

**2ND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE PRIORITIES
OF THE
QUEEN ANNE / MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number /Address: **3006267- 2429 8th Ave N**

Date of Meeting: **November 7th, 2007 (2nd Meeting)**

Applicant: **Andrew Miller for Westward Development**

Architect: **John Trieger of JT Architecture**

Landscape Architect: **Ray Robinson**

Board members present: **Bill Vandeventer**
 John Rose Jr
 Patrick Doherty (Board Chair)

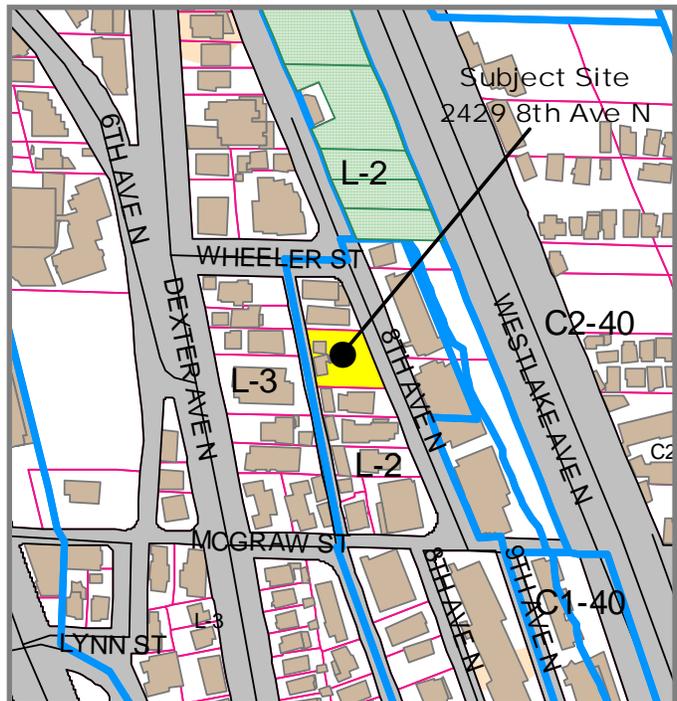
Board members absent: **Matt Roewe**
 Maria Barrientos

Land Use Planner present: **Catherine McCoy for Lucas DeHerrera**

Design Guidelines: **[Citywide Design Review Guidelines for Commercial and Multifamily Buildings](#) (linked electronically)**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PROPOSAL:

The approximately 11,230 square foot site is located in the northwest area of Seattle and is zoned Lowrise Two (L2) with a twenty-five foot base height limit. The site lies on the east down slope of Queen Anne Hill between Aurora Ave N to the west and Lake Union to the east. 103 lineal ft. of street frontage (8th Ave N) abuts the site on the east property line, the only street access to the site. Alley access from Waverly Pl N, a named alley, exists from the west property line. The block the site is located



within is bound by Wheeler St to the north, McGraw St to the south, Dexter Ave N to the west and 8th Ave N to the east.

In close proximity zoning is comprised of three zones, Commercial-Two with a forty-foot height limit (C2-40) to the east of the Westlake Ave N, C1-40 zoning south of McGraw St between 8th Ave N and Westlake Ave N, Lowrise Two (L2) on the east half of the subject block and across 8th Ave N extending southward along 8th Ave N with L3 zoning along both sides of Dexter Ave N to the north and south. See the vicinity map above.

The site slopes heavily from west (high grade) to the east (low grade), approximately 36°. Development in the vicinity consists of small and large scale apartment and condo buildings. Views to the east are provided from the site to Lake Union.

PROPOSAL

Two four-unit townhouse structures are proposed with parking under each townhouse unit, four of the units are proposed with two parking spaces. The project includes removal of the existing one story single family residence and the accessory garage.

ARCHITECT'S PRESENTATION INITIAL EDG MEETING

The architect presented the neighborhood context noting zoning, existing structures and uses surrounding the site. Photo montages from the east and west alley (Waverly Pl N) views and along 8th Ave N were presented to provide the architectural context in the immediate vicinity. A prominent feature the property provides is view east towards Lake Union. A sun diagram was presented showing winter and summer exposures to the site.

The architect provided site photos looking at the site from the street, south, east and northwest vantage points to get a feel for the site's character. Inspiring design images reflect modern architecture with strong windows and modern designs and materials. An arborist was hired by the applicant to analyze the trees on-site and it was stated that no trees are significant or exceptional by City standards. The steep slope on site is situated in a location that will likely require an Environmentally Critical Areas Exception pursuant to SMC 25.09.300.

