

Nelson Service Center

1 – COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP

Design Review Staff Report

February 14, 2014



From :
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 Planning & Development Services
 Department

Subject :
 Standard Board Design
 Review of a public project.

Applicants :
 City of Spokane Utilities Division
 Rick Romero, Director
 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
 Spokane, WA 99201

 and
 Garco Construction, Inc.
 4114 E. Broadway Ave.
 Spokane, WA 99202

 c/o OAC Services
 701 Dexter Ave. N., Suite 301
 Seattle, WA 98109

Design Review Board Authority

Spokane Municipal Code [Chapter 04.13](#) Design Review Board

A. Purpose. The design review board is hereby established to:

1. improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the City early in the design and siting of new development subject to design review under the Spokane Municipal Code;
2. ensure that projects subject to design review under the Spokane Municipal Code are consistent with adopted design guidelines and help implement the City’s Comprehensive Plan.
3. advocate for the aesthetic quality of Spokane’s public realm;
4. encourage design and site planning that responds to context, enhances pedestrian characteristics, considers sustainable design practices, and helps make Spokane a desirable place to live, work and visit.
5. provide flexibility in the application of development standards as allowed through development standard departures; and
6. ensure that public facilities and projects within the City’s right of way:
 - a. wisely allocate the City’s resources,
 - b. serve as models of design quality

Under SMC [Section 17G.040.010](#) Design Review Board Authority, all public projects or structures are subject to design review. Recommendations of the Design Review Board must be consistent with regulatory requirements per [Section 17G.040.080](#) Design Review Board Recommendations.

Recommendations of the Design Review Board will be forwarded to the Planning Director.

Project Description

Please see applicant’s description for the potential development options.

Location & Context

The proposed facility is located west of the City of Spokane Street Department Office at 901 N. Nelson Street and east of the Spokane Parks Operations Office at 2304 East Mallon Avenue. The site is south of East DeSmet Avenue and north of East Broadway Avenue. The site is now used for storage purposes and

a portion for former light industrial structures. The Nelson Service Center is in the Chief Garry Park Neighborhood.

Character Assets

The neighborhood is defined by a row of two-story duplexes and other residences that face the proposed facility and line the opposite side of East DeSmet Avenue, and by Stone Park, a 0.98-acre neighborhood mini-park with play equipment located northwest of the proposed facility. A transit route passes the site three blocks west, with the nearest stop at North Napa Street and East Cataldo Avenue. A railroad passes to the southeast. The Centennial Mills grain storage and processing structures define the skyline to the southwest.

Regulatory Analysis

Zoning Code Requirements

The site is zoned Light Industrial (LI). The applicant will be expected to meet zoning code requirements. Applicants should contact Current Planning Staff with any questions about these requirements.

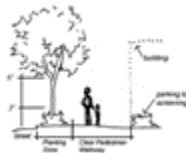
Recommendations of the Design Review Board must be consistent with adopted regulations. The DRB may not waive any code requirements. Please note the code requirements for landscape buffers for screening in parking lots, placement of landscape buffers behind sidewalks, and placement of street trees between the sidewalk and the street curb.

Section 17C.130.230 Setbacks and Sidewalks:

B. Setback and Required Sidewalk Width Standards.

The setback standards for all structures are stated in [Table 17C.130-2](#), Industrial Zones Development Standards, and as stated below.

1. Structures shall be no closer than twelve feet from the back of the curb except as provided in subsection (B)(3) of this section.
2. Sidewalks are required to be constructed and shall consist of a clear walking path at least five feet wide (in addition to a planting zone for street trees per [SMC 17C.200.050](#)). Part or all of the sidewalk width may be located on private property. The sidewalk dimension shall be applied to the clear, unobstructed pathway between the planting zone behind the curb and building facades or parking lot screening.



3. The required sidewalk width may be reduced by approval of the planning director if the existing sidewalk (distance between the curb and the building) is less than twelve feet wide between the back of curb and the existing building setback line of adjacent building(s). In no case shall the setback be reduced below nine feet from the back of the curb unless on-street parking exists between the building and the street.

Section 17C.130.260 Pedestrian Standards:

A. Purpose.

The pedestrian standards encourage a safe, attractive and usable pedestrian circulation system. They ensure a direct pedestrian connection between the street and buildings on a site.

