



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3027739

Address: 2510 NE Blakely Street

Applicant: Craig Belcher

Date of Meeting: Monday, August 14, 2017

Board Members Present: Eric Blank (Chair)
Joe Hurley
Anita Jeerage
James Marria

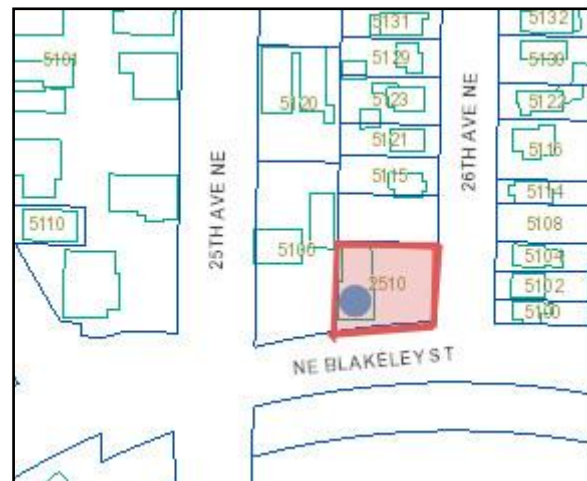
Board Members Absent: Brian Bishop

SDCI Staff Present: Sean Conrad

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC2P-30 (Neighborhood Commercial/Pedestrian Overlay – 30’ height limit)

Nearby Zones: (North) Single Family Residential 5,000 square foot lot size (SF 5000)
(South) Commercial 1 – 40’ height limit (C1-40)
(East) SF5000
(West) NC2P-30



Project site area: 8,310 square feet

Current Development:

The project site is at the northwest corner of NE Blakeley St and 26th Ave NE. Currently, the site is occupied by a vacant single-story 2,016 sq. ft. former restaurant and 27 (including adjacent residential lot) surface parking stalls, managed by Diamond Parking Services. One curb cut exists near the property's SE corner, accessing NE Blakeley St.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The project site is on the northeast side of the University District neighborhood. Surrounding uses include a mix of commercial and residential: commercial areas and multi-family residential development line 25th Ave NE adjacent to the site's west boundary. A Silver Cloud Inn and University Village shopping mall are located to the south. Nearby single family residential is located along 26th Ave NE and the blocks east of the site. Most of the nearby single family and older retail structures are 1-2 stories tall; newer multi-family residential, hotel and mixed-use are 3-4 stories tall.

Access:

Access to the project site is provided by 26th Avenue NE on the site's east side and NE Blakeley Street on the site's south side.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no environmentally critical areas present on the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a four-story indoor sports and recreation center (Center of Physical Arts) with a gross floor area of approximately 15,700 square feet. Parking for nine vehicles will be provided within the structure.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

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

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI:

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

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

During the Early Design Guidance meeting the following comments were provided by the public:

- Preferred option A because it maintains the existing street access off NE Blakely St.
- Concerned with the driveway off 26th Avenue increasing traffic on narrow residential street
- Concerned that the size and scale of the building does not fit in with existing residential scale along 26th Ave.
- Concerned with the on-street parking impacts the project will create; the street is already very narrow with limited on-street parking
- Appreciated the type of business proposed within the building and felt that the business owners and clients would be good, conscientious neighbors

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify 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. Comments regarding parking demand are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance for the applicants:

1. Massing

- a. The Board unanimously favored the proposed massing of Option C, the applicant's preferred option, based on the following:
 - The programmatic approach and how the applicant used this to inform the design of the building;
 - Providing vehicle access off 26th Avenue;
 - The upper level setbacks along the south and north sides of the building; and
 - The design's strong pedestrian connection to the sidewalk along NE Blakely Street. (CS2-C, CS2-D)

2. Façade:

- a. The Board had concerns with the number of windows along the north and east facades, specifically the east stair tower. The Board stated that the windows along the

east façade and on the stair tower could pose privacy issues with the residences to the east. The Board directed the applicant to resolve this issue at the recommendation stage and suggested obscuring the views from the north and east facades by incorporating sun shades or blinds to provide a semblance of privacy to the neighbors. (CS2-D)

- b. The Board supported the applicant's proposal for the west façade, which includes a combination of windows and art. The Board recommended incorporating art on this façade. At the recommendation meeting, the information should include the potential art composition pieces being considered and demonstrate how they relate to the building design. (DC2-B)

3. Access

- a. The Board noted SDOT's recommendation to eliminate the existing vehicle curb cut along NE Blakely Street and install a new curb cut on 26th Avenue. The Board concurred with SDOT's assessment that eliminating a curb cut along NE Blakely Street would minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles traveling on NE Blakely Street. (DC1-B)
- b. The Board supported the applicant's desire to work with SDOT to construct an ADA compliant crosswalk from the project site south, across NE Blakely Street to connect with the Burke-Gilman Trail, and east of the project site at the intersection of NE Blakely Street and 26th Avenue NE. (PL1-B)

4. Zone Transition

- a. The Board supported the north side building setbacks, stating that the massing and building articulation to reduce the perceived bulk of the building on the adjacent residential homes to the north was done well. (CS2-D)
- b. The Board emphasized the east building façade needs to be given special attention with regards to the volumetric composition (height/bulk/scale) of the massing along 26th Avenue NE, due to the residential homes across the street. The Board gave guidance to design this façade to respond to the smaller scale residential houses across the street. (CS2-C, CS2-D)

5. Noise

- a. The Board approved of the design and location of the interior vehicle parking street grade, eliminating the need for a ramp and, thereby reducing the engine noise (vehicles do not have to accelerate up a ramp while leaving the building). (CS2-D)
- b. The Board supported the interior design of the building with the placement of the weight lifting placed at the bottom of the building, below the street grade, to reduce the noise of gym members weightlifting on the adjacent residences. (CS2-D)
- c. The Board request the roof top deck be pushed further away from 26th Avenue NE, to the south and west, to provide a greater distance from those using the roof deck and neighboring residences and to cut down on noise impacts to those neighbors. (CS2-D)

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 the applicant did not request a departure.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-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-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

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).

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.



CS2 UNIVERSITY

Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

II. Respect for Adjacent Sites

i. Zone Edge Areas: Special attention should be paid to projects in the zone edge areas as depicted in Map 2 of the full Guidelines to ensure impacts to Lowrise zones are minimized.

III. Corner Lots

ii. Special Site Features: For new buildings located on a corner, including, but not limited to the corner locations identified in Map 3 of the full Guidelines, consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building such as a tower, corner articulation or bay windows. Consider a special site feature such as diagonal

orientation and entry, a sculpture, a courtyard, or other device. Corner entries should be set back to allow pedestrian flow and good visibility at the intersection.

IV. Height, Bulk, and Scale

i. Reduce Visual Bulk: Special attention should be paid to projects in Map 4 of the full Guidelines to minimize impacts of increased height, bulk and scale as stated in the Seattle Design Guideline. In order to reduce the impacts of apparent building height and bulk at specified zone edges listed above, the following alternatives should be considered:

1. Along zone edges and specified streets, step back upper floors above 40', or modify the roofline to reduce the negative effects of the allowable height limit.
2. Along specified corridors, a gradual setback of the building's facade above 40' in height from the street, alley or property line may be considered.
3. In exchange for setting back the building facade, the Board may allow a reduction in the open space requirement.
4. Access to commercial parking on corner lots should be sited and designed in a manner that minimizes impact on adjacent residential uses.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

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

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.

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).

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

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

DC4-A Building Materials

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

RECOMMENDATION

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application, with responses to all the guidance herein.