



ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION
SOUTHEAST

Record Number: 3036324-LU

Address: 4208 Rainier Avenue South

Applicant: Jodi Patterson O'Hare for Steve Olson, SkB Architects

Report Date: June 22, 2023

SDCI Staff: David Sachs, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercials 2-55 (M)
[NC2-55 (M)]

Nearby Zones: (North) Neighborhood Commercials 2-55 (M)
[NC2-55 (M)]
(South) Neighborhood Commercials 2-55 (M)
[NC2-55 (M)]
(East) Neighborhood Commercials 2-55 (M)
[NC2-55 (M)]
(West) Neighborhood Commercials 2-55 (M)
[NC2-55 (M)]

Lot Area: 67,405 sq. ft.



Current Development:

The subject site is currently developed with a surface parking lot and slopes downward southwest to northeast approximately six feet.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The subject site is located on the northeast corner of Rainier Avenue South and S Genesee Street in the Columbia City Residential Urban Village. The site is a through lot with additional frontage on 36th Avenue South to the east. Adjacent to the site are a restaurant structure to the north, single-family residences to the east, and commercial structures to the east, south, and west. Industrial and small- and large-scale commercial establishments are concentrated along Rainier Avenue South, transitioning to lowrise and single-family residential uses extending east and west away from the arterial. Principal

arterial Rainier Avenue South provides north-south connection through southeast Seattle and passes through the historic Columbia City Landmark District to the south. Recreational opportunities exist nearby at Rainier Community Center and the Columbia Branch of The Seattle Public Library. A network of green spaces, beginning with local Columbia Park and Rainier Playfield, connect in a northeasterly direction, ending at Stan Sayers Memorial Park and the Wetmore Slough.

The site is situated in a transitional area. An industrial and commercial character is present along Rainier Avenue South, where structures include a mix of masonry warehouses and lowrise brick and wood frame buildings built in the early- to mid-1900s. A strong street wall is present in places with commercial uses, punctured by parking lots and undeveloped parcels. The area has experienced a development trend of multifamily residential structures replacing lowrise commercial structures and vacant lots. The area was rezoned from Neighborhood Commercial 2-40 to Neighborhood Commercial 2-55 (M) on 4/19/19. Multiple projects in the vicinity are currently in review or under construction for proposed development, including 4212 Rainier Avenue South and 4740 Rainier Avenue South.

Access:

Vehicular access is proposed from 36th Avenue South. Pedestrian access is proposed from 36th Avenue South, Rainier Avenue South, and S Genesee Street.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The subject site is located in a mapped liquefaction prone area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Land Use Application to allow a 5-story, 226-unit apartment building with retail. Parking for 153 vehicles proposed. Existing parking lot to be removed. Early Design Guidance conducted under 3036272-EG.

The design packet includes information reviewed by planning staff, and is available online by entering the record number at this website:

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

ADMINISTRATIVE EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE – OCTOBER 1, 2020

PUBLIC COMMENT

SDCI received the following design related comments:

- Welcomed the improvements to the properties.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning parking. These comments are outside the scope of design review.

One purpose of the design review process is for the City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design

Guidelines 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 record number (3036272-EG): <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

PRIORITIES & STAFF GUIDANCE

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, Staff provide the following siting and design guidance.

