

**DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Meeting Date: April 9th, 2009
Report Date: April 13th, 2009

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3004482

Address: 4532 42nd Ave SW

Applicant: Neal Thompson of Newell Architects for
David Lau of Golden Crest LLC, developer

Board members present: Christie Coxley, Chair
Joe Hurley
Robin Murphy
Vlad Oustimovich
Norma Tompkins

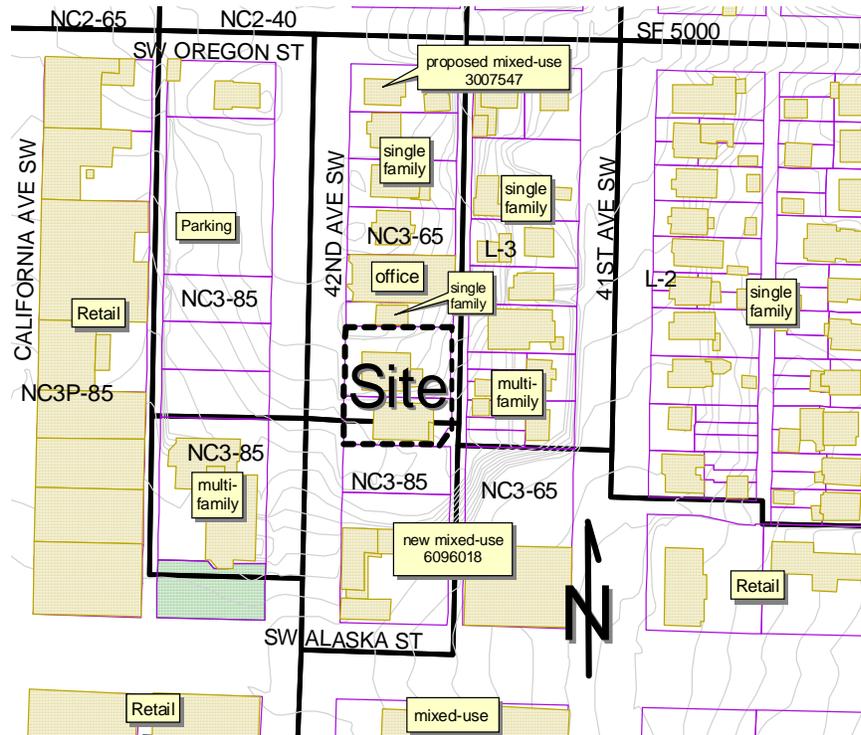
Board members absent Brandon Nicholson; recused

DPD staff present: Shelley Bolser AICP, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

The site is located on two mid-block parcels located on the east side of 42nd Ave SW, between SW Alaska St and SW Oregon St. The site is approximately 14,375 square feet in size and slopes slightly from the northwest to southeast.

The subject property is split zoned Neighborhood Commercial with two different height limits. The north portion of the site has a 65-foot height limit (NC3-65). The south portion of the site has an 85-foot height limit (NC3-85). The NC3-65 zone continues to



For illustrative purposes only

the north and picks up again to the southeast. The NC3-85 zone continues south, west, and northwest of the site. A Lowrise Multi-family 3 (L3) zone is located to the east across the alley from the site. The area slopes downhill to the south and east.

The site is currently vacant and was previously occupied by a vacant older three-story house and a two story mid-century duplex (now demolished). Adjacent development includes a small scale single family residence to the north, a medical dental building beyond that, and additional single family residences beyond that. East across the alley are newer townhouses. A mixed-use residential and commercial building (currently under construction) is located immediately to the south, across the east/west oriented alley. An eight story apartment building and a large surface parking lot are located to the west across 42nd Ave SW.

Architecture of adjacent buildings varies based on age and type of structure. Adjacent single family development reflects primarily wood, some vinyl or metal siding, and masonry. The large multi-family building across the street is painted concrete and cinderblock. The medical/dental building is a combination of wood siding and masonry. Newer development nearby includes hardi panel/plank and brick. There is no one predominant style of development. Most single family houses and duplexes are two-story 1920's – 1940's style. Newer townhouses are three stories with a modern craftsman style finish. Commercial development reflects a large variety of styles, depending on age. Several large new mixed-use projects are either under construction or in permit review within a block of the subject property.

