

Capitol Hill Design Guidelines Update - Work Group meeting #7

Meeting Summary

March 13th

Work Group Members present

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie Bain | <input type="checkbox"/> Jess Blanch | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lincoln Ferris | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erik Rundell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brian Baker | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lana Blinderman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Whitney Fraser | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Saunatina Sanchez |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Matthew Benedict | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> McCaela Daffern | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rob Ketcherside | <input type="checkbox"/> Alicia Daniels Uhlig |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Blakeney | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Feit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Mariano | |

Staff present

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christina Ghan (SDCI) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patrice Carroll (OPCD) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aaron Hursey (OPCD) |
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Additional Attendees

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Melissa Wechsler (Consultant) | <input type="checkbox"/> Joel Sisolak |
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On March 13th, 2018, the seventh work group session was held at 12th Ave Arts (1620 12th Ave) in the Capitol Hill Neighborhood of Seattle. This meeting was cohosted by the City of Seattle's Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) and Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) and the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict, a project of Capitol Hill Housing. The work group, which consists of over a dozen renters, homeowners, and business owners who live, work, and/or socialize in the Capitol Hill Neighborhood, will help with the update of the current Capitol Hill Neighborhood Design Guidelines. The goals of the meeting were to 1) continue to review and discuss updates to the Public Life section of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines and 2) begin to review and discuss updates to the Design Concept section of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines. Due to an in-depth discussion of elements in the Public Life section, the work group did not begin discussing the Design Concept section.

The meeting was attended by 12 work group members and three city employees. The meeting was facilitated by Christina Ghan, of SDCI, and Patrice Carroll, of OPCD. The meeting began by discussing potential dates for the next meeting with the greater Capitol Hill community as well as other agenda items.

Christina Ghan then led a continuation of the discussion on updates to the Public Life section of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines. The work group reviewed and provided feedback for each of the following subcategories in the Public Life section.

PL1. Connectivity

- Pedestrian Volumes and Amenities- work group members agreed there is a goal to have adequate sidewalk space for both pedestrian traffic and public space, acknowledged that these goals can sometimes conflict with each other due to the narrow sidewalk width in areas throughout the neighborhood. Members want to provide guidance that will encourage provided greater building setbacks at the street

level where a narrow sidewalk exists in order to provide adequate space for public life without having a negative impact on pedestrian flow. Work group members commented that it would be nice to have a better understanding of what sidewalk widths are required by code. Members then made comments about potentially providing guidance on streets that are not identified as commercial corridors or pedestrian areas but serve as major pedestrian thoroughfares.

- Informal community uses – The work group commented that providing exterior access to community rooms can be difficult to manage due to safety issues. While providing community access to space is nice, work group members are worried managers might lock the exterior access due to security issues.
- Services within the Right-of-way (ROW) – While not a subsection in the PL1 category, the work group briefly discussed the presence of dumpsters in the ROW

PL2- Walkability

- Accessibility – The work group asked if there were citywide policies to address accessibility issues within a specific distance from light rail stations and streetcar stops. Specifically, members are concerned with hazards that will reduce and/or eliminate accessibility for specific user groups. The work group then commented that some sidewalks along thoroughfares are so cluttered that it causes overcrowding in specific areas.
- Safety and security – work group members discussed the issue of pedestrian lighting within the neighborhood. Work group members discouraged the use of pedestrian lighting that shines directly onto the pedestrian. Members had differing opinions on lighting levels. Several members encouraged providing consistent lighting levels throughout the neighborhood, while other members commented that preferred lighting levels might differ in different areas throughout the neighborhood. Members encouraged providing appropriate lighting levels that also met minimum safety standards. Work group members mentioned the Dark Skies Initiative and then encouraged the use of pedestrian lighting that minimized lighting of the sky above. The work group is concerned with the limited discussion of pedestrian lighting at Design Review Board (DRB) meetings. Members want to provide greater guidance on pedestrian lighting so to encourage discussion at DRB meetings. The Work group then discussed safety issues for specific communities in the neighborhood.
- Weather protection – The work group had several concerns for as well as suggestions for guidance on weather protection. Group members discussed providing weather protection on heavily travelled streets that are located outside of commercial corridors or pedestrian zones. Group members then discussed on appropriate areas to provide weather protection. Members then identified issues with current examples of weather protection. Group members thought that providing continuous protection along the facade can make it appear monolithic. Members also thought that poorly designed weather protection can result in the dripping water in the middle of the sidewalk. The group then discussed the potential issues between weather protection and street tree canopy. The group agreed that guidance should prioritize existing and future street tree canopy over weather protection. The group also discussed specific materials to use for weather protection.
- Wayfinding – The work group discussed the fairness of requesting developers to provide wayfinding. Group members felt it was not necessary unless the wayfinding provided clear direction to onsite open space. The work group then discussed their interpretation of wayfinding. Several group members understood wayfinding to

include elements, not including signage, within the building design that were meant to assist users. Group members agreed guidance should address wayfinding as it relates to Capitol Hill amenities, entrances, and on site public space.

PL3 – Street level interaction

- Retail entries – the Work group recognized the Pike/Pine and 15th Ave corridors as having positive examples of pedestrian scaled signage. Group members suggested including guidance on pedestrian scaled signage along commercial corridors throughout the neighborhood. Work group members then suggested including guidance to encourage signage that fits in with the building, local character, and context of the neighborhood. Members then suggested narrowing the guideline on neon signage to include areas on Broadway and 15th Ave. The work group then questioned including specific guidance on having “bay windows”. Group members suggested using language such as “inset doorways”.
- Common entries to multi-story residential buildings - Although work group members recognized the benefits of including stoops, such as providing places to sit and gather while increasing the transparency of the building facade, they understand that stoops can create access issues. Several group members suggested encouraging the use of stoops if there is also enough space to provide ADA access. Other work group members suggested providing the amenities associated with a stoop (without providing the stoop) could capture the feel of the stoop while providing universal access.
- Individual entries to ground-related housing – Work group members acknowledged the increase in privacy by elevating ground floor residential units about the street level. Work group members agreed with encouraging stoops as long as developers provided another entrance that is universally accessible. The work group then discussed ways to encourage the activation of individual residential entrances. Members suggested provided guidance that encouraged providing space that can be personalized but cautioned about providing guidance that was too prescriptive. Group members requested more information about what design elements help encourage the activation and use of private residential entry space.
- Ground-level residential edges – The work group members agreed with providing adequate natural light for tenants but suggested rewording the other portions of the first guideline. Group members then discussed safety and transparency issues around windows within ground-level residential units. Work group members acknowledged that windows are often closed with blinds drawn on units that are either at street level or below street level for safety reasons. Group members suggested providing window treatments that allows for operability that would provide privacy without closing the entire window, such as windows that open from the top rather the bottom. Group members suggested guidance that would require project teams to provide diagrams showing the transparency of the faced along the street level. Group members then suggested using photographs and captions to better address this concern.
- Live/work uses – The work group had several concerns with live work spaces. Group members acknowledged that existing live work spaces did not further activate the street edge. A work group member commented that they liked the idea of live work spaces, but acknowledged that the spaces are currently misused. The group member also suggested that live work space is a great way to provide smaller

commercial spaces in residential area. The work group suggested providing guidance on the transparency and signage location within live work spaces.