- 1. Building Massing and Site Configuration:** Staff considered the three massing alternatives proposed, which are similar in bulk and scale with differences in the upper level massing modulation and in the design and location of the amenity areas on site. After reviewing a fourth alternative submitted by the applicant, Staff is generally supportive of the revised preferred massing, noting the two distinct massing forms proposed along Rainier Avenue South help to break down the scale of the building. This fourth alternative also begins to respond to the surrounding neighborhood context by utilizing shifts in the building massing to provide a more appropriate residential scale along 36th Avenue South. Continue to explore how the building massing relates to the adjacent context and refine the design to take advantage of the unique and visually prominent location within the neighborhood. **(CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence, CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning)**
 - a. Staff supports breaking up the perceived bulk of the upper level massing through façade articulation/material treatment and the use of secondary architectural elements. Maintain the 7 ¾" depth proposed from face of the siding material to the window bays. **(DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass, DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest)**
 - b. Staff supports the break in the upper level massing along the west façade to allow for an outdoor amenity space that opens to Rainier Avenue South. Staff also supports the voids created by opening the courtyards on the second level to allow for light and air to enter these amenity spaces. Staff recommends integrating the design of these courtyards into the overall façade composition. **(CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading)**
 - c. Staff supports setting back the lower levels below the open-air courtyard along Rainier Avenue South and at the south end of the structure, allowing for usable open areas at the ground level adjacent to commercial space. Staff also supports the setback provided at the residential entry and lobby along 36th Avenue South. As the design of the building evolves, consider how these spaces support the adjacent uses and contribute to creating a lively pedestrian realm. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**
- 2. Façade Composition:** Staff supports the proposed architectural design concept for the development, which can be characterized as using texture, depth, color, and secondary architectural elements to complement the larger, more simplistic, massing forms. As the project design evolves, explore how the massing and material application can be unique to each building. The two developments should read as distinct structures to not exacerbate the overall bulk scale of both developments. Staff

requests elevations/perspectives of all façades be provided at recommendation to clearly illustrate the design concept and how the buildings relate to one another.

- a. Staff supports the proposed materials identified in the conceptual elevation study which includes a metal panel, black vinyl windows, and a combination of CMU at different scales applied to the lower level massing. Staff recommends applying the selected material palette in a manner that helps break down the massing to a more appropriate scale and reinforces the proposed shifts in the massing along all façades. **(DC2-D-1. Human Scale, DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials)**
- b. Staff supports the use of façade articulation as shown and the inclusion of secondary architectural elements to provide depth and visual interest to the building façades. Staff also supports the variety created by the random placement of balconies throughout the building. **(DC2-C. Secondary Architectural Features)**
- c. Staff supports the high level of transparency proposed on the ground floor, allowing for visual connections from the sidewalk into the retail space and into the residential and lobby areas along Rainier Avenue South and 36th Avenue South. **(PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency, CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**
- d. Staff is concerned with the presence of blank wall at the ground level along Rainier Avenue South and 36th Avenue South. Develop a design that incorporates various design elements to support the proposed mural, to minimize the impact to the pedestrian realm and create an area that is more pleasant to pedestrians traveling along the building. **(DC2-B-2. Blank Walls)**

3. Primary Entries and Ground Level Uses:

- a. Staff supports the proposed location for the primary residential entry and lobby, which are located along 36th Avenue South, and the inclusion of a secondary residential entry along Rainier Avenue South. To help improve the visibility of the residential entries, Staff recommends incorporating additional design elements and signage to highlight the entries. Staff also recommends the design of these residential entries differ from the entries proposed for the adjacent building to the north. **(PL3-A-2. Common Entries)**
- b. Staff supports the proposed design and location of the secondary residential entry and lobby at the north west corner of the building. Maintain a high level of transparency into this space to promote pedestrian safety along Rainier Avenue South and the shared access easement. **(PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street, PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency)**
- c. Staff supports the proposed layout of the ground level uses shown in the revised preferred massing alternative, which creates a strong retail presence starting at the southern end of Rainier Avenue South, then continues along S Genesee Street before wrapping around to 36th Avenue South. Staff also supports the ability for the commercial space to accommodate a large retail tenant but encourages the applicant to explore how the layout/design can be modified to accommodate smaller commercial tenants

within the larger space to increase flexibility in the potential configuration. **(PL3-C. Retail Edges, DC1-A-3. Flexibility)**

- d. Pedestrian Experience at the Ground Level: Staff is concerned with the design of the commercial space as proposed, which has a repetitious language that wraps around the southern portion of the building. Include various pedestrian scaled elements along the commercial frontage to add some variety and break down the linear nature of the glass storefront. **(CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites)**

