

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

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**Project Number:** 3008147

**Date of Meeting:** January 7, 2008

**Notes Issued:** January 31, 2008

**Address:** 4750 Roosevelt Way NE

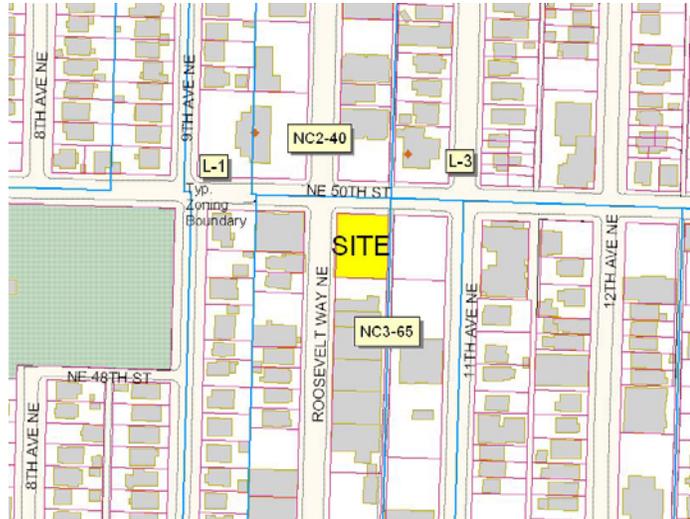
**Applicant:** Johnston Architects for  
Eric Sun (50<sup>th</sup> &  
Roosevelt LLC)

**Board members present:** Tom Nelson  
Tricia Reisenauer  
Sue Jensen

**Board members absent:** Shawna Sherman  
Craig Parsons

**DPD Staff present:** Jess Harris

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Site and Vicinity Description

The site is located at the southeast corner of NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Way NE in the University District. The 11,160 square foot site is zoned Neighborhood Commercial 3 with a 65 foot height limit (NC3-65). The site is developed with a 1 ½ story building (formerly Tubs) situated on the southern portion of the site. There a surface parking lot located on the north portion of the site which is accessed from Roosevelt Way and the alley.

The site is located within the University District Northwest Urban Center Village and is just outside the Light Rail Station Area Overlay District.

Both abutting streets are fully improved and are designated as arterials. A 15 foot wide alley abuts the site on the east. With this project, a 5 foot alley dedication and 3 foot setbacks on both Roosevelt and 50<sup>th</sup> will be required for street improvement purposes.

The site is generally flat and comprised of entirely impervious surface. There are large mature street trees along Roosevelt Way NE and smaller street trees along NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street.

Surrounding property to the west across Roosevelt Way NE, to the east across the alley and to the south is zoned NC3-65. Property to the north across NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street is zoned Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a 40 foot height limit (NC2-40). The zoning transitions to less intense multifamily Lowrise zones farther to the west and northeast.

### Project Description

The preferred scheme consists of a 6-story building with approximately 60 apartments (35 studio, 4 one-bedroom, and 20 two bedroom units), 5000 square feet of street level retail and parking for 48 vehicles in 2 levels of underground parking. Access to the parking would be from the alley. The residential lobby is proposed to be near the southern portion of the façade along Roosevelt Way NE.

The streetscape design vision would include 30-50 foot deep storefront retail along all the street facades except for space (about 12 feet wide) for the residential lobby. Floor to floor heights at the ground floor are expected to range from 14 feet to 17 feet. The parking ramp is not expected to interfere with the retail in that it is planned to occupy the southeast corner of the floor plate.

The green factor is expected to be met primarily by providing a green roof and enhancement of the street landscaping. Open space would be provided on the lid of the parking garage on the alley side.

### Public Comment

Six members of the public attended the meeting. The design-related comments expressed were that they liked massing scheme number 1 (the preferred scheme) which shows a “U” shaped building with a setback along the alley. Another member of the public expressed a strong concern for use of the alley for access to parking for the project since his business uses the alley. He owns the car dealer abutting the site and feels traffic in the alley will be a mess. The alley is not wide enough. Closing the alley during construction is not an option in his opinion.

### PRIORITIES:

The Design Review Board members provided the siting and design guidance described below after visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents and hearing public comment. The Design Guidelines of highest priority to this project are identified by letter and number below. The Design Review program and City-wide Guidelines are described in more detail in the City of Seattle’s “Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings” and in the “University Community Neighborhood Design Guidelines”. The University Community Neighborhood Design Guidelines are provided below in *italics* when applicable.

## **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-3 Entrances Visible from the Street**

**Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.**

*On mixed use corridors, primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street. Secondary and service entries should be located off the alley, side street or parking lots.*

### **A-7 Residential Open Space**

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

### **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.**

*For new buildings located on a corner including, but not limited to the corner locations identified in Map 3(page 9), consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building such as a tower, corner articulation or bay windows.*

*Consider a special site feature such as diagonal orientation and entry, a sculpture, a courtyard, or other device. Corner entries should be set back to allow pedestrian flow and good visibility at the intersection.*

The Board supports multiple commercial entries in that too few entries could create a long streetscape that does not relate well to retail storefront modules in the neighborhood, like at the Seven Gables theatre across the street.

