



# City of Seattle

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

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE PRIORITIES  
OF THE  
QUEEN ANNE / MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**  
**Date & Place of Meeting: February 4, 2009, Queen Anne Community Center**

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**Project Number:** 3009832

**Project Address:** 1966 Thorndyke Avenue West

**Applicant:** Mark Goodwin (Goodwin Architects) for Michael Frank.

**Board members present:** Matt Roewe (Chair)  
David Nemens  
Mark Garrell  
John Rose Jr.  
Kristen Clem

**Board member absent:** Bill Vandeventer

**DPD staff present:** Mark Taylor, Land Use Planner

**Report Date:** March 2, 2009

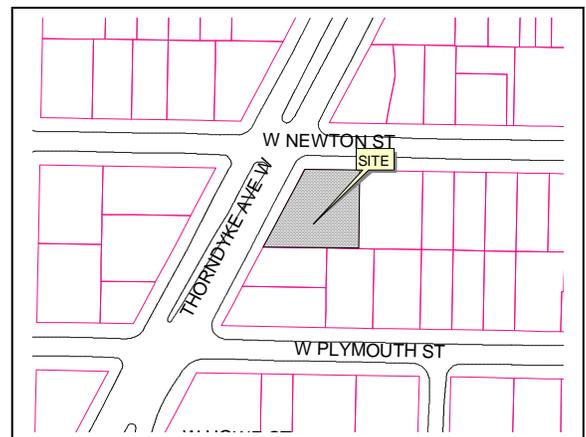
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## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is for the design of a 12 unit multi-family apartment. Access to the 15 stall parking garage will be off West Newton Street.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The subject site is zoned Lowrise 3 (L-3) and currently vacant. The site is relatively flat with the exception of the northerly portion of the site which drops approximately 9 feet to street grade. The lot contains approximately 9,526 square feet of area. The site is an



irregular shaped corner lot with Thorndyke Avenue West abutting to the west and West Newton Street abutting to the north.

### **SURROUNDING AREA DESCRIPTION**

The site is located within a multi-family area. Much of the existing development is a mix of two and three story single-family and multi-family structures. The areas across Thorndyke Avenue West further to the west are zoned Single-Family 5000 (SF-5000). The surrounding area is a hillside generally sloping down from west to east with views of downtown Seattle, Elliott Bay and Mount Rainier.

### **DESIGN PRESENTATION**

The architect presented three schemes at the Early Design Guidance meeting. All three schemes proposed a three-story structure with access off West Newton Street to a parking garage located below the structure. The principal differences between the design options were building height (due to the location of the elevator penthouse), facade massing and modulation along Thorndyke Avenue West and structure width and depth. The first scheme, option 1 is code compliant and has the elevator penthouse located in the northwest corner of the structure, the structure steps along the angle of Thorndyke Avenue West with modulation elements and has the greatest structure width along the south structure elevation and the least structure depth. The second alternative, option 2 requests a departure to structure depth and has the elevator penthouse located towards the middle of the west facade, the entryway is recessed into the building along Thorndyke Avenue West and has the same structure width and depth as option 3. The third scheme, option 3 has the elevator penthouse located towards the middle of the west facade, the entryway projects out from the building along Thorndyke Avenue West and has the same structure width and depth as option 2. The applicant preferred option 3. The Board also preferred option 3 at this time.

### **BOARD CLARIFYING QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS WITH ANY ANSWERS**

- 1 *Question:* What is the view blockage for the various options.  
*Response:* View blockage will occur but will be minimized.
- 2 *Question:* Will each unit have private open space?  
*Response:* Don't know, have not designed project that far yet.
- 3 *Question:* Did you try to break up the mass of the structure into two buildings?  
*Response:* Yes, the parking garage would not allow the development of two adequate structure footprints.
- 4 *Comment:* If parapets are proposed, these could further obscure surrounding views.
- 5 *Question:* What were some of the pros and cons identified in the last public outreach for the last proposed project on the subject site?  
*Response:* One issue was around the downzoning of the property from Neighborhood Commercial 2 - 40 to L-3.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Approximately 6 members of the public attended the Early Design Guidance meeting. The following comments were offered:

- 1 Location of meeting should have been closer to Magnolia Neighborhood.
- 2 The mass and height of building is blocking views.

- 3 Why is having access better off West Newton Street instead of Thorndyke Avenue West? West Newton Street is more actively used by the surrounding neighborhood pedestrians and vehicles.
- 4 Use nonreflective materials for the rooftop to minimize glare.

### **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.

<b>A. Site Planning</b>
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- 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.
- 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-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 project 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.

