



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor  
Department of Planning and Development  
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**RECOMMENDATION MEETING**  
**Of**  
**AREA 7, THE CAPITOL HILL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**  
Meeting Date: May 20, 2009  
Report Date: June 8, 2009

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

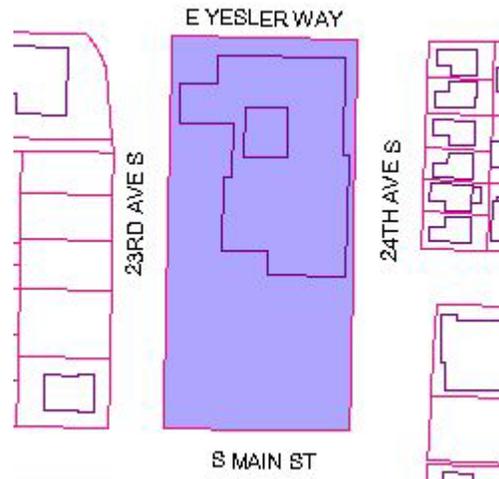
Project Number: 3005392  
Address: 140 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South  
Applicant: Rod Butler of Chaos Architecture for Catholic Community Services of Western Washington (CCSWW)  
Board Members Present: Sharon Sutton, Chair  
Evan Bourquard  
Brian Cavanaugh  
Lisa Picard  
Wolf Saar  
DPD Project Planner: Art Pederson

**PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

The project proposes a four story mixed-use structure with 51 affordable residential units, 2,400 square feet of retail space, 2,000 square feet of administrative office space, 31 parking spaces for the residents and administrative office use, and 41 replacement parking spaces for the existing Catholic Community Services of Western Washington (CCSWW) building.

The development will replace the existing parking lot on the south end of the CCSWW building, which is bordered by 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South to the west, South Main Street to the south, and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to the east. The existing CCSWW building will remain.

The site is mostly level, but with a 2 foot to 3 foot grade change along the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue frontage. The project site and CCSWW northern portion are zoned Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a 40 foot height limit (NC2-40). The CCSWW building is a one to two story office building. To the south across South Main Street and extending to the east and west of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and south beyond South Jackson Street the



zoning is NC 3 with a 65-foot height limit (NC3 –65) and contain predominately retail commercial uses centered on the intersection of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and South Jackson Street. On the north end of this commercial area and to the southeast of the project site is the P.H. Masonic Temple. To the east of the site the zoning is Lowrise 2 (L2) and contains predominately residential structures but also the Bethel Christian Church. To the west across 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue the zoning is Lowrise 4 (L4) and contains a variety of ages of multi-family development, a retirement and assisted living facility directly across 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and the Historic Landmark Fire Station No. 6 to the north at the corner of East Yesler Way and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. To the north of the CCSWW building is the Historic Landmark Douglas Truth Branch of the Seattle Public Library, in an L3 zone.

## **DEVELOPER AND ARCHITECT'S PRESENTATION**

Brian Lloyd of Beacon Development, the applicant's development consultant, began the presentation with overview information about the project. The project is to provide housing for families moving out of homelessness. Consequently, the units will be affordable for the income range of 30 to 50 percent of area median income. Financial involvement will include the city, county and state as well as private entity purchase of approximately \$5.5 million of associated tax credits. The project will also meet the requirements of the Evergreen Sustainable Design Standards, a Washington State "Green" building program administered by the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development for projects receiving state funds through the State Housing Trust Fund.

Roderick Butler, project architect, explained the project is the continuation and further development of the proposal presented at the October 10, 2007 Early Design Guidance meeting. A description of the unit count, size, and parking quantities was given as outlined in Project and Site Description above. The main residential entry will face 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue near the building's southwest corner and be recessed from the street facing facades on either side. North of the entry, store-front commercial spaces will face 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and abut the extended sidewalk. A resident's support services office will be at the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and South Main Street and extend to the east with ancillary office spaces. The façade of the office will be set-back further than the north façade to help create a small entry plaza. Approximately mid-block on South Main Street a tenant multi-use room (day room) is proposed. Following this would be two ground level studio units at the corner of South Main Street and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, with their entries facing South Main Street.

A project design goal was to break up what could have been the mass of one large building into what appears to be two buildings. The ground level is a single concrete and masonry base but the upper levels are divided into a smaller two-level "butterfly" roofed portion along South Main Street separated from a larger three level flat-roofed portion along the site's northern half by a central courtyard that is above the ground level base. The southern portion would contain 11 two-level units; the northern portion would be comprised of "flat" type apartment units. Access for the south side units will be from the courtyard. Primary access for the north side apartments will be from the interior corridors, although the courtyard level units will have access to the courtyard.

