



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning & Development

D.M. Sugimura, Director

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE PRIORITIES
OF THE
CAPITOL/FIRST HILL/CENTRAL AREA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3007732

Address: 1110 East Madison Street

Applicant: Constanza Marcheselli, Runberg Architecture Group,
PLLC for Union & Madison LLC

Meeting date: March 5, 2008
Report date: March 21, 2008

Board members present: Rumi Takahashi
James Walker

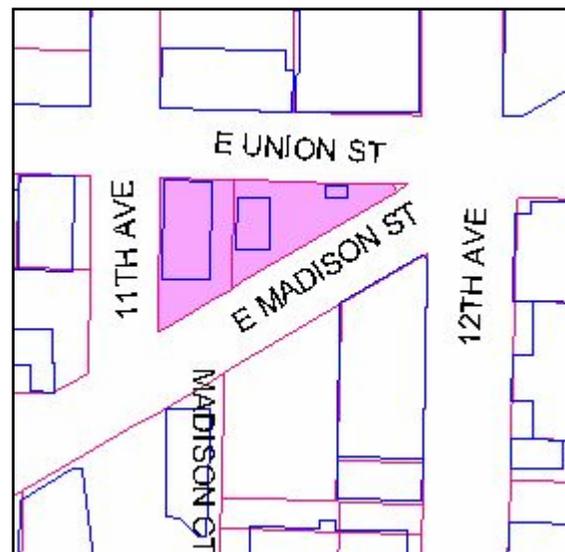
Board members absent: Jason Morrow
Sharon Sutton

DPD staff present: Lisa Rutzick, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

The site occupies an entire triangular block: the SE corner of the intersection of 11th Avenue and E Union Street, the NE corner of the intersection of 11th Avenue and E Madison Street, and the west corner of the intersection of E Union Street and E Madison Street. There is no alley located on or adjacent to the site.

The site is currently occupied by surface parking and three structures: a two-story wood frame multi-family building, and two one-story retail buildings.



The site slopes slightly, with the lowest elevation at the SW corner of the property and sloping upwards to the east and north. The NE corner of the property is approximately seven feet higher than the lowest corner.

The site is zoned NC3P-65' (Neighborhood Commercial 3 with a Pedestrian designation). 11th Avenue, E Union Street and E Madison Street are all designated principal pedestrian streets per the Land Use Code. Per SDOT, E Madison Street is designated a principal arterial and 11th Avenue and E Union Street are designated minor arterials. SDOT classifies E Madison Street a major transit street, E Union Street a minor transit street and 11th Avenue as a local transit street. All three streets are also classified as main streets per SDOT. The site falls within the "Pike-Pine Urban Center Village," a Pike-Pine neighborhood. The east corner of the site at the intersection of 12th Avenue, E Madison & E Union Streets is identified as a gateway by the Pike-Pine Urban Center Village Design Guidelines.

The adjacent zoning to the north, west, and east is also NC3P-65'. The adjacent zoning directly to the south is Seattle University major Institution Overlay MIO-105'-NC3P-65'. The zoning to the southeast is MIO-105'C-2-65' and the zoning to the southwest is MIO-105'MR. Two blocks to the southeast the zoning is L3 and L1. Five blocks to the southwest the zoning is NC3P-160'.

The development in the neighborhood to the north of the site is primarily a mixture of multifamily structures, automobile sales and repair shops, warehouses, retail and restaurants, and surface parking lots. The development in the neighborhood to the south and southeast of the site is primarily a mix of institutional and residential: Seattle University, Seattle Academy, retail shops, multi and single family structures.

The site is well-served by Metro transit bus route #12 adjacent to the site on E Madison Street & 11th Avenue and Metro transit bus route #2 on E Union Street & 12th Avenue.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of a new six-story building. The new structure would include approximately 91 residential units, ground level retail uses and below grade parking for approximately 37 vehicles. Access to the site is proposed from East Union Street.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Three code-compliant schemes were presented. All of the options include a driveway entrance from Union Street (the longest side), a residential lobby on 11th Avenue, and a setback at grade from the property line to provide 13'-6" sidewalks.

The first scheme (Scheme C) proposed retail and residential units to form an "L" along 11th Ave & E Madison St and a courtyard proposed on the north mid block at E Union St. Additionally, the first scheme (Scheme C) proposed upper level open space located on Level 2 at the south, east and north.

The second scheme (Scheme D) proposed retail and residential units to form an “L” along 11th Ave & E Union St and a courtyard proposed on the south mid block at E Madison St. Additionally, the second scheme (Scheme D) proposed upper level open space at level 5 at the south and east of the site to take advantage of southern exposure.

The third scheme, preferred by the applicant, (Scheme F) proposed retail and residential units to form an “L” along 11th Ave & E Union St and a courtyard proposed on the south mid block at E Madison St. Additionally, the third scheme (Scheme F) proposed upper level open space located on Level 2 at the south and east to take advantage of southern exposure.