4. Landscaping/Amenity Areas:

- a. Staff is concerned with the configuration of the upper level courtyards as proposed, which are very long and narrow. Improve the spatial experience by utilizing a lighter colored material for these interior façades to help reflect light into these spaces. Staff also recommends using vegetation and hardscape materials to break down the larger courtyard into smaller, more intimate spaces. Explore how the intended usability of these areas will continue to influence the design as the project evolves. **(DC3-B. Open Space Uses and Activities, DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features)**
- b. Staff supports the visual connection established between the upper level courtyards and public life along Rainier Avenue South and 36th Avenue South but is concerned with the lack of identified ground level amenity space along the street frontages. Staff recommends the applicant explore how the design can evolve to introduce more placemaking opportunities at the ground level. **(PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life, CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**

5. Shared Vehicle Access and Service Uses:

- a. Staff supports locating access to the on-site parking off 36th Avenue South but is concerned with the potential conflict between pedestrian traffic and vehicles accessing the parking. Staff recommends differentiating the hardscape material at the curb cut and the installation of various safety measures to help minimize the impact of the curb cut and increase pedestrian safety. The safety measures should be visual; not audible. **(DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, DC1-C-4. Service Uses)**
- b. Staff supports restricting vehicular access to the shared easement, providing pedestrian only access from Rainier Avenue South. Staff recommends a unique paving treatment for the portion of the access easement accessible only to pedestrians, to help create an environment that is both safe and pleasant. **(DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials)**

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION – JUNE 22, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENT

SDCI received the following design related comments:

- Supported the project.
- Appreciated the painted wall and art and suggested more windows along Rainier in-lieu of blank wall to increase safety.
- Highly suggested residential at the ground floor, including row housing to provide a mixture of income and housing types.
- Stated they would like to see a larger setback from Rainier Ave S to provide more space for pedestrians.
- Supported the canopy design to retain the street trees.
- Suggested providing areas for bike parking.
- Encouraged sustainability and solar energy opportunities in the design.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning parking, transit, traffic and pedestrian safety on nearby streets, housing affordability, crime, stormwater runoff, a desire for taller development near the light rail station, and specific types of retail businesses. These comments are outside the scope of design review.

One purpose of the design review process is for the City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines 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 record number (3036324-LU): <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

PRIORITIES & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, Staff provide the following recommendations.

1. Building Massing and Site Configuration:

- a. Staff recommends approval of the overall massing with its two distinct forms proposed along Rainier Avenue South that help break down the bulk and scale of the building and the varied roofline created by the expressed vertical circulation cores along 36th Avenue South. **(CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence and CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning)**
- b. Staff recommends approval of the well-integrated courtyard openings on the west and east elevations that provide articulation of the massing and allow visual connection into the interior of the building. Staff specifically notes the success of bringing the light colored base material up to the second and third floor courtyards as a way to visually link the pedestrian realm to the residential amenities above and minimize the perceived height bulk and scale of the building. **(CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading, CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, and DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass)**
- c. Staff recommends approval of the covered stained glulam wood structure with decorative hanging light fixtures at the third floor courtyard on Rainier Avenue South, as shown on page 14 of the Recommendation packet. This feature, combined with the planter boxes shown attached to the railing, contribute to the successful articulation of the mass and its

overall residential character. (**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass** **DC2-D-1. Human Scale** and **DC2-C. Secondary Architectural Features**)

