will be important to the success of pedestrian/vehicular circulation.
- 3. **Architectural Concept**. The Board noted the emerging nature of the area and recommended careful consideration of this larger context to include projects currently proposed. A solidified architectural concept should be presented at the next meeting including material details.
 - a. South Façade. (DC4-A *Exterior Elements and Finishes*)
 - i. The Board was particularly interested in the south façade, and agreed that it will be visible from adjacent public open spaces such as the light rail station and festival street.
 - ii. The Board recommended the south façade be carefully articulated: expressing the stair tower, material treatments, and a community designed art installation were suggested.
 - iii. The Board recommended the project reach out to the community, local artists, and the Beacon Hill merchants. The following should be presented at the next meeting: ground level perspectives from the east and south looking toward the site.
 - b. Residential Entry. (PL3-A *Entries*, PL3-B *Residential Edges*)
 - i. The primary residential entry is accessed through the ground level open space off 16th Avenue. The Board supported this location, and recommended the entry be carefully articulated with an ensemble of elements and secondary architectural features to break the perception of mass.
 - c. Roof Deck. (CS2-III *Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility*)
 - i. The roof deck was discussed briefly, in the context of view opportunities. The Board recommended the project explore moving the roof deck from the south mass to the north, or if remaining on the south mass, dropping the parapet.

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, no departures were requested.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. 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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

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.

North Beacon Hill Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I Streetscape Compatibility

CS2-I-i. Buildings with Multiple Street Fronts: For buildings that span a block and face two streets, each street frontage should receive individual and detailed site planning as well as architectural design treatments to complement the established streetscape character.

CS2-I-ii. Relationship to Sidewalks: Build at or near the edge of the sidewalk and restrict grade separations where commercial uses occupy the ground floor.

CS2-III Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

CS2-III-iii. Viewsheds: Consider existing views to downtown Seattle, Puget Sound, Mt. Rainier, the Olympics and the Cascade Mountains, and incorporate site and building design features that help to preserve or enhance those views from public rights of way.

CS2-III-vi. Articulate Building Facades: Either vertically or horizontally in intervals that relate to the existing structures or existing pattern of development in the vicinity.

CS2-III-viii. Landscaping: Soften commercial facades with dense landscaping, where appropriate.

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

North Beacon Hill Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-I Architectural Context

CS3-I-i. Facade Articulation: To make new, larger development compatible with the surrounding architectural context, facade articulation and architectural detail are important considerations in mixed-use and multifamily residential buildings. When larger buildings replace several small buildings, facade articulation should reflect the original platting pattern and reinforce the architectural rhythm established in the commercial core.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

North Beacon Hill Supplemental Guidance:

PL1-I Residential Open Space

PL1-I-i. Quasi-public Open Space: Incorporate quasi-public open space into new residential development or redevelopment with special focus on corner landscape treatments and courtyard entries.

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-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-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.

North Beacon Hill Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-I Human Activity

PL3-I-i. Sidewalk Retail: Provide for sidewalk retail opportunities and connections by allowing for the opening of the storefront to the street and the display of goods on the sidewalks.

PL3-I-ii. Outdoor Dining: Provide for outdoor dining opportunities on the sidewalk by allowing for the opening of restaurant or cafe windows to the sidewalk and installing outdoor seating.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

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

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

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

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

North Beacon Hill Supplemental Guidance:

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

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.