Townhouse units are the structure type desired to be constructed by the applicant. As a result the applicant provided three alternatives, all townhouse designs. All three alternatives are for eight townhouse units in two structures, each with different access locations and parking for vehicles and with slight massing differences.

Alternative A,

Access is proposed from the alley for all units and a total of 12 parking spaces are provided. This design houses all vehicles in or under the western structure. The townhouse structures step with the non-rectilinear shape of the site with each unit providing a modulation and break in the façade. Rear yard setback, interior setback and open space location are departures requested for this alternative.

Alternative B,

Dual vehicle access is proposed from the alley and from 8th Ave N via one curbcut to a common mostly underground parking area under the eastern four-unit townhouse structure. This alternative provides 12 on-site vehicles. The eastern townhouse structure along 8th Ave N is designed as a solid wall with no modulation, while both the interior and the west façade of the western structure provide a modulations (stepping) similar to Alternative A. The applicant stated this alternative is prohibitive due to excavation costs. Access from the alley and street, rear yard setback, interior setback and open space location are departures requested for this alternative.

Alternative C (preferred)

This design also proposes dual vehicle access from the alley and from 8th Ave N. This design does not include a common underground parking area, but rather two curbcuts to individual garages off of 8th Ave N. This alternative also provides 12 on-site vehicles. This design provides modulation similar to Alternative A. Access from the alley and street, proximity between curbcuts, width of curbcuts, rear yard setback, interior setback and open space location are departures requested for this alternative.

ARCHITECT'S PRESENTATION 2nd EDG MEETING (November 7th, 2007)

The applicant's original proposed alternative C remains the preferred design and was the focus of the presentation. Objectives of the development are modern architectural design and providing environmentally sensitive buildings (5 star green, potentially LEED). Parking and access design are major choices and shape the project design and costs. Parking access continues to be proposed from 8th Ave N via two curbcuts and also from the abutting named alley, Waverly Pl N. The proponent stated that providing an underground garage would require large amounts of excavation and costs would be nearly prohibitive. The proponent stated that dual access may not require a departure under the City's draft multifamily code update that is planned in the near future.

The architect provided plan and section drawings, stating that view blockage was expressed as a concern during the first EDG meeting, the stair towers have been moved in response. The four stair towers, one at each of the north and south building ends, is aimed at activating the courtyard landscaped pedestrian walk that separates the two four-unit townhouse structures. The courtyard internal setback area does not contain cantilevers common to contemporary townhouse developments. The initially proposed flat roofs have been changed to gabled roofs for the westerly four-plex along the alley and the easterly four-plex remains designed with flat roofs. Roof decks continue to be proposed for all units. The modulations of the buildings help define each unit vertically and the upper level setbacks create a street presence with the open space roof decks oriented east toward 8th Ave N and Lake Union. Front doors for six of the units are proposed to be accessed through or near the central courtyard by way of pedestrian walks on the northern and southern property lines, two units are proposed with front doors off the alley. The proposed pedestrian walks continue to 8th Ave N to create entries visible from the street. The applicant made the case that pedestrian entries from 8th Ave N would create a non-functional floor plan as guests would need to be greeted two floors below the main living level and the courtyard would be less active. Eight departures are requested for the currently proposed design:

- *Structure Depth*
- *Cluster Internal Setbacks*
- *Open Space location*
- *Open Space dimension*
- *Access to Parking from both the street and alley*
- *Curbscut Quantity and Width*
- *Rear Setback*
- *Front Setback*

Some departures were altered from the first meeting; the rear setback departure request has been reduced from 10' to 1'-2", the cluster internal setback departure request has been reduced from 11' avg. to 7'-7" and the request for front yard setback is now 11'-7" avg. where 14' avg. is required. See the requested departure matrix below

BOARD CLARIFYING QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

The Board had the following comments and questions for the proponent:

