



City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3011255

Address: 7100 Delridge Way SW

Applicant: Linda Abe for Su Development

Date of Meeting: Thursday, April 28, 2011

Board Members Present: Brandon Nicholson (Chair)
Christie Coxley
Robin Murphy
Norma Tompkins

Board Members Absent: Myer Harrell

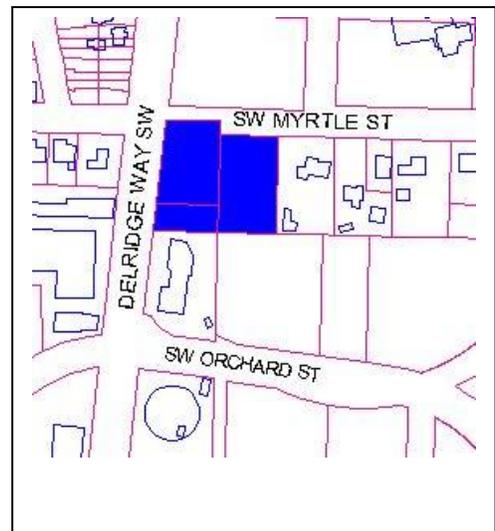
DPD Staff Present: Shelley Bolser, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial (C1-40) for the western half of the site and Single Family (SF 5000) for the eastern half of the site

Nearby Zones: (North) SF 5000
(South) C1-40 and SF 5000
(East) SF 5000
(West) SF 5000

Lot Area: 44,138 square feet



Current Development: The site is currently undeveloped and is heavily vegetated with trees and shrubs.

Access: There is no existing vehicular access to the site. A public staircase is located in the unopened SW Myrtle St right of way on the north side of the site.

Surrounding Development: Commercial uses, multi-family development, and single family development are located to the west along Delridge Way SW. Single family development and a school are located to the east. The parcels north of SW Myrtle St right of way are also undeveloped and heavily vegetated, and are owned by the City of Seattle. The parcel to the south of the site includes a gas station, convenience store, and surface parking.

The area includes many environmentally critical areas, such as steep slopes on the ridge east of Delridge Way SW, and a riparian corridor and wetlands in the low areas west of Delridge Way SW.

ECAs: Several areas of the subject property have been mapped as steep slope Environmentally Critical Areas. DPD has granted an exemption from some of these areas, with the requirement that the entire site is subject to geotechnical review and conditions.

The areas on the eastern portion of the site have not been exempted, and therefore no development is permitted in these areas without additional environmentally critical area reviews.

The site is characterized by steep slopes and heavy vegetation, and separates the commercial node and multi-family development at Delridge Way SW from the single family residential and public school uphill to the east.

Neighborhood Character: Development along Delridge Way SW is oriented to this north-south corridor, and includes low density commercial uses that are primarily auto-oriented, with large surface parking areas separating the commercial use from the sidewalk. Newer townhouses and older single family residences are also located along this area of Delridge Way SW. Single family development dominates most of the areas east and west of the Delridge Way SW corridor.

Delridge Way SW is an arterial with a high amount of traffic and bus lines that connect this area with downtown Seattle. A bus stop is located immediately north of this site on Delridge Way SW. Another bus stop is located a block south on SW Orchard Street, where transit connects this area with the Admiral neighborhood to the north and Tukwila to the south.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to develop the site with a mixed-use residential and commercial building, at grade and underground parking, and three single family residences. The proposed mixed-use building is four stories tall, including 1,344 sq. ft. of retail space and 77 parking spaces at grade, with 58 apartments above. Three 2-story single family structures are proposed for the SF 5000 zoned portion of the site. Parking for the single family structures is proposed in the garage of the mixed-use building, with a bridge connecting the mixed-use building to the single family structures.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: August 12, 2010

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options included the same proposed curb cut locations, most of the building mass at or near the west property line, pedestrian connections to the public staircase at SW Myrtle St, bus stop enhancements at Delridge Way SW, and detached single family residences with internal site connections to the larger building.