B. Pedestrian Connection Implementation.

1. Connections.

Within parking lots containing more than thirty stalls, clearly defined pedestrian connections shall be provided:

- a. between a public right-of-way and building entrances;
- b. between parking lots and building entrances.

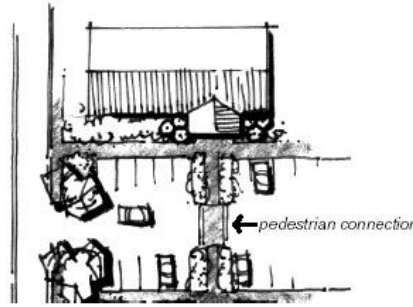
2. Width.

Pedestrian connections shall not be less than five feet wide.

3. Materials.

Pedestrian connections shall be clearly defined by at least two of the following:

- a. Six-inch vertical curb.
- b. Textured paving, including across vehicular lanes.
- c. A continuous landscape area at a minimum of three feet wide on at least one side of the walkway.
- d. Trellis.
- e. Special railing.
- f. Bollards.
- g. Special paving.
- h. Low seat wall and/or other architectural features.



Planting reinforces pedestrian connection through parking lot

Section 17C.200.040 Site Planting Standards (excerpts provided for consideration; other requirements apply): Sites shall be planted in accordance with the street frontage standards for the applicable zone:

A. Street Frontages.

- 1. The type of plantings as specified below shall be provided inside the property lines:
 - a. Along all commercial, light industrial, and planned industrial properties except where buildings are built with no setback from the property line: a six-foot wide planting area of L2 see-through buffer, including street trees as prescribed in [SMC 17C.200.050](#). Remaining setback areas shall be planted in L3 (open area landscaping).

D. Other Areas.

All other portions of a site not covered by structures, hard surfaces, or other prescribed landscaping shall be planted in L3 open area landscaping until the maximum landscape requirement threshold is reached (fifteen percent of the total site area) (see [SMC 17C.200.080](#)).

E. Parking Lot Landscaping Design.

- 3. The parking lot landscape shall reinforce pedestrian and vehicle circulation, especially parking lot entrances, ends of driving aisles, and pedestrian walkways leading through parking lots. (P)
- 4. Planted areas next to a pedestrian walkways and sidewalks shall be maintained or plant material chosen to maintain a clear zone between three and eight feet from ground level. (R)



F. Parking, Outdoor Sales, and Outdoor Display Areas.

5. A planting strip of five feet in depth with L1 visual screen landscaping or site-obscuring decorative wood, iron, etc. fences or masonry walls at least six feet in height shall be installed along property lines where any adjacent single-family residential zone would have views of parking or service areas.
7. In industrial zones, parking lots, outdoor sales, and outdoor display areas that are abutting or across the street from residential zones are subject to all of the requirements of subsections (E) and (F) of this section.

Section 17C.200.050 Street Tree Requirements. Street trees are required along all City streets in downtown, commercial, center and corridor, industrial zones and along arterials in the residential zones. Street trees shall be planted between the curb and walking path of the sidewalk. Larger shade trees with spreading canopies or branches are preferred where possible.

A minimum 100 cu ft of uncompacted soils per street tree is required. Maximum 3' depth can be factored into the volume.

A street tree permit will be required for planting of trees in the ROW. Please contact Angel Spell, Urban Forester at 363-5495.

Section 17D.060.300 Low Impact Development

- C. Low impact development is encouraged for site development and redevelopment. Compliance with the Basic Requirements of the Spokane Regional Stormwater Manual shall be met regardless of best management practices used. Certain low impact development techniques may be used to fulfill the basic requirements set forth in the Spokane Regional Stormwater Manual, as approved by the director.

Industrial Design Standards

Design standards in the code appear in the form of Requirements (R), Presumptions (P), and Considerations (C). Upon request of the applicant, the board may offer some flexibility from certain eligible code "design standards" if the board recommends that the proposed solution is equal or better than what is required, and still meets the purpose of the standard.

Please see the following design standards:

Section 17C.130.500 Design Standards Implementation:

The design standards and guidelines found in SMC 17C.130.500 through SMC 17C.130.540 follow SMC 17C.130.015, Design Standards Administration. All projects must address the pertinent design standards and guidelines. Design standards are in the form of Requirements (R), Presumptions (P), and Considerations (C). Regardless of which term is used, an applicant must address each guideline. An applicant may seek relief through chapter 17G.030 SMC, Design Departures, for those eligible standards and guidelines contained in the zoning code.