- Questioning about parking space quantity and configuration.
- The Board questioned what makes the proposed project better than if another developer came in with a code compliant concept.
- Clarification was requested about why the project could not be constructed as a condominium project, it was stated that a unit lot subdivision is required to make the development work financially.
- Possible parking access waivers by the Department and departures being requested to the Board were clarified.
- The Board wants more insight into the excavation necessity related to an underground garage. The definition of townhouse was discussed as it applies to the proposal.
- The proponents explained the rear setback departure request, the proposal has a greater average rear setback but portions if the rear façade require a 1'-2" departure.
- The developer clarified that 18 parking spaces could be parked on site with the preferred scheme (12 code complying).
- The Board requested the proponent to provide explanation why the proposal would be a better project than a code compliant scheme. *The proponent stated a code compliant scheme would yield much less modulation, less side setback, architectural style, finish materials, less on-site parking spaces and would lack definition of individual units.*
- Dimensions regarding the curbcuts and allowable vehicle maneuvering areas from of 8th Ave N were questioned by the Board.
- Discussion revolved around the parking and access schemes and whether 18 parking stalls is needed by the development and the thought that parking is market driven, if you provide parking spaces people will fill them, the lifestyles and vehicle ownership purchasers for these units will match with whatever scheme is built, the market drives.
- The design has made some concessions to address the parking issue and the proposal's courtyard, modulations and side setbacks will be positive.
- Parking along 8th Ave N having a paved front yard with vehicles highly visible was weighed against the need for on-site parking in the area. Grasscrete was suggested as a possible solution to the sea of parking and paving along 8th Ave N.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were approximately eight public attendees at the Interim EDG meeting and many comments and discussions occurred:

- Questions about measurement of height, height exceptions and the relationship to the setbacks was questioned and discussed by the applicant and Board. Questions were asked about the flat roof scheme and traffic impacts of the development.
- Parking schemes were questioned and related to possible impacts of each.
- It was pointed out that the project will sit out like a soar thumb and will be too tall for the site.
- The previous scheme was questioned regarding the flat roofs on the rear units with 10’ stair towers. The view blockage was questioned and whether a pitched roof or stair tower would block more of the view to east.
- The proponent stated that the views on the corners of the development are improved with the updated scheme because of the pitched rounded corners of the development. The public wanted to know the number of parking spaces would be removed from the right of way with the two curbcut schemes (*the applicant replied that 4 would be taken away*).
- The project is a benefit as it sets back along the side property lines. The more parking that can be fit on site would be the most beneficial to the neighborhood. The courtyard center open space will be a great bonus for the project.

BOARD DELIBERATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponent, The Queen Anne / Magnolia Design Review Board provided initial siting and design guidance for the property during the initial EDG Meeting. The Board 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. The proponent opted to hold a second EDG meeting in order to gain further guidance based on departure requests and the updated design response. The following guidance supplements the guidance given by the Board at the first EDG meeting, which is located in the project file.

REQUESTED DEPARTURES

Development Standard Requirement: Eight Departures	Proposed / Applicant Rationale	Board Comment and Direction
(1) Structure Depth: 68’-7” (65% of lot depth) SMC Table 23.45.011-A	Approximately 97’-1” / The rhombus shaped property requires that a box be drawn around the entirety of the structures to measure depth, while no individual townhouse depth when combined with the townhouse directly behind it exceeds the allowable 68’-7”	The Board (3 of 3) is willing to entertain this departure request depending on how the project better meets the design guidelines. The Board had no specific direction for the applicant regarding this departure.

<p>(2)Front Setback: 14' avg, 5' min. SMC 23.45.014-A</p>	<p>11'-7" avg. / The Board supported moving the project eastward and to minimize the rear setback intrusion and maximize views from properties to the west.</p>	<p>The Board (3 of 3) is willing to entertain this departure request depending on how the project better meets the design guidelines. The Board discussed increasing this departure for the first floor to allow tandem stalls for some units off of 8th Ave N and reducing curbcut width and front yard paving.</p>
<p>(3) Interior Cluster Setbacks: 25' average, 10' minimum SMC 23.45.014-D + SMC Table 23.45.014-C</p>	<p>17.5' average and 10' min. / The courtyard is absent of cars and is well charged with unit entries. Appropriate landscaping and the absence of looming cantilevers or projections provide great design features to create a successful courtyard.</p>	<p>The Board (3 of 3) is willing to entertain this departure request depending on how the project better meets the design guidelines. The Board was supportive of the internal courtyard, programming, plantings and feel of the courtyard as proposed.</p>
<p>(4) Rear Setback: 21'-1^{1/2}" SMC 23.45.014-B</p>	<p>19'-11" / The updated design provides a well modulated rear façade (not required) and also provides an average setback (22.4') greater than the required minimum.</p>	<p>The Board (3 of 3) is willing to entertain this departure request depending on how the project better meets the design guidelines and is made a better project overall. The Board wanted to ensure that granting of any departure for rear setback will not further impact views when compared to code compliant possibilities.</p>
<p>(5) Open Space Location: Open space required to be at Ground Level. SMC 23.45.016-A.3.a.(1)</p>	<p>Allow roof decks/gardens to be counted as ground level open space. / Considering the slope of the site and the views to take advantage this offers a site specific appropriate solution. Units will still have some level of ground level space available to them.</p>	<p>The Board (3 of 3) is willing to entertain this departure request depending on how the project better meets the design guidelines and is made a better project overall. Considering the steepness of the site and the views the roof top decks are an appropriate design response.</p>
<p>(6) Open Space Dimension: No horizontal dimension less than 10'. SMC 23.45.016-B.1.c.(1)</p>	<p>Allow portions of the deck open spaces to have less than 10' of horizontal dimension. / The open space will be such high quality with views and the overall amount of the open for the roof decks will exceed the code requirement for ground level.</p>	<p>The Board (3 of 3) is willing to entertain this departure request depending on how the project better meets the design guidelines and is made a better project overall. Considering the steepness and the views the roof top decks are an appropriate design response.</p>

