



# City of Seattle

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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 22, 2009**  
**Notes Completed: November 5, 2009**

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Project Number: 3008453

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

Board members present: Christie Coxley (chair)  
Myer Harrell  
Joseph Hurley  
Robin Murphy  
Norma Tompkins

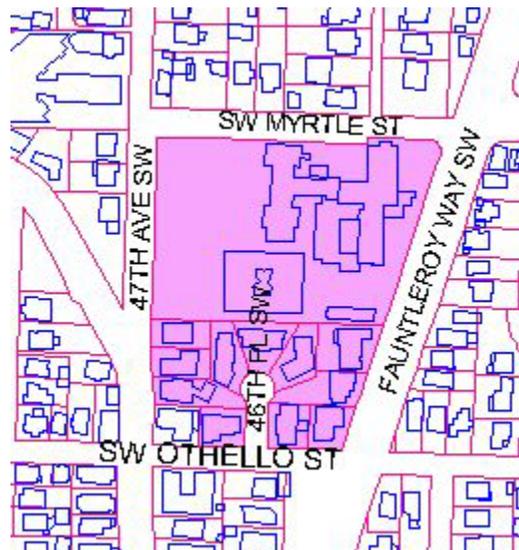
Board member recusant: Brandon Nicholson

Land Use Planner present: Michael Dorcy

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## **VICINITY AND AREA DEVELOPMENT:**

The site comprises the entire block bounded by Fauntleroy Way SW on the east, SW Myrtle Street on the north, 47<sup>th</sup> 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 46<sup>th</sup> 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 above 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 46<sup>th</sup> 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, as presented at the first two Early Design Guidance meetings, contemplated demolition of several structures that comprise The Kenney, including the "Seaview" building which has been on the site for a century. A notable shift in thinking occurred in the presentation at the May 14, 2009 meeting when the architect presented a scheme for retaining and moving the Seaview building.

At the first Early Design Guidance meeting, held on Thursday, October 23, 2008, at the Library of the Madison Middle School, the 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. The Board noted that at the second meeting they would further specify siting guidance and design guidance for the proposed structures and landscaping, as well as identify by letter and number those guidelines found in the City of Seattle's Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily a& Commercial Building of highest priority for the project.

The second Design Review Early Design Guidance meeting was held at 8:00 PM in the Social Hall of the West Seattle Christian Church. At that time, Gene Guskowski from the Milwaukee-based AG Architecture firm, examined five conceptual proposals for the site. The first two were prepared in response to requests from the first Design Review Early Design Guidance meeting: one that was described as allowable within existing zoning for the site, and one that would save the century-old Seaview building *in situ*

The so-called "code-compliant" option was briefly presented but was said to allow 25 percent fewer new units than the Kenney's basic program requirement that would keep The Kenney financially viable. A second option was described as one that would save the Seaview building. In presenting that option, however, it was noted that the century-old building's "construction type" was not conducive to a remodeling program that would transform its units into the larger, more comfortable retirement apartments that retiring baby boomers, the intended audience, would be expecting. Other difficulties lay in the facts that the existing corridors would result in

inefficient floor plans and that existing floor heights would not line up with new ones elsewhere in the complex. Most importantly, a contemplated large, central underground parking garage would not be possible with the building still there. The proposal that would keep the Seaview building, however, would enable The Kenney to get the ultimate number of units it desired by converting the Seaview to something with four units per floor and increasing the height/density elsewhere on the site. The presentation then moved to the three other options. Notably, Option A would include a “re-creation of the Seaview building” on the northeastern corner of the site. At that time, one of the members of the Board, skeptical of a proposed “re-creation” of the Seaview building at the northeast corner of the site, asked whether the architects or developers had looked into the possibility of moving the historical structure to a new location.

The presentation at the May 14, 2009 meeting, held at the West Seattle Senior Center, centered about a new plan to keep the orientation of the Seaview building but move it approximately 200 feet toward Fauntleroy Way SW while raising it some 12 feet in height above its current siting. This would enable the area underneath the Seaview building as currently sited to be available for underground parking. The scheme would also enable the design team to address other concerns that had been addressed at the two earlier meetings, in particular the following:

- Visually and actually opening up the site and addressing perceptions that that campus was too walled-off;
- Providing some visual erosion at the corners and edges of the site;
- Relocate service functions from SW Othello Street to SW Myrtle Street

