



City of Seattle

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



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012718

Address: 3636 Stone Way N

Applicant: AP Urban Development, LLC

Date of Meeting: Monday, June 03, 2013

Board Members Present: Ivana Begley
Joe Hurley (Chair)
Christina Pizana
Martine Zettle

Board Members Absent: Salone Habibuddin

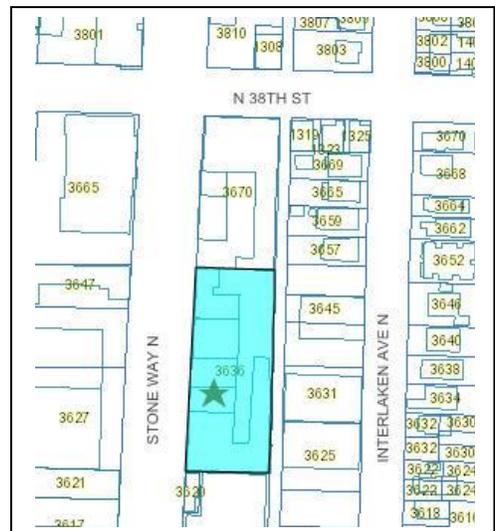
DPD Staff Present: Bruce Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial Two with a 40 foot height limit (C2 40).

Area Zoning Pattern:

C2 40 and Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3 40) and NC2 with a 40' height limit line the Stone Way N. corridor from N. 36th St. to N. 46th St. South of N. 36th St. the zoning transitions to Industrial Commercial with a 45' height limit (IC 45).



To the east of the project site across the alley, the zoning changes to Commercial One with a 30' height limit (C1 30) and multifamily residential Lowrise Two (LR 2). On Woodland Park Ave N, to the west, the zoning designation is Commercial One with a 40' height limit (C1 40).

Lot Area: 31,487 sq. ft.

Current Development: The site is located on Stone Way North, mid-block between North 36th Street and North 38th Street. The existing structure warehouses the materials for a roofing company. The site slopes downward approximately 15 feet from the northwest corner to the southeast corner. The change in grade approximates nine feet across the west property line (adjacent to Stone Way N).

Access: Alley

Surrounding Development: The buildings on either side of the project site include a 3-story (approx 40') institutional building to the north (Bastyr Center for Natural Health) and a single-story commercial restaurant next to a three-story (approx 40') public storage building to the south. Other nearby uses include single-story commercial buildings with adjacent surface parking lots. The block east of the subject site contains scattered single-family homes, but recent development trends toward Lowrise apartments and duplexes.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: Varied mix of commercial uses and structures along the Stone Way corridor and residential uses beyond.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a mixed use building with approximately 120 residential units located above 7,640 sq. ft. of ground level commercial use. Parking for 148 stalls to be provided in a below grade garage accessed from the alley.

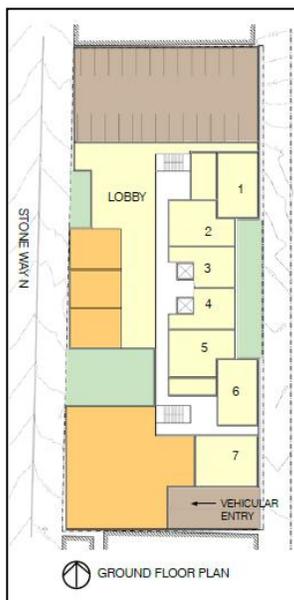
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include a commercial space at the southwestern corner of the site and access to below grade parking from the alley.

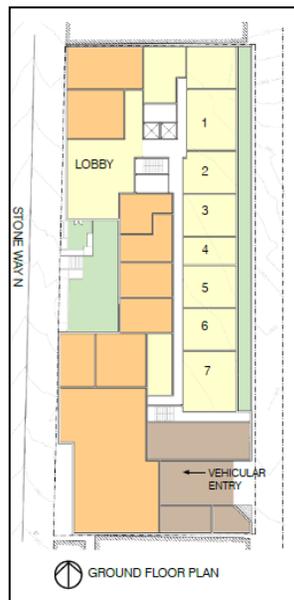
The first scheme (Option A) showed a design that breaks the building up into three segments separated by courtyards that face Stone Way. The south court is at street level, with the north court at the second level. Light wells bring light and air to residential floor at the north and south property line. Retail space occupies the ground floor of the south segment, with live/work units at the middle and north segment. The residential lobby enters off the south court, which is at the same elevation as the sidewalk. There are two parking areas: one at the ground level and one completely below grade. The 12-foot change in grade facilitates entering those different levels.

The second scheme (Option B) showed an alternative that reduces the mass at the southwest corner, opening up units in that area to views and light. Retail uses occupy that corner at ground level, with the potential for private open space above it. Live-work units and the residential lobby enter off the north courtyard, several feet below sidewalk grade.

