

Capitol Hill Design Guidelines Survey – Final Results (6/18/18)

Q1 How well does this list capture the priority design issues?

Responses: 42

Score: 71 out of 100

Q2 Is there another design issue in Capitol Hill that should be listed?

Responses: 36

- affordability, parking and diversity in new structure design
- Identify the use of brick, masonry and concrete as preferred materials
- Maintain existing older buildings (not just mid-century). Blend new buildings into the old (not the boxy new buildings that are so ugly)
- More emphasis on green space is needed. Right now, we are constantly losing green at street level. Oddly enough, I find SLU has the potential to be a lush neighborhood than the core of Capitol Hill, despite having longer established plantings.
- Encourage new construction that honors historic character of the neighborhood (brick, stone, small scale) and incorporates natural materials such as wood and greenery.
- no
- Preserve and protect historic single-family homes; Encourage high-quality new construction that embodies the distinct architectural character of historic Capitol Hill buildings
- No, there should be less
- "Enhance and expand contiguous tree canopy, and expand natural landscapes." Natural landscapes haven't existed on Capitol Hill for 200 years. How about using the term 'wildlife habitat'?
- Prioritize streamlined design review and acknowledge the tradeoff between design and affordability.
- Safe Streets, Building for Affordability
- Sustainable energy usage
- Streets should be for people, bikes, and transit, not cars.
- I don't think that there should be an emphasis on creating attractive environments. This is subjective and it should be up to the community to determine what is attractive to them. I don't think the city coming in to polish the streetscape has been inclusive or beneficial to the Capitol Hill community.
- The diversity and social equity touted in these design goals is only achievable if Capitol Hill is affordable to a range of incomes, including extremely low income. However, these guidelines make no mention of economic diversity and inclusion. "Socially equitable" is vague language that might mean income diversity, but with so many low-income Capitol Hill residents being priced out of their homes, we need to be up front about economic inclusion in the design guidelines.
- design (plant, streetscape or building) should last the test of time. We should require higher quality materials.
- Consider inclusivity - create spaces that are welcoming and consider needs of folks targeted by NIMBY thinking. Also, consider safety in design concepts for especially vulnerable groups.
- want lists that are not followed or enforced are useless

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- Affordable housing
- differentiate Capitol Hill's distinct areas - Pike/Pine 12th, 15th, Broadway, Melrose etc.
- I agree with all this but offer two thoughts: 1. I don't want livability for residents to be lost in the process. A LOT of people live in Capitol Hill. So, while I appreciate the push to support the retail core, what do we mean by "retail core"? Are we creating structures that serve a feeling of community and a sense of neighborhood, or is the profitability of a "destination" retail core being more valued in the design process? 2. I appreciate the reference to history, but I want more of it and I want a clearer definition. To me, historical character is about brick and larger setbacks and masonry among other things. It might mean something else to someone else, so I think that needs some clarification.
- Maximum value for residential housing around transit hub.
- Affordable space (commercial and residential) for communities of color - there needs to be a racial equity focus
- Not make the new buildings so ugly / cheap looking. Also, this is too long. the digestible list above is good for public
- Well, there don't seem to be areas where the homeless can safely hang out in/restrooms they can use, that are also safe for everyone in the neighborhood. I don't think you can fix this though.
- The "architectural qualities" and "walkable urban form" section should explicitly specify that street level building features (including store frontage) should be at human-scale/pedestrian-scale.
- Expand office space use for 2nd floor and higher than current zoning
- Prioritize the preservation of the Craftsman-dominant architecture that's seen through much of the neighborhood, especially within the more residential areas of the neighborhood. Enforce a stricter design policy encouraging more traditional architecture, including features such as sloped rooflines and wood siding.
- Retain historic architectural features, including interior elements, where possible
- be supportive of small businesses and local retailers
- Disappointing that the guidelines back away from the guidelines for high quality finishing materials and setting the bar at hardi-board. I had hardi-board on my condo. It weathered horribly and has been more costly than if we had done brick in the first place. It starts looking terrible within a year.
- Quality of life for residents, including consideration of privacy, defensible space principals, ease of putting out and taking in solid waste containers, etc.
- Encourage the use of brick all the way up at prominent sites! People are fed up with the hardi party. Why was DC4 gutted? The end result will be large sheets of hardi and aluminum everywhere with a brick veneer at the base. The most successful blend of old and new in the neighborhood has been using brick all the way up with modern detailing (i.e., Hugo House, the new Mithun building across from Pony).
- Design for women.
- Optimizing density to mitigate displacement should be top priority
- No. But several of these are not necessarily priorities for me. I.E. supporting the arts community, supporting EcoDistrict, and protecting the tree canopy which is not necessarily possible when also allowing new development and density.

