EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETINGS
OF
QUEEN ANNE/MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Date of Meetings: November 3, 2010
February 16, 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Number:	3010370
Address:	3040 17th Avenue West
Applicant:	Bryan Fish/Fish Mackay Architects, for Unico Properties, Inc.

Early Design Guidance Meeting-November 3, 2010

Board members present:	John Rose, Jr. (Chair) Jill Kurfirst Lipika Mukerji David Delfs
Board member absent:	Mark Garrell
Land Use Planner present:	Michael Dorcy

Site and Vicinity

The L-shaped development site is bounded by 17th Avenue West and an alley/existing buildings to the west, West Barrett Street to the south, 16th Avenue West to the east, and West Dravus Street to the north. Dravus Street is a major car and bicycle arterial. The site is very close to a major bus stop (soon to be Rapid Ride) along 15th Avenue West. The total development site area is approximately 52,000 square feet in size. There are currently several structures located on the development site. The structures include the building previously occupied by the Sound Track Tavern, and its associated surface parking lot, on the corner of 16th Avenue W. and W. Dravus St. Three vacant ramshackle single-family houses and associated outbuildings line 16th Avenue W. These houses have been vacant for several years. A Quonset hut and associated auto storage yard are located on the southwestern part of the development site, on the corner of 17th Avenue W. and W. Barrett St. Finally, an office building is located on the far southeastern section of the site.

The development site slopes to the south, with a grade change of approximately 24 feet (with a high point of 64' at corner of 16th Avenue W. and W. Dravus St., and a low point of 40' at 17th Avenue W. and W. Barrett St.). The development site is zoned Seattle Mixed/Dravus (SM/D 40/85).

Several different uses surround the development site. Across 17th Avenue W. and to the west is a ballfield. Across W. Barrett Street to the south is a soccer field used by Seattle Pacific University and other community soccer teams. To the east, across 16th Avenue W. are a gas station and the Interbay Veterinary. To the north, across W. Dravus Street, are a QFC and a Pagliacci Pizza restaurant. To the north and west of the project, on the same block, are a Starbucks coffee, a Red Mill Burgers and surface parking lot, and the Pandasia restaurant and surface parking lot.

Proposed Project

The proposed project consists of a 7-story building, containing between 220 and 240 residential units, and approximately 4,800 s.f. of retail. The retail is proposed to be located in the portion of the building fronting W. Dravus Street, wrapping partially around the corner to 16th Avenue W. Parking would be provided in three levels of structured at-grade parking for approximately 160-200 vehicles. Due to the grade change, the three at-grade parking levels are able to be accessed from three separate at-grade entrances. The lowest parking level access will be mid-block on W. Barrett Street, The next level up is accessed from the southern portion of the reconfigured alley, and the highest level will be accessed from the alley just south of the Red Mill Burgers' driveway. The at-grade parking is proposed to be screened from view from the streets by residential units that would "wrap" the interior parking garage. A pedestrian entrance to the building is proposed on 17th Avenue W. near the alley entrance, which is also proposed to include a residential lobby and amenity space. The main residential/pedestrian entrance to the building is proposed on 16th Avenue W., near the corner of W. Dravus St.

APPLICANT'S PRESENTATION

The presentation team consisted of Jonas Sylvester from Unico Properties, Inc., and Bryan Fish and Don Mackay from Fish Mackay Architects.

The developer opened the presentation, stating that the team was focused on three things. First, they wished to ensure that the proposed project responds to the relatively newly assigned zoning that had been over-laid on the area, allowing for a project providing housing that was close to work and recreation opportunities. Second, they desired to develop a quality workforce housing project that would be the catalyst for the desired further development in the neighborhood. Third, they wished to create an economically viable project, that is, a project consistent with the current economic realities. It was further noted that the project team had met with several neighborhood stakeholders and surrounding businesses, including the Magnolia Community Club Board, the Queen Anne Community Council, the Interbay Neighborhood Association, Starbucks, Red Mill,

and Pandasia. It was pointed out that the proposed project generally had been met with widespread support.