The site plan, applicable to all three schemes proposes filling in seven existing curb cuts, adding one curb cut for the driveway entrance on E Union St, and adding new curb bulbs and crosswalks at the corners of 11th Ave and E Madison St and 11th Ave and E Union St. All of the alternatives showed multiple smaller retail spaces that could be divided into as many as eight separate spaces and a minimum of four spaces depending on the needs and interests of retail tenants.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 30 members of the public attended the Early Design Guidance meeting. The following comments were offered:

- Scheme F faces Madison but turns its back on 11th and Union. The massing along Union will cast shadow on the neighbors; consideration should be given to maximizing the solar exposure of neighboring properties.
- Flooding on the site often occurs and attention to stormwater mitigation is needed.
- The proposed design concept is not responsive to the contextual buildings and should have stronger references to the older, rather than newer buildings in the neighborhood.
- Appreciate the effort to create a sculptural building design at this location, but feels the proposed open spaces should not be covered. The design concept should not override the reality of weather in the Northwest and a practical design response is warranted. The survival of the proposed vegetation is critical.
- The corner of 12th and Madison should be more grounded, to define the intersection with a hard corner. The courtyard and landscaping attention should be focused on 11th rather than Madison.
- Apartments under the overhang will be dark. Spaces for small businesses are appreciated and important to the character of Capitol Hill.
- The demolition of the multifamily building will displace affordable housing o Capitol Hill.
- Union Art Cooperative building is a landmark building. Union is the preferred pedestrian corridor, drop-off will be easier on Union. On a triangular lot, there is opportunity to have three “fronts” to the building and no backside. Madison is busy and loud and should be the automobile-oriented side with a bold statement; Union should be the pedestrian-oriented side with an inviting and more intimate design, as it already functions as a quieter pedestrian route. In Scheme F, the garage faces the front door of the Union Coop and the neighborhood beyond. The garage should be moved to 11th.
- Concerned that the creation of open spaces that are not located on the pedestrian circulation routes dictated by the existing crosswalks will encourage unsafe pedestrian movement.

Instead, the pedestrian routes should help inform the location of building entrances and activity points on the subject site.

- Encourage green space and main entrances at the NW corner of the site (intersection of Union & 11th).
- Encourage urban precedents such as the Flatiron Building in New York which celebrates the corner rather than erode back from the corner.
- Suggest that the curb bulb at 11th and Union as the natural extension of a ground level courtyard on Union. This may also help to slow traffic at this intersection.
- The inspiration from nature that was presented doesn't seem to translate into the proposed design schemes.
- Proposed contributions and improvements to the public realm in the sidewalk and ROW are great. Modern vocabulary and conceptual approach to the design is appreciated and there is a role for modern architecture in the neighborhood as well. Massing studies are too eroded; the mass should anchor all three corners, especially the corner that plays a role in defining the 5-way intersection at 12th and Madison.
- There is a memorial on the site for a slain police officer. This memorial plaque should be relocated and integrated into the proposed design.
- Madison is also the most direct pedestrian connection for people walking downtown. The design should anchor the corners, especially the acute corner at 12th and Madison.
- Seattle University will eventually redevelop the storage building on Madison and 12th. Madison will really benefit from the two-foot setback proposed; very appreciative of this gesture. Agree that the large windows to the Union Coop provide natural light important to the craft making that occurs in these residences and this light should be protected. The scheme with the cut out top should be flipped to be on Union to be more hospitable to the Coop. Encourage moving the garage entry from Union and making the design of the Madison façade very strong.
- Scheme C should be encouraged, which keeps a strong edge on Madison and makes Union less of a tunnel. Focus should be more towards Pike/Pine rather than to south.
- No garbage cans should be located on the street; do not treat Union like an alley.
- Headlights from cars exiting the proposed garage will potentially disrupt residences in Union Coop building.
- Raised open space plazas along Madison will be negatively impacted by street traffic noise.
- Would like to see improvements to the bus stop on Madison.

DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance and identified by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings* of highest priority to this project:

A. Site Planning

- A-1 **Responding to Site Characteristics.** The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.
- A-2 **Streetscape Compatibility.** The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.
- A-4 **Human Activity.** New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity along the street.
- A-5 **Respect for Adjacent Sites.** Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.
- A-7 **Residential Open Space.** Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.
- A-8 **Parking and Vehicle Access.** Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.
- 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.

The Board felt that the project massing could be strengthened by a stronger urban edge along E Madison St. Although Madison is used by pedestrians walking to/from downtown, this is more of a “beeline” activity. The Board reminded the applicant to be mindful of the noise along E Madison St in developing the residential open space, and suggested that the applicant consider a rooftop deck that would be more removed from the noise of the street and also take advantage of the views to downtown. Other ground level open spaces should be situated away from Madison. The Board agreed that developing the 11th Ave design to respond to and enhance the strong pedestrian connection is critical.