The area is pedestrian-oriented and located near the center of the West Seattle Junction area (SW Alaska St and California Ave SW). Sidewalks and street trees are located on all nearby street fronts. Parking is predominantly on-street, with the exception of the large surface parking lot across 42nd Ave SW from the subject property. Most garages are accessed from the alleys located between blocks. The subject property is located on a site that has an alley at both the east and south property lines.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of one mixed-use residential and office building. Approximately 54 parking stalls would be located in an underground two-level parking structure. 3,085 square feet of office would be located at the street level with 35 apartments above.

DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES: **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING (April 13, 2006)**

At the Early Design Guidance meeting held on April 13, 2006 and after visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance and identified by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's "*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*" and "*West Seattle Junction Urban Village Design Guidelines*" of highest priority to this project:

- A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics
- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility
- A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street
- A-4 Human Activity
- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites

- A-7 Residential Open Space
- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access
- A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts
- B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility
- C-1 Architectural Context
- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency
- C-3 Human Scale
- C-5 Structured Parking Entrances
- D-2 Blank Walls
- D-3 Retaining Walls
- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures
- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites
- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site
- E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY (JUNE 12, 2008)

On April 12th, 2007, the applicant submitted for a Master Use Permit. On June 12th, 2008, the Southwest Design Review Board convened for a Recommendation meeting. Additional graphics and display boards presented for the Board members' consideration included a three dimensional graphic and a colors and materials board. The Board recommended that the applicant address the following design issues and return for a second Recommendation meeting.

- Minimize the front (west) setback and push building mass to the west
- Bring commercial street frontage to the west property line and provide continuous overhead weather protection
- Minimize garage entries at the east façade; consider moving one entry to the south facade
- Provide information about acoustics of metal siding
- Respond to new context immediately to the south
- Storefronts should appear taller and be adjacent to the sidewalk
- Each storefront and the residential entry requires an individual entry directly accessing the sidewalk
- Provide pedestrian street level sketches
- Visually integrate the podium and upper levels of the building
- Wood grain hardi plank is not appropriate to the scale of this building
- Use planting to reduce the scale and blank walls at the north, east, and south facades
- Use planting in the landscape strip to enhance the streetscape

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY (APRIL 9TH, 2009)

On April 2nd 2009, the applicant submitted a revised design recommendation packet. Applicant design responses since the Design Recommendation meeting on June 12th, 2008 included the following:

- The proposed massing and storefronts was 'pushed' to the west property line

- The lower sills of the storefronts were reduced in height, and the canopies were raised to increase the visual height of the commercial spaces
- Each proposed entry has doors directly accessing the sidewalk area
- Proposed sidewalk plan #1 on page 8 of the packet responded to the adjacent development to the south
- Pedestrian level sketches were provided in packet
- Upper level hardi plank was changed to smooth texture

The Board recommended that the applicant return for a third Recommendation meeting.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Roger Newell of Roger H. Newell Architects gave the applicant presentation. Roger described the proposed modifications as a result of the June 12, 2008 design recommendation meeting.

Mr. Newell noted that the three possible street level development options shown on pages 7, 8, and 9 included the following points:

- All three options allow room for a recessed door swing
- Office space A (the north tenant space) includes a step down to the office floor from the exterior walkway to accommodate the 13' height requirement
- Options shown on pages 7 and 9 include continuous overhead weather protection

Two possible parking solutions were proposed for the two garage entries. In the first parking solution, one access point would be from the east alley and one would be from the south alley. In the second parking solution, both access points would be from the east alley. Mr. Newell noted that the second option is the applicant preferred option due to potential traffic conflicts with the garage entry for the project to the south.

The noise potential for rain on metal siding was examined, and the applicant found little data available. Mr. Newell noted that metal roofing has rain noise only 6 decibels higher than shingle roofing.

In response to the visual height of the commercial spaces at grade, the design was modified to include increased window height (lower sills, higher headers) at the street level. A separate canopy above the residential entry helps to distinguish from the commercial entries.

Upper level material concerns would be addressed by smooth hardi plank instead of wood grain. Protruding roof elements have been reduced to minimize shading on the properties to the east (reduced roof overhang by 1' and reduced overall height by 2.5').