The architects then presented the proposed project to the Board. They began with a general vicinity map showing the major arterials and surrounding neighborhoods. A more detailed neighborhood map showed the area's zoning and adjacent uses. The development team's take on the SM/D zoning was explained to the Board. The SM/D zoning includes a base height of 40 feet, but allows a building to be built to 85 feet if affordable housing is included. Also, there is a zoning setback requirement from W. Dravus Street, which essentially limits the W. Dravus St. façade to 45 feet tall.

The architects then outlined the three massing alternatives. Alternative A depicted the building at maximum buildout, with the code-minimum required screening of the at-grade parking levels. This alternative was not preferred by the design team as it would create blank facades and provide no modulation.

Alternative B maintains the alley, and includes a maximum buildout of the two sites.. This scheme was not preferred as the two buildings would require two service entrances, and two systems of internal circulation. The loss of efficiency would result in little space for setbacks, articulation, or modulation of the building, and the code-minimum required screening of the at-grade parking levels would again be required.

Alternative C is the scheme preferred by the design team. The scheme includes an alley vacation and reconfiguration into an L-shaped alley to maximize efficiency. The mass of the building is shifted back towards W. Barrett Street to allow for the required setback from Dravus. It would include residential uses that wrap most of the at-grade parking levels from the public's view. The scheme proposes three separate at-grade entries to the three at-grade parking levels, and proposes two residential entries, and one corner retail location. The retail location is intended to complement the existing retail uses along W. Dravus St. The amenity/residential entry on 17th Avenue W. would face the park across the street and act as a lighthouse or beacon to signal to cars traveling to the project to enter the project through the alley. Distinct articulation and modulation is proposed, particularly at the W. Barrett St. side, to break up the massing of the building.

Following presentation of the preferred massing scheme, the design team presented character photos of potential rain gardens and landscaping options that could be incorporated into the project, including a "fissure garden," green walls, or climbing vines that signify the changing nature of the neighborhood from an industrial area to a more vibrant, mixed use area. Finally, the design team presented three renderings of the proposed design concepts. Views were shown of the retail corner at W. Dravus Street and 16th, Avenue W. which anticipates weather protection, covered seating, and new trees and planting; the glassy amenity space and potential pedestrian entry at the reconfigured alley and 17th Avenue W., which would help activate the street at 17th Avenue W. and provide a wayfinding landmark for vehicular entry to the site, and a view of the corner from 17th Avenue W. and W.Barrett St., which provides an enhancement to that street

and provides ground-related residential that would be safe for residents but would also provide eyes on the street.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Following the architect's presentation and the Board's clarifying questions, public comment was received. The first public comment was from the chairman of the Interbay Neighborhood Association. He stated his support of the project, particularly because it provides workforce housing. He stated that he and others have been working on obtaining the zoning for the area for many years, and he is excited about the fresh new energy created by this development and design team. He stated that while he has some design concerns, he understands the needs to keep the building expenses down in order to keep rents down and allow this to be a true workforce housing project. The second public comment was from a member of the Queen Anne Neighborhood Association's land use committee. He stated that he was excited that there was finally going to be a building in Interbay. He noted a couple of concerns of the land use committee. The committee would really like to see the entrances to the proposed townhouse on Barrett, open onto the street, keeping in mind the security issues for residents. The committee also hoped that some type of amenity or courtyard would be provided off the alley. Additionally, he wanted the Board to focus on breaking up the massing of the building by trying to make the building look like several buildings—possibly by changing materials. The design team's community relations consultant, submitted a letter of support from the owner of Pandasia restaurant just north west of the project. The letter stated the owner's general support for the project and development in the neighborhood. Finally, the owner of Red Mill Burgers spoke and stated that he was apprehensive about the parking entrances for the project, and thought it might have unintended consequences for the business' surface parking lot where congestion may occur and where people may park who are not patronizing the Red Mill Burgers.