<p>(7) Parking Access: Allowed from street or alley but not both</p> <p>SMC Table 23.45.018-B.1 + 3</p>	<p>Allow access from both the street and alley /</p> <p>The steepness of the site creates significant challenges to creating off street parking from the either the alley or from the street alone. Also interaction of the units and access of principal entry plays into this request as well as total parking impacts to the area.</p>	<p>The Board was generally supportive (3 of 3) of the dual access, but excessive curbcut widths, large amounts of paving and eventual parked vehicle along the street were not supported. The Board wants less curbcut width, less curbcuts and less paving along 8th Ave N.</p>
<p>(8) Curbcut Width: 10' allowed for each curbcut</p> <p>SMC Table 23.54.030-F.1.b</p>	<p>Allow each curbcut to be 20'</p>	<p>The Board was generally not supportive (2 of 3) of the two 20' curbcuts, large amounts of paving and eventual parked vehicle along the street. The Board wants some reduced curbcut widths and paving in the front setbacks along 8th Ave N.</p>

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-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-6 Transition Between Residence and Street

For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.

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.

Initial Guidance

Views to the east should be maximized and the design of the structures needs to reflect the sloping nature of the site.

The relationship of the proposal to the surrounding structures needs to be analyzed in regard to massing and parking access impacts, considering the requested departures related to setbacks and access from 8th Ave N. The rear setback departure is not supported by The Board (3 of 4) at this time, but more information needs to be provided. The applicant must show what the code compliant mass of the structure would be if no rear setback departure were proposed, against the preferred structure's mass with the proposed rear setback departure (section drawing from Dexter Ave N to Westlake Ave N). The uphill structures and their floor levels need to be shown in these massing studies. The Board was supportive (4 of 4) of moving the structure towards 8th Ave N, as close as 5', to respect the adjacent sites as opposed to allowing a rear setback departure. (A-1 and A-5)

The design for the front façade needs to be reworked; the proposed two curbcut preferred design would dominate the front façade and is not supported by the Board (3 of 4). The Board showed support (4 of 4) for a dual vehicle access scheme with access from both the alley and an underground parking area, only if the underground garage were to be accessed by only one minimized curbcut. (A-3, A-6 and A-8)

The Board is supportive (4 of 4) of the locating the proposed open space on the roof considering the site's location and views. In light of this departure request, The Board requested that roof-top projections (parapets, stair/elevator penthouses, landscaping, etc.) be minimized above the base height limit to reduce view blockage considering the increased activity the roof top open spaces would generate. The Board recommended use of hatches to minimize roof projections. (A-7)

Guidance 2nd Meeting (November 7th, 2007)

The Board was divided about the parking access design, specifically the proposal for two 20' curbcuts from 8th Ave N. One Board member supported the proposed parking access and two were non-supportive. The Board wants to see more street connecting elements, less paving, cars less prevalent and front façade articulation to better express the residential character of the development. A possible solution was discussed, moving the eastern structure's first floor closer to 8th Ave N and providing tandem spaces for the units, this would allow less curbcut and paving from 8th Ave N. Also, grasscrete was discussed as a solution or using more green elements along 8th Ave N. (A1, A3, A5, A8).

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 context.

C-3 Human Scale

The design of 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.

