City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

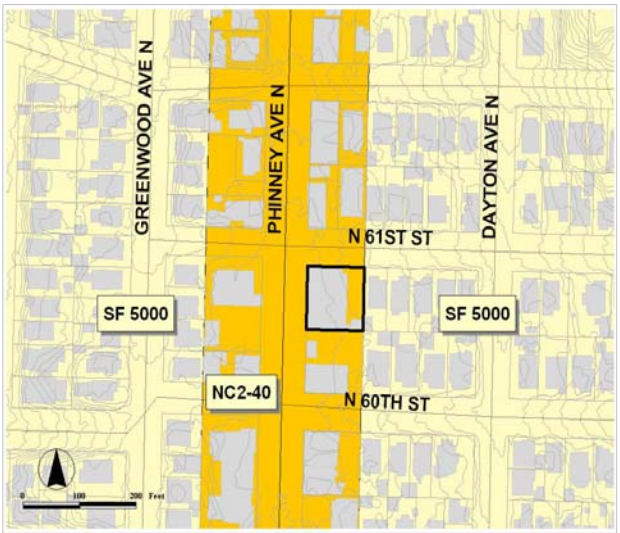
Department of Planning & Development
Diane M. Sugimura, Director

RECOMMENDATION REPORT
OF THE
NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Number:	**3006773**
Address:	**6010 Phinney Avenue North**
Applicant:	**Todd Kilburn, Kilburn Architects, LLC, for Mike Villiot**
Date of Meeting:	**February 23, 2009**
Date of Report:	**March 13, 2009**
NW Design Board Members Present:	**Guy Peckham, Board Chair** **Mark Brands** **Joe Giampietro** **Bill Singer**
Members Absent:	**Jean Morgan**
DPD Staff Present:	**Catherine McCoy, Land Use Planner**

SITE & VICINITY



The subject site is located in Seattle's Greenwood/Phinney neighborhood, on the southeast corner of the intersection of Phinney Ave N and N 61st Street. The property is 10,000 square feet in area, and is currently developed with a single story commercial building, a small storage building, and surface parking for six vehicles.

The site is virtually flat, however the Phinney Ave N corridor rests on a natural ridgeline that extends north from the Fremont neighborhood to Greenwood, near North 85th Street. East of the site

is Green Lake and looking west are views of Ballard, the Puget Sound, and the Olympic Mountains.

The site is zoned Neighborhood Commercial with a height limit of 40 feet (NC2-40). This zoning designation extends approximately two blocks north and south of the site along the Phinney Ridge corridor. To the east and west of the commercial corridor the zoning changes abruptly to Single Family with a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet (SF5000).

Development in the surrounding area includes a mix of structures and uses including single and multi-family residential, and retail and office commercial. At present, uses on-site include The Daily Planet (antiques), Rooster's Breakfast Club, Chef Liao Asian Garden, and the Phinney Ridge Cleaners.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposal is for demolition of the existing structures and construction of a four-story commercial and residential structure with below-grade parking. The design concept includes approximately 2,350 square feet of ground level commercial space, 22 residential units, and on-site parking for 23 vehicles. Vehicle access to the site is proposed from N 61st Street.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The project team described the design program and general design objectives for the proposal, and presented Board members and the public with project updates. Key characteristics of the current design include two retail spaces facing Phinney Ave N; garage access and service oriented uses in the northeast corner of the site on N 61st Street; residential access on N 61st Street, recessed 42 inches from the sidewalk; and three stories of residential single-load units above the ground level. Outdoor features include prominent landscaping along both rights-of-way, balconies for all residential units, rooftop patio and green roof common amenity areas.

Proposed materials include painted fiber cement siding, hardi plank lap siding, corrugated metal siding, dark bronze or black aluminum storefront system, wood grain panels for the rear of the building, brick, concrete, and a stained wood fence along the east property line.

The main elevation along Phinney Ave N includes brick as the primary material, which, the applicant noted, represents one of the more historic building materials along Phinney Ridge. Features of the façade include modular material, two solid bays, and corners lightened up with glass. The applicant explained the intent to create a rhythm of a lighter transparent façade and a heavier permanent façade. The continuous canopy along Phinney Ave N and the large amount of glazing support the pedestrian experience.

