

Capitol Hill Design Guidelines Update - Work Group meeting #6

Meeting Summary

February 13th

Work Group Members present

<input type="checkbox"/> Leslie Bain	<input type="checkbox"/> Jess Blanch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lincoln Ferris	<input type="checkbox"/> Erik Rundell
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Rob Ketcherside	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alicia Daniels Uhlig
<input type="checkbox"/> Don Blakeney	<input type="checkbox"/> John Feit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Mariano	

Staff present

<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

<input type="checkbox"/> Melissa Wechsler (Consultant)	<input type="checkbox"/> Joel Sisolak
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On February 13th, 2018, the sixth 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 Context and Site section of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines and 2) begin to review and discuss updates to the Public Life section of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines.

The meeting was attended by 9 work group members and three city employees. The meeting was facilitated by Christina Ghan, of SDCI, and Patrice Carroll and Aaron Hursey, of OPCD. The meeting began with the introduction of a new work group member followed by the approval of meeting minutes from the January 25th work group meeting. Patrice Carroll then provided an update from a previous meeting held between city staff and several work group members to discuss opportunities to 1) introduce cultural aspects to the updated guidelines and 2) to help future developers and project teams to better understand neighborhood wide goals.

Aaron Hursey then led a continuation of the discussion on updates to the Context and Site section of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines. The work group reviewed and provided feedback for each of the following subcategories in the Context and Site Section.

CS2. Urban Pattern and Form

- Corner Sites – Work group members discouraged including guidelines that would suggest using every corner site as a gateway or node. Group members discussed

encouraging small business uses on prominent corners, specifically within high traffic areas where there is a concentration of active uses. Members suggested focusing entries for small retail or restaurant uses on specific corners. Group members then encouraged having a consistent architectural design along both facades of a development located on a corner site. The group also suggested that developments with corner entrances include space around the exterior of the corner entrance to provide a small buffer for users between the entrance and adjacent sidewalk.

- Mid-block and Full Block Sites – The work group agreed the citywide guidelines provided sufficient guidance for this section
- Existing Zoning and Zoning Transitions – The work group agreed the neighborhood includes developments that vary greatly in height. Group members also agreed that zoning transitions would most likely affect large (possibly full block) developments that are adjacent to different zones. The work group suggested that citywide guidelines probably provide enough guidance for this section.
- Massing Choices – The work group stressed the importance of basing height, bulk, and scale choices on EcoDistrict priorities. Group members also suggested that massing choices adjacent to character buildings respond to the architecture and massing of the existing structure. Several group members then expressed their concern with including language that addressed views. If views are addressed, language should explicitly state where/which views are protected to prevent potential interpretation of language to protect views from private areas.

CS3. Architectural Concept and Character

- Neighborhood Attributes -The work group suggested that, rather than providing guidelines for existing and emerging neighborhoods, we focus on guidance for fitting old and new developments together. The work group then provided examples of different areas that include a variety of architectural styles. Several members also expressed their desire to see guidelines that will encourage new types of architectural styles as they emerge. Group members then stressed that while new developments should not attempt to replicate previous styles, it should respond to design elements of existing structures such as massing, materials, fenestration, etc. Work group members also encouraged guidelines that encouraged project teams to include precedent images from both the adjacent sites as well as the broader neighborhood to better highlight positive neighborhood attributes. Work group members also suggested additional guidelines for 12th Ave and 15th Ave in addition to Broadway.
- Local History and Culture – The work group agreed with suggestions made for guidelines about local history and culture. The group suggest guidelines also provide opportunities to integrate LGBTQ culture within developments. Group members then reminded the broader group that history and cultural elements can be integrated at a variety of scales. The work group also emphasized the need to include EcoDistrict principles as part of the neighborhood’s culture. The group also suggested providing historical elements that explain how the neighborhood had transitioned over time.

PL1. Connectivity

- Enhance Open Space – The work group suggested highlighting corridors that are identified as neighborhood greenways and providing guidance on how these corridors should be treated. Group members then agreed that developments adjacent to

parks should include a defined urban edge at the street level in order to promote activity and to reduce physical and visual barriers between the park and adjacent development

- Adding to Public Life – The work group did not want to encourage nor discourage the development of street facing courtyards within projects. Rather, work group members agreed that guidelines should address how the courtyard connects with the adjacent public realm, if they are proposed by developers.
- Pedestrian Infrastructure – The work group acknowledged the positive aspects of through block connections but questioned if they should be promoted in the design guidelines update. The work group agreed that through block connections should be addressed for large developments. Group members acknowledged that through block connections provided additional access and opportunities for affordable retail space
- Pedestrian Volumes – The work group strongly suggested including guidelines that encouraged better analysis on pedestrian quality and activity adjacent to the development through the creation of additional renderings, sections details, and views into pedestrian spaces. Group members suggested including guidance on increasing pedestrian amenities and infrastructure in specific areas/corridors where pedestrian volumes are high such E. Denny Way and E John St.
- Pedestrian Amenities – The work group stressed the inclusion of age friendly amenities and universal design. Group members called out specific guidance for rails, heights of steps, lighting, etc.