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Q3 Clarity You shouldn't have to be an architect or a planner to understand the Design Guidelines. Did we make the guidelines clear and easy to understand?

Responses: 43

Score: 73 out of 100

Q4 Are there any guidelines that you don't understand?

Responses: 32

- n/a
- No
- Kind of generic in a way that they have no meaning
- No
- Would appreciate greater clarity for expectations for environmental sustainability. For example, all new construction should adhere to standards outlined by the Living Building standard.
- no
- no
- nope
- No
- see comment above
- the difference between the two about the tree canopy was maybe too subtle. combine into one?
- No
- No
- No
- The "the best features of existing early to mid-century buildings" is vague and subjective.
- No.
- no
- Pedestrian safety, then you let the Cove put up an unlit awning creating a dark dangerous cave like walking space on E Pike St.
- Contiguous street canopy - I mean, I understand it, but could you just say, "Protect and encourage street trees"?
- There just needs to be greater specificity in order to ensure we are all talking about the same things.
- Leverage new development to meet EcoDistrict goals to promote a socially equitable, environmentally resilient and culturally vibrant neighborhood. It's too complex and does not have a single, clear item.
- I understand them, but the language is wordy/jargony - Even to me, and I have an architecture degree.
- I don't understand why the tree canopy line is two bulletpoints - just say "Preserve, protect, enhance and expand"
- No
- Yes. The distinct purpose of this one isn't really clear given that there are two others that cover the topic: "Encourage a greener, more sustainable public realm."

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- no
- Most of these guidelines are too open-ended and have very little to do with the actual appearance of buildings. They utilize buzzwords "walkable urban form" and "environmental sustainability" without providing much substance beyond them. "Preserving the best features" needs to be exemplified more, as the less new construction that is to occur, the less waste that is going to incur also...
- no
- CS1-3c isn't clear; CS2-4a could be clearer; how to meet PL2-2b isn't clear;
- What does "Honor Capitol Hill's role as the center of LGBTQ culture and community" Entail? How do you plan on honoring that and keeping Capitol Hill as the LGBTQ+ neighborhood?
- It took me a bit of thought to guess what you must mean by "leveraging". I assume you mean making inclusion of non-rich people a condition of development agreements. You could try to find a way to put that more clearly. It's the most important part of the guidelines to me.
- No, but I am a planner, so not the best judge. But I'm not sure why this really only seems to address buildings in the retail corridors. It seems there should be a section on the more residential parts of the neighborhood...

Q5 Photos. Photos of great development help communicate what the community wants. How well do the photos in the guidelines communicate future development you would like to see in Capitol Hill?

Responses: 41

Score: 67 out of 100

Q6 Is there another building in Capitol Hill or a similar neighborhood that might be good to include? (Optional)

Responses: 3

- 1548 E Harrison Street.
- Silvan, 914 E Harrison St
- St. John's Apartments 725 E. Pike St.

Q7 If you don't have a photo of a building to upload, let us know the name or address – we'll try to track it down!

Responses: 17

- New Mithun building across from pony
- The Gatsby
- Part of SLU show better setbacks and pedestrian green space than is being offered on Capitol Hill.
- Analog Coffee on Summit

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- Anything by Weinstein is a pretty good example. I'd like to see a photo removed, page 28 last image. That building is a mess of details, too much going on. It's counter to the intent of the caption
- St. John's Apartments 725 E. Pike st
- n/a
- There are several that come to mind. I would say make sure to include texture. Most newer buildings are lacking this. Less straight lines, more sensory stimulating, thought provoking architecture.
- Silvian, 914 E Harrison St as example of existing neighborhood character and low-income housing
- NA
- Avalon is good example of the city asking for boutique style ground floor retail, being ignored and then sitting empty for FIVE YEARS!
- The Roy Vue, The Arcadia, Oddfellows Building, Elliott Bay Books
- 1634 11th Ave. - The new Hugo House!
- Oola Distillery: More places with outdoor space that extends out to the sidewalk or one floor above street level.
- 511 Malden Ave E
- Show an Anhalt Building with a recent complementary structure.
- 1548 E Harrison Street.