- A. Industrial, Institutional and Other Use Categories.
Site and building design for uses in the industrial, institutional and other categories described in [chapter 17C.190 SMC](#), Use Category Descriptions, shall comply with the following design standards (refer to [Table 17C.130-3](#) ... for a summary of the design standards):

1. Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), and Planned Industrial (PI) Zones.

- c. A building on a site adjacent to or across a right-of-way from a residential zone or within sixty feet of a residential zone shall incorporate three of the design elements specified in [SMC 17C.130.510](#) through [SMC 17C.130.540](#).

Section 17C.130.515 Base/Middle/Top – Building Design:

A. Base/Middle/Top Implementation.

When this building design element is chosen:

- 2. The “top” of the building shall be treated with a distinct outline with elements such as a projecting parapet, cornice, or projection. (P)

Section 17C.130.530 Ground Level Details – Building Design:

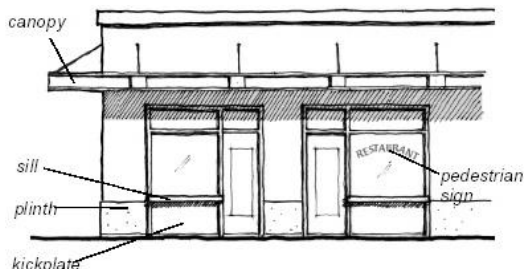
A. Purpose.

To ensure that buildings display the greatest amount of visual interest.

B. Ground Level Details Implementation.

When this building design element is chosen:

- 1. Ground level of building shall be pedestrian friendly in scale, expression and use of materials. (R)
- 2. Ground floor of the buildings shall have at least two of the following elements: (P)
 - a. Large windows.
 - b. Kickplates for storefront windows.
 - c. Projecting sills.
 - d. Pedestrian scale signs.
 - e. Canopies.
 - f. Plinth.



Elements to be incorporated at ground level

Section 17C.130.535 Roof Expression – Building Design:

A. Purpose.

To ensure that rooflines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building.

B. Roof Expression Implementation.

When this building design element is chosen, buildings with flat roofs shall have portions with pitched roofs, extended parapets or projecting cornices to create a prominent edge when viewed against the sky, especially to highlight major entrances. (P)



Variation in roofline

City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan

http://www.spokaneplanning.org/docs/Comp_Plan_2012_full.pdf

- **Urban Design and Historic Preservation Policy 6.3 Transit and Pedestrian-Oriented Development** – *Encourage attractive transit and pedestrian-oriented development.*

- **Urban Design and Historic Preservation Policy 6.7 - Design Standards for Public Projects and Structures.** *Design all public projects and structures to uphold the highest design standards and neighborhood compatibility.*
- **Natural Environment Goal 1** – *Protect the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer and other water sources so they provide clean, pure water.*
- **Natural Environment Policy 5.6 Barrier Free Environments** – *Create barrier free walking and bicycling environments throughout the city in order to make alternative transportation a viable option.*
- **Natural Environment Policy 6.1 Native and Non-Native Adaptive Plants and Trees** – *Encourage the use of and develop standards for using native and non-native adaptive plants and trees in landscape designs for public and private projects.*
- **Natural Environment Policy 13.2 Walkway and Bicycle Path Design** – *Design walkways and bicycle paths based on qualities that make them safe, functional, and separated from automobile traffic where possible.*
- **Natural Environment Policy 15.5 Nature Themes** – *Identify and use nature themes in large scale public and private landscape projects that reflect the natural character of the Spokane region.*
- **Neighborhoods Goal N 4 Traffic and Circulation** – *Provide Spokane residents with clean air, safe streets, and quiet, peaceful living environments by reducing the volume of automobile traffic passing through neighborhoods and promoting alternative modes of circulation.*
- **Neighborhoods Policy 4.5 Multimodal Transportation** – *Promote alternative forms of transportation.*
- **Neighborhoods Policy 4.6** – *Establish a continuous pedestrian and bicycle network within and between all neighborhoods.*
- **Neighborhoods Policy 4.13 Pedestrian Safety** – *Design neighborhoods for pedestrian safety.*

Public Projects Design Guidelines

http://www.spokaneplanning.org/docs/Design_Review/Public_project_guidelines.pdf

I. Introduction (excerpts)

Public projects and structures, whether they are parks, streets, bridges, governmental buildings, or above ground utility installations are the most physical and visual aspect of the roles government plays in the lives of the citizens of Spokane.