The façade along N 61st Street includes a corner commercial space and a residential entry area. The applicant referred to a design departure request of 41% street level transparency, rather than the required 60%, and suggested that including a landscape zone and green wall along the garage drive would work well in lieu of open transparency along the street. Additionally, the applicants have requested that the residential entry be closer to the sidewalk and at-grade rather than above grade.

The design team stated that they have worked to soften the east-facing (rear) façade by adding a green wall, a 6 foot fence along the east property line, and lower level residential unit landscaping. Transparent bays exist at the north and south corners with solid bays in the center. The materials have been changed to wood panel to evoke a more residential quality. Along the south elevation, the applicants noted that they were striving for vertical modulation with various materials; including brick, fiber cement siding, fiber cement panels, wood, and metal.

The design team showed street views of the proposed development, section drawings looking east and looking south, and discussed solar studies of the proposal (spring and autumnal equinoxes at various times of the day).

BOARD CLARIFYING QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, PUBLIC COMMENT

Board clarifying questions and comments, and public comment from the Design Review Recommendation meeting are detailed below. Approximately one hundred neighbors attended the meeting. Public comment was offered orally, in writing, and via a compact disc (CD) titled "Phinney Design Reflections". Additional public comment and project documents and reports may be found in the project file, MUP 3006773. The file is available for review at the Public Resource Center, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue, Seattle WA, 98124, PRC. Design related packets and reports can be found on the Design Review Program website, Design Review Program.

Board Clarifying Questions and Comments, with Answers in *Italics*

- What work have you done with the community to date; have you met with any of the neighborhood groups?
    - *We have had a dialogue with a neighborhood group. It was suggested by DPD that we suspend incorporating neighborhood comments into the design until this Recommendation meeting*.
- You mentioned you'll be planting trees on the residential property to the east, can you provide more details?
    - *At present, there is a tall dense stand of cedars. The trees and the root system are on the actual property line. The owners have had conversations with the neighbors and would be amenable to planting another screen wall comparable to what currently exists*.
- How far are you along in your discussions with SDOT regarding street use improvements?
    - *We have had discussions; nothing has been finalized.*
- Are you planning to have exterior lighting for the units above, as with the unit balconies?
    - *Typically we will have lighting in the balcony areas. We have not identified the lighting or fixtures yet; these areas could be lit in a number of ways, such as downward focused sconce, soffit, etc.*
- The steel column at the each of the corners might be a pedestrian hazard.

- In the northwest corner there appears to be a brick column that is standing outside the building yet holding up the canopy. This seems out of place with the rest of the design.
- As seen in the elevation views, the building forms have well defined massing and use of materials, but it appears like large masses of solid material going straight to the street on visually nothing. The design could work better at a base which would help support the mass.
- Is the canopy glazed or solid?
    - *Solid*.
- It seems like there are too many material choices, perhaps too many for this size of building. Could you explain the rationale behind your choices?
    - *The intent is to break down the mass of the building by using different materials, while making clearly defined modular bays with differing materials and siding.*
- It seems like there is a lot going on with the corner treatment at Phinney and N 61st Street. Please describe your design ideas relative to the ins-and-outs and columns in this corner area.
    - *The idea is to create a passageway for the exit with landscape screening, and, the forms and columns are supporting the mass above. The steel column may be in the way.*
- Related to the brick detailing, the photos and drawing show a much redder brick than the example presented on the materials board. Can you clarify?
    - *The color prints came out too dark, but the actual brick material will be darker and just as presented on the materials board – the same.*
- Did you choose the dark brick because of buildings in the neighborhood you were trying to relate to?
    - *We didn't take cues directly from any specific building, because we noticed a large variety of architectural styles. We wanted to use brick, and we chose this material because of the surface treatment, rather than a flat brick.*
- Are you planning on adding brick detail treatments, such as terra cotta or patterning, for window openings, sills, or lentils that would relate to the more historic buildings in the area?
    - *At present the brick character is planned to be flat; we would consider finer brick details. There is no plan for terra cotta.*
- Will the exposed concrete be painted or sealed?
    - *The cement is painted an integral color.*
- Regarding the metal siding, is the plan to use straight galvanized corrugated siding?
    - *Yes, corrugated.*
- Two areas of the building lend themselves to concern…the stair tower directly adjacent to the residential entry is essentially a massive blank wall that extends from the street to above the building height..is that full height necessary? Instead, could you use the elevator as a second means of egress at the upper level?
    - *We would need to look into this further.*
- The way the brick material is proposed to be used appears too massive. The historic use of brick in the neighborhood is much more detailed. Have you looked into detailing the brick material in a way that is more compatible with buildings in the area?
    - *We have been trying for an aesthetic of clean lines. The point is well taken.*
- The brick mass on the south and north façades have very limited openings, and coupled with the stair tower present a solid, imposing mass. Are these essential to the design or could they be modified?
    - *The concept with the stairwell and the brick corner is that we wanted to create two solid masses surrounding glazing infill.*

