



City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director



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

Project Number: 3010551

Address: 101 John Street

Applicant: Todd Kilburn, Kilburn Architects

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, March 16, 2011

Board Members Present: John Rose (Chair)
David Delfs
Jill Kurfirst
Lipika Mukerji

Board Members Absent: None

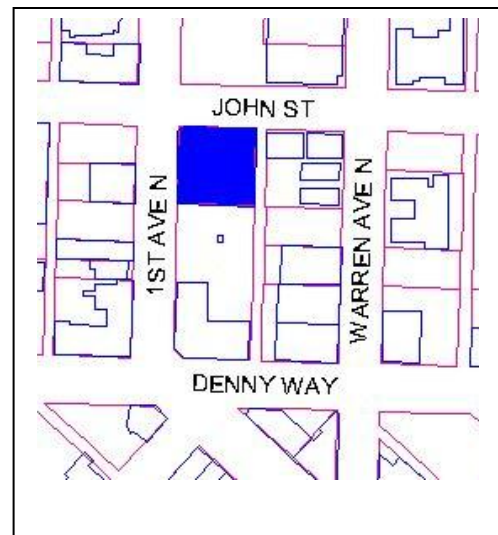
DPD Staff Present: Lisa Rutzick

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 3 -65
Uptown Urban Center

Nearby Zones: (North) NC3-65
(South) NC3-65
(East) NC3-65
(West) NC3-65

Lot Area: 14,374 square feet



Current Development: Three single story commercial and restaurant buildings (to be demolished) and one five-story apartment building (to remain).

Access: No parking is required or proposed.

Surrounding Development: East of The Fionia Apartment Building located on the subject site is an alley with two to four story apartment buildings. To the north is a surface parking lot and to the south is a surface parking lot with a two story commercial building beyond. Across 1st Ave North are several one to four story commercial, office and restaurant uses.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: Variety of structure sizes and uses ranging from one to five stories with residential, office and commercial uses. The Seattle Center campus and its ancillary buildings and parking lots have a strong presence in the Uptown neighborhood. The main north-south arterials are typically bound with commercial uses, while the multifamily residential uses are more often located at least a half block off of the commercial streets.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a mixed use building with five floors of residential uses with approximately 25 residential units above a commercial base. The existing Fionia Apartment building is located on the same site and is proposed to remain. No parking is proposed.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: March 16, 2011

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include a six story building with residential uses above a commercial base. All of the schemes also included a 20-foot wide interior courtyard space between the proposed building and the existing Fionia building.

The first scheme (Option A) showed a historic block configuration with bay windows. The residential entry would be from John Street. This is the applicant's preferred scheme.

The second scheme (Option B) showed a historic block alternative with classic masonry and cornice lines, punched windows and the residential entry off of John Street. The proportions of this option respond to the existing Fionia building in the most literal fashion.

The third scheme (Option C) showed a contemporary loft scheme with a residential entry from First Avenue North and a setback at the top floor to respond to the datum line established by the height of the Fionia.

PUBLIC COMMENT

One member of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Preferred the first scheme with the squared projecting bay windows. Suggested that the blank wall (east wall of the proposed building) use color, green screen or mural of some sort to provide visual interest for the Fionia residents. Would like to see decorative gate included at the entryway to the interior courtyard space. Concerned that there not be views between private residential units. Reminder that the street level design of the commercial space is critical.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

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. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#). The Uptown Neighborhood Design Guidelines identify the area where the subject site is located as an *Uptown Urban Character Area*.