The proposed second level courtyard would be the residential amenity area and approximately

6,200 square feet of area, while approximately 2,500 square feet is required by Code. The courtyard is functionally divided into three zones: the west end will be the most active area with the main stairway, elevator and laundry room facing a children's play area; approximately the central third of the courtyard will be a large gathering area with unit entries from both the north and south sides; and the eastern third will narrow down from 44 feet to 35 feet and mostly have only units entries on the south side. This progression from an active to a quieter and smaller zone follows the gradient away from the activity and traffic noise of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to the residential zone across 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue. At the courtyard's east end a key-controlled and alarmed secondary residential entry stairway will connect the courtyard to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue for emergency access only.

The intention of the colors and materials proposed is to further break-down the bulk of the entire structure. The color scheme of yellow, yellow/orange, purple, and red brick was chosen for a bright cheerful affect and derived from the original building name and color concept for "Village Spirit". The concrete base will be brick clad along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, all of South Main Street except the recessed studio apartment facades, approximately the first 32 feet of the northwest façade (where this façade is highly visible from southbound 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) and surrounding the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue courtyard stairway for a width of approximately 40 feet. The commercial, residential office / multi-use room areas would have store-front window systems to maximize transparency. Brick pilasters are proposed along the brick clad frontages and to extend to the second to third floor break. The 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue street level façade materials are lap siding on the street facing studio unit and cast in place concrete with horizontal reveal lines north of the stairway brick façade portion. The north façade would be similar cast in place concrete with two two-car width garage door openings, utility doors, and three areas of passive ventilation grills for the at grade parking behind. The upper level siding materials and colors will be the same on both structures, except for the metal siding on the north portions fourth level, but used in different amounts and arrangements to further differentiate the two masses. The second and third levels will have 6-inch horizontal cement fiberboard lap panels interspersed by groupings of flat fiberboard panels. On the north structure the groupings of panels would be widely spaced and painted a purple color, with the exception of the panels along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, which would be a bright yellow / orange. The courtyard elevator tower would be all yellow-orange panels. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue upper façade of the southern structure would have a large grouping of purple colored panels. The Main Street façade of this structure would have the proposed bay window groupings clad in this same color paneling. The north structure would also have bay window elements. However the outer face of these would not be parallel to the main façade but angled (a saw-tooth pattern in plan view).

Store front awnings are included along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and South Main Street. Individual horizontal metal grated window shelves for shading are proposed above all south and west facing residential window on both structures.

At the ground level, the current sidewalk and planting strip along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue will be expanded three feet east due to the Code right of way (ROW) dedication requirement. This will provide a more generous street tree and sidewalk area and separation from traffic. A free-standing planter will border the sidewalk by the office and residential area to delineate the entry plaza. A small landscape border will front the office area. Along Main Street, a deeper landscape area will front the building. A generous landscape planting area will continue in front of the two studio entries

and along 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, where it will screen the proposed garage ramp ventilation grills. Along the north side landscaping will screen the garage grill areas. At the northwest corner with 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue the southern of two existing driveways / curb cuts will be closed (EDG Design Departure for 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue vehicle access is no longer necessary) and this area landscaped north to the other existing curb cut that will remain.

Vehicle access by Code is required to be from 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the street frontage with the least amount of commercially zoned frontages (overall), and will be through a joint driveway /easement between the proposed and existing buildings. Some parking for CCSWW will be at grade within the proposed building. Egress to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue will be possible from one remaining curb cut there. The removal of the wide planting strip along 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the replacement with diagonal parking is no longer proposed; this area will remain a grass planting strip with street trees.

Exterior improvements that will respond to the project proposal will occur to the existing CCSWW building along with this project, although they are not part of this application. These are the relocation of this building's main entry from the south, where it now faces the parking lot, to the west, where it was originally. The existing parking along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue will remain, although have only one curb cut access as described above. Building canopies will be added above the existing west side walk way that will connect the relocated entry to the proposed building's north side garage entry.