The first scheme (Option A) showed a large rectangular massing with a double loaded corridor, centrally located on the commercial portion of the site. The west façade was oriented at an angle to the property line, reflecting the context of nearby development and building orientation to Delridge Way SW. The west façade included a checkerboard pattern of windows, walls, and recessed decks to reduce the appearance of mass. Live-work units were located at the street level at Delridge Way SW. Four single family residences were located on the single family zoned portion of the site, with pedestrian connections to the larger building.

The second scheme (Option B) showed a similar double loaded corridor and a west façade placed at an angle to Delridge Way SW. Live-work units were again located at street level. The façade treatment for the residential building and the live-work units were distinct from each other, to draw attention to the different uses and scale. The east portion of the building included a courtyard with a bridge to access the four single family houses proposed immediately to the east.

The third scheme (Option C) was the applicant preferred option and included a U-shaped mass for the mixed-use building, with open space in the center. Three single family residences bordered the east side of the open space and were connected to the larger building via an open bridge walkway. The larger building was a story lower than options A and B, and the west façade was located at the west property line. Retail was provided at the street level on Delridge Way SW. The large opening at the second and third floors allowed a visual connection from the street through to the internal courtyard and would allow the front facing units to see into the courtyard. The materials were shown in concept as a neutral color for north-south oriented walls, and an intense color for east-west oriented walls (balconies, opening, etc.) to provide

visual interest as a person moves past the building. The single family detached residences were intended to respond to the different context uphill from the site, which is smaller scale residential with more pedestrian activity and an urban forest setting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Appreciated the development located as far west on the site as possible, to reduce the noise and visual impacts to the residences uphill from the site
- Appreciated the new development and the design response to the neighborhood
- Appreciated the developer's other projects and operation of other projects around the Puget Sound area
- Advised the applicant to retain the maximum number of trees to reduce noise and air pollution
- The site should be activated at the perimeters, with open sight lines at the sidewalk
- The SW Myrtle staircase should be activated, well lit, and safe
- What does the south façade look like for the preferred option?
 - Apartment windows facing south, and a blank wall at the lower level adjacent to the gas station
- Concerned about the slope stability at this site
- Requested a setback at the west façade, with usable retail at the street level

FINAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: April 28, 2011

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The proposed development included a U-shaped mixed-use residential and retail building on the west portion of the site, with three single family houses east of the internal courtyard. A bridge was shown connecting the mixed-use building with the single family houses.

The proposed development would require removal of all trees and vegetation in the western part of the site, and retention of the trees and shrubs in the



eastern part of the site. The applicant explained that they intend to remove non-native invasive species and garbage from the eastern areas of the site, and replant with Western Washington native plant species.

F: LOOKING EAST FROM THE WEST SIDE OF DELRIDGE AVE THROUGH THE RESIDENTIAL BLOCK AND INTO THE FORESTED COURTYARD



At the Delridge Way SW street front, the retail spaces included glass roll-up doors to connect the street with the retail or restaurant space. This would be the first type of pedestrian oriented retail in the immediate area.

The north portion of the street level façade was proposed as a green wall with seating and a canopy to offer bus patrons a place to wait for the bus. This area would connect the bus stop activity with the proposed retail/restaurant activity.

Another green wall was shown at the south end of the street level façade, near the driveway and apartment building entry. This green wall screens a blank wall and a service area of the building. The driveway was shown at near the south end of the street level façade, with the residential pedestrian entry immediately to the north.

The materials included fiber cement panels in a very light off-white color, corrugated metal siding in a combination of bright accent colors (red, aqua, and green), and two types of glass storefront treatment. The application of colors and materials was intended to provide a 'colorless' flat front façade, with bright color side wall accents visible as a person travels by the site.

The internal courtyard of the building was visually connected to the west, through a second level opening in the façade. The elevator to the parking garage was shown in this area, bringing activity to the street front at that level.

The courtyard was described as 80' wide, with three story tall buildings on three sides. The fourth side of the courtyard would be open to the single family structures to the east. The bridge would cross over the courtyard, one story above the courtyard surface. The separation

B: BIRDS-EYE VIEW LOOKING EAST AT THE COURTYARD & SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES



between structures, the height of the structures, and the light colored internal walls were intended to maximize light and air to the courtyard.