Q8 Brevity. The Design Review Board has limited time to review each development project. They need to focus on the important topics pretty quickly. How well do the guidelines point to the most important issues clearly and quickly?

Responses: 37

Score: 69 out of 100

Q9 If pressed for time, are there guidelines that should be a lower priority for the Design Review Board?

Responses: 24

- no
- Items not specifically related to design like EcoDistrict goals
- LGBTQ and arts focus
- no
- Honor Capitol Hill's role as the center of LGBTQ culture and community.
- There's just soooooo much. It's a minefield. I think the guidelines should be half as long, at least! How are we as designers to know which topic the board will prioritize at any given moment? If there's going to be this much, there should be points or some type of system to tally the things we've addressed akin to LEED. All the guidelines that deal with aesthetic preferences (CS3, DC2, DC4) should be lowest priority or removed.

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- "Leverage new development to help meet the arts community goal to elevate and sustain the presence of arts and culture in Capitol Hill." this one feels like it may be harder to judge since it's much more about systems and policy than the building itself.
- Historic preservation
- The arts guideline is moot for any project that does not offer 25%+ of units as low-income housing, because artists cannot afford "market rate" apartments on Capitol Hill.
- The design review board should worry about design and less about environmental elements.
- since they don't make any of the developers follow guidelines I don't really see the point
- I would prioritize historical character, green space, open space, and walkability.
- LGBTQ - hard to see how that priority would be enacted anyway.
- Historic preservation of facades, etc. Prioritize our growing city. Prioritize preservation of communities and usage over architectural "character." Eco/green is important but it should be framed as environmental justice (in opposition to environmental racism and economic injustice.)
- No
- This one, because if the other guidelines are followed, this one should be taken care of as a side-effect: "Leverage new development to meet EcoDistrict goals to promote a socially equitable, environmentally resilient and culturally vibrant neighborhood."
- "Create an attractive, functional, and safe pedestrian environment, especially to support vibrant, thriving retail corridors." - This doesn't say anything about how the building fits into the neighborhoods existing historic character.
- not sure
- All are important
- Specific landscape plant types
- Bioswales unless the sewer system will be overwhelmed in a storm.
- Historical and architectural character aren't important or relevant to modern Capitol Hill.
- Way too much emphasis on art. Art costs money, which makes housing and everything else more expensive and should not be under the purview of the City

Q10 Redundancy. The Neighborhood Design Guidelines should not repeat what's already included in the citywide Seattle Design Guidelines. How well do the guidelines avoid redundancy with the Seattle Design Guidelines?

Responses: 35

Score: 61 out of 100

Q11 Which guidelines might be redundant?

Responses: 12

- Are you kidding me? This is 31 pages long. I haven't done a project in Seattle in a bit, but if I did it'd be a labyrinth to figure out how this integrates with the Seattle Design Guidelines.
- None - I wish Seattle used these guidelines everywhere!

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- Tree canopy, natural landscapes
- NA
- making the streets safe with lighting, even though the city ignores it and even refuses to light their street light for 2 years!
- I'm not familiar with them.
- I don't know.
- PL4= Bicycles
- "Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them."
- not sure
- I haven't read the Seattle guide
- They are likely pretty redundant. I think the most important things that matter to Capitol Hill that do not apply in the rest of the city as much is to enhance the pedestrian environment, create active retail streets, and to develop new buildings that fit in with the historic buildings. Also, to ensure that new development maintains the diversity of housing types that people like in Capitol Hill.

Q12 Any other feedback you would like to share about the draft design guidelines?

