



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

**Department of Planning & Development**

D.M. Sugimura, Director

---

**FINAL DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION  
OF THE  
QUEEN ANNE/MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

---

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**Project Number:** 3007688  
**Address:** 201 W Harrison Street  
**Applicant:** Steve Lampert, Nicholson Kovalchick Architects

**Date of Meeting:** May 7, 2008  
**Date of Report:** June 2, 2008

**Board Members Present:** Matt Roewe, Chair  
Mark Garrell  
John Rose  
Bill Vandeventer

**Board Members Absent:** David Nemens

**DPD Staff Present:** Holly Anderson, Land Use Planner

---

**SITE AND VICINITY**

The proposal site is located in the Uptown neighborhood at the southwest corner of the intersection of W Harrison Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue W. The site is zoned NC3-65 with 60 feet of frontage on W Harrison Street and 118 feet along W Harrison Street. The surrounding area is within the Uptown Urban Center, and is zoned NC3-65 for several blocks on all sides. Currently the site is used as a surface parking lot with stalls for 26 vehicles. The area is a mix of office buildings and mixed-use apartment buildings built between the 1960s to the 1990s as well as numerous surface parking lots. Immediately to the south of the site is a two story concrete masonry warehouse followed by a surface parking lot and a 4 story 1970s office building. Across 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue W from the site are a 6-story stucco apartment building and a two story Allstar Fitness gym. To the north of the site across W Harrison Street is a four story office building over an open parking garage. Across the alley to the west is a two story office building and the former Mountaineers Building to the south. There is a proposal under review for a 7-story 195 unit mixed-use apartment building for this entire half-block on the west side of the alley containing the mountaineers site (project 3007073).

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposes a 6-story, mixed-use apartment building consisting of 5 stories of residential over street level retail (1,873 s.f.) and five live work units. Parking for 19 vehicles will be located in a below grade garage accessed from the alley. The Project also includes removal of the existing surface parking lot and approximately 3,200 cu. yds. of grading.

### **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: 10/17/07**

An early design guidance (EDG) meeting was held on October 17, 2007 where ideas for the design were discussed and design priorities identified by the Board. No members of the public attended.

### **SUMMARY OF BOARD GUIDANCE**

- Minimize or eliminate any blank walls of the garage on Harrison street and focus the design on the spatial relationship between the live-work units and the sidewalk.
- Central location of the residential lobby is preferred.
- Knit together the upper floors with the ground level.
- Simplify the design expression.

### **EDG PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Design Review Board members identified the following siting and design guidelines from the City of Seattle's "*Design Review Guidelines for Multi-family and Commercial Development*" of highest priority to this project.

A complete report of the EDG meeting is available in the Master Use Permit file.

- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility
- A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street
- A-4 Human Activity
- A-7 Residential Open Space
- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access
- A-10 Corner Lots
  
- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency
- C-3 Human Scale
- C-4 Exterior Finish Material
  
- D-9 Commercial Signage
- D-10 Commercial Lighting
- D-11 Commercial Transparency
- D-12 Residential Entries & Transitions
  
- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance Building and/or Site

## **RECOMMENDATION MEETING: 5/7/08**

A recommendation meeting was held May 7, 2008. While five persons signed in on the attendance sheet, most are associated with the project. Brandon Nicholson presented the project as follows:

The immediate neighborhood contains a mixture of office uses with some housing, but little retail activity at this time. There is an extended stay hotel across the street.

The proposed design has been broken into 3 masses with an external breezeway and walkway system that allows many of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) goals to be met. Each unit within the building has natural light on 2 to 3 sides. The external circulation allows for natural ventilation through each unit and eliminated the need to have stairwells, interior lobby and interior corridors illuminated during the daytime. The units are smaller – 525 s.f. with the space well laid-out to provide for all residential needs in an affordable manner.

The floor plates have been broken to allow the live-work units on Harrison Street to follow grade and eliminate the projecting garage mass below. The ground floor spaces range between 14' at the corner and 16' as the grade drops along Harrison Street. The live-work units are recessed at street grade, 6 1/2' behind the sidewalk and 4' – 4" from the edge of the building above.

Exterior materials consist of:

- Siding: phenolic resin flat panels
- Base: concrete with reveals and patterning
- Aluminum windows
- Concrete decking
- Metal railings
- Decorative metal gate at entry with call box for security

Green features of the building include hydronic heat and collection of storm water from the green roof that will be channeled into a rain garden in the courtyard area.