- What setbacks are required and what have you've allowed for?
    - *There are no setback requirements along the west and north property lines. The rear setback requirement is for area above 13' in height; area above 13' in height must be setback 10'. The entire building has been setback 16' from the property line, at-grade. We could build up to 13' in height at the property line, but because of the requirement for access from N 61st Street, we have instead set the entire building back 16'. (DPD Staff note: there are two setback requirements for the site: 15' triangle setback abutting a side or rear lot line of a residentially zoned lot, SMC 23.47A.014.A; and 10' setback for portions of structure above 13' in height to a maximum of 65', SMC 23.47A.014.B.)*
- Is there a vertical transition between the neighboring single family residence, such as a wall descending down into the parking garage beneath the building? There was an existing tree. Are there plans to replace the tree?
    - *There is a wood fence extending to the residential unit, then a 3'-4' wall that will extend to the south property line. There are plans to replace the existing landscaping.*
- Please provide specific development goals for the site; amount of parking, number of residential units, commercial space, trash/recycling pick-up etc.
    - *Twenty three (23) on-site parking spaces are required and 23 are being proposed. There are two small accessible commercial spaces accessed from Phinney Ave N (1,355 sq.st. each), with 19 residential units above. The trash units will be contained within the building and wheeled out to N 61st Street.*
- Please restate the departure requests, and the design rationale behind the requests.
    - *North façade transparency – north façade street level transparency reduction from 60 % to 41%. It is a less commercial area, and the transparency is concentrated on the commercial space and not near the residential entry – we feel the transparency is not needed at the residential portion of the building.*
    - *Residential street level requirement – required to have the first level either 10 feet from the sidewalk or 4 feet up off the sidewalk. We are requesting a residential entry at-grade which is 42 inches from the sidewalk. The entry is the only element that is at-grade, the rest of the residential portion is raised. We felt it would be nicer to have the entry closer to the walkway. And, if set back further, there would be less area for internal elements, such as the mailroom, lobby, and utility area.*
- You've taken the effort to add a walkway to gain sensibility around the stair area, did you explore carrying the walkway all the way to the lobby, so entry could actually be from the lobby rather than the stairs? Would that be a possibility? The stairway could be moved back, so that the walkway could actually enter the lobby directly.
    - *We have not considered this design.*
- What is the setback on the south, where the building is set back?
    - *That is a 6 foot setback at the south elevation.*

Public Comment

While not all neighborhood attendees signed the sign-in sheet, and not all attendees offered public comments, comments captured by the Board members and DPD staff and are presented below.