A. Site Planning

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

Throughout Uptown, major entrances to developments should be prominent. The use of distinctive designs with historical references is strongly encouraged. Design, detailing, materials and landscaping may all be employed to this end. Building addresses and names (if applicable) should be located at entrances, tastefully crafted. Streets throughout Uptown should be sociable places that offer a sense of security, and residential building projects should make a positive contribution to life on the street.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board supported the location of the residential entrance on John Street, further reinforcing the more residential character of this street and focusing the commercial activity and frontage on to 1st Avenue North. The Board also discussed at length the proposed courtyard and the emphasized that the

entrance to the courtyard from the sidewalk should be welcoming and allow views through to the courtyard from the sidewalk. A decorative gate that is designed as a special, unique feature is recommended. The Board was also very supportive of situating the lobby at the corner of the northwest corner courtyard.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

**Uptown Supplemental Guidance:
Throughout Uptown encourage outdoor dining**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of designing a street level commercial space which allows the commercial activity to spill out into the street. The Board encouraged the use of roll up doors or window systems that open up to the street and engages with the sidewalk environment. The Board noted, however, that such activity does not need to wrap around onto John Street given the quieter, more residential nature of John Street. The commercial activity should be focused along First Avenue North, which has a stronger, more urban character.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that although the Fionia is located on the same (not adjacent) site as the proposed building, the intent of this guideline applies. Sensitivity to the privacy and views from the existing residential units is critical and should inform the design of the east elevation and interior courtyard.

A-7 Residential Open Space. Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was pleased with the proposed courtyard space, but warned that the design of this space should consider the lack of solar exposure. It is likely that an interesting hardscape design, rather than a heavily landscaped design would make sense given this condition. Interesting paving, furniture and exterior lighting (under lit benches, catenary lighting, etc) that highlights the hardscape elements and add light and life to the courtyard are strongly encouraged.

A-10 Corner Lots. Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

Generally, buildings within Uptown should meet the corner and not be set back. Building designs and treatments as well as any open space areas should address the corner and promote activity. Corner entrances are strongly encouraged, where feasible. Corner lots are often desirable locations for small publicly-accessible plazas, turrets, clock towers, art, and other special features. Design corner retail entries to not disrupt access to residential uses above.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board clearly recognized the importance of the corner location of the subject site and agreed that the treatment of the corner in all of the alternatives was an appropriate approach. All of the schemes included a solid corner piece for the entire height of the structure. The Board did note, however, that in the abutting Fionia building, the punched residential windows extend down to the ground level and this may inform the design of the north façade of the proposed building. The Board suggested that the fenestration at ground level may differ on the two building fronts at ground level to respond to the different character of the two streets.

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.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

The Uptown Urban character area embraces high quality urban infill, and responds to special relationships with nearby civic institutions. The following features are encouraged:

- **Consistent street wall;**
- **Engaging the sidewalk / storefront transparency;**
- **Building siting that responds to Seattle Center entry points;**
- **Defined cornices;**
- **High quality, durable materials;**
- **Distinct residential and commercial components; and**

Throughout Uptown, upper level balconies are discouraged on the street side of residential buildings. Bay windows are a preferred architectural element on the street side. This guideline is intended to avoid open displays of storage, which are sometimes an unintended consequence of street side balconies.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was supportive of the glassy, light bay windows proposed in the preferred scheme. The Board offered several suggestions about how the first and third design concept alternatives might be melded together to create a more contemporary design that is more responsive to the precedent of the Fionia Apartment building – See C-2 below. The Board was supportive of a strong commercial

base that engages with the street and the residential levels above responding more to the residential Fionia building.

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. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board liked the third option with the more modern, contemporary massing that is broken up and would like to see the proportions of the third option inform the preferred option.

The Board noted that the preferred scheme should endeavor to break up the verticality of the building with a different treatment of the top level. The Board was very interested in how the more modern scheme (option 3) could inform the preferred scheme (option 1) in the following ways:

- Include a clear, distinguished top that responds to the datum line of the Fionia Apartment building. This may be in the form of a setback or a change in materials.
- Design a clear, gracious entrance on First Avenue for the commercial uses.
- Develop a dynamic street level design with large, transparent storefront windows that are operable.
- Breaking up the façade with modern bays that emphasize the sleekness of the building and allow the sense of light and activity of those units to be visible to the street.
- Endeavor to retain the massing of Option 3 with the double height windows that express a loft-like feel.

See also B-1.

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.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

Throughout Uptown, decorative exterior treatments using brick, tile, and/or other interesting exterior finish materials are strongly preferred. Quality exterior finish materials should be incorporated at all levels and on all exterior walls. Use materials, colors, and details to unify a building's appearance; buildings and structures should be built of compatible materials on all sides.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that it will look forward to reviewing a detailed color and material palette with durable and high quality materials responsive and sensitive to the Fionia.

