City of Seattle

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

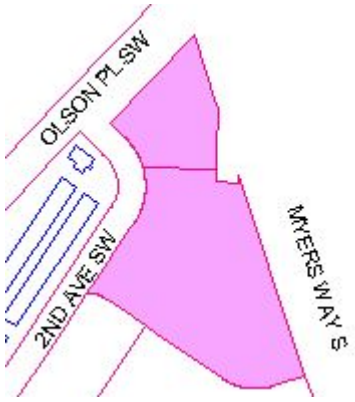
EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
of
AREA 5, THE SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Meeting Date: January 25, 2007

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Number:	3006264
Address:	9000 Olson Place SW & 9200 2nd Avenue SW
Applicant:	Bryan Park, Senior Housing Assistance Group
Board Members Present:	Jeff McCord, Chair David Foster Vlad Oustimovitch (substitute) Chris King
Board Members Absent:	Deb Barker Jasmine Arayana (extended leave)
Staff Member Present:	Art Pederson

PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION



The project proposes a four building senior housing "village" containing approximately 461 units, with ground floor commercial space in one structure facing 2nd Avenue SW. Each of three residential structures would contain approximately 150 units each and a fourth building would contain a community center. Parking for residents would be provided in below grade garages beneath two of the residential buildings. Surface parking would be provided for the project's commercial use, residential visitor use, and for the adjacent City of Seattle Joint Training Facility per an existing parking covenant attached to the site. Approximately 293 total parking spaces would be provided.

The project site is two parcels totaling approximately 173,295 square feet in area with street frontage on three rights of way: Olson Place SW, 2nd Avenue SW and Myers Way South (Note: there is frontage on a small segment of undeveloped 1st Avenue S, which protrudes into the site. However, this extends off of Myers Way S and will be considered a part of Myers Way S for this project.). The site's southern boundary extends along the southern edge of an existing access road on the site with easement rights for vehicle access to the adjacent Metro Transit Park and Ride lot and the Joint Training Facility (JTF). The northern parcel is undeveloped and wooded; the southern parcel is paved for surface parking and currently used as overflow parking for the adjacent Park and Ride lot.

The site is zoned Commercial 2 with a 65-foot height limit (C2-65). The parcels to the south are

similarly zoned C2-65. Across 2nd Avenue SW is a commercial rental storage business with C2-40 zoning. Northwest across Olson Place SW the zoning is Single-Family 7200 (SF 7200). This area is wooded and undeveloped. To the east across Myers Way South the zoning is SF 5000. This area is also wooded and undeveloped.

DEVELOPER AND ARCHITECT'S PRESENTATION

The project developer, Bryan Park, gave an overview of the work of the Senior Housing Assistance Group and the reason for considering a development in West Seattle and on this site. The group has done many projects in Seattle. Although there are numerous senior housing projects in West Seattle, many are not priced to be both affordable and allow independent living, as opposed to a "nursing home" facility. This project would then respond to the many age and income qualifying persons in the area needing this type of housing. The adjacent Metro Transit facility will be a benefit to prospective tenants who don't drive. Mr. Park also discussed the difficulty of placing commercial uses along both Myers Way and Olson Place because of the grade difference between the street and level area of the site; therefore, he feels the site would be better for largely non-commercial uses. (Planners Note: Residential uses are only allowed in C2 zones by Conditional Use approval. Administrative Conditional Use Review, under SMC 23.47A.006.B.3, will be a part of the future Master Use Permit submittal review. Early Design Guidance is given only in preparation for MUP permit submittal, not as an indication of any ACU approval by DPD.) A project parameter is an easement on the property that requires providing parking for the JTF.

Two members of the project's architectural firm, Joe Giampietro and Vivek Menon of Johnson Braund Design Group LLC, presented a statement of objectives for this project, the site's opportunities and constraints, preliminary site design concept, and three development options.

The three options presented intend to create a "village" like campus of residential buildings and a community center building with extensive open space, a substantial amount of parking beneath structures, and additional parking on grade. All three options propose a line of head-in surface parking along the existing (and to remain) private drive / easement road that is on-site and forms the site's southern boundary. Otherwise, the substantial difference between Options 1 and 2 and preferred Option 3 is that Options 1 and 2 would place most open space along the periphery of the site and fronting Myers Way S and have some surface parking between buildings. The applicant does not consider either of these options as preferred because of the internal location of some surface parking, the inability to completely segregate the required JTF parking from tenant and visitor parking, and less variety, usefulness, and functionality of the open space areas.