The project is working with the adjacent project to underground utilities on Harrison Street. If this is achieved, the flowering plum street trees on Harrison will be replaced with Sweet gums.

### **Public Comments**

- Will the trash chute be insulated for noise? They can be very noisy as the trash is thrown and falls to the bottom.
- What will be the interface with the property to the south when it redevelops?

## **Board Discussion:**

### **Questions & Clarifications**

- Will the retail have visibility into the courtyard behind? *Yes.*
- Has the issue of the trash chute noise been contemplated? *The architect was unaware of this issue.*
- What will be the diameter of the railings? *They will be light and transparent with ½” metal material and 4” between the rungs.*
- What color will the aluminum windows be? *Dark anodized and will match the storefront.*

### **Initial Feedback and Discussion**

The Board is supportive of the overall design and agrees that it has responded adequately to the EDG guidance. The Board liked the design’s central concept of natural ventilation and its architectural consistency. The design is clean and simple with separated masses that relate to each other. The Board was also impressed with the proposed massing for the small site and the variety of unit types, ranging from efficiency to live-work and some 2-story units in the back building.

A concern was expressed by one Board member that the prevalence of railings could be distracting to other elements of the design. These railings should be as lightweight as possible to blend in rather than draw attention.

There was also discussion that in some buildings which have included the phenolic resin panels, the materials have become discolored over time; however, this has occurred more with the lighter shades than with the darker colors. The Board also discussed whether the dark Prodema color choice here contrasted enough and whether a brighter color would be better; the Board agreed that a brighter or lighter color could be a benefit, but did not require a change.

The potential noise issue of the trash chute was discussed, including the potential for use to be limited after 10 pm. The architect will explore the noise issue.

The land use planner brought up the lack of overhead weather protection for the project – there are awnings over the retail entries, but not along the rest of the retail façade. The live-work entries are recessed, but there is no overhead weather protecting extending to the sidewalk. There will be more pedestrian activity in the area with the new overpass that is being built to the waterfront (connecting to Thomas street a block to the south). The redevelopment of the Mountaineers site with the Avalon Bay project will also bring more pedestrian traffic to the area. However, the Board was okay with the overhead weather protection as designed since the site is not currently a high pedestrian traffic area.

**Board Recommendation:** After considering the proposed design and the project context, hearing public comment, and reconsidering the previously stated design priorities, the Design Review Board members came to the following conclusions on how the applicant met the identified guidelines in the City of Seattle’s “*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*” that were determined at the EDG meeting to be of highest priority to this project. The recommendations made were agreed to by the four Board members present, unless otherwise noted. While the priority guidelines noted below discuss the guidelines the Board found most important, all of the Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings apply.

<b>A. Site Planning</b>
-------------------------

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

The project has located the retail at the corner, and along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue as discussed with the Board at the EDG meeting. The quality of the interface between the live/work units and the sidewalk on Harrison Street has been improved by having the entries follow the grade, eliminating the projecting blank walls of the garage as the grade slopes. The live-work units are set back several feet to allow for a sense of individuality for each unit.

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

The main residential entry has been located mid-block on Harrison Street. The central location with projecting landings on each level above brings attention to the entry and knits together the upper levels with the ground floor.

The setback for the live-work units allow for landscaping adjacent to each entry. A substantial amount of glazing has been added along this section of the façade to facilitate the commercial function of the live-work uses.

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

Locating the retail/commercial space on the corner has created a good opportunity to enliven the street.

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

While the Board had advised keeping the courtyard open to the west to keep light and air access in the future, a new 6-story development is being proposed on the half block to the west that will create shadows from that direction. The open space area at the ground floor is being treated as a shade garden that provides visual relief to the surrounding units as viewed from above, as well as serving the green building function of a rain garden. A row of bamboo at the south provides a vegetated screen from the building to the south. The roof deck will provide for year-round access to light.

**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.**

Access to the parking garage continues to be from the alley, as shown in the draft schemes and recommended by the Board, and as required by code. An external trash chute facilitates residential disposal of waste. The chute extends down to the trash pick-up area accessible from the alley. The project will likely employ a private garbage hauling service that picks up trash daily. The Board recommended that lining the trash chute to reduce noise will be investigated further by the architect.

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

Retail use wraps the corner with two retail entries on Second Avenue, and a leasing office for the residential on Harrison Street next to the main residential entry. The building fronting on Second and the building fronting on Harrison Street are integrated with the connecting residential stairway between the two, featuring projecting landings at each level that help to emphasize the location of the residential entry below.