The CCSWW building and underlying originally platted lots will be segregated from the underlying platted lots beneath the proposed building.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING**

Two members of the public attended and offered the following comments in response to the applicant's presentation:

- A resident of a single-family house on 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue is pleased to see the development of affordable housing but thinks the proposed 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade is being treated like the back (non- street front) of the building and does not create a "human space" for this busy pedestrian street (many walkers from the high school and library to the north to the retail area to the south) or create a transition to the largely residential neighborhood to the east.
- The proposed 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue courtyard stairs and grating are unfriendly; the stairs and courtyard access should flow out into the street;
- Don't like the project's main vehicle entry on this street;
- Any proposed "green wall" segments along 24<sup>th</sup> should have evergreen plant material to assure it is green 12 months of the year and should be consistently maintained;
- The deep set-back of the southeast corner studio units does not help create a transition to the nearby residential area;
- The proposed street level commercial and office facades on 23<sup>rd</sup> and South Main are good;
- Another commenter likes the ambitions of the building. However the color scheme creates an unfavorable "checkered" appearance; at least one less color should be used;

- The proposed north-side “saw-toothed” bays have been tried on other recent buildings and are not always successful in fitting in with the building design. Instead typical squared bays should be used;
- The pilasters extending above the adjacent brick façade don’t work well; they go up, but go nowhere. These should be terminated at a logical ending point;
- The street level brick corners should be stronger – have more emphasis.

### **DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES, EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING OF OCTOBER 10, 2007.**

At the Early Design Guidance meeting, after visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the Design Review Board members identified by letter and number the following siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle’s “*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*” of highest priority to this project:

- A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics
- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility
- A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street
- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites
- A-7 Residential Open Space
- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access
- A-10 Corner Lots
- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency
- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials
- D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances
- D-2 Blank Walls
- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures
- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas
- D-7 Personal Safety and Security
- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and / or Site

The detailed EDG Guidance is included below in *un-bolded Italics* along with the Board’s Recommendations on the presented Master Use Permit design response.

### **DEPARTURES FROM CODE STANDARDS AT EDG**

A request was made for one possible *Design Departure* from Code requirements for street level uses (SMC 23.47A.005.B). A second *Design Departure* for vehicle access (SMC 23.47A.032) was recognized as needed after the EDG meeting and included in the record.

### **EDG PUBLIC COMMENT**

Five members of the community attended the Early Design Guidance meeting and offered the following comments:

- To maximize visual connections between the courtyard and surrounding units, these units should have balconies and large windows.
- The building design and materials should be visually interesting and have the appearance of market rate housing, not low-income housing.
- “Sustainable” building principles should be used in design and construction.

- The design should fit with the three historic buildings in the area (Seattle Public Library Douglas Truth Branch, Yesler “Victorian” houses, and Seattle Fire Department Station #6).
- Support for the development of parking in the large planting strip along 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- The divided massing and building set-back from the street is good; do not crowd the street like the Welch Plaza building crowds 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.
- Opposition to replacing the wide planting strip on 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue with parking; this is a pleasant public “open space”.

## **RECOMMENDATION MEETING**

At the May 20, 2009 *Recommendation* meeting the Design Review Board reviewed the design submitted in response to the EDG and further developed in conjunction with the project planner and discussed the requested *Design Departure* (The previous Design Departure for vehicle street access on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in addition to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been dropped. See *Design Departure* table at the end of this document for details). Following clarifying questions and deliberation, the Board provided the following additional guidance and recommendations. The Board has recommended the project return for a second Recommendation meeting to address the issues outlined below. The Board’s comments and recommendations follow EDG Guidance that is in *Italics*.

### **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-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.*

**EDG Meeting:** *The proposed parking access driveway extending from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenues will be traversed by CCSWW employees using the new parking. It will also be visible from the CCSWW building and the residents of the proposed structure. Consequently the driveway area and north side ground level of the proposed building should:*

- *Not have a utility / service character, but acknowledge its visibility from the CCSWW site and the both avenues when approaching from the north.*
- *Be designed to be foster interaction between the two buildings and sites.*

**Recommendation Meeting:** The project proposes extending the first level brick along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue onto the north façade to the depth of the retail space behind. Extensive landscape screening is proposed for the blank concrete base past this and ending at the northeast corner garage entrance. A “paving pattern change” is proposed between the first level’s parking vehicle and man doors and the CCSWW walkway across the shared driveway.

For the next Recommendation meeting the architect should:

- Reconcile the awkward termination of the second level siding at the concrete base next to

the proposed trash room doors / next to the northeast garage entry;

- Describe specific material and pattern change proposed for the crosswalk / upper garage entry;
- Address the pilaster termination discussed in C-2 below;
- Demonstrate continued compliance with this guideline when any utility doors are relocated from the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade to the north façade;
- Describe how substantial wall screening at the time of planting will be achieved by the choice of plant species and sizes in a reasonable period of time (i.e. blank wall will not be exposed for a long period of time until adequate landscaping screening is achieved).

