



City of Seattle

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



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3012851

Address: 500 Third Avenue West

Applicant: Aidan Bird

Date of Meeting: August 1, 2012

Board Members Present: Mindy Black
Jacob Connell
David Delfs
Jill Kurfirst

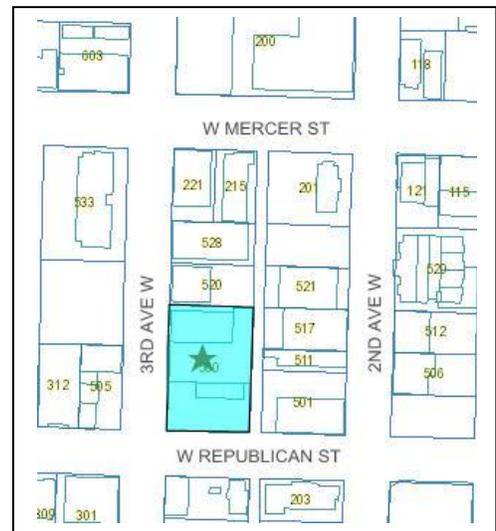
Board Members Absent: Lipika Mukerji

DPD Staff Present: Bruce Rips
Beth Hartwick

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three with a 40' height limit (NC3 40)

Nearby Zones: North: NC3 40 and multifamily Midrise (MR).
South: Neighborhood Commercial Three with a 65' height limit south of W. Republican St.
East: NC3 40
West: MR



Lot Area:	A rectangular shaped site comprising 21,600 sq. ft. 120 linear feet extends along W. Republican St. and 180 linear feet extends along 3rd Ave. W. The site descends approximately 14' from the northeast corner to the southwest corner.
Current Development:	A two-story, commercial structure built in 1931 occupies the site. A surface parking lot sits on the site's southern portion.
Access:	Existing curb cut on W. Republican St. Access also occurs from the alley.
Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character:	The neighborhood has a mix of low-rise multi-family residential and commercial / mixed use buildings. Lower Queen Anne forms an urban, pedestrian accessible neighborhood with a variety of services. First Ave W. and Queen Anne Ave. to the west form the commercial and retail core. Seattle Center lies several blocks to the east and Kinnear Park lies to the northwest. Buildings represent an eclectic mix of styles and materials.
ECAs:	No mapped environmentally critical areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Applicant proposes a four story mixed use building with commercial (approximately five live/work units) at ground level and 71 dwelling units. Parking for 82 vehicles would be located below grade. An existing commercial building will be demolished.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The applicant presented three design options. Due to the site constraints, the proposals for the infill project share several commonalities including a desire to place live/work units along both W. Republican St. and Third Ave. W. (this provides the applicant with a greater floor area ratio), vehicle access from the alley and residential lobby access on Third Ave. W. Option # 1 forms a rectangular mass with the building setback from the alley and the rest of the bulk hugging the three other property lines. A single loaded corridor forms an east/west spine through the structure.

The "U" shaped option #2 generates a courtyard fronting the alley with residential units fronting the court on three sides. Like the previous option, the bulk of the building meets the bordering streets. The structure at the first floor sets back along Third Ave. sheltering the entrances to the proposed live/work units. Option # 3 carves away the northeast portion of the building mass to

create a small open space for the first floor units. Preferred by the applicant, the design has a notch at the corner of the two streets and projecting bays along the upper floor of the building.

The proposed parking ramp's location close to the alley intersection with the street is due to the change in grade. The rooftop includes several usable rooftop deck areas. Residential open space includes sunken patios with landscape buffers for street level units facing the alley.

By the Recommendation meeting, the applicant had revised the structure to set back considerably from the northern portion of Third Ave W. The preference for all live/work units along the two streets changed to a combination of live/work and residential loft spaces along W. Republican and the southern portion of the property on Third Ave. Traditional apartment flats set back horizontally and vertically from the property line and sidewalk grade respectively occupy the northern half of the building along Third Ave. A series of terraces connect the right of way to the units.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately five members of the public affixed their names to the Recommendation meeting sign-in sheet. Those who spoke raised the following issues:

- Use an anti-graffiti coating on the blank walls near the streets.
- The corner at 3rd Ave W. and W. Republican St. is well designed.
- Praise for the use of brick.
- Use specific Uptown pedestrian lighting fixtures for the right of way. The specific fixtures are currently installed on First Ave. W.
- The project needs pedestrian lighting on the sidewalk. Use the Uptown standard lighting fixture.
- The setbacks and differentiation of the facades are good.
- The corner has too much concrete. Look at early 20th century buildings. Consider using decorative tiles. At the very least, painting the raw concrete would reduce the crudeness of the material and its impact on the streetscape.
- In Uptown, we don't favor Juliette balconies. The ones proposed for this project look better than most seen.
- This project is exactly the kind of residential apartment building that we like in Uptown. All in all it is a really good 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.