BOARD DELIBERATIONS

The Board began deliberations by discussing the massing of the building. One member of the Board expressed appreciation that the project was not a "wedding cake" that showed a series of regular, incremental setbacks. The large, lower planes created by the setback from W. Dravus Street was appropriate. The Board member further stated that she believed those looking down on the building, as the adjacent neighborhoods will, would be more pleased without looking down on wedding cake tiers. She further suggested that one way to break up the massing of the top floors of the building might be to add items like the mechanical penthouse and stair over-runs as integral parts of the rooftop façade, elements that create interest and break down the overall massing of the project. Another Board member stated that he was concerned about the larger massing along the W. Barrett St. side of the project. A third Board member stated that she liked the diagonal massing of the project and how it held the two corners at the southern end of the site. The Board's chair observed that the massing made the project more feasible as a workforce housing project and recognized how, if it were to be required to set back at the upper levels could lose efficiency. He liked the massing of the building, as it is a

transitional neighborhood, and the setback on W. Dravus St. made the building unintimidating from the people on that street front. When one Board member stated that he was still concerned that the building would read as a "breadloaf" from the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods, another Board member stated that one way to ameliorate this issue would be to break down the forms so the one building could be read as several separate buildings. Care and careful design would be needed to ensure that the building would still read as a whole, not as a piecemealed building. A Board member stated that while she didn't think the building read as a breadloaf, adding features, such as parapets, to the roof would help with articulation. The Chair stated that it would really help to make the building read as more of a complex of different buildings by using different colors and materials in different masses. A Board member added that it might also help to raise the parapet of the building on the southeast corner enough so that when viewed it would not look like just one plane. The Board asked the design team to look at the massing issue, using the Board's several suggestions, at the next meeting.

Next, the Board discussed the alley vacation. Although the Board does not formally recommend for or against an alley vacation, and does not formally weigh in on public benefit, the Board may review the building as it relates to the operation and design of the building. The Board members supported the alley vacation as it allowed two buildings to become one and allowed for a more efficient building . The Chair stated that he was concerned about where building services would occur, and was unclear about where the garage entries were located. The design team clarified that the parking garage would consist of three separate at-grade levels which were made possible due to the grade change. The parking levels would not be connected by ramping. Each level would be accessible from an at-grade entry, two from different points in the alley, and one from W. Barrett Street. One Board member stated that she liked the planned traffic circulation that encourages traffic to enter and exit on 17th. She thought that limiting the northern portion of the alley to a one-way enter only could help some of the traffic concerns of Red Mill Burgers. Another member stated that he would like to know what the project was doing to activate the alley, to pull pedestrians through the alley to 17th Avenue W. to W. Barrett St. The first Board member replied that she thought the function of the alley in this instance was not to invite pedestrians in, but to allow for services/auto access. She did not see this project or location as a "Post Alley" or "Alley 24 situation." Rather than walking through the alley, pedestrians should be encouraged to walk on the sidewalks surrounding the project to activate the neighborhood. Another Board member asked whether the easiest way for residents to get to neighboring restaurants (Panda's and Red Mill Burgers) would not be to walk through the alley. Shouldn't that call for some kind of alley improvement? She suggested that the idea of a courtyard in the alley might be a good one. The Board member who had suggested a more utilitarian role for the alley pointed out that there was no residential lobby exiting into the alley; as shown, the residential lobby closest to the alley would exit onto 17th Avenue W., just to the south of the existing restaurants. One Board member observed that an issue still remained as a concern and that was how the building will face the alley and the back of the Pandasia, Red Mill Burgers, and Starbucks buildings. The Board asked the applicant to return to the Board with elevations and/or renderings of the view toward the project as viewed from the QFC parking lot across W. Dravus Street on the north. The Board also asked

the applicants to give as clear vision for their approach to pedestrian and vehicular safety in the alley area.

The Board turned its discussion to encouraging activation of street facades. The Chair stated that he had a concern that there was no entrance into the lower units on W. Barrett Street. As a clarification, a Board member noted that the Building Code and accessibility standards create a problem in providing such entrances due to ADA, and that the applicant might think about pursuing a variance from this requirement from the building code. She stated that stoops might be a good idea here, as it would create privacy. The Board asked the applicant to take a look at the option of providing such individual entrances onto W. Barrett Street. One Board member stated that he would like to see curb bulbs to "create" parking on W. Dravus St. to activate 16th Avenue W. and provide traffic calming measures if supported by SDOT. One of the members disagreed with this idea, saying that she believed it was already an activated retail corner and that adding parking in this location might detract from it. It was pointed out that there is already parking on W. Dravus St. that helps activate the area and provide retailers with parking.