**A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. *The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.***

EDG Meeting: *There are a number of developments along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to the south and west of the project site that have begun to create a “street wall” definition for this avenue.*

- *The design should continue this by placing the structure in a traditional urban relationship close to the sidewalk.*

*Development on this site will require a 3 foot dedication of land along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue for right of way (ROW) widening. The minimum sidewalk width required will be 6 feet. To build upon these required street improvements:*

- *The proposed retail uses along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue should be close to the street for interaction and engagement with the street. But they should also be set-back enough to create a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment next to the street, which has high traffic volumes and speeds and no on street parking as a buffer. Recessed entry areas are a possible approach.*
- *If administrative office use is necessary at the southwest corner, it should be designed to support activity on the street.*

Recommendation Meeting: The Board noted that all facades respond to this guidance through their scale and proximity to the sidewalk. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and the Main Street façades, except the studio unit entries, respond to this and other guidelines and guidance for supporting the pedestrian environment. However, as discussed under D-1 and D-12 below, the studio unit facades and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade need further design development.

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

EDG Meeting: *Residential, office, retail, and semi-public spaces (multi-purpose room) should have entries visible to the public and users and be differentiated from each other.*

Recommendation Meeting: The proposed design for the office and commercial spaces successfully does this. See D-1 and D-12 below for further guidance on the studio unit and courtyard entrances.

**A-7 Residential Open Space. *Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.***

EDG Meeting: *The widest width of the amenity area is approximately 30 feet. This may be too narrow to achieve the above objectives. The width of the space on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue façade is likely one-third to one-half of this and will occlude a substantial amount of needed afternoon sun light.*

- *The design should assure adequate width of the amenity level to create functional and inviting user areas. The MUP submittal should include solar studies of sunlight penetration during the four seasons (spring and autumn equinox, summer and winter solstice). A detailed “site” plan of the area configuration should also be included.*
- *The proposed roof top residential amenity area (open space) between the two upper level structures should have a strong connection to the interior of the building and be easily accessible to users. It should be an active space.*
- *Suggestions on creating this connection are multiple entries for the northern apartment building (mid-way on the long wall and at the structure end(s)), orientation of living rooms and kitchens/dining rooms toward the amenity area, among others.*

Recommendation Meeting: The proposed courtyard configuration and design successfully responds to this guidance. However, the proposed courtyard egress stairway to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be treated more than a Code required emergency egress / ingress point.

The open grating is a good element for visual interest and a connection between the courtyard and street. But the solid door panel and plan to alarm the door so even key card or similar tenant access is not possible will result in a forgotten and dirt collecting space. The further developed design should:

- Allow the stairway to be a tenant access space to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This will off-set the otherwise almost complete lack of uses along this entire façade.
- Explore ways to create a greater visual opening / connection between the street and the courtyard. One suggestion is to extend the grating to the door itself.
- Design a door and door frame that is integrated into the surrounding grating; now it appears as an awkward freestanding door frame.

**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.***

EDG Meeting: *Although off site, the project proposal to replace a large planting strip along 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue with diagonal parking (approximately 21 spaces) would have a negative affect on the pedestrian environment. Planting areas provide opportunity for landscaping, street trees, wider sidewalks, and “spill-over” activity space for pedestrians. Diagonal parking schemes can place automobiles in close proximity to pedestrians and remove space for these others elements. The Board does not support this proposal. The project proponents may present other schemes that separate parking from pedestrians and maintain landscaping.*

Recommendation Meeting: The project no longer includes diagonal parking in place of the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South planting strip. See D-2 on guidance relating to proposed interior driveway ramp location.

**A-10 Corner Lots.** *Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.*

EDG Meeting: *The building design should continue its orientation to both avenue corners with South Main Street. Active uses should be fronting both sides of each corner, appropriate to their location on the quieter character of 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue or the more active 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.*

Recommendation Meeting: The proposed fenestration, entry plaza, and building entries at the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and South Main Street respond to this guidance. Although the building is located close to the corner of 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue and South Main Street, the proposed residential entry design and amount of wall without a use / activity area approaching this corner does not meet the priority guidelines overall. See D-12 on guidance pertaining to this issue.