- The galvanized panels may rust and turn brown. It would be preferable to see a different finish. The building should be softened with a curve, rather than the sharp looking angular lines.
- The east and west elevations look good. The north and south elevations show too many materials, not enough detail. Consider using evergreen plantings along N 61st Street.
- The garage entry on N 61st Street should be moved to Phinney Ave N; there is precedent for this already. If the curbcut were placed on Phinney Ave N it could be shared with future development. The mass looks like five stories along Phinney Ave N, too big and blocky. Step the building further back at upper stories along Phinney Ave N. Break up the canopy, and provide transparency in the canopy. Increase setbacks along the streets.
- Against the departure request for transparency; the commercial area needs to be increased. Losing too much retail at the street level.
- The design calls for too many material choices; skim the amount of materials down to brick and wood only, for example. The vertical massing/striations are disjointed and busy; calm these down. Would prefer to see a distinct base and cornice. The corner treatments are not unique – should not be symmetrical. Do as much as possible with the commercial area to encourage the existing businesses/tenants to remain.
- Concerned about the life-cycle of the wood material; does not look like it will weather time. The residential entry and garage access should not be on N 61st Street.
- There does not appear to be an easy solution for the garage entry. The awnings should be transparent. The vertical solid elements should be removed.
- The style of architectural design is too modern; re-work the architecture. Fit the architecture better in relation to the neighborhood.
- The sidewalk is too narrow on Phinney Ave N. The building should be smaller. Approximately 1,400 sq.ft. for commercial space is too small; they should be larger in order to accommodate restaurant use.
- Commercial parking spaces need to be provided.
- Should use solstice dates for the shadow study, rather than equinox dates. Put the all residential units along N 61st Street rather than on the south. Move the driveway to Phinney Ave N, along the south property line. The retail spaces are sized to avoid commercial use parking requirements, but they are too small to entice tenants that the neighborhood would like to see. The massing and materials lose cohesiveness; reduce the number of material choices to bricking and glazing.
- The vertical masses are too much. Better street view sketches are needed.
- Concern that the materials will not hold up well to flame/fire. Would like to see a guard on-site during construction. The colors are not well thought out. The residential entry and garage entry should be moved off N 61st Street.
- Do not like the tunnel effect along Phinney Ave N. Would like to see the existing businesses retained.
- The Vine Maples along N 61st Street are nice. Would like to see a better design along the both streets; a design that strongly considers an opportunity for a community feel, gathering place; one that encourages music and restaurant uses.
- The building should be smaller and should better reflect the neighborhood.
- The east elevation and wall should be set back further to protect single family privacy, sun shadows, and noise for residences to the east. There appears to be more of a set back at upper levels on other buildings.
- The design does not appear to be providing enough parking spaces.

- The balconies should be changed to bay windows. It was also suggested that bay windows replace the balconies above Phinney Ave N; that balconies would be welcome elsewhere.
- The design team should take the neighborhood concerns seriously in the next phase of design.
- The shape and size of the commercial spaces do not invite the types of uses the neighborhood would like to see. The space appears to be a "dead space". As an example, how would a fan system be incorporated into the existing commercial area design?
- The design team should consider a 3-story building rather than a 4-story building.
- The shape of the retail space does not work well; was thought given to a courtyard design along Phinney Ave N?
- The slope of the driveway appears to be too steep as designed and unsafe for pedestrian traffic.
- The south elevation should incorporate more greenery, such as a green wall.
- The roof design includes two stairwells and one elevator – could this be scaled back?
- The roof line needs improvement. The building should be set back further from the property lines along the streets. The Board should require more from the applicants before granting the requested departures.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The Early Design Guidance meeting was held on October 8, 2007. Nine months later, the applicant applied for the MUP (Master Use Permit), July 29, 2008, which initiated early land use, zoning and SEPA review. Board members have visited the site, considered the analysis of the site and context, and have identified design guidelines of highest priority for this project.

For the purposes of this report, the Early Design Guidance given by the Northwest Design Review Board is followed by the recommendation meeting discussion and recommendations in **bold** lettering. Board members had a number of priority concerns at this recommendation stage of design review (February 23, 2009), and all agreed that the design team should return for a second recommendation meeting. The following items/groupings were immediately identified in Board deliberations:

- The massing of the building
- Transparency along N 61st Street
- Residential entry and location
- Garage entry location on N 61st Street
- Building materials and color
- Viable commercial and pedestrian space along Phinney Ave N

Summary of Board Early Design Guidance, October 8, 2007

The Northwest Design Review Board unanimously agreed that the applicant should move forward to the recommendation stage of Design Review, with particular attention paid to the following important guidelines and guidance:

1. **The design needs to create a good transition from commercial site to single family zoned properties along the east lot line.** This will be a particularly important issue to address in the next iteration of project design. The residential units along the east property line should be above, rather than at, the (same) level as the single family residential uses to the east. The design should take more steps than shown in the EDG packet to further ease the transition in height, bulk, and

scale above the ground level, facing the structures to the east. The bulk of the structure massing should be directed more towards Phinney Ave N, and should "to the fullest extent possible" mitigate and relieve the potentially "very harsh" scale conditions between the two distinct zones. ***A-5: Respect for Adjacent Sites; B-1: Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility.***

2. **Parking garage access should be from N 61st Street, rather than Phinney Ave N**. The Board was unanimous in this guidance. The curbcut should stay on the northeast corner of the lot, along N 61st Street. Phinney Ave N should be designed as a pedestrian, retail oriented, street with no curbcuts. ***A-4: Human Activity; A-8: Parking and Vehicle Access.***

A.	**Site Planning**

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

A-3 **<u>Entrances Visible from the Street</u> – Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.**

A-4 **<u>Human Activity</u> – New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.**

A-5 **<u>Respect for Adjacent Sites</u> – 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-8 **<u>Parking and Vehicle Access</u> – Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.**

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

The Board encouraged the applicant to reconsider the project concept with greater emphasis on a street level design that supports pedestrian activity along both Phinney Ave N and N 61st Street. The goal is to ensure that the corner is developed in a way that recognizes the need for pedestrian safety, comfort, protection from natural elements, and interest in the structure and (potential) use. The corner should also enhance and support vibrant retail-oriented street level activity; such as currently exists in the immediate vicinity.

The relationship of the proposed structure to the adjacent and lower residential zoned property is a major issue for this site. The design of the structure and its massing should be placed, as much as possible, along Phinney Ave N, and stepped back along the east property line to minimize not only bulk and scale issues along the single family zone, but to minimize shadow impacts on the adjacent structures and public areas (see Summary of Board Guidance, item no. 1).

The Board stated that Phinney Ave N is not a suitable location for a curbcut and garage access onto the site. The applicant should show options for placing the garage entrance at some point along N 61st Street, as in Scheme One (see Summary of Board Guidance, item no. 2).

Board members discussed the proposed design for the corner elements in detail. In general, the Board concluded that the corners and floating balconies, specifically the corner at N 61st Street and Phinney Ave N, are problematic and need more design exploration. The corners are symmetrical on both sides, the north and south ends are similar, and the canopy and cantilevered deck above are unresolved. Earlier design guidance strongly suggested that the corners deserve special treatment, and Board consensus is that the design does not reflect a satisfactory corner entry and does not visually ground the building well.

The Board added that the design for the two corners detract from the architecture of the building and creates an unpleasant transition at the corner. A retail entry with a balcony overhead is not a desirable design from the pedestrian perspective – there should be more separation between commercial uses at the ground level and residential uses above; each use needs more privacy and separation. The Board suggested that the applicants take cues from positive examples of corner treatment and transitioning that currently exists on Phinney Ridge and in other neighborhoods.

The proposed residential entry area on N 61st Street was also discussed at length. The Board wants the applicant to explore other location options for the residential entry and the walkway area on N 61st Street. A suggestion was that the residential entry could be pulled off N 61st Street and combined with the commercial space on Phinney Ave N in such a way that would be friendly and more inviting. This would enable the commercial space to extend around the street corner. The planter space along Phinney Ave N, shown between the commercial units, does not appear to be necessary to the design and could be removed to allow additional commercial space. The Board is concerned that the proposed upper shape of the building dictates how the retail space works at the street level, which limits the flexibility of the commercial space. The applicants should incorporate a strong (commercial) base in the entire design, and bring the building to the sidewalk along Phinney Ave N.

Board members agreed that the garage entrance should remain in the current location, along N 61st Street. The Board noted that the issue of access was extensively discussed at the EDG stage of design, and that, among other things, moving the garage entry from N 61st Street would constrict viable pedestrian and commercial frontage on Phinney Ave N.