The Board then discussed in fuller detail how the roof of the building might appear to other neighborhoods. It was suggested that a green roof should be implemented. This green roof, it was noted by another Board member, would not need to be occupied by residents but should include some green. The Board agreed that the applicant should be asked to consider this idea.

DESIGN PRIORITIES

The Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance 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.

The Board found that with additional refinement, the applicant's preferred scheme was also the scheme preferred by the Board. The Board included several specific requests of the applicant in its development of design moving forward, as noted below.

Guidelines of highest priority

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. Entrances should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.
A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.
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-8 Parking and Vehicle Access. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.
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 felt that the applicant should look at providing individual entrances to the units on W. Barrett Street to encourage human activities and provide a better transition between the building and the street. The Board would also like to know how the residential lobby on 17th Avenue W. will look. The Board thought that Guideline A-10 had been addressed, but stated that it was still a high priority for the project.

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 near-by, 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 of the adjacent zones.

The Board asked the applicant to consider different materials and additions, such as raised parapets, elevator and mechanical equipment, and a green roof to help break down the appearance of mass from neighboring buildings and the nearby hills. The roof (s) should be thought of as a separate façade in need of careful design attention.

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 and exhibit an overall architectural concept.

The Board asked the applicant to break down the composition of the building, to break down massing. The Board would like the building to read as separate buildings that work together.

C-3 Human Scale. The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.

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.
C-5 Structured Parking Entrances. The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

The Board was particularly concerned about the façade along 16th Avenue W., that it be activated and not include a blank wall hiding the portion of the above-grade parking garage. Other than this portion of the building, the Board felt that Guideline C-5 was being addressed in the early conceptual drawings.

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. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open spaces 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-5. Visual Impacts of Parking Structures. The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.
D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas. Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When it is not possible to locate these elements away from the street front, they should be screened from view using high-quality and compatible materials 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.
D-8 Treatment of Alleys. The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.
D-9 Commercial Signage. Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.
D-10 Commercial Lighting. Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.
D-11 Commercial Transparency. Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.

The Board asked the applicant to give more thought to the activity on W. Barrett Street, and how the design might deal with the elevation change to deal with safety issues. In particular, the Board asked the applicant to consider how the residential units on this side related to the ground level to increase safety and security. The Board asked the applicant, with regards to Guidelines D-9 and D-10, to be respectful of the existing recommendations of the Interbay Neighborhood Association for lighting and/or commercial 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.

A second Early Design Guidance meeting was held on February 16, 2011 at the request of the applicants.

Early Design Guidance Meeting-February 16, 2011

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Board member absent:	Mark Garrell
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Design Team Presentation

Following the opening remarks from the Board Chair who had suggested that the presenters "cut to the chase" by omitting the contextual analysis which had been adequately presented at the first EDG meeting. The Board was primarily interested in what responses had been made by the design team in response to the guidance given at the first meeting.

Brian Fish of Fish Mackay Architects addressed the Board's first piece of guidance from the last meeting, namely, that the project should read as several smaller buildings. Mr. Fish showed how the team had varied parapet heights in order to achieve the impression of a variety of roof heights. Overall, in addition to creating architectural variety, the differential in parapet heights furthered the sense and the reading of the project as a self-

contained village of buildings that work together. The project has also included setbacks on the 17th Avenue W. façade, and a varied use of materials to reduce the perceived scale of the project. At the corner of 17th Avenue W. and W. Barrett Street, the corner was located at the property line, rather than pulled back. This was contrasted with the corners at 16th Avenue W. and W. Dravus Street and 17th Avenue W. and W. Dravus Street , where the corners were clearly pulled back from their respective property lines..

The Board had also asked the project team to explore changing the expression of the roof, and potentially adding green roof elements, to ensure that views from Queen Anne and Magnolia were made more pleasant. The project team addressed views both from Queen Anne and Magnolia and demonstrated that given the elevation of the building any views containing glimpses of the roof would be from such distances that the addition of small green areas would not make much of an impact. The project team demonstrated that only from as far away as 24th Avenue W. and W. Dravus Street on Magnolia would the roof becomes visible. With the project site and proposed structure superimposed on a photo from that location, it was clear that any greenery on the roof would be difficult to see. The project team explained that they would prefer to concentrate the project's limited resources on what could be perceived from the pedestrian experience at or near the building rather than on the roof where they would not provide perceptible benefit to anyone. One of the potential additions to the project would be rain-garden features on 16th and 17th Avenues as well as bio-retention planters on some of the lower decks.