Responses: 23

- Keep the 2013 language regarding preferred materials
- Should be clear about trees that are older. 100-year-old trees cannot be replaced with saplings.
- Greater emphasis on integration of greenery, and need to radically move away from developing building with large areas of concrete in the public spaces - both unattractive and uninviting to spend time in, so it's a waste of space and land.
- I think it is important to emphasize the need for high-quality, long-lasting buildings that will stand the test of time and bring character to the neighborhood.
- The only thing I noticed that's missing is the guidance that bike parking be visible - both for people looking for a place to park their bikes and to prevent theft. As 12th Ave Arts quickly found, tucked-away locations are great for thieves.
- The guidelines need to be shorter. They need to be development friendly to solve our housing crisis. I'm glad to see a reduction in "modulation" because that has made our neighborhood worse. I think there should be credits given for using nicer materials like brick and wood. All we really need in our neighborhood is simple, well detailed boxes made of nice materials and some significant investment in street trees. I also think there's a missing element of transparency of glass at the retail level. Cheap, reflective glass has such a negative effect on retail that I think it should be championed in the design guidelines. Basically, if you just focused on getting better materials to be used instead of focusing on character of design you'd probably be better off and would see nicer buildings in the neighborhood. The shittiest brick building will likely be better than an okay hardiboard building.
- From CS1 -"Maximize use of native and/or naturally growing plant species ". I fear that 'naturally growing plant species' is too vague a term. Are there plants that aren't naturally growing?

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Either explain 'naturally growing' better, or, Why not just say 'maximize native plant species'. The book Bringing Nature Home explains in detail why this is an important issue in providing habitat for local insects, birds, etc. Nonnatives create a sterile habitat. I support design guidelines that improve environmental sustainability and transportation access but I strongly disagree that we should be dictating aesthetics. It was absurd that the Capitol Hill Link TOD project had to go in front of the Design Review Board over, among other things, the color of the panels. Different people have different aesthetic preferences. The preferences of a few should not be enshrined in city policy. The city is in a well acknowledged affordable housing crisis. We need housing, not more process.

- They're great! I hope the city genuinely follows through to create a low-carbon neighborhood with abundant housing for all income levels.
- Please include sensory stimulating, thought provoking architecture. Please include affordable housing. Please make sure that the LGBTQ+ community doesn't get washed out in this process. Capitol Hill must remain a safe place for queer individuals and focus on them.
- I cannot emphasize enough that the "neighborhood character" of Capitol Hill must include low income residents. IMHO all new housing in this dense neighborhood should have units affordable to extremely low income and low-income tenants. Affordable housing creates diversity; expensive new units have the consequence of driving out diverse low-income people and replacing them with wealthy, white heteronormative people. Capitol Hill's oft-touted vibrancy is intrinsically tied to it being a place that is welcoming to those that are queer, weird, and poor.
- NA
- How about enforcing the smaller retail spaces to accommodate art and small business? How about not letting developers drain water onto the sidewalks on principal pedestrian streets. How about making developers have a waste management plan for their garbage/recycling that doesn't involve taking up 5 parking places, having dumpsters on the sidewalks and streets every day of the week or dragging them behind a vehicle down the E Pike St sidewalk. How about making developers have a plan for retail deliveries/residential moving vehicles and not just let people park in the center turn lane. How about the city NOT install dangerous half street lights? How about the city NOT make developers create 'retaining wall seating' while the city blocks off all of it's seating in dealing with the homeless crisis? How about fining developers that leave 10,000 square foot ground floor retail vacant for YEARS creating pedestrian deserts? How about Seattle do something right! Anything would be better than this! Talk, talk, talk, no enforcement of existing rules just new unenforced guidelines. Stupid!!
- No
- It is important that when a developer reads through these guidelines, their primary take-away is that in order to make a building or development work in this neighborhood, their focus needs to be on the pedestrian.
- Thank you for including honoring Seattle's LGBTQ community's history on Capitol Hill and maintaining it as a priority.
- I think more emphasis should be put on exterior appearance. New developments often stick out like sore thumbs and ruin the continuity and flow of their give streets. The overly boxy appearances offer no sense of imagination, emphasizing efficiency and minimizing details.
- no

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- How about encouraging backyard cottages?
- I will send in more detailed comments.
- Design for women and children. There need to be more of them in Capitol Hill.
- I appreciate your work.
- I notice that many of the images of "good" development are in South Lake Union, but I always hear that no one in Capitol Hill wants it to develop like South Lake Union, so this is highly troubling. More examples of small scale buildings that do not take up entire blocks would be a good idea. New buildings that take up entire blocks should be highly discouraged as they do not support the small-scale retail spaces that we like in Capitol Hill. Also, please stop building 7 story buildings. Limit the heights to 5 stories unless they are in the Pike Pine Corridor. I also find it silly that the Pike/Pine Corridor is not included in the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines since everyone here considers it part of the neighborhood. Presumably the City will review design guidelines for that area separately, but they will likely be identical to those for Capitol Hill since the same people live/work/play in the two areas all the time and have a vested interest in both.