



# City of Seattle

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



## FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3013235

Address: 4041 Roosevelt Way Northeast

Applicant: Permit Consulting Northwest

Date of Meeting: Monday, February 25, 2013

Board Members Present: Joe Hurley  
Christina Pizana  
Martine Zettle  
Bo Zhang (substitute)

Board Members Absent: Salone Habibuddin  
Peter Krech (recused)

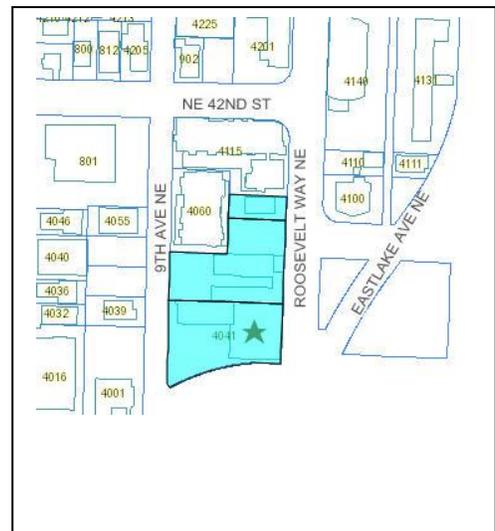
DPD Staff Present: Bruce Rips

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial One with a 65' height limit (C1 65). University District Northwest Urban Center Village.

Nearby Zones: North: C1 65  
South: C1 65 north of NE Pacific St.  
West: Multifamily Lowrise Three (LR3) west of 9<sup>th</sup> Ave NE.  
East: C1 65 and Midrise (MR) with Major Institution Overlay (MIO) with a 105' height limit.

Lot Area: A panhandle shaped lot of 46,500 sq. ft.



Current Development: The south parcel has abutting single and two story structures. The northern two most lots are vacant.

Access: Roosevelt Way NE, 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. and NE 40<sup>th</sup> Street

Located in the University District just west of the University of Washington, the irregular shaped site has boundaries defined by Roosevelt Way NE on the east, Ninth Avenue NE on the west and NE 40th Street on the south. The “L” shaped Allegro Apartments to the north and west define the northern boundary. Existing structures on the site include an unoccupied one story brick building fronting Roosevelt Way and a two story, wood office building behind the lower building. A surface parking lot lies between NE 40th St. and the office building.

Land uses in the neighborhood comprise institutional, multifamily and single family residential uses to the west. The University of Washington Medical Center is to the north and south and the U.W. campus to the east. Commercial, entertainment and medical facilities lie close by. Recreational and scenic amenities, Lake Union and the Burke Gilman Trail, are within close proximity. Noted buildings in the vicinity include the elegant Japanese styled design University Friends Meeting (meeting house), the newly constructed Cedar Apartments, Hardwick and Sons hardware, the Watertown and the University Inn hotels.

Surrounding  
Development  
&  
Neighborhood  
Character:

One way street patterns surround the site. Roosevelt Way, a principal arterial, travels south bound, NE 40th St. is west bound and Ninth Ave moves traffic north bound. The east/west couplet NE Campus Parkway provides an axis from the campus and dives under Eastlake Ave E connecting to NE 40th St. to the west. Between the site’s south property line and the Burke Gilman Trail / NE 40th St. lay rights of way lined with trees.

Roosevelt Way is the primary commercial corridor adjacent to the site. Roosevelt functions as a thoroughfare for vehicular traffic between the Eastlake neighborhood and University District. Roosevelt separates and creates a barrier for the east west pedestrian movement traveling from the University of Washington to the subject lot. Roosevelt Ave NE corner with NE 40th Street has been identified as a gateway by the University District Guidelines.

NE 40th Street is a one-way westbound section of street that serves as a connector between the commercial and institutional districts on Roosevelt and the primarily residential neighborhood to the west.

9th Ave NE travels one-way northbound from the subject lot. The street, primarily residential in character, separates the subject lot, zoned C1-65, from the lower density zoning of LR3 across the street.

The site drops approximately ten feet from the north to south across the site. There are mature trees and landscaping to the south of NE 40th Street.

ECAs: No mapped designated environmentally critical areas.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposes a seven story structure with approximately 214 residential units above 4,000 square feet of commercial space and 200 parking stalls.