LOOKING SOUTH AT PEDESTRIAN RIGHT OF WAY AND ILLUMINATED FACADE AND GREENWALL



The north elevation of the building includes windows, three points of entry to the development, and light fixtures near the entries to enhance security. The public right of way between the stairs and the building would be planted with shrubs and groundcover.

The efforts to enhance vegetation and green

site design include green walls, adequate soil depth for trees in the courtyard, pervious concrete sidewalks at Delridge Way SW, and retention of trees and shrubs on the eastern portion of the site.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately three members of the public attended this Design Recommendation meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Appreciated the proposed design.
- A green roof on the western portion of the mixed-use building would be good
- Are the single family houses rentals as well?
 - Yes, they are.
- Why are three houses proposed, and will they be stable on the hillside?
 - Part of the Environmentally Critical Areas Administrative Conditional Use review; this is what is possible with the steep slope ECA on that part of the site
 - The foundation will be pilings driven deep into the hillside to create stability and minimize the impact on the slope
- How far to the east will the site be cleared of vegetation?
 - The steep slope buffer is immediately east of the houses, and no clearing will occur from the edge of the buffer to the east.
- Will the SW Myrtle stairs be closed during construction?
 - No.
- What is the applicant's plan for safety and trash pickup near the stairwell? The stairs have had problems with crime and debris.

- The applicant will pick up any trash that falls on their property, and they intend to maintain and clean up the area
- Lighting and windows from the proposed development will add to safety in that area of the stairs.
- The stairs are in good shape structurally, so there is no reconstruction proposed
- Will there be any tree clearing north of the stairs?
 - No, that property is not owned by the applicant.

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 of highest priority for this project.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board expressed appreciation for the bridge connecting the proposed mixed-use and single family structures and the response to grade changes. The applicant should continue with the preferred design concept and focus on opportunities provided by the changes in grade, with attention to retaining wall treatment.

The preferred option massing was supported by the Board in relation to height, orientation of the west façade to the property line, the internal courtyard, and the large opening in the building between the courtyard and the street.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board noted that the bridge is a critical feature of the design and it should be retained in the scale and detail shown. The Board recommended a condition that if zoning identifies any conflicts with height measurement requirements in the commercial zone portion of the site, the tallest part of the bridge support should be shifted to the single family zoned site.

The Board expressed appreciation for the design response to the site characteristics, particularly the bridge and the opening on the west façade.

The Board recommended that DPD approve the design that requires removal of the two exceptional trees near the north property line and center of the site. The proposed design includes a wide courtyard, the visual interest and pedestrian connection of the bridge, and “eyes on the street” for the stairs at the north property line. The design

modifications to save these trees would result in a design that doesn't meet the design review guidelines as well as the proposed design.

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board directed the applicant to enhance physical and visual connections to the staircase at SW Myrtle St right of way and the sidewalk at Delridge Way SW. The proposed opening in the building at the west façade should be enhanced to create visual interest and maximize visual connections. The proposed physical connections to SW Myrtle St staircase should be designed for safety and pedestrian comfort.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board appreciated the design of the west façade opening, as described in response to Guideline A-1.

The Board expressed concern about whether the lighting at the north façade was sufficient, given the public's concerns about safety at the SW Myrtle St stairs. Additional lighting will discourage unsafe activity, and will encourage residents and neighbors to use the stairs. The Board recommended a condition to provide additional lighting at that façade, either via building mounted lights, or light fixtures in the public right of way. The applicant should work with Seattle Department of Transportation to install any fixtures in the public right of way.

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 gave guidance that the internal courtyard may include large retaining walls as a result of grading for the parking garage. The applicant should create a design for these walls that could include visual interest in the retaining wall material, and/or a softening of the wall with vegetation.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board expressed appreciation for the proposed courtyard design, and noted the critical design of the bridge in contribution to the courtyard, as described in the response to Guideline A-1. The proposal meets this guideline, subject to the conditions listed.