The Board enthusiastically supported and encouraged the proposed minimum two foot setback on all three sides of the site to create more sidewalk width and opportunities for planting.

The Board recommended the applicant inquire about whether the angled parking on 11th will be changed in the near future.

The Board acknowledged that Union may be the most appropriate location for the garage entrance, since 11th Ave is one-way and E Madison St is such a busy arterial. However, the Board encouraged the applicant to study shifting the garage entrance so that it did not face the entry of the Union Coop. The Board also felt that the driveway angle should be designed so as to avoid glare from headlights into neighboring residences. The driveway design could also be integrated into a larger entry open space area to help buffer the visual effect of the driveway with pavers, vegetation, etc.

The Board encouraged the applicant to request a Design Departure to reduce the driveway width.

The Board would also like to see the corners more anchored, particularly the corners along E Madison St.

B. Height, Bulk, and Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility. Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to nearby, 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 on the adjacent zones.

The Board felt this guideline applied with respect to compatibility with adjacent properties in how the building massing affects neighboring residences and properties in terms of shadow and solar exposure. The Board noted that they would not support a massing scheme that opens on to Madison (see A-1, A-2, A-4, A-5, D-1).

C. Architectural Elements

C-1 Architectural Context – New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.

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.**

C-4 Exterior Finish Materials. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

The Board agreed that the design should endeavor to both reference the historic buildings in the area, while also taking advantage of the acute angles at the corners and exploit the triangular geometry to express the corners and create a dramatic, bold design. The Board did not feel that eroding away at the corners would be the most opportune response to the site geometry. Scheme C feels the most urban and appropriate to the site. The building should hold the Madison corners and define the street edge, exaggerating the gateway location.

The Board was also interested in how the initial inspiration of movement and naturalistic expression would be clearly articulated in the design.

The Board strongly stressed that the proposed material palette should include durable materials, such as masonry, metal, etc. The Board noted that hardi-panel will not be acceptable.

The Board was concerned about the proposed design trying to erode the building from below and the dark open spaces that would be created below the overhangs. They also discussed that the soffits of these proposed overhangs will become a “fifth façade,” and the materials chosen for these undersides will be important. If this approach is further pursued, the Board will be very interested in the quality, functionality and practicality of these open spaces.

D. Pedestrian Environment

D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances. Convenient and attractive access to the building’s entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas. Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks, and mechanical equipment away from the street 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.

The Board weighed the pros and cons of situating the open spaces on Madison which will have better solar exposure than the other street sides, but is much louder and busier than the other sides. Given the realities of Madison as a highly trafficked east-west arterial, the success of open spaces, especially at grade or at lower levels, on this street is highly compromised and unlikely to be usable. Thus, the Board agreed that the open spaces should be shifted to other sides of the site and the Madison façade should provide a strong urban edge that protects the rest of the site.

The Board was really pleased with the proposed minimum two foot setbacks on all sides to widen the sidewalks.

The Board did not have a preference as to whether the residential entrance should be on 11th or on Union, but agreed that Madison would not be appropriate.

E. Landscaping

E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions. The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

The Board encouraged the applicant to enhance the landscaped pedestrian connection from Seattle University to Cal Anderson Park. The Board also felt that the design should take advantage of the enlarged curb bulbs at the site as further opportunity for

landscaping. The Board was pleased with the concept of providing ground level open space and agreed that harnessing the proposed extra right-of-way area of the curb bulb at 11th and Union would make sense in terms of locating open space at or near that corner, also reinforcing the Seattle University – Cal Anderson linkage. See also D-1.

The Board was very supportive of the proposed landscape design concept that includes green street designs, a green roof system, bio-retention and the integration of artwork into the open spaces and/or right-of-way.

The Board encouraged locating some amenity space on the roof, which will be quieter and removed from the activity surrounding ground level open spaces.

The Board reiterated that all three building facades should be treated as front sides, each with different conditions.

The Board also stated that they would like the memorial plaque protected and integrated into the proposed landscape plan.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

No design development standard departure requests are anticipated at this time.

NEXT STEPS

MUP Application:

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please call Lisa Rutzick (at 206-386-9049) when you have scheduled your MUP intake appointment.
2. Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG. Per Attachment B of Client Assistance Memo 238, plan on embedding four 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape and right-of-way improvement plans and three-dimensional street level vignettes into the front of the MUP plan set (4 per sheet) as Design Review sheets.
3. A parking and traffic study will be required as part of the MUP process.

Recommendation Meeting:

4. The Board would like to review three-dimensional renderings showing how the ground level uses, details and design relate to the sidewalk.
5. Please provide a shadow study showing solar access opportunities to the proposed open spaces and on neighboring properties at the extreme seasons.
6. Please submit a color and materials board.
7. Please provide colored renderings and/or graphics showing the proposed development from the pedestrian perspective.
8. Please also prepare a conceptual signage plan.
9. Please submit a conceptual lighting plan.