Option 3 proposes three residential buildings with a fourth community center building. One structure would be on the site's northern parcel and front closely to Olson Place SW and Myers Way South, with underground tenant parking. The community center building will be located directly to the south of this building's southern Myers Way South facing wing. A second "L" shaped building would front on 2nd Avenue SW and wrap the corner to continue frontage on the private drive. The proposed street front commercial spaces would be in this structure and front 2nd Avenue SW and continue along a portion of the private drive façade. The third building would be in two connected segments with its northern most portion parallel to the private drive and the southern segment parallel to Myers Way South. The third building would be separated from Myers Way South by a proposed surface parking lot for both JTP and guest use. This

building would also have below grade tenant parking. A second and third story wing would extend perpendicular from the structure and over a portion of the parking area.

Option 3 proposes a central automobile and pedestrian entry area off of 2nd Avenue SW with access to all buildings oriented to the related on-site traffic circle courtyard. The northern most building's underground parking entry would be located off of the traffic circle. The structured parking entry to the Myers Way S facing structure would have its underground parking access off of the private drive, but close to this drive's intersection with Myers Way South.

Option three would locate open space in a variety of areas: an open space courtyard would be located within the four sides of the northern most building and connect to the entry courtyard and the community center building. A southern lineal open space area would connect to the entry courtyard and extend between the 2nd Avenue SW facing building and the Myers Way S facing structure.

DEPARTURES FROM CODE STANDARDS

No *Design Departures* have been requested.

PUBLIC COMMENT

One member of the public attended the meeting. No public comments were given.

PRIORITIES

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.

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.

This site is uphill and prominently located at the intersection of Olson Place SW and Myers Way S, two arterial streets leading from the regional highway environment downhill to two different neighborhoods uphill to the south and west. As such, the site is in a transitional area and a serves as a gateway to the neighborhoods beyond.

The eastern edge of the site abuts and is partially in the buffer for a wetland in the Myers Way South ROW. The southern boundary of the site, currently occupied by the private driveway, is within the Hamm Creek riparian corridor.

The design of the buildings at the prominent intersection should respond to this gateway location through a contrast in design and / or materials and massing. A design that communicates the purpose and use of the buildings and development is also appropriate.

The buffer for the off-site wetland appears to extend into the proposed building and landscape area for the northern building and the open space and JTF parking area further south along the Myers Way South frontage. Besides any required buffer enhancements, the building and site design outside of the buffers should respond to these environmental elements. A suggestion is creating viewing opportunities from building interiors and on the ground and providing site landscaping that is compatible with a wetland buffer environment.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

The project proposes tenant supportive store front commercial uses in one building along 2nd Avenue SW. This Board strongly supports this direction and notes that the design of the commercial frontage should have frequent entries, extensive transparent window area, and a connection to the projects entry courtyard and the bus depot to the south. While the stated intent of the commercial use is to for tenants, patrons of the bus depot should be considered a customer source for the support and viability of these businesses.

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

The linear open space between the two southern buildings is proposed to be approximately 60 feet in width and next to two 60 foot tall buildings. Given this steep 1 to 1 ratio, care should be given to assuring the space has a comfortable human scale for users.

All open space areas should be designed to support a year round resident presence and usability.

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 parking lot for approximately 47 vehicles is proposed to front the Myers Way South ROW. Although the parking area would be approximately 10-feet above the road surface, parked vehicles should not be visible along the frontage. The parking area as proposed may also intrude into the wetland buffer. Parking lot screening should respond to the wetland buffer environment. The possibility for expanding the parking area screening while enhancing the off-site wetland buffer should be explored with SDOT (Seattle Department of Transportation).

- The MUP submittal should include section views that include the Myers Way South ROW, the wetland, and the parking area for planner review and presentation at the Recommendation meeting.

The 47 car parking lot could be visually unappealing to residents of the adjacent building. The lot should be designed to break up its area and the visual harshness of the pavement. The proposed parallel parking abutting the building should help in reducing headlight glare on adjacent residential units.

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

See relevant comments in A-1 above.

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.

Height, Bulk and Scale impacts on adjacent uses are not major concerns. However, the bulk and massing of the building design should respond to the site's higher and prominent location relative to the uphill approach on Myers Way South. The building design should not appear massive and should respond to the sites uphill slope.

- Provide building sections along Olson Place SW and Myers Way S with the MUP submittal and for the Recommendation meeting.

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.

There is not well-defined or desirable architectural character. This can be an opportunity for the project design to establish a context that is interesting and note-worthy.

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.

