

**DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES  
OF  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD FOR AREA 2 NORTHEAST  
Meeting Date: February 6, 2007  
Report Date: April 5, 2007**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Project Number: 3005703

Address: 14349 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast

Applicant: Anthony Shapiro, AD Shapiro Architects, for  
Jackson Square LLC

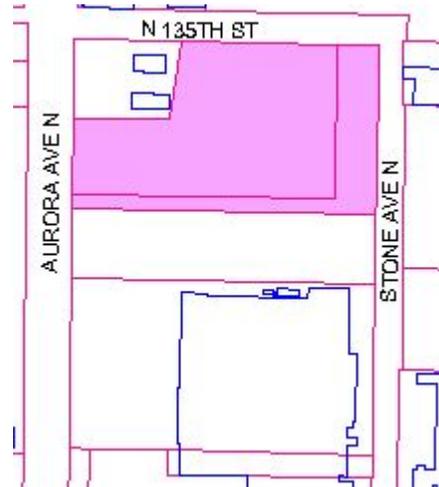
Board Members present: Jamie Fisher, Chair  
Brodie Bain  
Susan Eastman Jensen  
Shawna Sherman  
Craig Parsons

Land Use Planner present: Tamara Garrett, Land Planner

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**SITE AND VICINITY DESCRIPTION**

The site is located at 14349 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. It was recently created as part of a recorded short plat (rec. #20060811900002-Parcel B) that divided one (1) parcel into two (2) parcels. This approximately 31,801 square foot (sq. ft.) site is a flag-shaped lot with frontage on the west side of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. No structures exist on the subject site. This paved site has trees mainly scattered along the site's northernmost, westernmost and southernmost property lines. An existing 8" Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) located near the subject site's western boundary line has been determined by an arborist (Tony Shoffner, ISA Certified Arborist, Arboricultural Consulting) as meeting the criteria to be classified as exceptional tree status (Director's Rule (DR) 6-2001).



The site's topography is relatively flat with a downward sloping condition from north to south resulting in a ten foot grade change occurring along the site's southwesterly

boundary line. This split zone property is located within both the Midrise (MR) and the Commercial 1 (C1-65') zones.

Surrounding property is zoned as MR west and south of the subject property. Both MR and C1-65 zones are north of the subject site and C1-65 is the sole zoning designation east of the proposal.

Existing development in the vicinity of the proposal includes retail stores, drive-thru restaurant (Starbucks Coffee), and an office building (Qwest) all north; a bank, fast food restaurants, grocery store and a newly constructed retail store (WA state Liquor) to the east; a four-story apartment complex to the west; and an additional three-story apartment complex to the south. The Jackson Park Golf Course is one block west of the subject proposal.

### **PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The proposal is to develop one (1) residential building consisting of a total of sixty-five (65) residential units. Accessory parking for eighty-seven (87) vehicles is proposed to be located below the structure at grade and partially below grade.

### **ARCHITECT'S PRESENTATION**

The proposal was presented to the Board as a PowerPoint presentation. The project architect, Anthony Shapiro, offered examples of past residential developments he has designed and gave a description of the project site and surrounding development in the immediate area. He explained the following unique traits inherent to the site:

- Construction of a one-story structure retail building on the newly created lot (Parcel A) immediately east of the subject site that will be leased as a Washington State Liquor Control store.
- Preservation of an exceptional tree (Pacific madrone) located on the subject site's west property line.
- A downward sloping condition (identified as Environmentally Critical Area-Steep Slope) occurring along the site's southwesterly boundary line.

The architect presented three (3) project alternatives or schemes, all of which included a five-story residential development with open space oriented towards the south, west and the main entry at the north. The alternative massing diagrams are distinguished by how the southwest corner is treated-chamfered or squared off. Mid-year shadow studies, building locations and elevation drawings were also shown. The diagrams represented the neighborhood context and future conditions based on area zoning. The first scheme (Option A) included an "L" shape chamfered at the southwest corner mass with covered parking and a garage entrance on the building's west façade. The second alternative presented (Option B) was a "Z" shaped building mass with a substantial green area in the southwest corner including screened parking and garage parking. This alternative proposes one (1) departure from building depth. The third alternative (Option C) showed an "L" shaped building mass.

The architect presented the third alternative (Option C) as the preferred scheme because it allows for more development of the entry court and more easily permits the creation of an attractive building that complements its context and neighboring buildings in comparison to the other options.