Initial Guidance

The design examples presented by the proponent are supported by the Board as an architectural direction to take the project. Neighboring structures have some elements of interest but overall felt the project should set a new standard for the future of the area. (C-2)

Pedestrian access locations and design of unit entries are of high importance in creating a good human scale for the units, especially for units accessed via the alley. Having one curbcut from the street would also allow visible entrances from the street rather than having garages along the street front and internal pedestrian access from garages only. (C-3)

Upon MUP submittal, the applicant should provide full color drawings, with material call outs, a materials board and a perspective drawing or drawings to give The Board a feel for the proposal. (C-4)

The Board cited the C-5 guideline emphasizing that the Board does not support two curbcuts from 8th Ave N, while providing one curbcut would be entertainable. Treatment of blank walls along the front façade of any parking structure needs to be addressed with landscaping, detailing and architectural features. (C-5)

Guidance 2nd Meeting (November 7th, 2007)

The Board supported the architectural direction of the project, modern architecture, proposed building stepping down the hill, modulation, the center courtyard, side stair tower lanterns and the green aspects proposed by the proponent. (C2)

Guideline C3 is applicable to the 8th Ave N street level, curbcut, paving materials and overall streetscape designs, which are all key components in meeting this guideline. (C3, C4)

D Pedestrian Environment

D-1 Pedestrian Open Space 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 spaces 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-7 Personal Safety and Security

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

Initial Guidance

Considering the site's grade and proposed vehicle access, the principal pedestrian entries to the townhomes will be a challenge but the design should have connections to the street and or alley. The roof open spaces and related departure are supported by the Board, but projections need to be minimized above the base height limit to reduce view blockage from surrounding properties. Projections between the structures should be minimized to reduce the looming effect over the internal ground level open space area. (D-1)

Retaining walls apart of any parking structure along 8th Ave N if proposed, need to be minimized and design features need to be used to lessen their prominence. (D-2, D-3 and D-5)

No specific guidance was given beyond the guidance language. (D-7)

Guidance 2nd Meeting (November 7th, 2007)

The Board did not touch on the above guidelines directly, so the proponent should continue to develop the project with the initial guidelines and statements from the first meeting. Some guidelines may or may not apply depending on the MUP proposal, specifically if there will be a below grade parking garage in the final design.

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.

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.

Initial Guidance

Neighboring sites provide queues and should be mimicked for landscaping along the street front and existing front berms along 8th Ave N. Landscaping needs to be provided to shield blank walls of any proposed parking structures or retaining walls. Plantings and programming of the center pedestrian open space court is important to the space's success, care should be taken to provide well designed landscaping and open space. (E1, E-2 and E-3)

Guidance 2nd Meeting (November 7th, 2007)

The Board did not touch on the Landscaping guidelines; as a result the proponent should continue to develop the project with the initial guidelines and statements from the first meeting.

NEXT STEPS FOR INTERIM MUP INTAKE

Using the design guidance above the architect should develop the next iteration of the design response. The following items summarize what should be provided to the planner as necessary and be prepared Master Use Permit intake. See guidance above for applicable details.

Items to be included with response to Early Design Guidance and MUP plans

- Provide a written response to each bullet of design guidance above at MUP submittal (see attachment B of CAM 238). Please send the planner the electronic version of the narrative design response via email.
- Bring all necessary materials required for the Steep Slope Exception request, see Client Assistance Memorandum 328 and [SMC 25.09.300](#).
- Provide a detailed color landscape plan that includes any possible roof garden and the ground level opens spaces.
- As part of the MUP plans (4 required) embed in the MUP plans the five full scale detailed color drawings (N, S, E, W and perspective drawing from 8th Ave N (your choice of vantage point)). All of these elevations should show specific material callouts, planting, adjacent structures, power wires, landscaping at mature stage, and true colors etc.
- Provide a detailed zoning analysis clearly calling out any requested departures. This analysis must show code requirements and proposed amounts with regard to each development standard. For each departure provide a written rationale (provide with attachment B CAM 238) regarding how the design meets or exceeds the guidelines and why the design results in a better project. The analysis done in the 2nd EDG packet is a good example of what should be provided.
- Please contact the planner once your MUP intake date is set. We will need to make sure you have all the requirements needed for MUP Intake: 4 sets of MUP plans, 5 copies of the filled out SEPA checklist, Filled out CAMs 238 Attachment B and 328, 1 copy of an updated initial design recommendation packet (more will be requested prior to the meeting after planner review), owner authorization form, financial responsibility form, site plan (8.5”-11”) for SEPA large sign (see Director’s Rule 29-2006).
- Please provide an additional site plan (separate from the plans) showing any future proposed unit lot subdivision lines for reference only. We need to have a plan for the unit lot on file so the SEPA review of your project can include the unit lot subdivision review, which would trigger SEPA on its own. The unit lot component needs to be in the notice for the SEPA/MUP. This will avoid having to run SEPA again when the unit lot is subsequently submitted. Please note this in the SEPA checklist.
- Please send a pdf of the EDG design proposal packet to DPD per specifications of the Design Review webpage found @ http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/design_review_program/Overview/ (See **Highlights, Design Review Going Digital** for instructions)