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.**

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

Throughout Uptown, entries should be designed to be pedestrian friendly (via position, scale, architectural detailing, and materials) and should be clearly discernible to the pedestrian. Individual or unit entrances in buildings that are accessed from the sidewalk or other public spaces should consider appropriate designs for defensible space as well as safety features (e.g., decorative fencing and gating). Landscaping should be consistent with these features.

Throughout Uptown special attention to the pedestrian experience and street right-of-way should be given along pedestrian corridors as identified on the map (pg. VI).

... In addition, streetscape features such as street clocks and benches are encouraged in Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas.

Supplemental guidance related to Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances is provided under Guideline A2 – Streetscape Compatibility.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board specified that the gated entry to the interior courtyard and new residential lobby entrance should be designed to be a gracious and special space that will be visible to pedestrians.

- 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.**

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas artwork and decorative surfacing may provide an alternative wall treatment to landscaping in some locations. However, painted murals are the least preferred solution to larger wall areas in Uptown.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the design of the east elevation at great length and felt strongly that this wall be as sensitively designed as

possible. The Board adamantly agreed that the elevation include some areas of transparency (preferably glazing, provided that the Building Code permit) that provide light into the courtyard at night and help break up the massing of the facade in an interesting manner. While views to and from the new building (stairwells) into the courtyard would be desirable, the provision of glass block or peek-a-boo slits with obscured glass that would allow light to filter through would be sufficient to help break up the mass of the east elevation. Other lighting sources or integrated fixtures may also help provide visual interest to this façade. Where there are walls perpendicular to the Fionia Apartments, the Board encouraged the use of expansive glazing in these spaces.

- 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 elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

The Board noted that at the next meeting, it will be interested in reviewing the location and function of service areas.

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

As noted earlier, the Board encouraged clear views between the sidewalk, the gate entrance, the residential lobby and the courtyard both for visual interest and security. A lighting plan should be presented at the next meeting.

- 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board requested a signage concept plan.

- 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.**

See D-7.

- 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board supported the extensive transparent glass storefront windows proposed along First Avenue North.

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.

Uptown Supplemental Guidance:

Throughout Uptown...landscaping should be substantial and include a variety of textures and colors, to the extent possible. Landscaping should be used to enhance each site, including buildings, setbacks, entrances, open space areas, and to screen parking and other less visually attractive areas. Encourage planted containers at building entries.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the viability of landscaping in the courtyard and wants to ensure that any proposed landscaping is appropriate for the limited solar access. Where possible, however, the Board would like to see landscaping and green walls incorporated into the courtyard and residential entryway. The hardscape design of the courtyard is critical and should strive to be both usable and aesthetically pleasing as it will be highly visible to the Fionia residents.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) 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(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departures were requested:

- 1. Green Factor (SMC 23.47A.016):** The Code requires that a Green Factor of .30 for the entire site. The applicant proposes to only meet the Green Factor calculation based on consideration of only the proposed building (not including the existing Fionia).

The Board indicated concern with this request and would like to review what would be needed in order to meet the required Green Factor. If this appears to be in an unreasonable proportion to the new building, then they might consider some level of departure. If the applicant would like to also show alternative levels of compliance with this standard at the next meeting, the Board would be better able to consider the options and the impact on the project's overall success. The Board encouraged the applicant to explore a green roof and opportunities to add vegetation to the Fionia. The Board was also very interested in a high

quality, well-designed right-of-way planting strip and using every effort to make the pedestrian environment as green and friendly as possible.

- 2. Structural Building Overhang (SMC 23.53.035.A4):** The Code requires a maximum of 12 foot long structural building overhangs. The applicant proposes 15-foot long structural building overhangs.

The Board indicated early support for the proposed departure and a preference for the longer bays as a better architectural expression of the living/active areas of the units that help engage the interior uses of the building with the street life. Furthermore, the nature of the projections literally extends the life and activities of the building residents into the streetscape, thereby activating and enlivening both the building and the streetscape.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.