### **BOARD CLARIFYING COMMENTS**

The Board clarifying questions and comments with applicant response (*in italics*) are the following:

- What is the purpose of providing a corridor between the liquor store and the proposal?  
*Corridor created in anticipation for possible emergency egress request from the Fire Department. Applicant will seek further clarification regarding this requirement.*
- What security measures are proposed between the liquor store and the residential proposal?  
*Fencing provided along the retail building's rear western property line and a rolling gate for fire access.*
- What is the planting area surrounding the exceptional tree?  
*Ok per arborist recommendations and arborist will continue to be involved.*
- What is the open space calculation and types of open space amenities proposed in addition to the decks, rear patio and courtyard entry?  
*Open space calculation is slightly over code required minimum and is inclusive of deck areas. Roof decks are being considered.*
- How the Land Use code relates to open space for apartments in MR zones?  
*Per SMC 23.45.058.A.2.a & b, a minimum of 25% of the lot area shall be provided as usable open space at ground level except a maximum of 1/3 of the required open space may be provided above ground in the form of balconies or decks if the total amount of required open space is increased to 30% of lot area.*
- What is the vehicular circulation and parking screening on the plaza level?  
*Considering screening elements such as a landscaped island, lawn, etc.*
- What is the parking stall count and usage?  
*Seventy (70) below grade and seventeen (17) at grade...anticipate at-grade parking will be utilized by visitors and for resident's convenience.*
- Where will future signage be placed for the liquor store?  
*Signage will be along that building's southern and eastern facades.*
- What are the site conditions at the base of the slope next to the southwest corner of the subject site?  
*A walkway leading to the apartments exists on the neighbor's property and there is no creek.*
- Is the focus on certain elements (building entry, signage, etc.) strongly related to marketing to a specific type of resident?  
*Voiced concern regarding trying to counteract the close proximity of this proposal to the liquor store and providing adequate/appropriate*

*signage...envision young, single professionals-majority of units plan to be one bedroom plus den...decision to develop apartments or condominium will be market driven but at this time a apartment proposal is the choice.*

- Was an inverted “L” shaped building mass option was investigated as it relates to an opportunity for more enhanced open space?

*Investigation led to the building having a less pronounced building entry due to the distance of the structure from the front property line and close proximity of the retail building...wanted to avoid a large overhang or corner condition as the main residential entrance.*

- What are the concerns with pursuing Option B?

*Unclear if required departure would be granted...upper two floors would be considered too narrow for apartments but could work as lofts...building edge would be closer to the drive aisle, the western boundary and the retail development.*

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

One (1) member of the community attended the Early Design Guidance meeting. The comments and concerns offered were as follows:

- This member stated that he represents the type of resident the developer would market to. For that reason, he recommended that the proposal should incorporate viable usable open space such as a roof garden in order to take advantage of views of the golf course and encourage residents to enjoy onsite surroundings. The same member commented that the overall building design approach looks good.

## **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the siting and design guidance described below 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*” of highest priority to this project.

## **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

<b>A. Site Planning</b>
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***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-3 Entrances Visible from the Street***

*Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.*

***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.*

**A-7 Residential Open Space**

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

**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.*

The Board emphasized the importance of developing a respectful and consistent relationship of the overall massing and design of the development to the streetscape, pedestrian environment and general pattern of development in the neighborhood. The board agreed that the development of a liquor retail store in front of a residential property is not the preference one would desire. However, the Board stated it would adequately work and cautioned against the allowance of any future commercial design features (pole signage, large storefront sized windows, etc.) being integrated with the residential proposal.

The Board acknowledges that due to the site's configuration, any proposal at this property would be situated a substantial distance from the front (eastern) property line abutting 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast and obstruction of the lower portions of building's façade will occur. However, the Board noted that the design of the residential entry should be as visible from 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast as possible and should not rely upon "visually loud signage" as a building entrance locator.

The Board looks forward to reviewing a high-quality well programmed and well landscaped ground level open space design. The Board emphasized that the open spaces should be configured to allow western and southern solar exposure. The Board encouraged the architects to explore different building depths, widths and configurations to accommodate such open spaces. The Board further noted that the design should include a seamless transition from the main entry areas to the ground level open spaces.

The Board is concerned that a substantial amount of the site has been dedicated for vehicular access (driveway, ramp, motor court) and parking design concerns. The Board voiced further concerns regarding the proposed configuration of the cul-de-sac motor court and advises against this design. Any configuration must be well-executed and the Board would like to closely examine the proposed details of such design and how it integrates with the pedestrian walkways, vehicular queuing, and proposed landscaping elements.

The Board discussed the proposed driveway/ramp and vehicular garage entrance along the western façade leading to the lower garage level parking area. The Board understands the applicant is trying to take advantage of the existing sloping condition. However, all agreed that relocating the garage entrance elsewhere on the site and reallocating that rear area to landscaped open space is highly desirable. Therefore, the Board encourages the applicant to explore other options.