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The Board had the following questions and clarifying comments, with responses from the applicant:

- The elevation drawings appear to show a ridged roof; please explain.
 - The roof would have a low slope of 3/8" per 1' with a curbed edge and drains in the edge of the roof. It would appear flat from the street and adjacent properties.
- Where is the street level façade in relation to the property line?

- The columns are at the property line, with the storefront 2' from the property line and the entry doors 3' back from the property line.
- Where has the glazing been increased at the storefronts?
 - The awnings were raised and the window head heights brought up to 11' height, and the sills were lowered
- Has the building been reduced to below maximum zone height?
 - DPD clarified the applicability of clerestories, which resulted in a reduction of overall proposed building height for this proposal. The building is proposed for the maximum zoned height at the southeast corner. The other areas are under maximum height, due to the grade changes across the site.
- Regarding the proposed sidewalk designs – does the building to the south have the same landscaping and sidewalk design as the option shown on page 7?
 - Yes, it is the same as shown on page 7.
- How does the proposal respond to the parking access recommendations from the first recommendation meeting?
 - There are townhouses to the east that face the alley, so placing one of the two garage entries to the south would reduce impacts to those residents.
 - However, the project to the south includes loading and parking access at the south alley, so placing one of the entries there could cause traffic conflicts.
- How does the proposed development fit with the architectural character noted in the *West Seattle Junction Urban Village Design Guidelines*?
 - The applicant noted that there doesn't appear to be a clear architectural trend of materials or forms in this particular area, which is one block east of the primary buildings noted in the guidelines.
- What type of landscaping is proposed on the north side, adjacent to the single family?
 - Several large evergreen trees with some deciduous trees, ground cover and small shrubs are proposed.
- It appears the building base materials would be EFIS over concrete.
 - The proposed building base would be stucco or plaster over concrete, with reveals, because it seemed that bare concrete was not a building base that fit with the context of the nearby buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Three members of the public attended the Design Recommendation meeting, two of whom signed the Sign-In Sheet. The following comments were offered:

- The townhouses to the east are oriented to face the alley as a 'front yard' and therefore the option to place one of the garage entries and the trash/loading at the south face would be preferable to reduce noise and headlight impacts to the townhouse residents
- The north-south oriented alley is narrow and placing both garage entries at that alley would increase traffic conflicts along the length of the alley and at the intersection with SW Oregon St. An entry at the south façade would encourage cars to use the east-west oriented alley to access 42nd Ave SW instead, which has traffic lights at the north and south ends of the block.
- The east façade of the building needs to step down to reduce shadow and visual impacts to the lower zone to the east
- The east retaining wall should include vegetation, to reduce the appearance of bulk and scale on neighbors to the east

- The plantings on 42nd Ave SW need to be low, in order to reduce sight line conflicts at the alley entrance
- The plantings on 42nd Ave SW outside of sight lines should include above grade planters with seating walls
- A wide sidewalk at 42nd Ave SW is better for the streetscape
- The option shown on page 22 (lower roof, 3' west, no overhang) is the best option to minimize shadows on adjacent properties.
- Appreciation for the proposed modifications to move the building closer to the west property line
- The proposed design should better integrate the upper and lower portions of the building
- The proposed and/or approved developments to the south (3007035) and north (3007547) include proposed sidewalk and landscaping designs. This proposed development should include sidewalk design that is consistent with those developments.
- Office space A should not require visitors to step down into an entry. The entry should be level with the sidewalk, and at least half the floor should be above grade, rather than depressing it to meet 13' height requirements.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

After considering the proposed design and the project context, hearing public comment and reconsidering the previously stated design priorities, the Design Review Board members came to the following conclusions on how the proposed design met the identified design objectives from City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings* and *West Seattle Junction Urban Village Design Guidelines*.

A. Site Planning

- A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.**
- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.**
- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites. Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.**

West Seattle Junction Guideline (augmenting A-2). A pedestrian-oriented streetscape is perhaps the most important characteristic to be achieved in new development in the Junction's mixed use areas (as previously defined). New development—particularly on SW Alaska, Genesee, Oregon and Edmunds Streets—will set the precedent in establishing desirable siting and design characteristics in the right-of-way.

