



City of Seattle

Mike McGinn, Mayor

Department of Planning & Development

D.M. Sugimura, Director

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
OF THE
NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: 3012213

Address: 2428 NW Market Street

Applicant: Jon Hall, GGLO, for AMLI Residential Partners LLC

Date of Meeting: May 23, 2011

Date of Report: June 21, 2011

**Board Members Present: Jerry Coburn
Mike DeLilla
Jean Morgan, Chair
David Neiman**

Board Members Recusant: Jerry Coburn

DPD Staff Present: Michael Dorcy

SITE & VICINITY

Site is zoned **C1-65, NC3-65, and NC3P-65.**

Site abuts **IB U/45** zone to west and is across street from **MR-RC** zone.

Development site extends (partially) between

NW 56th Street and NW Market Street and is bounded (partially) on the east by 24th Avenue NW. The site lies within the boundaries of the Ballard Urban Village.

Site slopes from **NE to SW** with a difference of **+/- 16 feet.**

Five existing one-story buildings on site will be demolished.

Site is former home to **Jacobsen's Marine.**

Development to north and northwest is primarily residential, to the south and southwest industrial/commercial.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a mixed use building with approximately 300 residential units located above ground level commercial retail and office use. All of the parking (approximately 453 stalls) for the proposed development is to be provided in a garage that is at and below grade and accessed from NW 56th Street.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: MAY 23, 2011

DESIGN PRESENTATION

There was a brief initial presentation of a site analysis, including a preliminary look at opportunities and restraints which included surrounding uses, view opportunities, etc. Three important elements of the analysis are noted: 1) a 50 foot by 100 foot portion of the northeast corner of the site, bordering on the intersection of NW 56th Street and 24th Avenue NW, extended into a pedestrian designated zone (NC3P-65); 2) the southeast corner of the block, a piece of land approximately 100 X 100 feet, currently occupied by a gasoline station, is not part of the development area; 3) topographically, the development site slopes approximately 16 feet from the northeast corner to the southwest corner.

Three alternative design schemes were presented. Scheme A, the design team's preferred scheme, was the head of a monkey wrench with a south-facing courtyard. *Between the third and sixth levels, however, there was a bridge element of residential units that partially covered the courtyard.* Scheme B was in the form of a lower-case "h" or chair, with a longer, thinner courtyard, but one entirely open to the west. Scheme C provided a central courtyard, open at levels two and three to the north and NW 56th Street.

A series of street-level studies were then shown, identifying in perspectives and cross-sections the three distinctive abutting street environments, that of NW Market Street, NW 56th Street, and 24th Avenue NW.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 11 members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting and affixed their names to the sign-in sheet. Several members of the public identified themselves as residents who lived along NW 56th Street or who used that street as the connector to their places of residence. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised at the meeting:

- **More than one of the members of the public were concerned that the NW 56th Street façade would not be given high priority and the result would be an overbearing undermodulated blank wall along that street frontage;**
- **Others commented on the proposed parking entry and exit along NW 56th Street, noting that the street was narrow and already overutilized for its size;**
- **Noted that there was a high water table (and underground stream that the site would need to address;**

- Suggested that there was a sewer line located beneath on of the existing buildings on site;
- Noted that the ambient noise levels from area industrial uses, especially to the south of the site, would need to be dealt with in planning the residential units.
- Questioned the adequacy of parking provided for commercial uses.

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 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. A portion of the proposal at the northeast corner of the site is also subject to the *Ballard municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines*.

Note: The Board’s recommendations follow in *italics*.

A. Site Planning

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility

The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

The Board noted that equal attention needed to be devoted to each of the three streets abutting the project.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street

Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

The Board noted that, as presented, there appeared to be some ambiguity regarding the courtyard entry, namely what it entered to and who was invited to enter.

A-4 Human Activity

New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

The Board noted that the graphics presented indicated a sensitivity to this guideline and encouraged careful consideration of the interplay of the proposed live/work units and the sidewalk.

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.

The Board linked this to the B1 guideline and the importance of addressing the interface of the proposed structure and the existing smaller building to the west along NW Market 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.