The Board wants any landscape proposed on the corner of the lot at the street intersection and along the hillside along West Newton Street to maintain and reinforce the residential characteristic of the surrounding area. The Board prefers option three due to the proposed location of the residential principal entrance off Thorndyke Avenue West. This placement is visually prominent and the design proposes to modulate the entry outward. The Board wants further exploration of this entryway design, including careful selection of materials and appropriate scale of doors to further emphasize the prominence of the entryway while avoiding a blank section of the facade.

The Board believes the third option's southerly massing provides appropriate levels of separation for light and air circulation for the proposed duplex to the south of the site. The proposal should also remain consistent with the existing structure setbacks along Thorndyke Avenue West and West Newton Street. The Board wants the open space along Thorndyke Avenue West to be functional and attractive.

The Board wants the vehicle access to be off West Newton Street but only if the

design has adequate sight distance to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety. The Board recognizes that views are an amenity for the surrounding area and encourages the design of the proposal to optimize the view opportunities for the surrounding properties, paying particular attention to the size of parapets, pitched /domed roof or orientation of ridgeline.

## **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 wants the massing of the proposed three-story structure to be compatible with the proposed duplex to the south and the existing structure to the east.

## **C. Architectural Elements**

- 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 wants to review a material and color board at the next meeting to see how these elements will make the overall design unified. Street level vignettes from a variety of viewpoints shall be provided to illustrate how passing pedestrians and residents will view and interact with the proposal and how the proposal fits in with existing development at a pedestrian scale. The Board also wants attention paid to the window fenestration and the parapet, pitched/domed roof to make sure these elements are appropriately balanced with the scale of the proposed three story building.

## **D. Pedestrian Environment**

- D-1 Pedestrian Open Space 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.**
- D-3 Retaining Walls – Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where high retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscape.**
- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas - Building sites should located service elements such as trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front 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 screen from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

**D-7 Personal Safety and Security - Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.**

The Board prefers option three because the principal entrance off Thorndyke Avenue West is visually prominent because it modulates outwards. The Board wants additional emphasis added to the entrance off Thorndyke Avenue West by use of landscaping, careful selection of materials, and appropriate scale of doors to further emphasize the prominence of the entryway. The Board wants the dumpsters to be located within the parking garage and utility meters and mechanical units should be properly screened from street view. The proposed retaining walls along West Newton Street shall be designed to maintain pedestrian and vehicular safety by maximizing sight lines.

<b>E) E. Landscaping</b>
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**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 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.**

**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 wants careful attention paid to the landscaping treatment for the hillside along West Newton Street. The first consideration is to maintain pedestrian and vehicular safety by maximizing sight lines. The second is to create an attractive, tiered landscaped area along Thorndyke Avenue West and West Newton Street which reinforces the existing residential form of the surrounding area. The Board wants to see street vignettes showing the proposed tiered, landscaped system for the frontage along West Newton Street.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departures will be reserved until the final Board meeting and will be based upon the departure’s potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure. The following departures from the development standards are proposed at this phase:

**Departure Summary Table**

<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>REQUEST</b>	<b>JUSTIFICATION</b>
<b>SMC Table 23.45.011 A Maximum building depth is 65% depth of lot.</b>	Increase to 71.5% of lot depth.	Increases light and air for duplex located to south. Improves unit layout possibilities.
Maximum permitted building depth is 65 feet.	Departure to allow building depth to be 71.5 feet.	

**SMC 23.45.011 Structure Depth** – The applicant prefers this option as it improves unit layout possibilities and increases light and air for the duplex located to the south. The SMC would allow 65 feet for the building depth and the applicant is requesting a departure to allow a structure depth of 71.5 feet.

### **NEXT STEPS**

#### **MUP Application:**

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please call Mark Taylor (at 206-684-5049) when you have scheduled your MUP intake appointment.
2. **Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG.** Plan on embedding four 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape and right-of-way improvement plans and three-dimensional street level vignettes into the MUP plan set (4 per sheet) and label sheets DR.

#### **Recommendation Meeting:**

3. The Board wants the following specific design elements presented and discussed in more detail;
  - A. Colored renderings and/or graphics showing the proposed design from the pedestrian perspective at street level. There should be a minimum of two street level vignettes for each street. More may be required to adequately show the design. Please include the mass of the proposed duplex to the south and other structures within the abutting block fronts.
  - B. Submit a color and materials board.
  - C. Submit a fully developed landscaping plan.
  - D. Provide elevations showing the retaining walls along West Newton Street. Provide the height of the retaining walls & landscaping (at maturity) to demonstrate how sight lines will be maintained for pedestrian and vehicular safety.