Recommendation from 6/12/08: The Board noted that the applicant has responded somewhat to the guidance from EDG by pushing the upper building mass to the southwest area of the podium. The Board noted that there is a large setback proposed for the west façade, which doesn't reflect the new street wall that will be created by the mixed-use development to the south. The proposed retail would be located approximately 16' from the back of the sidewalk and located under an arcade and behind a planter, further separating it from sidewalk activity. The setback

also means that the structure is closer to the townhouses across the alley than is necessary, which may create additional shadows on those structures.

The applicant should modify the design to push the entire building mass as close to the west property line as possible. The street level retail spaces should be as close to the sidewalk as possible and not divided from the sidewalk by planters. The retail and building entry should include continuous overhead weather protection which may extend into the public right of way.

The proposed garage entries and trash/services area at the alley should also be designed to minimize impacts to the townhouse residents to the east. The trash area should be reconfigured so the doors open to the south. The applicant should examine the potential for locating one of the garage entries at the south façade instead of both facing the townhouses to the east.

The proposed metal siding was of some concern regarding noise impacts to adjacent residential development. The Board requested that the applicant provide information about acoustics and noise transmission of rain on metal siding.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: The Board noted that the applicant has moved the mass of the building west, which is an improvement. The proposed metal siding was appropriately analyzed and does not appear to result in noise impacts.

The proposed design should be further modified to address the following issues:

- The proposed sidewalk/planting design at the street level should be consistent with proposed projects to the north and south along 42nd Ave SW
- At least one of the garage entries, and the access to trash/services should be located at the south façade, adjacent to the east-west alley at the south facade
- The commercial spaces should be emphasized by changing the 'heavy' appearance of the opaque overhead weather protection, providing maximum glazed storefront windows, providing articulation of the façade at the street level, and through the use of material and color to emphasize the storefront and visually integrate the upper and lower levels of the building
- The residential entry should be modified to provide an inviting and distinct entry, visually separate from the appearance of the commercial entries.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

Recommendation from 6/12/08: *Since this proposal last came before the Board, a new mixed-use project has been approved on the lot to the south. That project includes a grocery store at the street level, with an entrance on 42nd Ave SW. The context of new development in this area now includes strong street walls with commercial entries that actively engage the sidewalk level.*

The applicant should modify the street level design to bring the retail spaces as close to the sidewalk as possible and include overhead weather protection, as noted in the comments for guidelines A-1, A-2, and A-5. The commercial spaces should be designed to increase the appearance of height and provide strong visual and physical connections between the interior spaces and the sidewalk.

Each commercial space and the residential entry should have an individual doorway directly accessing the sidewalk. The Board noted that grade change can make this challenging, but it has been achieved with the development immediately to the south that includes a greater grade change along 42nd Ave SW.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: The Board recommended that the applicant modify the commercial entries to provide direct access at grade from the sidewalk to the commercial space,

and the commercial spaces and entries should be modified to maximize the transparent areas, as noted in the response to A-2 above. The Board noted that the commercial entries do not necessarily need to be symmetrical or physically separated from the residential entry; it is more important that they are at grade with the sidewalk.

In addition, the residential entry is currently proposed as recessed and includes a heavy opaque awning. The residential entry should be modified through a change in awning material, lighting, and materials to provide a more obvious distinct and welcoming entry for residents. The residential entry should be visually treated as separate from the commercial entries (through use of color, material, awning, lighting, etc), even if the residential and commercial entry are adjacent in the west façade.

A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.

A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts. Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.

Recommendation from 6/12/08: The Board responded positively to the applicant placing both vehicular access points at the alley. Given the presence of the townhouses across the alley to the east, the applicant should work to reduce visual and noise impacts to the adjacent residents.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: The Board noted that the option to provide one garage entry at the south alley and one garage entry at the east alley is the preferred option.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility. Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

West Seattle Junction Guideline (augmenting B-1). Current zoning in the Junction has created abrupt edges in some areas between intensive, mixed-use development potential and less-intensive, multifamily development potential. In addition, the Code-complying building envelope of NC-65' (and higher) zoning designations permitted within the Commercial Core would result in development that exceeds the scale of existing commercial/mixed-use development. More refined transitions in height, bulk and scale—in terms of relationship to surrounding context and within the proposed structure itself—must be considered.