The Queen Anne Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

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.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown new developments should, to the extent possible, be sited to further contribute to the neighborhood's pedestrian character.

Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas encourage outdoor dining areas utilizing sidewalks and areas adjacent to sidewalks. Outdoor dining is especially encouraged for sites on block faces with southern exposure.

Responding to the early design guidance, the applicant revised the massing and the location of the open space by substantially setting back the northern most portion of the Third Ave. façade and creating a series of landscaped terraces and patios from sidewalk level to the units. The revised massing and landscaping defers to the adjacent residential building by introducing a transition from the live/work units closer to W. Republican St. to the residential neighborhood to the north.

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

Uptown-specific 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.

At the EDG meeting, the Board's guidance focused on the need for clearly identifiable residential entries from the street. The applicant has accomplished this along W. Republican St. and for the live/work units along Third Ave W.

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

In order to encourage true neighborhood commercial development, the Board recommended that two sets of the live/work units have easily removable demising walls

(non-load bearing) to create larger more useable commercial spaces. These units include the two live/work units between the primary residential entrance on Third Avenue West and the West Republican St. and the two units closest to the corner of W. Republican St. and the alley.

- 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.**

See Board comments for A-1.

- 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.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Front Setbacks

Where feasible, new development in the Uptown Park character area should consider landscaping any setback from the sidewalk. Landscaping within a setback should provide a transition from public to private space and define a boundary between these.

Where the incorporation of decorative gates and fencing may be necessary to delineate between public and private spaces, these features should be softened by landscaping where feasible.

- 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-specific supplemental guidance:

Corner Lots in Uptown

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.

The architect revised the drawings and eliminated a rounded corner at Third Ave and Republican St. The primary residential lobby occurs near the mid-point of the property along Third Ave.

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.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, a departure would be supported for 3' of additional height for projects that step back the top floor of the structure a minimum of 6' from the street.

In the Heart of Uptown character area, break facades into smaller massing units.

In the Uptown Urban character area larger massing units and less modulation are appropriate, provided they are carefully designed, with quality materials.

The applicant responded to earlier guidance by revising the building's massing along Third Ave W. to setback from the right of way as it approaches the north property line. This met the earlier guidance to reduce visually the structure's length.

The Board noted its satisfaction with the revised massing.

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-specific supplemental guidance:

In the Uptown Park character area, extensive landscaping, the use of brick and inlaid tile as building materials and designs with an appearance of substance and quality are recommended to promote Uptown Park's desired character.

The Uptown Park character area emphasizes the notion of historic continuity—the relationship of built structures over time.

The Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character districts prefer an architecture that emphasizes human scale and quality, detailing and materials, and that remains compatible with the existing community.

Supplemental Guidance Scope

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

Landscaping and steps from the sidewalk to the terraces and patios of the units facing Third Ave. enhance the residential character of the design. The residential lofts on W. Republican provide a more urbane quality to the streetscape as the units sit several feet above the sidewalk.

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-specific 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.

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).

Throughout Uptown the use of a pedestrian-scaled streetlamp within all character areas is encouraged. In addition, streetscape features such as street clocks and benches are encouraged in Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas.

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas, encourage Seattle Center campus redevelopment along its boundaries to either open vistas from Uptown into Seattle Center or to provide activation for the street.

Including amenities for transit riders in a building's design rather than the traditional use of curbside bus shelters generates a safer and more active street. In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas the elimination of curbside bus shelters is encouraged in retail areas as appropriate.

- D-2 Blank Walls.** Building should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near the sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

The height of the concrete base at the corner of Third Ave. W. and W. Republican St. forms an expansive blank wall at an important corner. The Board recommended adding detailing to the concrete base in order to provide more definition and interest. Install plantings that mature to a height forming a substantial layer between the sidewalk and the concrete wall.