In current times it is all too often that budgetary constraints become the overriding concern dictating the design and the resulting “presence” of today’s public projects and structures. Instead of being a source of pride they may become a source of criticism and project an image of impermanence that is destructive to the particular public institution. For these reasons public projects and structures should be held to a higher standard of design, be required to comply with all adopted standards and policies, be consistent with adopted Neighborhood or District Plans, as well as serve as a positive example of how to incorporate resource conservation into a project.

III. Guidelines (excerpts)

A. Site Design and Orientation:

A.2 Circulation and Parking

Design Objective:

The circulation and parking components shall be safe, simple, and accessible, however, they shall not dominate the entire development.

Criteria:

1. A system of connections with adjacent neighborhoods such as pedestrian walks, bikeways, drives, alleyways, open spaces, linking to the project should be provided.

A.3 Pedestrian Access & Amenities

Design Objective:

The project shall create an environment that is visually attractive and easy to use for pedestrians who use the facilities.

Criteria:

1. Pedestrian building entrances should be located close to the street to maintain visual surveillance of the street and sidewalk areas.
2. The project should provide visual and pedestrian access (including barrier free access) into/out of the site from adjacent public walkways.

Topics for Discussion

To address the Industrial Design Standards, Comprehensive Plan Policies, and Public Project Design Guidelines listed in the staff report, staff would offer the following for consideration and discussion:

1) Relationship to the Chief Garry Park Neighborhood. The Nelson Service Center is the facility now proposed between existing parks and streets facilities and future development that will serve the water department and other City entities. The form of this facility will help define the City’s presence in the neighborhood and a campus like character would be encouraged.

- **Strengthened Prominent Entrance.** The proposed parking lot in front of the Prominent Entrance defines the northern portion of the site. How does the Nelson Service Center integrate its surroundings and support and improve this neighborhood? What form would a direct pedestrian connection take from the Prominent Entrance north to East DeSmet Avenue that might strengthen integration and help break up the parking lot?
- **Street Aesthetics.** How might the design of the proposed parking lot help improve the aesthetics of Desmet and integrate stormwater treatment?
- **Alternative Transportation Modes.** How will users of alternative transportation modes access the proposed facility? How will employees on the site access Stone Park, the surrounding neighborhood, and transit or other forms of transportation?
- **Regional Pedestrian Component on North Nelson Street.** North Nelson Street is a designated route on the “Regional Pedestrian Network” Map TR 1 of the Comprehensive Plan and is a designated “Marked/Shared Roadway” route on the Planned Bikeway Network Map TR 2 of the Comprehensive Plan. How will improvements to North Nelson Street provide pedestrian and bicycle safety?
- **System of Connections.** The submitted Preliminary Site Plan: Vehicle Access, Pedestrian & Bicycle Connections shows a pedestrian connection and a bicycle pathway from North Nelson Street through the site to the proposed Nelson Service Center. How will these routes meet the Public Projects Design Guidelines’ intended “system of connections” with the adjacent neighborhood and “barrier free access” through the site from one end to another? Besides the Regional Pedestrian Network designation on North Nelson Street, the planned Children of the Sun Trail to the east and the Iron Bridge/Centennial Trail connection to the west should be considered. Should the City explore pedestrian connections in subsequent phases to complete the grid in this area and provide a secondary east-west connection through the site, such as the extension of the Iron Bridge alignment in the abandoned 100-foot-wide former rail line that traverses the south edge of the site?

2) Industrial Design Standards. How will the building design meet the Base/Middle/Top, Ground Level Details, Roof Expression or other design standards? What will these aspects of the design look like from the residential zone across East DeSmet Avenue?

3) Natural Resources. What use of native and non-native adaptive plants will the landscape plan make to reflect the natural character of the Spokane region and ensure good stewardship of natural resources? What opportunities are there to integrate stormwater treatment on site?

Note

The recommendation of the Design Review Board does not alleviate any requirements that may be imposed on this project by other City Departments including the Current Planning Section of Planning and Development Services.

Policy Basis

Spokane Municipal Codes
City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan
Public Project Design Guidelines