The Board wants the design to reflect or express some difference between the facades to acknowledge the hierarchy of the streets.

The Board supports the location of the residential entry on Roosevelt away from the intensity of NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street as presented.

In providing direction with respect to the corner, the Board feels a strong corner expression is appropriate and supports some step back at the ground floor. The Board discussed the idea of creating a symbolic entry at the corner and felt that it needed to be integrated in the design and is important in creating the “gateway” feature. The Board had mixed opinions about how the facades should meet at the corner. The presentation images showed two concepts, a more classical approach with two similar facades flanked by a strong corner element, and a more modern building with two differing facades that met at the corner. The Board concluded that the corner and façade expressions are very

important and need to be studied. At the next meeting, the Board would like to see studies or analysis of this key corner.

The Board wants attention paid towards the development of the open space in that it is challenging to design open space on roof decks. The Board wants the design to include a comfortable usable space and consider creating a design solution to shield the roof deck from the weather.

### **C. Architectural Elements and Materials**

#### **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.**

*Although no single architectural style or character emerges as a dominant direction for new construction in the University Community, project applicants should show how the proposed design incorporates elements of the local architectural character especially when there are buildings of local historical significance or landmark status in the vicinity.*

*On Mixed Use Corridors, consider breaking up the façade into modules of not more than 50 feet (measured horizontally parallel to the street) on University Way and 100 feet on other corridors, corresponding to traditional platting and building construction. (Note: This should not be interpreted as a prescriptive requirement. Larger parcels may characterize some areas of the University Community, such as lower Roosevelt.)*

*When the defined character of a block, including adjacent or facing blocks, is comprised of historic buildings, or groups of buildings of local historic importance and character, as well as street trees or other significant vegetation (as identified in the 1975 Inventory and subsequent updating), the architectural treatment of new development should respond to this local historical character. New buildings should feature traditional materials or a combination of traditional and contemporary materials employed in a manner that reflects the character of historic buildings in the vicinity*

#### **C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency**

**Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its façade walls.**

#### **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.**

*New buildings should emphasize durable, attractive, and well-detailed finish materials, including:*

- *Brick (especially appropriate).*
- *Concrete (if it features architecturally treated texture or color, other refined detailing, and/or complementary materials).*
- *Cast stone, natural stone, tile.*
- *Stucco and stucco-like panels, if they feature an even surface and properly trimmed joints and edging around doors and windows. Heavily textured finishes with obvious trowel marks are not generally appropriate. Stucco should be avoided in areas that are susceptible to vandalism and graffiti. Stucco and stucco-like panels must be detailed and finished to avoid water staining and envelope failure. Overhangs and protective trim are encouraged to increase weather resistance.*
- *Art tile or other decorative wall details.*
- *Wood, especially appropriate for residential structures.*

*Sculptural cast stone and decorative tile are particularly appropriate because they relate to campus architecture and Art Deco buildings. Wood and cast stone are appropriate for moldings and trim*

*The materials listed below are discouraged and should only be used if they complement the building's architectural character and are architecturally treated for a specific reason that supports the building and streetscape character:*

- *Masonry units. If concrete blocks (concrete masonry units or "cinder blocks") are used for walls that are visible from a public street or park, then the concrete or concrete block construction should be architecturally treated in one or more of the following ways:*
  - Use of textured blocks with surfaces such as split face or grooved.*
  - Use of colored mortar.*
  - Use of other masonry types, such as brick, glass block, or tile, in conjunction with concrete blocks.*
  - Treated to avoid the gray "weeping" effect of wet concrete masonry.*
  - Provided with substantial wood or metal trellis and maintained vine planting such as flowering hydrangea vine, or other non-pest vine.*
- *Metal siding. If metal siding is used as a siding material over more than 25% of a building's façade, the metal siding should have a matted finish in a neutral or earth tone, such as buff, gray, beige, tan, cream, white, or a dulled color such as barn-red, blue gray, burgundy, or ocher. If metal siding is used over 25% of the building façade, then the building design should include visible window and door trim painted or finished in a complementary color and corner and edge trim that covers exposed edges of the sheet metal panels.*
- *Wood siding and shingles except on upper stories or on smaller-scale residential projects.*
- *Vinyl siding.*
- *Sprayed-on finish with large aggregate.*
- *Mirrored glass. This is especially inappropriate when glare could be a potential problem.*

*Where anodized metal is used for window and door trim, then care should be given to the proportion and breakup of glazing to reinforce the building concept and proportions.*

*Awnings made of translucent material may be backlit, but should not overpower neighboring light schemes.*

*Lights, which direct light downward, mounted from the awning frame are acceptable. Lights that shine from the exterior down on the awning are acceptable. Light standards should be compatible with other site design and building elements.*

*The following sign types are encouraged, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors:*

- Pedestrian-oriented shingle or blade signs extending from the building front just above pedestrians.*
- Marquee signs and signs on pedestrian canopies.*
- Neon signs.*
- Carefully executed window signs, such as etched glass or hand painted signs.*
- Small signs on awnings or canopies.*

*Post mounted signs are discouraged.*

*The location and installation of signage should be integrated with the building's architecture.*

*Monument signs should be integrated into the development, such as on a screen wall.*

The Board wants the design to relate to the architectural context, particularly the Seven Gables building, and the library in some way but not necessarily in a traditional way. In other words, a modern interpretation is appropriate.