## **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The applicant presented three design scenarios at the early design guidance stage. Massing options A and C represent similar approaches to the site. Both options illustrate two parallel and linear rectangular volumes along the two north and south streets, Roosevelt Way NE and Ninth Ave NE, which form courtyards in the interstitial space between the two prominent masses. These linear bars contain double loaded corridors at the residential levels. Option A links these six to seven story volumes with hallways on each floor that divide the courtyard into separate realms. In Option C the upper floors of the Roosevelt spine inflect away from the street leaving a deck above grade and acknowledging the splitting of Eastlake into Roosevelt and 11<sup>th</sup> Ave NE.

Option B preserves the linear volume adjacent to Roosevelt and adds two perpendicular wings extending west from the spine. This solution forms an “F” shape plan with one courtyard between the two wings and a smaller second court between the stem of the spine and the western most portions of the neighboring Allegro Apartments.

The plinth common to each of these schemes contains similar configurations: shallow commercial use fronting onto Roosevelt Way NE (and a residential amenity area for Option C); a large residential lobby facing NE 40<sup>th</sup> St.; two garage entries facing Ninth Ave NE and lofts or townhouse-like units also lining Ninth Ave. These uses enclose one level of garage parking. The second garage access leads to a ramp that connects to lower parking levels. The schemes vary the height of the massing at the Ninth Ave and NE 40<sup>th</sup> St corner and incorporate slightly different approaches to the design of an entry plaza between NE 40<sup>th</sup> and the lobby. In plan and diagrammatic massing, the scale of the proposed complex roughly approximates the size of the Allegro Apartments.

By the Initial Recommendation meeting, the applicant refined Option C. The plans illustrated a slight reorientation of the southwest volume and establishment of more generous upper level setbacks along Ninth Ave. NE. The applicant also eliminated one of the garage entrances.

The Board and community reviewed alterations of the design based on the earlier guidance at the Final Recommendation meeting. The changes introduced at the Final Recommendation meeting included a canopy above the Roosevelt Way residential entrance and a blade-sign closer to the corner of Roosevelt and NE 40<sup>th</sup> St. The architect also further defined the building corner by creating a vertical notch or recession in the façade and projecting a portion of the south façade forward slightly.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Six members of the public affixed their names to the Initial Recommendation meeting sign-in sheet. The attendees who spoke liked the manner in which the proposal met the various street conditions. Speakers thought that the project would make a positive contribution to the neighborhood.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, three people signed-in. One person raised a question about whether the area designated as a sports court along Roosevelt Way could be converted to commercial use.

## **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-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.**

#### **University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** The pedestrian-oriented street streetscape is perhaps the most important characteristic to be emphasized in the neighborhood. The University Community identified certain streets as “Mixed Use Corridors”. These are streets where commercial and residential uses and activities interface and create a lively, attractive, and safe pedestrian environment. The Mixed Use Corridors are shown in Map 1. Another important site feature in the University Community is the presence of the Burke Gilman Trail. The primary goal is to minimize impacts to views, sunlight and mixed uses while increasing safety and access along the trail.

**Guideline:** For properties facing the Burke Gilman Trail, new buildings should be located to minimize impacts to views of Mount Rainier, Cascade Mountains and Lake Washington, and allow for sunlight along the trail and increase safety and access for trail users.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The Board provided extensive deliberation on whether the proposed structure responded to the varying street frontages. See guidance A-3, A-10 and C-2 for details.

**A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.**

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** Reinforcing the pedestrian streetscape and protecting public view corridors are particularly important site planning issues. Stepping back upper floors allows more sunlight to reach the street, minimizes impact to views, and maintains the low- to mediumrise character of the streetscape. Roof decks providing open space for mixed-use development can be located facing the street so that upper stories are, in effect, set back.

**Guideline - Solar Orientation:** Minimizing shadow impacts is important in the University neighborhood. The design of a structure and its massing on the site can enhance solar exposure for the project and minimize shadow impacts onto adjacent public areas between March 21st and September 21st. This is especially important on blocks with narrow rights-of-way relative to other neighborhood streets, including University Way, south of NE 50th Street.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* With the exception of the residential entry on Roosevelt Way, no changes to the streetscape were recommended.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* The applicant added a canopy to the Roosevelt Way residential entrance. The Board found the design acceptable.

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

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** Another way to emphasize human activity and pedestrian orientation, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors, is to provide clearly identifiable storefront entries. In residential projects, walkways and entries promote visual access and security.