The Board recommended the applicants develop lower eye-level street level elevations and 3-D sketches for the next recommendation meeting. The objective is to show more of what will truly be seen from a pedestrian standpoint.

For the benefit of members of the public, Board members explained that no off-street parking is required for commercial uses given the current design. The parking requirement is based on each individual space/business rather than the total provided commercial area, and since each of the commercial spaces is currently less that 1500 sq.ft. in area, no parking is required.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 **<u>Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility</u> – 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 project should develop alternative massing and setback schemes to clearly show how the design will create a good Height, Bulk and Scale relationship to the east. At the next stage of design review, the applicant should present solar studies with shadow diagrams of the site and surrounding area.

Two key height, bulk, and scale items were discussed during the deliberations portion of the meeting: the upper level design along the east elevation; and the two stair tower elements.

The upper level on the east side of the building could be stepped back (i.e., at least approximately 10' on the east side at the upper level as suggested by nearby residents), but at this point the Board feels more information is needed. The Board questioned whether stepping the building back at the highest level would make a positive difference in shadow and privacy improvements for single family residences to the east. It could be that any combination of design changes might positively affect properties to the east, such as material changes at the top level, the addition of a distinct cornice, and/or stepping the building back. However, in order to make a decision one way or the other about stepping the building back further at upper levels, the Board wants the design team to study this issue in more depth and provide the following at the next recommendation meeting: (a) solar studies using solstice dates rather than equinox dates, (b) design studies that show the building stepped back at the upper level, and (c) different material choices and design options for the upper level(s).

The two tower elements above the main roof, on the north and south elevations, currently create too strong of a visual image. The massing of these elements should not dominate the roof, but should be softened and/or reduced. This could be accomplished by a change in the color and materials of the stair towers, by shifting the towers inboard and away from the sidewalk (on the north side), by designing a stronger base into which the tower(s) could land, by adding glazing on the landing, and/or by bringing the parapet height of the tower(s) down.

The Board noted that it would be beneficial, from the pedestrian standpoint, to shift the stairwell and tower along N 61st Street back, thereby improving the pedestrian connection from Phinney to the lobby. This connection should be open and visible at-grade. The Board feels that this would activate the street better along N 61st Street and break up the massive feeling of the building. The Board added that the expression of the stair as an architectural element is not helping the building at present.

There was discussion about setting the building back, at any level, along Phinney Ave N. Some members of the public felt that situating the bulk of the mass of the building along Phinney Ave N

presents a "canyon effect" along the arterial. Board members concluded that there is significantly more value in setting the building back on the east side to offer a transition for single family residences, and no need to change the elevation along the west side.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-1 **<u>Architectural Context</u> – 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.**

C-2 **<u>Architectural Concept and Consistency</u> – Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural context.**

C-3 **<u>Human Scale</u> – The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, element and details to achieve a good human scale.**

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

Board members stated that the types and quality of architectural elements and materials is particularly important in mixed-use structures. The Board wants to see conscious attention to design details and massing that clearly makes a good transition from commercial to residential use. This will go a long way in easing public concerns that the design of the structure is "too modern" for the Phinney neighborhood.

The Board wants to see the design maintain the current character that exists along Phinney Ave N as much as possible. This includes strong consideration for masonry materials at the ground level along both street frontages.

The Board agreed that vehicular access to the site should be visually minimized and cause as little disruption to pedestrian circulation around the site as possible. And as such, the Board stated that they would be inclined to grant a departure request that minimized such elements as driveway and curbcut width, and sight triangle standards that fall below normal code requirements.