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 anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board directed the applicant to design the project in response to the context of transitions along Delridge Way SW. North of the subject property the lots are zoned Single Family 5000 and are owned by the Seattle Parks Department so are unlikely to be developed. South of the site is a gas station and other sparse commercial development. The applicant has done a good job of responding to the east-west transition and context, and should also respond to this north-south transition and context.

The building mass could also be re-organized slightly to provide additional solar exposure for the proposed internal courtyard. The applicant should consider methods to reduce building mass at the upper level of the south façade to allow additional light into the courtyard.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board agreed that the applicant had demonstrated sufficient light and air to the courtyard, and sensitive transition to the adjacent areas height, bulk and scale. The proposal meets this guideline.

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 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 expressed appreciation for the direction of the design and the preferred concept modulation and use of color to highlight visual interest in the west façade. The Board noted that this will continue to be an important element of the design and additional information will be required at the Design Recommendation stage.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board expressed some concern about the consistent use of color in the single family structures and the mixed-use building. The Board also noted that the street facing façade at the upper levels appears flat. Some shadow lines or another accent color would help to create depth in the long façade. Use of the red color in the mixed-use building could visually tie the two parts of the development and add some depth to the façade. The Board recommended a condition

for the applicant to work with DPD to add depth to the street facing façade, either by introducing a third color or slightly recessing the windows.

The Board also discussed the visual effect of the joint between the corrugated metal and the fiber cement panels. They noted that this joint should be detailed consistent with the overall design theme. For instance, if the idea is a thin 'skin' for the building, with a precise cut to the colored side walls, then the joint should be finely detailed. If the idea is a 'peeling' back of the layers of exterior materials, the joint could occur around a wrapped corner. The Board discussed this item, but they declined to recommend a specific condition.

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board directed the applicant to focus on creating human scale at the street level. This can be enhanced with glazing and architectural details. Additional information should be provided at the Design Recommendation stage.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board noted the proposed glass storefronts and lobby façade, as well as the green walls on the north and south sides of the street level façade. The concrete treatment behind the green walls will help to provide human scale while the plants are becoming established. The high degree of glazing at the street front will achieve human scale and activate the street front. The proposal meets this guideline.

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.

Early Design Guidance reflected the comments in response to Guideline C-3.

Recommendation response reflects the comments in response to Guideline C-3.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that Overhead weather protection should be included at the bus waiting area, retail entry and residential entry. This can be partially achieved with building overhangs.

Lighting for security and safety should be included at the north façade adjacent to the SW Myrtle St staircase. Consider working with nearby residents and the elementary school (PTA, etc) to determine the need for safety and design strategies to meet the need. Work with SDOT for specific lighting strategies for the public right of way.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board appreciated the addition of a canopy and seating area near the north end of the street level façade, providing a place for bus patrons to wait and connect the bus stop to the proposed retail/restaurant at this site.

The Board recommended a condition for additional lighting near the stairs, as described in the response to Guideline A-1.

The Board expressed concern about the proposed residential entry directly adjacent to the proposed curb cut. The Board recommended a condition for the applicant to either relocate the lobby entry to the north end of the lobby, or leave the entry in the current proposed area and provide separation between the driveway and pedestrian entry, and safety measures to prevent vehicular and pedestrian conflicts.

With either residential entry location, the Board also recommended that the applicant revise the residential entry to make it visually distinct from the retail entry. This could include a distinct canopy treatment, signage, lighting, or colors and materials.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was confused about the retaining wall and parking structure wall location. There may be some proposed blank wall areas at the north and south facades and at the internal courtyard. The applicant should work to minimize these areas, mitigate blank walls with materials that lend visual interest and/or soften the walls with landscaping. More information is needed about this at the Design Recommendation stage.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board noted the proposed concrete treatments and green walls mitigate any retaining walls and parts of the garage structure that may be visible. The proposal meets this guideline.

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that in addition to guidance provided in response to guidelines A-7 and D-2, the applicant should indicate how the proposed design will respond to the bus stop at the northwest area. The parking levels are at or below grade, and the walls of the parking structure may be visible at the bus stop and the north façade. More information is needed about this at the Design Recommendation stage.

