



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES
OF
THE WEST SEATTLE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
Meeting Date: October 23, 2008**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3008453

Address: 7125 Fauntleroy Way SW
Applicant: R. Kevin McFeeley, The Kenney

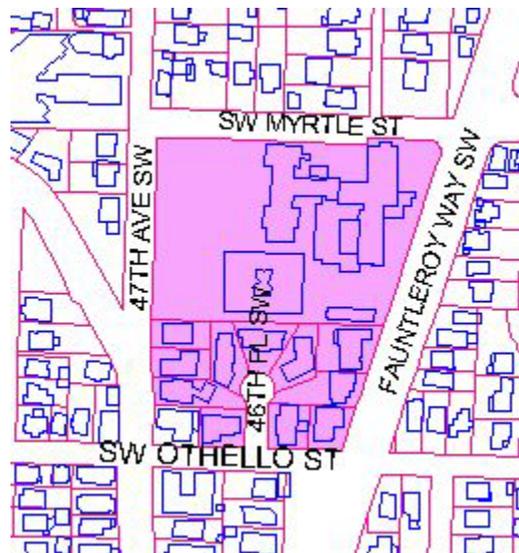
Board members present: David Foster (chair)
Joseph Hurley

Board members absent: Deb Barker
Christie Coxley
Jeff McCord

Land Use Planner present: Michael Dorcy

VICINITY AND AREA DEVELOPMENT:

The site comprises the entire block bounded by Fauntleroy Way SW on the east, SW Myrtle Street on the north, 47th Avenue SW on the west and SW Othello Street on the south. The generally trapezoidal site measures approximately 536 feet in the north/south direction and varies in the east/west direction, from approximately 498 feet at the north to 330 feet at the south end of the site. A keyhole-shaped 46th Place SW penetrates the site at its midpoint along SW Othello Street for approximately 134 feet. The total development site is approximately 205, 739 square feet in extent. The northern portion of the site is zoned Lowrise (L-3) while the southern 222 feet is zoned LDT. There are eight existing residential structures within the LDT-zoned portion of the site, containing 23 residential units proposed for demolition in order to accommodate the envisioned development.



The general neighborhood and vicinity, located just a short distance from Puget Sound, is characterized by low scale development. Areas to the east, west and north are largely zoned single family (SF5000), with a small area of Lowrise-1 just the south of the site and pockets of Lowrise-1 and Lowrise-3 to the northwest. Gatewood Elementary School, a City of Seattle Landmark structure, lies across Fauntleroy Way SW, northeast of the site. Lincoln Park, a hilly and wooded parkland of some fifty acres overlooking Puget Sound lies one block south of the development site. South of the park is the Fauntleroy Ferry Terminal which serves Vashon Island.

The proposed development contemplates both the City's vacating the 46th Place SW right-of-way and a contract rezone (as yet unspecified) to accommodate the following programmatic objectives: 194 "independent living" apartments, 110 "assisted living" apartments (of which 46 currently exist), 15 "memory care" units, 20 "skilled nursing" units. Underground parking would be provided for 176 vehicles.

In addition to razing the smaller residential structures within the portion of the site currently zoned LDT, the development proposal contemplates demolition of several structures that comprise The Kenney, including the "Seaview" building which has been on the site for a century.

ARCHITECTS' PRESENTATION

The presentation by the development team began with brief comments from Kevin McFeeley of The Kenney, indicating something of the history of the institution that has been in West Seattle for more than a century, and its need to adapt to the current market place. This would include improvements and additions to the existing facility to provide a full range of options, from independent living residential units, to assisted living units, to skilled nursing care and to memory care, in order to compete as a full-service "continuing care" retirement community.

The architectural team from AG Architecture then touched upon constraints of the existing facility and site, in particular its location within a neighborhood characterized to date by low-scale residential development. They then proceeded to present early schematic approaches to accommodating the programmatic requirements that had been outlined. Each involved significant increases in on-site densities and the heights and bulk of new structures that would be needed in order to accommodate the programmatic needs.

Following the brief presentations of four different site development configurations that would involve retention and demolition of some existing structures together with construction of new structures, the Board asked a number of clarifying questions that included:

- A request for specific information on which existing structures would be retained, and whether the "Seaview" building would be one of the saved buildings;
- A request for a more detailed account of the "contract rezone" that would be required for the intended development;
- Based upon the mention of a "campus" analogy, suggested questions that would need to be answered during design development of how the campus related to the broader

neighborhood community and how the individual buildings on campus would “talk to each other.”

Public Comment

Thirty two members of the public signed the sign-in sheet for the meeting. Comment touched upon a broad range of issues which included:

- The detrimental effect of losing the “Seaview” building, and in particular its distinctive dome as a neighborhood landmark;
- The impacts of height, bulk and scale evident in all the proposed schemes;
- Impacts on existing views and sightlines from outside the site;
- The potential loss of most of the mature landscaping on site as shown in at least three proposal schemes;
- Concern about the number of vehicular access spots being proposed for the site;
- Setbacks from the sidewalk on the outer perimeters of the site and a sense of buildings looming over them;
- Concern that development would create the impression of an institution separated from the community, a “fortress” in effect;
- Concern regarding the impact of the proposed development on conditions imposed on the previous MUP authorizing expansion of the facility;
- Concern that any up-zone of the property would enable a mega-institution not in keeping with the single-family residential context of the neighborhood;
- One member of the public advocated for niches along the external, street-facing walls of proposed new buildings to provide for better transitions; another suggested increasing setbacks from the property lines to better enable those transitions.

Many of the public comments touched in one way or another on the overwhelming height, bulk and scale of the alternative proposals that were presented and the need to substantially mitigate these impacts. Questions were also raised regarding processes, for example a proposed street vacation and rezoning all or portions of the site, that were beyond the purview of the Design Review Board. There were also comments and questions regarding environmental impacts of traffic and parking that likewise were not within the Board’s competence for comment.

Board Deliberations

The Board noted that the public comments overall did not express an enthusiastic support for the expansive development, especially as that development was portrayed in the first three alternative schemes. There appeared to be less negative reaction to the fourth scheme which maintained a greater amount of surface land not occupied by structures. One of the Board members commented that there were some reasonable and attractive elements associated with the first alternative, in particular as the proposed structures could be seen to meld at places with the existing topography of the site. The Board expressed disappointment that a greater effort had not been made to somehow incorporate the existing Seaview building into the development scheme.

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, hearing public comment, and addressing their major concerns regarding the

proposal, the Design Review Board members present recommended that, given the complexity of the site and the proposal, the applicants should return for a second Early Design Guidance Meeting. At that time the Board will specify the siting and design guidance and identify by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings* of highest priority to this project.

Additionally, the Board members present asked that the following information be provided and presented at the next Board meeting:

- Update the model to show the preferred scheme;
- Show a Code-compliant scheme of development that is now allowed on site, in order to provide a base for understanding what might be allowed by a rezone and what would be the content of any requested departures from development standards;
- Clarify rezone and street vacation intentions for the site; graphically convey the impacts of taller building that might be allowed by a rezone of part or all the site;
- Provide a general inventory of the existing trees on site and indicate the impact upon these trees and other landscaping by the various proposed development schemes;
- Detail any proposed requests for departures from development standards contemplated for any of the proposed schemes;
- Create a clear sense of the various proposed edges at street and property lines in order to vividly convey building heights and setbacks, any proposed buffering landscaping, and any permeability proposed at the campus edges.