The Board previously had asked the project team to explore the idea of including direct entries from the street into the townhouse units which fronted onto 16th Avenue W. and W. Barrett Street. The team had previously explained that for safety and design reasons, direct entrances from units to the street were not preferred. At this presentation the project team showed more detailed drawings of the two facades, which include units with ground-related patios and balconies. The outdoor areas were intended to be used by tenants as "outdoor rooms," separated from the sidewalk by landscaping and a railing. This was intended to give a sense of security to tenants, while still maintaining "eyes on the street."

The project team then offered some details in also emphasized their advances in landscaping design. Blank walls, including those blank walls facing the alley, would be screened with plantings, the exact species of these plantings at this point in the design process still to be determined.

<u>Public comment</u>
A half dozen members of the public affixed their names to the sign-in sheet at the meeting. John Coney from the Queen Anne Community Council commented that he supported the development of market rate housing near the Bus Rapid Transit line, and that he believed that the design of the building has come a long way from the initial presentations of the team to the Queen Anne Community Council. . Mr. Coney also asked for more pedestrian lighting to improve safety in the area, noting that the proposal area was the number one area for vandalism in the neighborhood. No other public comments were received at the meeting.

Board comments and deliberation

The Board agreed with the shift in emphasis away from any elaborate treatment of the roof as a separate façade, backing off from what had been one of their expressed priorities at the first Early Design Guidance meeting. They thanked the presenters for the clear demonstration of the lack of perceptual benefit from extensive rooftop greening. They expressed their support for more green area within the realm of the pedestrian experience instead of the addition of green roofs.

The Board also agreed with the project team's approach on the street-related units. It was suggested by the Board members that DPD coordinate with SDOT and attempt to reduce the amount of right-of-way required to be dedicated on W. Barrett Street, to allow for a deeper sidewalk and more landscape plantings to create more private and usable patios. The Board noted that this approach is common and very successful in Vancouver B.C., where low lying, but dense landscaping (such as barbary hedge) is used to shield patios from the street from a safety perspective, but allow for eyes on the street. The goal in landscaping depth near the patios would be something exceeding at least an arm's length in depth from the sidewalk. It was suggested that a reduction in the required right-of-way width, on W. Barrett Street, a street with little traffic, would help create an excellent and more livable street. The Board also supported the addition of more planting material in the alley facades to screen blank walls.

The Board requested additional exploration of the lobby area facing 17th Avenue W. Currently the lobby is designed to pull back approximately 3-4 feet from W. Barrett St. The Board members suggested that reducing the setback would allow more visibility of the lobby from W. Dravus Street should the Red Mill or Kozber properties ever redevelop to the street property lines in the area north of the 17th Avenue W. entry to the building. The reduction in setback would allow for an extended entrance canopy that would mark a more obvious the residential point of entry. The Board responded positively to the general design of the lobby space, including the perceived double-height glass entry.

Board members stated that the perception of the building's mass has been effectively reduced, and the project team answered its concerns regarding the building massing as well asviews of the roof. Board members responded favorably to the detailing of the elevations, including the variation in units with balconies and different levels, and the different materials chosen to break down the massing.

Board members had some questions regarding materials, and suggested that the gray/white material on the north and west facing interior (alley facing) façades be reconsidered, since the impression given in renderings shown made the façade treatments too stark. Board members suggested maintaining the playfulness shown elsewhere in the choice of materials at this location, as well as providing greater articulation and sense of depth to these interior facades.

The Board members also suggested using a more sturdy material than hardy board at levels where people or cars could damage the material. Panelized masonry or a brick-like material might provide a solution in these areas. The Board supported the notion of bringing the material at the base of the 16th Avenue W. and W. Barrett Street corner up a bit, but in a manner that still emphasized the "groundedness" of that portion of the structure.

The Board supported the project's moving forward to a Master Use Permit application and noted that they looked forward to a future recommendation meeting on the project after it had undergone even further refinement.

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