Recommendation response reflects the comments in response to Guidelines D-1 and D-2.

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

Early Design Guidance reflected the comments in response to Guideline D-1.

Recommendation response reflects the comments in response to Guideline D-1.

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.

Early Design Guidance reflected the comments in response to Guideline C-3.

Recommendation response reflects the comments in response to Guideline C-3.

E. Landscaping

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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board gave guidance that the applicant should first try to meet the Green Factor on the Commercially-zoned site, rather than request a departure to provide the requirement on the single family zoned site. Consider a vegetated roof to both meet Green Factor and enhance the view for the proposed single family residences uphill of the proposed mixed-use building.

The Board also noted that the applicant should work to meet the Green Factor requirements on the Commercially zoned site. The site is adjacent to two public right of ways, and landscaping in the public right of way can be used to achieve Green Factor. Rooftop landscaping could also work to achieve Green Factor and create a better view for uphill residences (proposed and existing).

Any trees that are proposed for the internal courtyard should be planted in soil that is deep enough to support the proposed species of tree. There is an opportunity to plant additional trees between the proposed single family residences and other areas where there is no structure proposed below the soil.

A detailed landscape plan is needed at the Design Recommendation stage for review of this item.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board found the proposed landscape plan to be acceptable, although a green roof would have helped with the increased storm water runoff at this site from the new impervious surfaces. The Board declined to make this a condition of approval.

The Board agreed that the proposed design with exceptional tree removal better meets the intent of the design review guidelines, compared with a design that would save the trees but require a smaller courtyard, no bridge connection, and fewer windows adjacent to the SW Myrtle St stairs.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departures was based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet the design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departures.

- 1. Upper level setback (23.47A.014):** The Code requires a setback of 10' for portions of structures that are 13-65' tall and adjacent to a residential zone. The applicant proposes to provide no setback in this area, since it's adjacent to the single family zoned portion of the overall proposed development site.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, A-7, B-1, D-1, and D-7, as conditioned below, by providing larger residential open space, minimizing scale impacts between the buildings on site, and providing increased security for the public stairs by locating units directly adjacent to that area.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure, subject to the conditions listed below.

- 2. Street facing facades (23.47A.008):** The Code requires a maximum street level setback of 10' for street level street facing facades. The applicant proposes modulation at the street level, with some areas of the façade located more than 10' from the property line.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, B-1, C-3, and D-1, as conditioned below, by modulation at the street front, additional area for sidewalk width adjacent to Delridge Way SW, and a design response to the nearby context of street facing facades.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure, subject to the conditions listed below.

- 3. Location of Parking (23.47A.032.B.1.b):** The Code requires separation of street level parking from the sidewalk with another use. The applicant proposes parking near the north end of the street level façade, separated from the sidewalk with a green wall, seating areas, and overhead weather protection.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-1, A-4, C-4, D-2, and D-5, as conditioned below, by providing a sheltered seating area for bus patrons, a green wall to soften the streetscape, and creation of a connection between the proposed retail and the bus stop area.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure, subject to the conditions listed below.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated April 28, 2011, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the April 28, 2011 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and initial recommendation conditions, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departure from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed above). The Board recommends the following CONDITIONS (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

1. Provide additional lighting at that façade, either via building mounted lights, or light fixtures in the public right of way. The applicant should work with Seattle Department of Transportation to install any fixtures in the public right of way. (A-4, D-1, D-7)
2. Shift the bridge peak to the single family zoned site, if it's necessary to meet Land Use Code height requirements. The bridge is a critical aspect of the overall design and should be retained in shape and scale. (A-1, A-7)
3. The applicant shall work with DPD to add depth to the street facing façade, either by introducing a third color or slightly recessing the windows. (C-2)

4. Relocate the lobby entry to the north end of the lobby, or leave the entry in the current proposed area and provide separation between the driveway and pedestrian entry with safety measures to prevent vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. (D-1)
5. Revise the residential entry to make it visually distinct from the retail entry. (D-1)