2. Façade Composition:

- a. Staff recommends approval of the clear massing, modulation, and intentional articulation of each façade. Staff specifically notes the successful composition of the various parts of the form, using fenestration grouping, extent of glazing, and other secondary architectural elements such as metal balconies with integrated planter boxes and metal canopies, to successfully minimize the perceived height, bulk, and scale of the building and provide a strong precedent for future development in this changing neighborhood. (**DC2-C. Secondary Architectural Features, DC2-D-1. Human Scale, and DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials**)
- b. Staff recommends approval of the overall simple and straight forward high-quality material palette, which brings texture and visual interest to each façade, and therefore meets the design guidelines. This palette includes contoured metal siding, brick, ground face CMU, cast terrazzo base, flat panel fiber cement, cedar tongue and groove siding, wood storefront, and black vinyl windows and storefront as shown on the material palette shown on page 33 and the elevations on pages 29-32 of the Recommendation packet. (**DC2-D-1. Human Scale, and DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials**)
- c. Staff recommends approval of the various setbacks in the façade shown on page 10 of the Recommendation packet, including the 7 ¾" setback from the face of the metal siding to the face of the window and pilasters and archways along the ground level façade to add visual interest and articulation to each façade. (**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass and DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest**)
- d. Staff acknowledges public comment about the street level uses, setbacks, and transparency. Staff recommends approval of the highly transparent ground floor that allows for visual connection from the sidewalk into the retail spaces, residential amenities, and lobby areas along Rainier Avenue South, South Genesee Street, and 36th Avenue South. (**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency and CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street**)

3. Primary Entries and Ground Level Uses:

- a. Staff acknowledges public comment about the canopies and bicycle parking and recommends approval of the enhanced design of the residential lobbies and building entrances. Since EDG, the applicant has modified the design through the use of increased transparency, addition of color on the canopies, subtle changes in material texture, signage, and accent lighting to help improve their identifiability and differentiation from adjacent retail spaces. Staff specifically notes the success of the secondary entry lobby at the northwest corner with its transparent corner that engages with landscaped west end of the north access easement that provides access to the parking garage and promotes pedestrian safety along Rainier Avenue South. Bike parking and other site furniture are proposed near the entries, further highlighting the entries. (**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street, PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency, and PL3-A-2. Common Entries**)
- b. Staff acknowledges public comment about ground level uses and setbacks and appreciates that the single large tenant space that fronted each street frontage at EDG has been revised to five smaller retail spaces that will allow for a more diverse and community scaled retail experience along Rainier Avenue South and South Genesee Street. (**PL3-C. Retail Edges, DC1-A-3. Flexibility**)

4. Landscaping and Amenity Areas:

- a. Staff notes comments related to the landscape plan and recommends approval of the of the overall design of the upper level courtyards, including the use of varied materials on the facades that reflect light into the residential units; varied and lush landscape that includes tree groves that provide visual interest, shade, and privacy; and common amenity and private terraces. Staff specifically notes the success of the third floor amenity space that looks down into the second floor courtyard and visually connects to the Rainier Avenue South right-of-way, creating opportunity for interaction on multiple levels. **(DC3-B. Open Space Uses and Activities, DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features, and DC4-D. Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials)**
- b. Staff recommends approval of the permanent freestanding irrigated planters proposed along all three street frontages, as shown on the building elevations, perspectives, and planting plan on page 38 of the Recommendation packet. Staff notes that the various sized and shaped planters are a critical part of the successful streetscape design. **(DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features and DC4-D-4. Place Making)**

5. Shared Access and Service Uses:

- a. Staff recommends approval of the simple integration of the vehicle access, building services, and solid waste storage room into the overall massing on the north side of the building through the inclusion of secondary building entrances with high levels of transparency and site-specific art installations on the blank walls, which are necessary to meet Design Guidelines, as shown on pages 15 and 21 of the Recommendation packet. **(DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, DC1-C-4. Service Uses, and DC2-B-2. Blank Walls)**
- b. Staff recommends approval of the overall design of the shared access easement on the north side with the inclusion of tactile warning strips where pedestrian traffic and vehicle traffic intersect at the east end and the pedestrian only access from Rainier Avenue South at the west end with its mixture of hardscape, planting with site furniture, unique pavements, and a stormwater treatment facility to create a safe and pleasant environment. **(DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, DC1-C-4. Service Uses, and DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials)**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

SDCI's initial recommendation on the requested departure(s) is based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

At the time of the Administrative Recommendation report, the following departure(s) were requested:

1. **Façade Modulation (SMC 23.47.47A.014.D):** For structures with a width of more than 250 feet, at least one portion of the structure 30 feet or greater in width must be set back a minimum of 15 feet from the front property line. The applicant proposes setting back a 27-foot wide portion of the structure 4-6 feet at the base along Rainier Avenue South. The upper level massing for this portion of the structure is set back more than 15 feet.