**Guidelines:**

- 1. On Mixed Use Corridors, primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street.**
- 2. In residential projects, except townhouses, it is generally preferable to have one walkway from the street that can serve several building entrances.**
- 3. When a courtyard is proposed for a residential project, the courtyard should have at least one entry from the street.**

4. In residential projects, front yard fences over four (4) feet in height that reduce visual access and security should be avoided.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The entry to the passageway on Roosevelt needs more “punch and character”. The Board encouraged the addition of a canopy to enhance the building’s presence along the streetscape. For the next Recommendation meeting, the applicant received direction to provide a revision to the entry notch or reveal that allows for as much transparency as possible and, at the same time, maintains the building’s security.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* See Board guidance for A-2.

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

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** Pedestrian orientation and activity should be emphasized in the University Community, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors. While most streets feature narrow sidewalks relative to the volume of pedestrian traffic, wider sidewalks and more small open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, and other activities would benefit these areas. Pedestrian-oriented open spaces, such as wider sidewalks and plazas, are encouraged as long as the setback does not detract from the “street wall.”

**Guidelines:** On Mixed Use Corridors, where narrow sidewalks exist (less than 15’ wide), consider recessing entries to provide small open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, or other pedestrian activities. Recessed entries should promote pedestrian movement and avoid blind corners.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The Board did not recommend changes to the setbacks along the streets or at the corners.

- 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.

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** This Citywide Design Guideline is particularly important where a building’s back side, service areas or parking lots could impact adjacent residential uses. Map 2 (page 8) shows potential impact areas—these are where Lowrise zones abut commercial zones.

**Guideline:** Special attention should be paid to projects in the zone edge areas as depicted in Map 2 to ensure impacts to Lowrise zones are minimized as described in A-5 of the Citywide Design Guidelines.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The relationship of the proposal to the Allegro Apartments met the Board's expectations from the EDG.

- 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.**

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The Ninth Ave. streetscape met with the Board's approval.

- A-7 Residential Open Space. Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.**

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** There is a severe lack of both public and private open space in the community. Small open spaces—such as gardens, courtyards, or plazas—that are visible or accessible to the public are an important part of the neighborhood's vision. Therefore, providing ground-level open space is an important public objective and will improve the quality of the residential environment.

**Guidelines:**

- 1. The ground-level open space should be designed as a plaza, courtyard, play area, mini-park, pedestrian open space, garden, or similar occupiable site feature. The quantity of open space is less important than the provision of functional and visual ground-level open space.**
- 2. A central courtyard in cottage or townhouse developments may provide better open space than space for each unit. In these cases, yard setbacks may be reduced if a Sensitive transition to neighbors is maintained.**

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* Board comments did not focus on this topic.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* No discussion ensued at the meeting.

- 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.**

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** In Lowrise residential developments, single-lane driveways (approximately 12 feet in width) are preferred over wide or multiple driveways where feasible.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The applicant reduced access to the garage from two to one garage openings which met the Board's earlier guidance.

- A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts. Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.**

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* No follow-up discussion occurred during Board deliberation.

**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.**

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** The Citywide Design Guidelines encourage buildings on corner lots to orient to the corner and adjacent street fronts. Within the University Community there are several intersections that serve as “gateways” to the neighborhood.

**Guideline:** For new buildings located on a corner, including, but not limited to the corner locations identified in Map 3, consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building such as a tower, corner articulation or bay windows. Consider a special site feature such as diagonal orientation and entry, a sculpture, a courtyard, or other device. Corner entries should be set back to allow pedestrian flow and good visibility at the intersection.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* Revising the southeast corner, particularly above the base, would both lend relief to the uniformity of the Roosevelt façade and respond to the community’s desire for a gateway at the corner. As stated by the Board, the treatment at the corner should be “powerful and special”.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* Most of the Board’s deliberation focused on composition of the southeast corner. The architect should continue to explore refining “the cube” at the corner in order to enhance its definition. Although not recommending any specific conditions, the Board members expressed the desire for a stronger architectural statement at this corner. The land use planner will evaluate the architect’s effort and work with the development team to determine the extent, if any, of revisions.

<b>B. Height, Bulk and Scale</b>
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**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.**

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** The residential areas are experiencing a change from houses to block-like apartments. Also, the proximity of lower intensive zones to higher intensive zones requires special attention to potential impacts of increased height, bulk and scale. These potential impact areas are shown in Map 4 . The design and siting of buildings is critical to maintaining stability and Lowrise character.

