

Herbaugh, Melinda

From: Paddy McDonald <padriff@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2017 11:33 AM
To: PRC
Subject: Project #3020338, 2925 E Madison St.

Dear Ms Hogness,

I am writing to you with regard to the publicly available documents at this time for the third proposal for 2925 E Madison St., project #3020338.

It appears to me that this third proposal, like the first and second, continues to fail to comply with the City of Seattle's Design Review Guidelines. Nor does it adequately address the Early Design Guidance and feedback provided to the developer and architect by yourself and the members of the East Design Review Board following both the initial Design Review meeting on the 13th July 2016 and the second Design Review meeting on 28th September 2016.

I will try and reference the Seattle Design Guidelines dated December 2013 which I believe is the current set of guidelines.

1) General impressions of the EDG#3 packet

While there has been some progress with regards to the parking garage façade on Dewey Place E thanks to the direction of the Design Review Board, the applicant has failed to address the height, bulk and scale of the proposal nor the setback as they were directed to by the board at EDG2. It appears that the setbacks on Dewey have been decreased with the inclusion of the façade of residences and the height remains the same, contrary to the board's direction.

The applicant appears to continue to be minimally responsive to the boards guidance on the most significant aspects of the proposal.

2) Height, Bulk, Scale, Response to Context and Topography

CS1.C both 1 and 2

The proposed design continues to go beyond ignoring both topography and elevation changes. It obliterates them.

CS2 – Urban Pattern and Form

That the site has two different zones across it indicates that this site was not always one entity, but is an amalgam of multiple properties conglomerated over time. So this design guideline remains relevant to this proposal.

The sheer scale of the project continues to dwarf everything around it. No attempt has been made to harmonize the footprint of the building with the pattern of buildings surrounding it either within the commercial or the residential zoning.

CS2.D3 and 4 – Zone Transitions. In particular: "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"

The proposed building stands on the transition between commercial and residential, a fact that the developer and architect are well aware of.

Looking at the numbers that can be gleaned from the proposals in relation to the setbacks and height of the initial building facades we see:

On the Madison Commercial side: a 3' setback rising to 47'

On the E Republican residential side: 10' - 15' setbacks rising from 17' to 46' height

While there are some minimal setbacks the upper stories are essentially co-planar with the ground level from the perspective of pedestrians and residents on the Dewey side, so we see:

A 5' setback(41' 9" span) rising to 5+ stories (70') consisting of 2 stories of "residential use", 1+ story of commercial facade, 2 stories of residential

A 10' setback (37' 6" span) rising to 5+ stories consisting of 2 stories of "residential use", 1+ story of commercial facade, 2 stories of residential

A minimally modulated frontage with 10' - 13'6" setbacks (~190' span) rising to 46' facade +/- Dewey grade changes over length (does it ever exceed 47'?) consisting of 2 stories of "residential use", 1+ story of commercial facade

~26' of garage entrance: 20' to building edge rising to full height of commercial level consisting of 2 stories of garage, 1+ story of commercial façade

Add to this the transition in base elevation which introduces yet more problems - leading to the effectively 5+ story facade and what is essentially a 7 story building in a 40' commercial zone. Even if the applicant's choices in height calculation are valid, how is this acceptable given the City's Design guidelines?

This is not a step in perceived height, nor is it a transition of any type.

CS2.D5 - Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings

The combination of the height, bulk and scale of this building with its apartments staring down into the back yards of the neighboring single-family residences along with the traffic that will be caused by the proposed garage entrance on a non-conforming street will severely stifle and restrict the privacy and outdoor activities of the neighbors.

CS3 – Architectural Context and Character

We have had progress in so far as we don't have 300' of parking garage on Dewey, but problems remain.

In no way does the proposal "Emphasize positive neighborhood attributes" – it simply overwhelms the neighborhood.

Nor does it in any shape or form have anything that relates to "Local History and Culture" – this proposal is more appropriate for an area that already has city block sized buildings, and where on earth is there anything in this building that even nods to local history? Has the architect or developer spent any time investigating the neighborhood and its history – I would suggest this is still doubtful.

DC1.B1 - Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible

The additional traffic caused by locating a garage entrance on Dewey will significantly decrease the usability and safety of the currently quiet residential streets which are used by children to play and the neighborhood to walk up the existing staircase at the end of 30th Ave E to connect to both the p-patch and the arboretum.

DC1.C1 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

We are still left with the parking entrance on Dewey exposing the 2 stories of parking garage to the residential zone.

DC2.B1 and B2 – Façade Composition and Blank Walls

The façade along the E Republican side is still a 200' + blank wall.

DC2.D1 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. Pay special attention to the first three floors of the building in order to maximize opportunities to engage the pedestrian and enable an active and vibrant street front.

This still has not been addressed with regards to Dewey. We have a commercial space pulled all the way through the building to loom over Dewey. The scale /façade of the building still overwhelms this quiet residential area.

DC4.C2 - 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

At the MVCC/LURC presentation the architect indicated that he wanted this to be a lights-on building and certainly the presence of a destination supermarket like PCC that will be open at least until midnight night glare and light pollution will be a significant problem with the building perched atop the slope above single-family residences – something that remains unaddressed in this packet #3.