### **C. Architectural Elements and Materials**

**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 façade walls.*

**C-4 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.*

EDG Meeting: *Priorities for this highly visible site that is located at the in the southern end of the 23<sup>rd</sup> & Union – Jackson Residential Urban Village.*

- *Strong and durable materials, such as brick or masonry, should be used at the building base, particularly along the tough environment of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.*

Recommendation Meeting: Numerous issues were noted and discussed by the Board that precipitated their recommendation for a second Recommendation meeting. Responses to the following issues must be prepared for the next presentation to the Board:

- The general façade treatments along both 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and South Main Street should be extended along 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue (e.g. extensive use of brick, addition of window shelves [if effective], and ground level visual interest). A more developed façade design theme is necessary; it should reflect this area's transitional nature to the residential area to the east. The number of utility doors must be relocated to the north side or interior (see D-2 below).
- Too many colors are proposed; simplify. Colors should complement the proposed choice of brick.

- Terminate the pilasters at a logical ending point, such as the floor levels between units, not mid-way between floors as proposed.
- Explore a change in brick material, pattern, etc between “buildings” (the 4-level north portion and the 3-level south portion). As presented, the uniform use of brick around the entire structure conflicts with the stated intention of breaking down the building mass into north and south portions.
- The brick base should be proud (forward) of the siding material above to emphasize the “base and upper” affect.
- Find an alternative to the proposed horizontal siding, or at least such extensive use of it. This material does not read well on large multi-family buildings, particularly in this neighborhood commercial core. The proposed use of metal siding should be continued, if appropriate for the developing choice of materials.
- The leader heads proposed for the butter-fly roof ends (south building portion) will be very visible due to their location. These should be further developed be visual attractive and compliment / respond to the overall building parti.

#### **D. Pedestrian Environment**

**D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.** *Convenient and attractive access to the building’s entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open space should be considered.*

EDG Meeting: *A recessed residential entry along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is proposed, where high traffic volumes and speeds require an ample entry area. However, this should be designed for visibility to the interior for resident safety.*

Recommendation Meeting: The proposed entry plaza on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue should be continued. At the next Recommendation meeting, demonstrate that the proposed canopies here will provide adequate weather protection.

Although the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue courtyard egress stairway will be secondary to the second level entry by the elevator, this stairway is an opportunity to respond to many guidelines and guidance. It cannot do this as the proposed alarmed / emergency access only exit. The visually open grill work should be continued and the recommendation guidance in A-7 followed.

**D-2 Blank Walls.** *Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.*

EDG Meeting: *The rear (north) wall at ground level should not be blank or considered a “rear” wall. This façade will be visible from 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenues as well as the remaining CCSWW building and site to the north, particularly where the CCSWW building is substantially stepped-back from its 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue property line.*

*If a Design Departure from the requirement for an intervening use between the interior parking and the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue street level façade is pursued the applicant must demonstrate how the overall design would meet this and other guidelines.*

Recommendation Meeting: The proposed north wall design at ground level includes brick material wrapping from 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and storefront glazing and a canopy to the depth of the commercial space behind this façade; this should be continued.

Per the last bullet point in A-1 / A-5 above, the proposed substantial and attractive screening of the concrete base should be continued.

Solid waste, egress, and mechanical room doors are proposed along the eastern end of the north wall. Alternatives to the addition of more utility doors, which effectively adds to the amount of blank wall sections that cannot be screened, should be carefully considered in responding to the guidance about the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade below.

The applicants have proposed no street level intervening use between the structured parking areas and the sidewalk along 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue as required by Code (SMC 23.47A.005.C). This requires two Design Departures (see *Design Departure* matrix). Instead approximately 62 feet of the façade in front of the lower level parking ramp is proposed with three grated ventilation openings and blank double transformer room door in a concrete wall with approximately 5 feet of landscape screening between the building and sidewalk. The remainder of the 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue street façade contains the side of the ground level studio units along approximately the southern 20% of this frontage and a brick veneer portion containing blank parking access doors for the upper and lower parking levels.

The Board does not approve of this *Design Departure* request as proposed. The garage ramp screening and blank utility doors, in combination with the blank parking access doors, treats this façade as the building's back and does not create an interesting pedestrian environment. At EDG the Board stated that overall it was not supportive of this request but would consider it if the applicant could demonstrate how the proposed layout is essential to the functioning of a floor plan and is replaced with a strong response to the Code and Design Guideline requirements for treatments of blank walls.