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

Add pedestrian oriented lighting along Third Ave. W and W. Republican St. Use the lighting fixtures specified in the Uptown Park District Landscaped Streets Element as “ZED “Zenith” Pedestrian Light Fixture and Pole approved by SDOT.

Lighting on the building should generally be shielded.

- 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-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 walls dividing the dwelling units’ patios or open spaces along and above Third Ave. W. should have much greater transparency than the illustration provided on p. 8 of the Recommendation booklet. These walls and those parallel to Third Ave. should be shorter than six feet.

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the August 1st, 2012 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 August 1, 2012 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) In order to encourage true neighborhood commercial development, the Board recommended that two sets of the live/work units have easily removable demising walls (non-load bearing) to create larger more useable commercial spaces. These units include the two live/work units between the primary residential entrance on Third Avenue West and West Republican St. and the two units closest to the corner of W. Republican St. and the alley. (A-4)
- 2) Add detailing to the concrete base at the corner of W. Republican St. and Third Ave. W. in order to provide more definition and interest. Install plantings which mature to a height that form a substantial layer between the sidewalk and the concrete wall. (D-2)
- 3) Add pedestrian oriented lighting along Third Ave. W and W. Republican St. Use lighting fixtures specified in the Uptown Park District Landscaped Streets Element as “ZED “Zenith” Pedestrian Light Fixture and Pole approved by SDOT. (D-7)
- 4) Lighting on the building should generally be shielded. (D-7)
- 5) The walls dividing the dwelling units’ patios or open spaces along and above Third Ave. W. should have much greater transparency that the illustration provided on p. 8 of the Recommendation booklet. These walls and those parallel to Third Ave. should be shorter than six feet. (E-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	RECOMMENDATION
1. Residential Uses at Street Level SMC 23.47A.005C.3	Residential uses not to exceed 20% of street level. Maximum residential use on 3 rd Ave W. totals 35.2'.	Allow an increase of residential use to 73.6% or 129.6'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances residential character of the adjacent street and reflects Design Review Board preference to reinforce residential pattern on 3rd Ave W. 	Recommended approval
2. Street Level Standards SMC 23.47A.008A.3	Street-level street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the street lot line.	Allow 89' of west façade to be 17' from street lot line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-shaped scheme defers to building to the north. Enhanced landscaped terraces with access to street along 3rd Ave W. 	Recommended approval
3. Street Level Development Standards SMC 23.47A.008D.3	Floor of a dwelling unit located along street-level facing façade shall be at least 4' above or below sidewalk grade or be set back at least 10 from the sidewalk.	Allow residential use to be separated from adjacent sidewalk grade with a reduced vertical separation ranging from 11" to 43" in lieu of the minimum of 48".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frontage on W. Republican St. will have mix of loft style units and live/work that respond to sloping terrain. 	Recommended approval
4. Street Level Development Standards SMC 23.47A.008B.3.a	Non-residential uses shall extend an average of at least 30' in length.	Allow live/work units to be a minimum of 27' average.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	Recommended Approval
5. Street Level Development Standards SMC 23.47A.008B.3.b	Nonresidential uses at street level shall have a floor to floor height of at least 13'.	Allow live/work units to have 19' high front area with mezzanine floor in the back splitting units into 9' lower and upper areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separates living area from work area. Creates 6' higher work spaces facing street. 	Recommended Approval

DPD FOLLOW-UP ANALYSIS

The applicant's departure request # 3, p. 14 of the Recommendation booklet, refers to the *Uptown Neighborhood* guidelines section B-1 for Height, Bulk and Scale. This guideline supports an increase in the maximum building height by three feet when a six foot minimum set back occurs at the top most floor.

Departures from neighborhood guidelines are not permitted in the Land Use Code. The direct code citation occurs in the SMC 23.41.012B.12.d (Development Standard Departures). The

specific code states, “Within the Uptown Urban Center building height departures up to three feet of additional height may be granted if the top floor of the structure is set back at least six feet in addition to all required building setbacks.” The proposed structure’s top floor currently does not comply with this regulation. The applicant could receive the additional three feet if the entire top floor sets back six feet from all building setbacks. Applicants may not request a departure from a defined departure.

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