At the EDG meeting, the Board had suggested knitting together the retail and residential segments in the facades to visually ground the corner and liked the way the bay at the corner in Option 3 partially achieved this objective. The Board is pleased with how the revised design presents a cohesive concept. The projecting balconies at each level, visible from the Second Avenue and Harrison Street façades, provide visual orientation to the building's functions and create a satisfying sense of organization and grounding. The proximity of entry functions for the various uses at ground level also help to create a cohesive design.

## C. Architectural Elements

- 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 roof line or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished for its façade walls.**

The architectural concept has been simplified from that presented at the EDG meeting, and the Board is pleased with both the architectural as well as functional design of the space. The penthouse expression at the top of the building, which the Board had appreciated in earlier concepts was retained and developed; a metal canopy wraps the elevator penthouse, mirroring the metal banding and canopy projections over the ground level entries.

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

The building materials, including Prodema cladding and color, the decorative metal entry gate, exterior lighting, vegetation at ground level, and a transparent store-front system with a suspended metal and canvas sign system create detail and visual interest for a successful pedestrian experience.

- C-4 Exterior Finish Material – 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 materials are durable with both texture and variety: Flat and ribbed metal siding; wood grain phenolic resin panels for accent; aluminum store-front system and exposed concrete with a smooth architectural finish.

## D. Pedestrian Environment

- 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 design includes a metal support system for hanging signs above the live/work unit; retail signage will be limited to the face of the entry canopies.

- D-10 Commercial Lighting – Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of weather protection, on**

**and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or signage.**

Light fixtures that complement the building materials have been chosen to illuminate pedestrian areas.

**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.**

Ample commercial transparency has been provided through the store-front system along both 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue W. and W. Harrison Street.

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

The main residential entry has been centrally located on Harrison Street as suggested by the Board. A decorative metal leads to the breezeway and stairs accessing the units. The interior rain garden courtyard is visible from the entry gate. For the live-work units, a 6' transition space behind the sidewalk has been created with room for individualized landscaping.

## **E. Landscaping**

**E-2 Landscaping to Enhance 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.**

Expanding on the ample landscaping already in the neighborhood, the street landscaping will be enhanced by removing the asphalt entry from 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave W. and extending the planting strip. The existing Oak on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue W will be matched with 2 additional Oaks. In conjunction with undergrounding of utilities along Harrison Street, the Purple Leaf Plums will be replaced with Sweet Gums. Landscaping is also provided in the 2' between the sidewalk and the property line, near each live-work entry, in the interior courtyard, and on the green roof.

## **DEPARTURE REQUESTS**

Two departures were requested at the recommendation meeting:

<b>DEVELOPMENT STANDARD</b>	<b>DEPARTURE REQUEST</b>	<b>JUSTIFICATION</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<p><b>Residential Uses at Street Level</b>  <b>SMC 23.47A.008D.2.</b></p> <p>When a residential use is located on a street-level street facing façade, either the first floor of the structure at or above grade shall be at least 4' above the sidewalk grade or the street-level façade shall be set back at least ten feet from the sidewalk.</p>	<p>Remove dimensional restrictions on residential use location at ground level to allow leasing office and lobby passageway at grade.</p>	<p>Location of a main residential entry and leasing office at grade makes sense; no vertical or horizontal separation is needed for privacy.</p> <p>(Policies A-2, D-12)</p>	<p>The Board voted unanimously in favor of the proposed departure.</p>
<p><b>Solid Waste &amp; Recyclable Materials Storage</b>  <b>SMC 23.47A.029D</b></p> <p>For front-loading containers, any proposed gates or access routes shall be a minimum of 10' wide, and when accessed directly by a collection vehicle into a structure, a 21' overhead clearance shall be provided.</p>	<p>Allow for a 6' rather than a 10' wide door.</p> <p>Eliminate the 21' overhead clearance requirement.</p>	<p>A 6' wide door is sufficient for Seattle Public utilities.</p> <p>The truck will not enter the building, but will load from the alley.</p> <p>(Policies A-8, C-3)</p>	<p>The Board voted unanimously in favor of the proposed departure.</p>

**BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:**

At the recommendation meeting on May 7, 2008, the 4 members of the Queen Anne/Magnolia Design Review Board present unanimously recommended Approval of the project with the following recommended condition to be worked out administratively by the DPD prior to approval of the final MUP plans:

1. Explore quieting the potential noise of the trash chute.

H:\Project Review\3007688 EDG Report.doc