#### EDG Meeting, No.4, October 22, 2009

#### Architect’s Presentation

The presentation before the Design Review Board was held on October 22, 2009, at the Youngstown Arts and Cultural Center in West Seattle. Gene Guskowski of AG Architecture, Milwaukee, presented a conceptual plan for the entire campus which showed a relocated historic Seaview building, retention of the “Lincoln Vista” complex, constructed earlier in this decade, and extension of the campus into the area south of Lincoln Vista with a structure that would include assisted living, skilled nursing, and memory care units. The opened-up area of the central portion of the campus, west and northwest of the Lincoln Vista complex, would be occupied by a series of interconnected structures containing common areas, open spaces and the bulk of the proposed independent living apartments. Guskowski described coming to the serious consideration of moving the Seaview building as a “eureka moment” in the design process, one that opened the path the process was now proceeding on. He also made mention of the fact that a tree survey of the site had been completed and that the design was proceeding with a goal of preserving these trees on the campus and pointed in particular to an area at the northwest corner of the site where considerable preservation of existing trees was shown.

### Public Comment

Following the architect's presentation and some clarifying questions from the Board members, including questions regarding the Seaview move, comments were solicited from members of the public in attendance. Among those addressed to design issues were the following:

- in the words of one member of the public, the project, after getting off to a troubled start, “was going in the right direction”; the planning was described by another as having “come a long way” from the first presentation to the Board;
- the decision to move the Seaview building was generally applauded;
- there was general approval of what was described as an opening up of the campus and the green landscaped development between the proposed structures;
- taking note of the architect's remarks that proposed buildings on the campus would be designed to be in harmony with the Seaview's historic brick exterior, one member of the public cautioned that making the other buildings resemble the Seaview would not be the direction to go; cloning would not be desirable; variety in style and material would more aptly capture the history of the site and institution that had “grewed” over a century;
- the overall proposal still appeared too “massive on 47<sup>th</sup> “Avenue SW; portions of the proposal, particularly along its western edge still appeared too bulky and out of scale given the context of single-family structures and low density, lowrise multifamily surrounding zoning;
- it was suggested that the program was too large for the site, and some of the perceived excess in massing might best be dealt with by scaling down the proposed sizes of individual units (thought to be excessive, especially for the West Seattle market);
- there was still concern, expressed by neighbors who lived in the single-family-zoned area across SW Myrtle Street, about the operation of the delivery functions to be located across the street;
- there was concern expressed for the potential for light and glare emanating from the development;
- the design team was urged continue to look into providing a series of garden rooftops, for the residents, and for neighbors to view.

### Board Deliberations

One Board member thanked the design team for its job of responding to the Board and public regarding issues raised at the earlier Early Design guidance meetings. Another noted that the latest iteration of design felt less institutional and more residential in scale. In reaction to suggestions made during the presentation that the southeast corner might be developed with a wall to segregate an outdoor path space for residents housed in the memory care structure, the Board suggested that a better approach might be to open that corner up more. A brief discussion with the design team suggested an alternative for an outdoor/indoor path that might address the concern and there was a Board suggestion that the overall campus plan might benefit from a path around the entire property. The design team was commended for the sight line into and possibly

through the campus that was shown between the existing Lincoln Vista structures and the proposed Memory Care and Skilled Nursing structures to the south of it. The Board urged the applicants to seek other opportunities for creating such sight lines and thereby “opening” the campus. This could be especially beneficial for perspectives from the west periphery of the campus.

There were two other particular areas of the Board’s particular interest and focus. One was the area where the south façade of the moved Seaview building, the entrance to the Lincoln Vista structure and the proposed buildings north and west of the Lincoln Vista building came together. This had been described as the location for an extended main entry and the Board highlighted the need to integrate that expanded entry with the existing entrance while at the same time guaranteeing that any structures connecting to the Seaview building would ensure the integrity of the historic building. The other area of particular concern was the plaza proposed to the west of the Seaview building. The Board emphasized the importance of the design development of that area. In brief, the area needed to be “great” and needed to be connected perceptually and physically to the public realm beyond the campus. In addressing the qualities of both magnanimity and connectivity, the design still needs to deal with potential functional conflicts predicated on the choice to bring in service functions at that juncture under the plaza.

For the plaza as for elsewhere throughout the campus the task now before the design team is to show how the proposed structures and the interstices between structures are to be humanized. Sectional studies as well as shadow and light studies would continue to be useful in that demonstration. With this guidance and these directives, together with the guidance and directives offered at the three earlier Early Design Guidance meetings, the five Board members present and deliberating recommended that the project proceed to Master Use Permit application.