The Board found the materials palette, the varying heights of the building, and the numerous color exchanges appear to be too much for the relatively small scale of development and should be simplified and/or reduced. Board members agreed with public input and recommended the applicants combine the materials, add a stronger base, and create a greater simplicity of building form – reduce the volumes of weight and materials. Strong elements, such as a firm base and a continuous cornice line, are needed to tie the design together. The Board suggested, for example, removing the option of metal siding and replacing with wood grain, or, shifting to three primary elements along with an associated shift in massing.
The Board is concerned with the proposed color of the brick samples as being too dark. As a response to public input and as reflected in the neighborhood, the Board recommended the

applicants work more with the color and detail of the brick material (lighter hues and tones of the masonry). Additionally, related to the detail of the brick material, the Board would like the applicants to expand the brick masses and massing with treatments that offer variety and interest, and offer a more transparent and cohesive treatment of the brick openings, such as expressed headers across windows, brick patterning, continuous cornice line with detail, etc. This is particularly needed with the north and south elevations.

The Board would like to see the design of the canopies along the streets be more welcoming, more accessible (transparent), and not one continuous flat element from end to end. The Board would also like to see the façade designed in a way that weathers changes over time; more open, more flexible, more adaptable for various types of tenants over time (i.e., roll-up doors, more openings, etc.). Board members offered that a more traditional building design would function better over time.

D. Pedestrian Environment

D-1 **<u>Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances</u> – 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 **<u>Blank Walls</u> – 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 receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.**

D-5 **<u>Visual Impacts of Parking Structures</u> – 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 **<u>Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas</u> – 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-11 **<u>Commercial Transparency</u> – 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 wall should be avoided.**

The applicant should avoid blank surfaces along both street frontages, and the south façade. Where unavoidable they should be treated with landscaping (i.e., trellising); material texturing; employing small setbacks, indentations, form-board patterns, or other means of breaking up the wall; or adding special lighting or overhead treatments.

Commercial and residential entryways should be sufficiently lighted, present safe and secure areas, and offer protection from inclement weather. The residential entry should be pronounced and clearly defined, distinct from commercial entryways. Strong consideration should be given to street level pedestrian-scaled signage, lighting, and street furniture. Commercial spaces should be transparent and open to direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring in the interior of a building. The applicant should show, in the updated design concept, maintaining the viability of the smaller retail spaces pattern along Phinney Avenue North. Continuous overhead weather protection should be provided adjacent to all sidewalk areas.

Board members discussed, at length, the design of the residential entry. Board members would like the applicants to explore other options for placement and location of the residential entry and walkway area. The usable space for the residential area should be more people-oriented – more friendly and inviting. Board members suggested changes such as moving the residential entry to the southwest corner of the building, thereby allowing the commercial space to extend around the northwest street corner. The Board is concerned that the upper shape of the proposed building dictates how the retail space works at the street level, which limits the flexibility of the commercial space. The proposed design for the housing entry does not present a noticeable value to the building or the design.

Board members concurred that the vehicle entry should not be moved from N 61st Street. The Board noted that moving the vehicle entry onto Phinney Ave N, as suggested by members of the public, would further constrict viable pedestrian and commercial frontage on Phinney. The issue was extensively discussed at the EDG stage of design, and at the time the Board gave clear direction to maintain street level and commercial viability along the Phinney frontage. The Board also noted, however, that design detail along the N 61st Street needs further work.

The commercial viability of the spaces as designed along Phinney Ave N was discussed. The commercial storefronts should be designed in a friendlier manner, such as with more openings to the street, roll-up doors, etc., (as noted in the previous section). The Board encourages the applicants and developer to work with the community or the existing tenants to design viable commercial areas that provide retail spaces the community would like to see more of, such as restaurant uses.

The Board recognized strong public sentiment for a restaurant in the commercial space. The Board encourages the applicant to incorporate a dedicated shaft in the building for the possibility of restaurant-type uses at the street level. The shaft should extend from the commercial space to the roof for ventilation of a high fire-related exhaust shaft. The Board also stated that this issue is less a design related issue and more a land use issue.

E. Landscaping

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

E-2 **<u>Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site</u> – 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.**

The Board looks forward to reviewing a high-quality, well programmed and well landscaped residential amenity and right-of-way design. The design of the east side of the structure should be softened with setbacks and landscaping, and the Board wants the applicant to give strong consideration to the protection and retention of the existing vegetation to help mitigate adjacent privacy.