The proposed project will be a large campus of buildings. The overall architectural concept should display a relationship between buildings but also provide variety to lessen the projects size. Building designs should indicate the uses inside: commercial store fronts for the commercial area, indications of a semi-public use for the community center, and a residential design for the residential structures.

C-3 Human Scale. The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.

The size of the project campus requires the site and building designs both convey a human scale; many tenants will be pedestrians and be outside on the sidewalk, in the courtyards, and open space areas. Project human scale should also be communicated to those driving by in the ROW.

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.

The project's large size and prominent location require that high quality materials are used to assist in reducing the building bulk and creating a human scale, as well assure long-term building attractiveness and reduce maintenance costs.

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 project proposes two structured parking entrances. The parking entrance extending from the entry plaza should not create a division between the courtyard and its building or between its building and the 2nd Avenue S sidewalk. The parking entrance to the Myers Way S building is proposed to be located on the buildings south end next to the surface parking entrance and not far from Myers Way S street access. This entry should also not be visually prominent from the private drive or the JTF to the south.

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.

The adjacent Metro bus depot is expected to be an important source of mobility for many project residents. Access across the private drive and to the entry plaza for individual building entries should be easy, interesting, and supportive of transit use. However, no building entries for the southern two buildings and oriented toward the depot were shown at the presentation.

Because of the number of future tenants and anticipated reliance on transit for mobility, this development is similar to a TOD, or transit oriented development. The Board discussed several solutions to creating the needed connections including locating a residential entry for the commercial / residential building at the corner across from the transit depot and one for the Myers Way S building close to the private drive sidewalk that would serve the units at the far end of this structure (away from the entry plaza).

The Board also discussed the extension of some portions of the commercial area toward the interior open space to the east as a way to bring activity and vibrancy to this space. This arrangement could also create an active internal passageway for connectivity between the transit depot and the main entry plaza. An internal passageway would serve as an alternative to walking along the 2nd Avenue S frontage for tenants who may otherwise be discouraged from transit use during inclement weather or after hours.

The sidewalk width along the private drive should be adequate for two persons to walk comfortably.

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.

Because of the site's topography, building design should avoid large areas of blank walls at ground level and visible from the ROW's. Buildings should be recessed into the ground or stepped to achieve this.

D-4 Design of Parking Lots near Sidewalks. Parking lots near sidewalks should provide adequate security and lighting, avoid encroachment of vehicles onto the sidewalk, and minimize the visual clutter of parking lot signs and equipment.

Curb parking proposed along the private drive and in the Myers Way facing lots should include wheel stops or other positive measure to assure vehicles will not intrude onto the proposed sidewalks.

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

Entries should be clearly visible and accessible. "Eyes on the street" techniques should be provided and utilized to assure a safe tenant connection between the project and the transit stop.

D-9 Commercial Signage. Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.

The quality of the commercial signage for the proposed commercial areas can affect the final design quality of the project. The Board would like to see anticipated signage designs and project signage guidelines at the next meeting, with the understanding that final tenant selection may not yet have occurred.

D-11 Commercial Transparency. Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.

Extensive transparency is necessary for the commercial frontage on 2nd Avenue SW. Per the guidance in D-1 above, transparency for the commercial presence facing the proposed corridor or a corridor expanded to be an interior connection between the transit area and the main entry plaza should be provided.

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 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.

The proposed residential units facing the sidewalk and private drive in the commercial / residential building should be designed to create an interesting pedestrian environment. This area will have the same function and visibility as a street (right of way) frontage: it will be visible to adjacent properties, users of the private road and the proposed parking, and be a connection between the transit depot and the Myers Way facing structure.

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.

The Myers Way South ROW wetland and buffer should be part of the datum informing the project's proposed landscape design. The project's landscape design should also respond to riparian management area requirements, if applicable, for the adjacent Hamm Creek riparian corridor.

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

This is a large site and project with extensive landscape areas proposed. The landscape design should do multiple things: beautify the project as seen from the ROW, tie together the campus of buildings, and provide intimate and usable outdoor spaces for project residents.

- The Board would like to see fully developed landscape and pedestrian circulation plans at the next meeting.

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.

The north corner of the site and adjacent ROW are sloped and contain numerous trees. The landscape design should respond to this condition, as well as the Myers Way South wetland, its buffer, and the Hamm Creek riparian management area.

Staff Comments

After integrating the above guidance into the MUP project design, the applicant may apply for a Master Use Permit. Please inform the project planner at least one week before the MUP intake appointment date for determination of EDG phase fees owing and to allow transferal of the project file to the intake staff.