**Guideline: Special attention should be paid to projects in the following areas to minimize impacts of increased height, bulk and scale as stated in the Citywide Design Guideline.**

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* Although the bulk and height of the Roosevelt Way elevation appeared adequate, the monotonousness of the façade's length exacerbated the project's scale in relationship to the surrounding urban fabric. See guidance for A-10 and C-2.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* The applicant responded to the earlier guidance by creating a six foot wide vertical recession above the commercial entrance on Roosevelt Way. This acts to establish a near cube-like corner. The introduction of a large blade-sign identifying the building near the recession and of a slightly projecting south façade at the corner helps to accentuate the idea of a gateway and reduce the monotony along the east façade's length. The Board welcomed these alterations but asked for more design exploration to enhance the corner element as an object related but distinct from the larger east and south elevations.

## **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.**

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The Board noted the monotony of the Roosevelt façade finding the southeast corner unresolved as a gateway and the entry passage to the open space lacking adequate presence. By the next Recommendation meeting, the applicant will need to revise the corner, which would include at least several bays on the Roosevelt and N. 40<sup>th</sup> St. elevations, and add a canopy at the passageway.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* See Board guidance for A-2, A-10 and B-1.

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

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* A canopy placed at the reveal and entry on Roosevelt Way will enhance the sense of human scale.

*Final Recommendation Meeting:* The Board accepted the canopy design at the Roosevelt residential passageway.

- 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.**

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

#### Guidelines:

1. New buildings should emphasize durable, attractive, and well-detailed finish materials, including: Brick; Concrete; Cast stone, natural stone, tile; Stucco and stucco-like panels; Art tile; Wood.
2. Sculptural cast stone and decorative tile are particularly appropriate because they relate to campus architecture and Art Deco buildings. Wood and cast stone are appropriate for moldings and trim.
3. The materials listed below are discouraged and should only be used if they complement the building's architectural character and are architecturally treated for a specific reason that supports the building and streetscape character: Masonry units; Metal siding; Wood siding and shingles; Vinyl siding; Sprayed-on finish; Mirrored glass.
4. Where anodized metal is used for window and door trim, then care should be given to the proportion and breakup of glazing to reinforce the building concept and proportions.
5. Fencing adjacent to the sidewalk should be sited and designed in an attractive and pedestrian oriented manner.
6. Awnings made of translucent material may be backlit, but should not overpower neighboring light schemes. Lights, which direct light downward, mounted from the awning frame are acceptable. Lights that shine from the exterior down on the awning are acceptable.
7. Light standards should be compatible with other site design and building elements.

#### Signs

**Context:** The Citywide Design Guidelines do not provide guidance for new signs. New guidelines encourage signs that reinforce the character of the building and the neighborhood.

#### Guidelines:

1. The following sign types are encouraged, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors – Pedestrian oriented shingle or blade signs extending from the building front just above pedestrians; Marquee signs and signs on pedestrian canopies; Neon signs; Carefully executed window signs; such as etched glass or hand painted signs; Small signs on awnings or canopies.
2. Post mounted signs are discouraged.
3. The location and installation of signage should be integrated with the building's architecture.
4. Monument signs should be integrated into the development, such as on a screen wall.

**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.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The applicant eliminated one of two proposed garage doors on Ninth Ave NE.

## 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.

**University-specific supplemental guidance:**

**Context:** The University Community would like to encourage, especially on Mixed Use Corridors, the provision of usable, small open spaces, such as gardens, courtyards, or plazas that are visible and/or accessible to the public. Therefore, providing ground-level open space is an important public objective and will improve the quality of both the pedestrian and residential environment.

**Guidelines:**

1. On Mixed Use Corridors, consider setting back a portion of the building to provide small pedestrian open spaces with seating amenities. The building façades along the open space must still be pedestrian-oriented.
2. On Mixed Use Corridors, entries to upper floor residential uses should be accessed from, but not dominate, the street frontage. On corner locations, the main residential entry should be on the side street with a small courtyard that provides a transition between the entry and the street.

**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.

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* The applicant's design reduced the presence of blank walls.

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

*Initial Recommendation Meeting:* No further discussion of this guideline ensued.

**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.**

**Recommendations:** The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the February 25, 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 February 25, 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).

**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 uses. SMC 23.71.008D.1	Residential uses limited to 20% of the street level street-facing façade.	45% for residential uses at street level on Roosevelt Way NE	▪ Placement of a sports court for residential use 8’ feet below grade would provide active uses.	Recommended approval