Staff recommends approval of the departure finding the setback and void in the upper level massing along Rainier Avenue South helps break the building into two distinct massing forms and makes the area at the ground level more aesthetically pleasing. The design with this departure better meets the intent of Design Guidelines **PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities** and **CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning**.

This departure was called out as departure D1 in the Recommendation packet.

2. **Street-level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.A.2):** The Code requires for structures in Neighborhood Commercial zones, blank segments of street-facing facade between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk shall not exceed 20 feet in width. The applicant proposes a 50 foot 1 inch wide blank wall segment along 36th Avenue South.

Staff recommends approval of the departure finding the proposed art installation at the northeast corner enlivens the blank wall segment better than glazing into rooms containing unoccupiable building services. The design with this departure better meets the intent of Design Guidelines **CS2-B-2 Connection to the Street** and **DC2-B-2 Blank Walls**.

This departure was called out as departure D2 in the Recommendation packet.

3. **Street-level Uses (SMC 23.47A.005.D):** The applicant requested a departure to allow residential uses at street level under this code section, however, this code section does not apply, and residential uses are allowed outright per code section SMC 23.47A.004.

This departure was called out as departure D3 in the Recommendation packet.

4. **Depth Provisions (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3):** The code states non-residential uses greater than 600 square feet shall extend an average depth of at least 30 feet and a minimum depth of 15 feet from the street-level, street-facing facade. The applicant proposes non-residential uses with average depths less than 30 feet and a minimum depth of 12 feet from the street-level, street facing facade.

Staff recommends approval of the departure finding the variety of retail depths and widths, accompanied by the setting back of the storefront from the sidewalk edge, provides the opportunity for neighborhood scaled small businesses, allows for planters, and promotes outdoor occupied space along the street frontage. The design with this departure better meets the intent of Design Guidelines **PL3-C Retail Edges** and **DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**.

This departure was called out as departure D4 in the Recommendation packet.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines recognized by Staff 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

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.

CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-1. On-Site Features: Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

CS1-D-2. Off-Site Features: Provide opportunities through design to connect to off-site habitats such as riparian corridors or existing urban forest corridors. Promote continuous habitat, where possible, and increase interconnected corridors of urban forest and habitat where possible.

CS1-E Water

CS1-E-1. Natural Water Features: If the site includes any natural water features, consider ways to incorporate them into project design, where feasible

CS1-E-2. Adding Interest with Project Drainage: Use project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements.

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.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites: Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

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.

CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References: Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

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.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses: In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

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

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

PL2-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

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.

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-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

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.

PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses: Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

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.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships

PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

PL4-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

PL4-C Planning Ahead For Transit

PL4-C-1. Influence on Project Design: Identify how a transit stop (planned or built) adjacent to or near the site may influence project design, provide opportunities for placemaking.

PL4-C-2. On-site Transit Stops: If a transit stop is located onsite, design project-related pedestrian improvements and amenities so that they complement any amenities provided for transit riders.

PL4-C-3. Transit Connections: Where no transit stops are on or adjacent to the site, identify where the nearest transit stops and pedestrian routes are and include design features and connections within the project design as appropriate.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

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.

DC1-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation: Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-1. Below-Grade Parking: Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

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-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children’s play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

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-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 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.

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

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

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.

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-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

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-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.

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

DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas: Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

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.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DC4-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan

DC4-E-1. Deconstruction: When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations summarized above were based on the design review packet dated May 4, 2023. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the Recommendation phase of the subject design and departure(s) are APPROVED with no conditions.

REC Report Sent 06/22/2023 BCC
Project 3036324-LU

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