



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012605

Address: 14307 Greenwood Avenue North

Applicant: Peter Anderson

Date of Meeting: Monday, January 09, 2012

Board Members Present: Jerry Coburn
Mike DeLilla
Jean Morgan
David Neiman
Bo Zhang

Board Members Absent: Ted Panton

DPD Staff Present: Bruce P. Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Two with a
40 foot height limit (NC2 40)

Nearby Zones: North: NC2 40 north along Greenwood
corridor to N. 145th St.
South: Multi-family Lowrise Two (LR 2)
south of the Greenwood Ave and 143rd
St. intersection.
East: NC2 40 fronting Greenwood.
SF7200 east of Phinney Ave.
West: Single Family 7200 (SF7200)

Lot Area: 15,600 square feet

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Current Development:	Three structures, all one story, currently occupy the site: a small drive through coffee kiosk, a flooring showroom and a single family house. The site, 120 by 130 feet, descends to the south. An existing rockery along the west property line separates the site grade from the neighboring grade by eight to nine vertical feet. Two large conifer trees sit near the south property line.
Access:	Curb cut locations on Greenwood Ave. N. and N. 143 rd St.
Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:	The general commercial development pattern in this vicinity has been auto oriented with surface parking and broad driveways fronting Greenwood Ave. Most commercial development occupies small, one or two story structures. Directly across the street sits a sizeable four-story mixed use building. Due to the lowrise zoning south along the Greenwood Ave. corridor, higher density residential development has begun to replace older single family homes. Several recreational opportunities lie within close proximity including Bitter Lake Park, the Seattle Golf Club, Landover Woods, the Interurban Trail and Carkeek Park. Immediately to the west, the zoning shifts to Single Family, a zoning classification that flanks the Neighborhood Commercial and Lowrise zones lining Greenwood Ave.
ECAs:	No Environmental Critical Areas on the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Applicant proposes to design and build a four story mixed use structure with ground floor commercial, 41 units on the upper three levels and below grade parking.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The architect proposed three somewhat similar massing options. Each resembles a large rectangular volume with the southwest corner set back near the adjacent single family residence. The particulars, the shape and depth, of the corner change for each option. The garage entrance, also common among the three options, would be accessed from North 143rd St. The strategies for the placement of commercial uses and the residential entry vary from scheme to scheme. Design concept # 1, as does option #2, locates both the commercial spaces and the residential lobby entrance along Greenwood Ave N. Option # 3 shifts the residential entry onto N. 143rd St. and increases the depth of the landscaping between the structure and the property line. Option #3 also places the driveway closer to the west property line along N. 143rd.

The design of the Greenwood façade for the three schemes emphasizes a strong symmetry to match the mixed-use building across the street. Each of the three schemes forms an arcade along the commercial storefront in deference to the building at 14300 Greenwood Ave.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Six members of the public affixed their names to EDG meeting sign-in sheet. The public raised the following issues:

Programming

- Don't extend the retail or commercial toward the residential neighborhood.
- Consider Guidance A-4, Human Activity. Provide benches and amenities for the elderly and the disabled.
- Create large enough apartments to attract families.
- Access for the disabled is a concern at the residential entry on N. 143rd St.

Respect for Adjacent Sites

- The preliminary project designs don't have enough emphasis on Guidance A-5, Respect for Adjacent Sites.
- Based on Option #3, the driveway and garage should be moved away from the adjacent property.
- The decks overlook the adjacent residential properties. The design and placement of the decks should be respectful of the neighbor's privacy.
- Focus design attention on the residential side.
- Decks on the north side will contend with noise and poor air quality.

Height, Bulk and Scale

- B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale. The mixed use building across the street should not be the only precedent for the proposal. Look at a broader area than across the street for comparable projects.
- New buildings along Greenwood corridor should not form a street canyon. Don't produce a large, un-modulated box.

Aesthetics

- This is the north entrance to the Broadview neighborhood. Provide high quality materials and produce an attractive building. The project should make the area look better.
- Make the proposed building compatible with the mixed use structure across the street. Continuity is preferable.
- The muted natural colors and the non-flashy appearance of the building across the street embody the type of people who live in the neighborhood.

Parking

- The quantity of parking is a concern.

- There is a great deal of competition for parking in the area. The restaurant across the street is popular. Parking spills over from its lot.