The Board wants the façade to be interesting and well articulated to break down the scale and provide human scale.

The Board specifically cautioned that if concrete is used at the retail level, then it should not be unfinished. The concrete should have texture or reveals as well as inset material, such as tile.

## **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-2 Blank Walls**

**Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.**

### **D-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 a visually interesting**

**street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.**

*On Mixed Use Corridors, consider setting back a portion of the building to provide small pedestrian open spaces with seating amenities. The building façades along the open space must still be pedestrian-oriented. Pedestrian-oriented open spaces should meet the objectives below as well as the Citywide Design Guidelines. Required open space may be reduced up to 50% if a substantial amount of the street-level open space (on the order of at least 200 square feet), meets the following objectives:*

- *Plazas should be centrally located, on major avenues, close to bus stops, or where there are strong pedestrian flows on neighboring sidewalks.*
- *Plazas should be sensitively proportioned and designed. For example: not more than 60 feet across and no more than 3 feet above or below the sidewalk.*
- *Plazas should have plenty of benches, steps, and ledges for seating. For example: at least one linear foot of seating per 30 square feet of plaza area should be provided; seating should have a minimum depth of 16 inches.*
- *Locate the plaza in a sunny spot and encourage public art and other amenities. For example: at least 50% of the total frontage of building walls facing a plaza should be occupied by retail uses, street vendors, building entrances, or other pedestrian oriented uses.*
- *Provide plenty of planting beds for ground cover or shrubs. For example: one tree should be provided for every 200 square feet and at a maximum spacing of feet apart. Special precaution must be taken to prevent trees from blocking the sun.*

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*On Mixed Use Corridors, entries to upper floor residential uses should be accessed from, but not dominate, the street frontage. On corner locations, the main residential entry should be on the side street with a small courtyard that provides a transition between the entry and the street.*

The Board wants the residential entry to have a transition from the street into the entry as indicated in the guideline and code requirements. The Board discussed the concept of recessed entries but cautioned that an outdoor space needs to be designed with safety in mind. As an alternative they suggested an indoor waiting area would be a good amenity.

The Board wants the blank wall on the east side at the base to receive design treatment and/or landscaping in that it will be visible for the foreseeable future. The Board wants the blank wall on the south side to receive design treatment and/or landscaping.

The Board supports a 3 foot setback on the south side in that it will provide opportunity for windows in the stair tower, and other design solutions to mitigate blank wall.

The Board wants overhead weather protection along all the street facades with the caveat that the canopies do not disturb the street trees. The Board feels that canopies will provide pedestrian comfort as well as break down the scale of the building.

At the next meeting, provide a concept for the commercial lighting and signage.

## E. Landscaping

### E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.

**Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.**

The Board wants the right of way landscaping enhanced especially along NE 50<sup>th</sup> street to provide a better buffer from the traffic. The Board suggested using green screen or plantings to mitigate blank wall.

### Departure from Development Standards

The applicant indicated potential code standard departures as follows;

Code Requirement	Proposed	Rationale
SMC 23.53.035. Structural Building Overhangs. The maximum length of each bay window in the public right of way shall be 15 feet, but requires the bay to angle back into the building on each end of the bay. The bay may only encroach to the full extent into the right of way for a length of 9 feet.	The exact extent of the departure is not yet defined, but the applicant wishes to eliminate the chamfered ends of the bays and square them off instead.	To provide articulation of the façade with shallow bays (18 to 24 inch)

### Note to the Applicant

The Design Review process contemplates that you will keep these guidelines firmly in mind when further developing the project design. The identification of these particular guidelines does not imply that other, non-identified guidelines in the City of Seattle’s “Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings” (1998) and in the “University Community Neighborhood Design Guidelines” may not be called upon in the ultimate decision making regarding this project. However, these identified guidelines should encapsulate the principal concerns regarding this proposal at this time.

Contact me prior to scheduling a Master Use Permit intake appointment. We will need to make sure you have all the documents and fees needed for intake such as, SEPA checklist, large sign map, plan sets and a detailed response to this guidance (CAM 238 attachment B). A preliminary presentation package (11 x 17) depicting graphically how the design meets the Board guidance will be helpful to have at your earliest convenience so we can plan for the recommendation meeting.

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