The Board noted this guideline in conjunction with concerns for the social interactions with neighbors across NW 56th Street.

A-7 Residential Open Space

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

Comments from the Board were generally favorable in concept regarding the roof-top decks. The Board awaits further development of these spaces and further development and clarification regarding functionality and details that enhance the delight quotient of the plaza area.

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.

The Board noted they would be particularly interested in developments as they related to this guideline and to street functionality.

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.

Please note what the Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines says regarding mixed-use development on north-south avenues, particularly regarding setbacks, overhead weather protection, etc., as it would apply to the 24th Avenue NW façade.

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 noted this as their three star guideline of highest priority. The Board requested that they be shown at recommendation time a series of east-west and north-south sections at a scale that would include adjacent streets as well as the built environment. Provide some perspectives and bird's eye views that convey a better sense of the façade along NW 56th Street, by far the longest façade and the most problematic for the public.

Stair wells and elevator over-runs should not be located along the sensitive NW 56th Street edge lest they augment the height and bulk already perceived by neighbors across the street as oppressive.

B-1, Ballard Municipal...Guidelines, calls for setbacks at the upper level "particularly on the west side" of north-south avenues for mixed use development. The applicant should be prepared to show how this guideline is being responded to.

C. Architectural Elements

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.

The Board gave the general directive that the project should "fit in." The applicant should be able to explain how the design, once developed, fits in.

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 context.

This guideline was selected to be of highest priority for the project, without further specificity.

C-3 Human Scale

The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, element and details to achieve a good human scale.

Related to this guideline was the Board's desire to see details of how the live/work and/or townhouse units interfaced with the sidewalk to achieve a good human scale as well as to promote values of security and comfort,

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 reminded the development team that this was really a big building and the importance of choosing materials that would be attractive to both dwellers and neighbors and that could be well maintained by the owners. **The Board would like to see a materials board presented at the Recommendation meeting which illustrates both the materials and colors proposed.***

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.

Again, the Board cautioned that the viewpoint to be assumed ought to be that of the neighbors across NW 56th Street.

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.

The Board noted that they would like to see more of the rooftop open spaces but particularly to see more graphic studies that explain the functionality, comfort and delight of the plaza area.

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.

The Board was particularly concerned with the NW 56th Street façade in this regard.

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.

The Board's guidance was that the parking should be invisible.

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.

While important, the Board thought that this would be taken care of by thoughtful design. The Board presumed that all garbage, utility and service areas would be screened or located within the proposed structure..

D-7 Personal Safety and Security

Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

The Board was particularly concerned with the relative grades between public sidewalks and the live work units and the central plaza as these related not only to safety and security but to broader issues of the feeling of well-being and comfort.

D-11 Commercial Transparency

Commercial storefronts should be transparent...

The Board noted that was important for the success of the project.

D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions

Should provide ...security and privacy...and be visually interesting for residents and pedestrians.

The Board noted once again the importance of providing intelligent and well-designed entries and transitions and that these were especially important details for live/work or townhouse units and for the main plaza.

E. Landscaping

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 feels that the project should demonstrate a comprehensive and coordinated landscaping plan and street improvement effort.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, no departure(s) were requested.

STAFF COMMENTS & NEXT STEPS:

MUP Application:

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Please call **Planner** (at **206-615-1393 by phone or email**) when you have scheduled your MUP intake appointment.
2. Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG (Attachment B to CAM 328).
3. Plan on embedding four 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape and right-of-way improvement plans into the front of the MUP plan set (4 per sheet). Label sheets "DR."

4. A traffic study dealing with impacts to NW 56th Street and local intersections will be required as part of the MUP process”.

Recommendation Meeting:

5. Please submit a color and materials board.
6. Please submit a conceptual lighting plan.
7. The Board would like to review details of the open spaces, specifically those associated with the ground level residential and live/work units, the central courtyard and the rooftop.
8. The Board would like to review renderings showing how the ground level uses, details and design relate to the sidewalk.
9. Please provide building sections that show the proposed development in context with adjacent structures and buildings across the various street..