Recommendation from 6/12/08: Comments reflect those found in response to guidelines A-1, A-2, A-5, and A-7.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: The Board noted that the applicant has moved the mass of the building west, which is an improvement. The reduction in building height and reduction of building overhang to 3' has reduced the shadow impacts on adjacent properties. Additional reduction of the roof overhang would result in minimal shadow reduction to adjacent properties and would increase the visual mass of the building and detract from the overall building design. The current proposed combination of massing, building height, and roof overhang meets this guideline (as shown on option B on page 22 of the design recommendation packet).

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

- C-1 Architectural Context. New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.**

West Seattle Junction Guideline (augmenting C-1). Façade articulation and architectural cues with good examples of storefronts in the Junction area (see West Seattle Junction Guidelines for pictorial examples).

- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency. Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.**

West Seattle Junction Guideline (augmenting C-2). New multi-story developments are encouraged to consider methods to integrate a building's upper and lower levels... New mixed-use buildings are encouraged to build the commercial level, as well as one to two levels above, out to the front and side property lines to create a more substantial base. The use and repetition of architectural features and building materials, textures and colors can help create unity in a structure. (see West Seattle Junction Guidelines for full text).

Recommendation from 6/12/08: In addition to the comments found in response to guidelines A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-5, the applicant should modify the proposed design to better integrate the 'podium' and upper levels of the building. The Board expressed appreciation for the 'playfulness' of the upper balconies and the vertical glazing expression at the upper floors. The Board recommended carrying the façade expression of the upper stories down to the street level development.

The street level commercial spaces and entry should be modified to increase the visual height of these spaces, create better visual and physical connections to the street, and create a consistent architectural expression for the overall structure.

The Board also noted some concern with the use of wood grain hardi plank siding at upper building levels. The applicant should consider the use of a façade treatment more appropriate to the scale of the building at the upper levels.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: The applicant has modified the upper materials to include smooth hardi plank rather than wood grain hardi plank siding.

The Board recommended that the design should be modified to provide better visual integration of the upper floors and the street level façade. The Board noted that a "hierarchy" of materials is needed, with use of materials to create a clear base, middle and top of the building, and to tie the

three elements together. Possible solutions include additional use of color to emphasize massing changes, additional glazing at the street level, a cornice cap above the storefront level, lighting at the building columns and vertical elements, emphasis of the cast in place concrete base material with a stone or other durable material application, and an increase in the mass of the brackets at the upper floor soffits.

C-5 Structured Parking Entrances. The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

Recommendation from 6/12/08: Comments reflect the responses found in A-5, A-8, and C-3.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: Comments reflect the responses found in A-8.

E. Landscaping

E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites. Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site. Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

Recommendation from 6/12/08: In addition to the comments in A-7 and C-3, the Board noted that the applicant has currently proposed several landscaped areas between the sidewalk and the retail spaces. Given the Board's direction to move the retail spaces directly adjacent to the sidewalk, the applicant should make full use of landscaping in the public right of way. The Board recommended that the applicant increase landscaping in the planting strip between the sidewalk and the curb to include a variety of trees, shrubs and groundcover.

4/9/09 Recommendation response: Comments reflect those found in response to A-2.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONDITIONS

The recommendations summarized below were based on the information shown and discussed at the April 9, 2009 meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board members recommended that the applicant modify the proposal to meet the recommendations above and return to the Design Review Board for a third recommendation meeting.

- Modify the proposed design (these items to be reviewed by the Design Review Board at the next Design Recommendation meeting):
 - Modify the appearance of the retail spaces to emphasize the commercial spaces through use of material, glazing, transparent awnings, etc.
 - Provide direct individual entries from the retail spaces and residential entry to the sidewalk, with continuous overhead weather protection
 - Revise the design of the residential entry to enhance the entry in a method visually distinct from the commercial spaces

- Modify the design of the west façade to visually unite the upper and lower portions of the building and enhance the proposed massing with materials, colors, lighting, etc.
- Modify the proposed design (these items to be reviewed by DPD):
 - Revise the sidewalk/landscape planter design to be consistent with other proposed right of way improvements along 42nd Ave SW and provide adequate sight lines from the alley
 - At least one of the vehicular entries and the trash/service entry should be located at the south façade

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No development standard departures are proposed.