The Board, however, does understand the difficulty of a site with three street frontages and the applicant's expressed financial constraint that limits the amount of excavation for parking, hence the restrictions on garage ramp location and parking configuration. But if a Design Departure from this Code provision would be recommended, the resulting façade treatment would have to have a high quality of visual interest to support the pedestrian environment and create a good transition to the residential neighborhood to the east. This guidance also applies to that portion of the ramp's west side wall that is open and visible to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The Board discussed some possible approaches to this goal:

- Relocate the parking ramp further to the west along the north façade to allow an active use (such as the bicycle parking now proposed for the garage interior) or a high quality and visually interesting façade treatment. The extra residential or office parking space that was discussed could be removed to assist in any re-configuration. (Planner Note: The applicant should research options for reductions to the on-site office parking, such as off-site parking covenant with a use that has substantial parking but uses it at different hours than the CCSWW office parking demand during the day, such as the church or Masonic Temple across 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue).
- Move the transformer room to the building's north side, at a minimum.
- Explore options for wall transparency into an active use, such as relocated bicycle parking.
- Change the blank garage access man doors, and courtyard stairway door, to include a design or pattern for increased visual interest.
- If the garage ramp must remain, this must be demonstrated to the Board and the façade material and screening must create a visually interesting pedestrian environment. This could involve a further set-back of the ramp to allow more area for one or a combination of visual treatments.

**D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures.** *The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.*

**D-7 Personal Safety and Security.** *Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.*

EDG Meeting: *The design proposes two entries with security gates for the parking garage. The proposed landscaping in front of the north façade where it is visible from 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is likely to create a security / visibility problem. These openings and the surrounding building base and any landscaping should respond to this guidance.*

Recommendation Meeting: See D-2 above.

**D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas.** *Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.*

EDG Meeting: *Dumpster and recycling areas should be screened from street view; the parking garage is the likely location. Utility meters should be within the garage areas if possible, or substantially screened if outside.*

- *Location of these utilities should be determined before MUP submittal for discussion at the Recommendation meeting.*

Recommendation Meeting: To assist in responding to D-2, and continue an adequate design response to the north façade as discussed in A-1 and A-5 consider moving the mechanical and solid waste access doors to the interior. This is particularly important if the relocated transformer

room, per D-2, must have exterior facing doors.

**D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions.** *For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and be visually interesting street for pedestrians Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops, and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.*

Recommendation Meeting: This guideline was not identified at EDG but is now a priority guideline.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue and South Main Street corner, although containing private residential units and their entries, is uninviting and appears lost in its recessed space. The space is framed by two pilasters that are awkwardly terminated and one that is oddly off-set from its adjacent brick wall.

**E. Landscaping**

**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.*

EDG Meeting: See D-5 above.

Recommendation Meeting: See last bullet point in A-5 above. The landscape plan must be updated to include likely changes in response to D-2.

**SUMMARY OF DEPARTURE REQUESTS**

<b>Land Use Code Standard</b>	<b>Proposed Amount of Departure</b>	<b>Rationale for Request</b>	<b>Board Recommendation</b>
<b>Required Street Level Uses.</b> Parking may not abut a street level street facing façade in a structure that contains more than one residential dwelling unit, i.e. a permitted use must separate any parking from a street level street facing façade (SMC 23.47A.005.C and 23.47A.032.B.1.b).	The below grade parking ramp and two access man-doors for both levels of parking are proposed to abut the structure’s east wall with no intervening use along the 24 <sup>th</sup> Avenue facade. Instead, a green wall and landscape screening would cover this wall section.	The site has three street frontages that must follow this Code provision. However, relatively small site, the need to replace the existing CCSWW surface parking and provide residential parking and project financial constraints as a low-income housing development that makes extensive excavation and construction for this parking financially difficult severely constrains the allow (land) uses that could go in this area.	The Board can not recommend this request with the design presented. However, it could do so provided a strong response is presented to the guidance above, particularly in D-2.
<b>Transparency.</b> 60% of the street-facing façade between 2 and 8 feet above sidewalk shall be transparent. (SMC 23.47A.008.B.2.a)	Because of the parking and parking ramp beyond, provide no transparency on the section of wall subject to the	This request is precipitated by the departure request above. In lieu of this requirement green wall landscape screening would be provided.	The Board did not specifically address this issue but by its comments indicated a departure or departures could be recommended per

<b>Land Use Code Standard</b>	<b>Proposed Amount of Departure</b>	<b>Rationale for Request</b>	<b>Board Recommendation</b>
	departure request above.		the above comments.

**BOARD RECOMMENDATION**

The Board cannot make a recommendation of approval until the design issues discussed above are adequately addressed. The applicant will present the further developed design responses at a second Recommendation meeting.