## **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 the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.*

The Board discussed at length the proposed massing configurations. All agreed that situating the usable open space towards the rear of the property is preferred because its southwestern orientation allows for maximum access to solar exposure. The Board debated the merits of the Z-shape versus the L-shape (preferred) and which would be least imposing to the residential neighbors and allow for maximum usable open space. Ultimately, the Board supported a design that maximizes the development potential allowed by the underlying zone. However, the Board stated that the design and massing of the west façade should be sensitive to the existing residential development abutting the site to the west. Also, a design that incorporates viable usable open space at the southwest corner is strongly preferred. Therefore, the Board would like to review a scheme that pushes the building mass closer to the northern boundary line as relates to having better usable open space. The Board would like the design to include enhanced site planning around the residential entry.

## **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-3 Human Scale***

*The design of the new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.*

### ***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.*

### ***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.*

The Board did not highlight a single architectural expression to develop given the varied collection of buildings in the vicinity. Rather, the Board encouraged innovative residential design that is cohesive and applied evenly throughout the building. The building should maintain a non-commercial appearance.

The Board concurred that the use of stucco and brick would be appropriate materials for the proposed development and looks forward to reviewing a more detailed, high quality materials and color board at the next meeting.

Even though none of the proposed schemes illustrated garage entrances along the east side of the proposal, the Board agrees that treatment of the garage entrances to parking on the plaza and below grade will be scrutinized for a design that should be visually minimized and cause as little disruption to pedestrian circulation around the site. The Board would like to see details of the garages entrances.

<b>D. Pedestrian Environment</b>
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***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.*

***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.*

***D-3 Retaining Walls***

*Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where high retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscape.*

***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-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.*

***D-7 Personal Safety and Security***

*Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.*

***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 a visually interesting street front 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.*

Given the orientation of the retail building in front of the proposal and the close proximity of the driveway, the Board feels strongly that the design should reinforce and enhance pedestrian safety from the street to the main residential entrance. Additionally, the Board noted that the area between the residential proposal and the liquor store in particular should be well lit. The proposed fencing surrounding the site should be well designed and well landscaped. The Board wants the design to provide lighting, distinctive pavement styles (pavers, embossing) and walkway overhead protection supplied by the retail building's roof extension. A conceptual lighting plan for the proposed building should be submitted at the next meeting.

The Board strongly agreed the northeastern corner of the building should be more prominent and suggests the design should integrate high quality materials (i.e. masonry), architectural detailing (i.e. lighted stairwell, up lighting, etc.) and a sense of whimsy that engages the passers-by.

The Board suspects the proposal may include massive retaining walls that extend higher than eye level and blank walls. Therefore, the Board requests the inclusion of site sections and design treatment that break down the scale and texture for any future retaining walls and/or blank walls.

The Board specified that the trash collection area should be enclosed and screened in an architectural form reflective of the development and not intrusive to pedestrian.

The Board is concerned that parking will be highly visible to adjacent properties. Therefore, the design should incorporate elements that eliminate or minimize the visibility and light and glare impacts associated with vehicles maneuvering on the site and within the covered parking areas.

A conceptual signage plan for the proposed building should be submitted at the next meeting.

<b>E. Landscaping</b>
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***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.*

***E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions***

*The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.*

Landscaping should enhance the prior guidelines, by creating a transition from neighboring lots and from the street, softening edge conditions and by helping create a

green streetscape. The Board looks forward to reviewing a detailed landscape plan that includes landscaping and screening along the property lines, open space areas and residential entry. The plan should also include details regarding the preservation of the existing exceptional tree.

### **Departures from Development Standards**

No departures from the development standards were proposed at this time. [Staff Comment: The proposed plaza level open space may not meet code requirements for a ground related open space nor is it entirely meeting landscape standards requiring 30% landscaping of open space areas. Therefore, prior to the next meeting, a departure from open space requirements may be requested after a more detailed analysis of the Design Review MUP submittal for zoning compliance.

### **NEXT STEPS**

#### **MUP Application:**

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please contact Tamara Garrett at (206) 684-0976 or [tamara.garrett@seattle.gov](mailto:tamara.garrett@seattle.gov) once the intake meeting date for the MUP submittal has been determined.
2. Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG. Plan on embedding four (4) 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape plans, and right-of-way improvement plans and three-dimensional street level vignettes showing design character of the entry plaza, the relationship between the proposed development and the existing development on either side of subject site into the front of the MUP plan set (4 per sheet) as Design Review sheets.
3. Please submit proposed tree protection plans.

#### **Recommendation Meeting:**

1. The Board would like to review details of the landscaping and usable open spaces and clarify which areas are counted towards land use code requirements.
2. The Board would like to review site sections in several areas of the site.
3. The Board would like to see detailed material and color board with actual samples.
4. The Board would like to review details and elevations (north, east, and west) of the pedestrian walkways and residential entrances.
5. Please submit a color board and also provide colored renderings and/or graphics showing the proposed development from the pedestrian perspective.
6. Please submit a conceptual signage plan which also illustrates the liquor store signage.
7. Please submit a conceptual lighting plan.