Board members support the current configuration of landscaping along both streets. Plantings should continue to be continuous low level plantings, and the applicants should continue to work with SDOT to determine the types of trees, whether coniferous or deciduous. (The Board noted that it is up to SDOT to determine whether coniferous trees should be planted in the public right-of-way. If the public is more interested in seeing conifers along the stretch of N 61st Street, SDOT should be consulted directly.)

Open space on the rooftop should shift to align more prominently along the west portion of the building to protect the privacy of eastern properties, to offer more sun exposure in the afternoon for rooftop patio users, and to locate residential noise closest to the noise of the arterial (Phinney Ave N). Board suggestions included mirroring the rooftop patio area in the greenroof module area, and/or including a public walk area around the rooftop. The priority, again, is to protect privacy along the east elevation.

Summary of Design Review Board Recommendations, February 23, 2009

1. **The corners and floating balconies, specifically the corner at N 61st Street and Phinney Ave N, are problematic and need more design exploration.**
2. **Explore other location options for the residential entry and the walkway area on N 61st Street.**
3. **Develop lower eye-level street level elevations and 3-D sketches for the next recommendation meeting.**
4. **Study the issue of upper level design along the east elevation in more depth and provide, at the next recommendation meeting, the following: (a) solar studies using solstice dates rather than equinox dates, (b) design studies that show the building stepped back at the upper level, and (c) different material and design options for the upper level(s).**
5. **The two tower elements, on the north and south elevations, currently create too strong of a visual image; the massing of these elements should be softened and/or reduced.**
6. **The materials palette, the varying heights of the building, and the numerous color exchanges appear to be too much for the relatively small scale of development and should be simplified and/or reduced. The applicant should combine the materials, add a stronger base, and create a greater simplicity of building form.**
7. **The Board recommended the applicants work more with the color and detail of the brick material.**
8. **Expand the brick masses and massing with treatments that offer variety and interest, and offer a more transparent and cohesive treatment of the brick openings.**

9. **The design of the canopies along the streets should be more welcoming, more accessible (transparent) and not one continuous flat element from end to end. The Board would like to see the façade designed in a way that weathers changes over time; more open, more flexible, more adaptable for various types of tenants over time.**
10. **Board members would like the applicants to explore other options for placement and location of the residential entry and walkway area.**
11. **The Board encourages the applicants and developer to work with the community or the existing tenants to design viable commercial areas that provide retail spaces the community would like to see more of, such as restaurant uses.**
12. **The Board encourages the applicant to incorporate a dedicated shaft in the building for the possibility of restaurant-type uses at the street level.**
13. **Plantings should continue to be continuous low level plantings, and the applicants should continue to work with SDOT to determine the types of trees, whether coniferous or deciduous.**
14. **Open space on the rooftop should shift to align more prominently along the west portion of the building to protect the privacy of eastern properties, to offer more sun exposure in the afternoon for rooftop patio users, and to locate residential noise closest to the noise of the arterial (Phinney Ave N).**

→ ***The applicant should address all design priorities, and Board guidance, during the next stages of design review.***

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

LAND USE CODE STANDARD	PROPOSAL	RATIONALE FOR REQUEST	BOARD GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATION(S)

Non-residential street level requirements 23.47A.008.B.2.a. *60% of the street-facing façade between 2' and 8' above the sidewalk shall be transparent.*	**Requests** reduction to 41%	It is a less commercial area, and the transparency is concentrated on the commercial space and not near the residential entry – [the design team] feels the transparency is not needed at the residential portion of the building.	The Board has asked the applicants to return for a second recommendation meeting, at which time a final recommendation will be offered.
Residential street-level requirements 23.47A.008.D.2 *Either the first floor of the structure at or above grade shall be at least 4' above sidewalk grade or the street-level façade shall be set back at least 10' from the sidewalk.*	**Requests** on-grade first floor entry, and reduction in setback to 3'6".	The entry is the only element that is at-grade, the rest of the residential portion is raised. [The design team] felt it would be nicer to have the entry closer to the walkway. And, if set back further, there would be less area for internal elements, such as the mailroom, lobby, and utility area.	The Board has asked the applicants to return for a second recommendation meeting, at which time a final recommendation will be offered.

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