



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

D.M. Sugimura, Director

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
OF THE
SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Meeting Date: April 9, 2009

Report Date: April 22, 2009

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3008002

Address: 2988 SW Avalon Way

Applicant: Alan Keimig for Transitional Resources

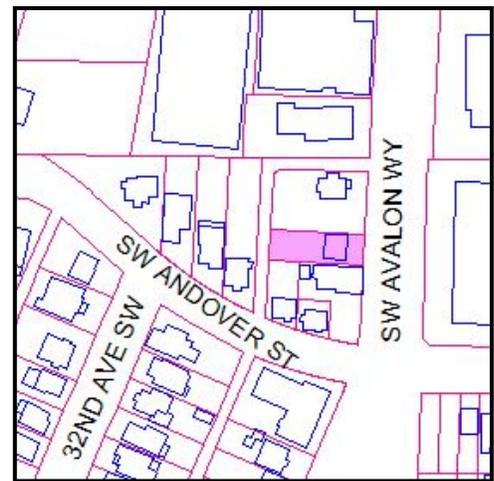
Board members present: Christie Coxley (Chair)
Joseph Hurley
Robin Murphy
Norma Thompkins

Board members absent: Brandon Nicholson (on leave)

Land Use Planner present: Marti Stave

SITE AND VICINITY

The proposed project is located on SW Avalon Way just north of the junction with SW Andover Street in the Youngstown neighborhood of West Seattle. The 8,000 square foot site currently contains a single family structure which will be demolished. The site slopes from an unimproved alley on the west to the east dropping approximately eighteen feet to the street at SW Avalon Way. The zoning is Commercial 1 with a 40 foot height limit (C1-40) as is the entire block face on the west side of SW Avalon Way. Across SW Avalon Way to the east the zoning is Industrial General 2 with a 85 foot height limit where the NUCOR Steel Plant is located. To the west, the zoning changes to Single Family and a mix of multifamily and single family to the south.



There is an eclectic mix of uses around the intersection of SW Avalon Way and SW Andover including larger multifamily buildings, public storage and small businesses including a hair salon and café. To the west, up the hill, is a mix of older, well-maintained single family homes of various ages.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes a four story building with approximately 1,295 square feet of commercial space at street level and 16 residential units. Four required parking spaces will be located at a shared lot adjacent to the site. A community open space is proposed between the site and the related project adjacent to the north.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include approximately 1,295 square feet of ground level commercial space which will be occupied by the local mental health community facilities. In addition, all option will share parking and a community open/garden space with the related building to the north.

Alternative 1 (the preferred option) shows a four-story structure with architectural features that related it to the building to the north. A large community space at the ground-level street level opens into access to the studio units to the rear. Outdoor walkways on the north offer views to the shared garden space below. The mass of the building is set back from the unopened alley on the west to afford the greatest distance from nearby homes.

Alternative 2 features an L-shaped entry courtyard with the community room set back from the street. A roof terrace behind the main entry building affords views to the north and the common open space. An additional building section at right angles to the main building at the rear is located on an adjacent parcel.

Alternative 3 also features a rooftop deck with the massing of the structure nearly filling the site. Large balconies overlook the shared common garden. Little open space is on the site itself.

The overall building form shows the façade set back from street level with pitched roof forms and dormers. Materials have yet to be chosen but may consist of lap siding and cementitious panels.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Eight members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Wanted to know who would be living in the building.
- Commented that the existing project is a great neighbor and they support the new project.
- Design should consider the future redevelopment of the adjacent building to the south which can build up to the property line.

BOARD DELIBERATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the Design Review Board members provided the siting and design guidance described below. 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.

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-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.

- The Board generally agreed that the preferred alternative design is the most appropriate for the site. They agreed that the new building with the proposed shared garden courtyard completes the complex.
- The Board wants the communal garden courtyard to work well with both buildings and provide a truly usable space for the residents. The refined design will need to show how it makes the overall project a better design and justifies the requested departure. At the next meeting, the Board wants to see a detailed design showing how the open space works with site characteristics and relates to each building.
- The board is particularly interested in seeing how the design of the transition between the sidewalk and the ground level community room provides for a neighborly space and how the transition to residential areas is achieved.

B Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale

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.

- The Board feels that the proposed massing is somewhat chaotic and unresolved. The design should create a better connection with the original building completing the complex as a whole.
- Because the site is narrow, the structure appears bulky. The design should be simplified to reduce the appearance of bulk.
- The Board commented on the large number of windows on the south façade next to a site that could redevelop to the property line. The design should explore options that re-orient these views to the north with views to the communal garden. The design should carefully consider the location of any windows on the south façade in the likely event of the future redevelopment of the adjacent property.

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 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 observed that the courtyard side of the building is dominated by circulation and railings diminishing the experience of the courtyard. The applicant should consider an alternative design that reverses the location of the windows on the south façade with the circulation patterns on the north façade. (See above).
- The entry design should present a welcoming feeling and more detail should be provided at the next meeting.
- The Board would like to see materials and color selections that lend to reducing the appearance of bulkiness. The examples provided at the EDG meeting gave an appearance of business; simplicity is a better direction for this structure on a narrow site.

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-12 **Residential Entries and Transitions**

For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and be visually interesting 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 Board thinks that the refined design should create an optimum relationship between the sidewalk, the community room and the entries to the residential spaces.

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 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 return with a detailed design that specifies areas of open space including a specific landscaping plan with vignettes showing how the spaces would be used by residents. The sloping site should be carefully considered in the garden design. Green Factor calculations should be provided.

DEPARTURES FROM DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Departure Summary Table

REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION	BOARD RECOMMENDATION
Residential Amenity Area (SMC23.47A.024) Residential amenity areas are required in an amount equal to 5% of the gross floor area in residential use.	Reduce the amount of amenity area to less than required.	Residential amenity area will be shared with adjacent related building. Design will include access and areas to shared by residents of both buildings.	The Board is willing to entertain this request depending on well the guidance regarding the design of the shared courtyard is followed.

NEXT STEPS

Using the design guidance above the architect should develop the next iteration of the design response. The following items summarize what should be included in the submittal materials for MUP application and recommendation meeting. See guidance above for applicable details.

- 4 sets of MUP plans, 5 copies of the filled out and signed SEPA checklist, owner authorization form, financial responsibility form, site plan (8.5”X 11”) for SEPA large sign (see **Director’s Rule 29-2006**).

- Provide a written response to the Design Review guidelines and 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.
- Provide the topographic survey in the MUP set and the recommendation packet.
- Provide detailed large scale street level vignettes for the street level along SW Avalon Way and inside the courtyard to illustrate the human experience.
- Provide a full color rendering of the building looking southwest from across SW Avalon Way.
- Provide full color shadowed elevations in the MUP plans (N-S-E-W) with material callouts.
- Provide a large scale full color landscape plan in the MUP plans.
- **Provide a full color materials board with tangible examples at the recommendation meeting. Also, provide some pictures of the material applications in built projects.**
- Provide larger scale site plans at the recommendation meeting.
- Please call the Planner (Marti Stave at 206 684-0239) when you have made your MUP intake appointment.

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