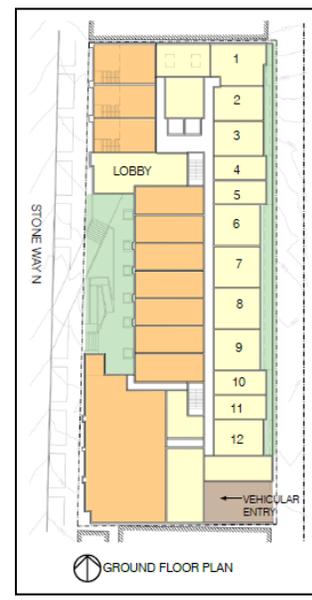
The third and preferred scheme (Option C) included one central courtyard with the residential lobby and live-work entrances organized around it. The larger courtyard helps negotiate the change in grade across the site with a grand stair down to the entries. The retail space at the southwest corner enters off the sidewalk at grade. Two-story live-work units occupy the north end of the street level façade and enter off the sidewalk. The lobby and solarium create a unified corner expression.



Scheme 1



Scheme 2



Scheme 3

By the Recommendation meeting, the applicant introduced a new architect who developed the ideas based roughly on Scheme # 3 with an open space along Stone Way. The program, now absent of live/work units, has a series of commercial spaces around the east and south edges of the central plaza.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Five members of the public affixed their names to the Recommendation meeting sign-in sheet. One individual spoke who conveyed his support of the project.

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.

A. Site Planning

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

At the southern one-third of the street frontage, where commercial storefronts face Stone Way, a pedestrian access ramp with handrail blocks the direct engagement of the pedestrian with the stores. The Board recommends revising the design to allow the pedestrian to move directly from the sidewalk to the future retail or office functions. Consider adding a much more expansive stairs, planters, and seating that would still accommodate the ramp. In addition, a large roll-up door for the storefronts might also better engage the commercial uses with the activity on the street.

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

Elimination of the live/work units from the program received Board praise. The change alters the conditions at the front plaza from a privatized space to one more publically oriented.

See also changes recommended in guidance A-3.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Lengthy deliberation focused on the street level of the northern third of the proposal. The lack of at-grade uses, the façade's compressed appearance, and the insufficiency of overhead weather protection departed from the more pedestrian accommodating street frontage (and plaza level) of the structure's southern two-thirds. Suggestions offered include bringing the materials and/or colors from the upper three floors to grade, aligning the piers and adding art such as the decorative screens to the south to the blank walls. The Board did not recommend a condition but asked the applicant to explore design changes with the land use planner.

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.

Discussion addressed the planar quality of the west elevation in particular. The multiple changes of materials do not signify a change in plane. Although some color/material changes may reference individual dwelling units, the designation of colors and materials appears mostly compositional. The Board members did not recommend a specific design alteration.

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 changes to the program transform the entry plaza from one with a mostly private, residential orientation to a common space shared by commercial and residential users.

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

The lighting scheme did not generate comments.
- 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.**
- 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.**

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 encouraged the installation of bike racks near the commercial entries.

Noting the strip of landscaping along the edge of the northern third of the structure, the Board raised doubts about its success. Honeysuckle, the plantings proposed for this narrow strip, would mature to cover the windows, a poor idea for an already weak connection along the sidewalk. Dogs and other threats to the habitat would make the area unsightly.

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the June 3, 2013 meeting. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented

in the plans and other drawings available at the June 3, 2013 public meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). The Board recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

- 1) Revise the southern one-third of the street frontage where commercial storefronts face Stone Way to allow direct pedestrian movement from the sidewalk to the future retail or office functions. Consider adding a much more expansive stairs, planters, and seating that would still accommodate the ramp. In addition, consider a revision to the storefronts. For example, a large roll-up door may better engage the commercial uses with the activity on the street. (A-3)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departure(s) are 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).

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	RECOMMEND- ATION
1. Street-level Development. SMC 23.45.008A.3	Street level, street facing facades shall be located within 10’ of the street lot line, unless wider sidewalks, plazas or other approved landscape or open spaces are provided.	Allow 33% of the building to have a 20’ setback for public amenity space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creates a pedestrian oriented central plaza. ▪ Provides a deep modulation or break in the Stone Way elevation to reduce the building mass. 	Recommended Approval
2. Non-residential Street-level Requirements. SMC 23.47A.008B.3	Non-residential uses shall have a floor to floor height of at least 13’.	One retail space (31% of retail spaces) to have a 10’6” floor to floor height.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows residential entry to have a wide accessible entry walk directly from the sidewalk. 	Recommended Approval