Crime Prevention

- Use crime prevention techniques in the project's design. Provide adequate lighting and fencing around open spaces. The open decks appear vulnerable to crime.

Landscaping

- The neighborhood has many older trees, some 40 to 50 feet tall. Removal of the two trees will be a loss of neighborhood character.
- The project should comply with new storm drainage regulations. A lot of water will be coming off the roof.
- Provide easy access thru the planting strip from street parking to the sidewalk.
- Consider human scale. Add benches and other amenities.
- Keep the trees.

Miscellaneous

- Responding to a comment by the architect, the speaker questioned whether the real estate trend is moving away from auto dominated uses.
- The applicant should work with SDOT on the street improvements.
- Views to the north are not particularly good.

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](#).

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 agreed that the proposed building could be shifted to the south, closer to the right of way. After deliberation, the Board members conveyed a lack of attachment to the two existing conifer trees.

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

The proposed arcade along Greenwood Ave. was discouraged. Board members did not believe that an arcade would facilitate pedestrian activity or encourage commercial development. Locating the commercial space closer to the right of way was encouraged.

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

Design of the commercial level frontage and its relationship to the right of way represents a critical component of future success.

Ensure that the design meets ADA accessibility standards for the formal residential entry. The Board discussed the location of the residential entry and indicated that its placement on either street would meet its expectations for the development.

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.

Design a west façade that defers to the adjacent residence. Placement of decks and fenestration should ensure privacy. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board expects to review two east/west cross sections, to include the neighboring house, and two north/south sections.

A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian

Noting Option # 3, the Board urged the applicant to shift the driveway away from the west property line. The driveway's proximity to the shared property line seemed to be a burden on the neighbor.

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.

The southeast corner of the structure will have considerable visibility from the streets. The Board members conveyed their interest in the architect's resolution. Keeping with the informal nature of the urban context, there is no need to make a grandiose or obvious architectural statement at the corner.

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.

The Board acknowledged the reduction in building scale at the property's southwest corner in response to the transition to a lower scale zone. The treatment of the proposed west façade will be scrutinized at the Recommendation meeting. See guidance

A-5. The decks, fenestration and choice of materials should possess a residential scale compatible with the building's surroundings.

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.**

Using an entry arcade to foster a visual relationship between the proposal and the mixed use building across the street did not receive Board support (see A-3 guidance). The two buildings will create a gateway into the small commercial hub. Consider using other architectural techniques to ensure a suitable dialogue between the two edifices.

- 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.**

The architectural gestures, based on the sketches, appear out of scale with the site. During design development, the architect should consider the intimacy of the site's context and neighbors' desire for an unpretentious building.

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

The architect was encouraged to activate the building's Greenwood Ave front, particularly at street level. Consider installing benches, art and other community friendly amenities.

- 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 acknowledged a neighbor's desire for a building with natural, muted colors compatible with the neighborhood context. The Board requested a materials board for the next meeting.

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.**

- 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.

Depending upon the depth of the proposed garage, blank walls facing the property to the west and N. 143rd St. could be problematic.

- D-3 Retaining Walls.** Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where higher retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscapes.

- 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.

If placement of the recycling and waste storage area occurs in the garage, the architect should show where the bulk of the residential and commercial waste material will be located during pick-up days.

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

The architect should be cognizant of creating secure open spaces for the patios at or near grade. The placement and type of exterior lighting are also important.

- 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.

The Board expects to review the applicant's concept for the type and location of commercial signage.

- 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.

Provide an exterior lighting scheme for the Recommendation meeting. Include cut-sheets or designs for the most visible fixtures.

- 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.

This is always an important consideration.

- D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions.** For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and

privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

As noted above, the Board conveyed its flexibility by acknowledging that the location of the primary residential entry could occur on either street.

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.

The Board encourages the applicant to work with SDOT on the development of the rights of way and to find creative solutions for drainage retention.

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 applicant did not request departures.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should proceed to the Master Use Permit phase. In addition to the general requirements for the Recommendation meeting packet, the Board requested the following drawings and materials:

- Two sections cuts for each axis of the proposed building.
- An exterior lighting scheme.
- A landscape plan that addresses SDOT's proposed improvements and drainage detention plans.
- A dimensioned site plan.
- A materials board.
- A realistic rendering of the surrounding conditions in particular the adjacent single family house and the structure to the north.
- Show how ADA required accessibility is achieved.

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