



INITIAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014111

Address: 3801 Stone Way North

Applicant: Matt Driscoll

Date of Meeting: Monday, August 19, 2013

Board Members Present: Ivana Begley
Salone Habibuddin
Joe Hurley
Martine Zettle

Board Members Absent: Christina Pizana

DPD Staff Present: Bruce P. Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial One with a forty foot height limit. (C1 40)

Zoning Pattern:

C1-40 zoning extends north to N. 39th St. and south to the Burke Gilman Trail along Woodland Park Ave N. South of N. 38th St., C2 40 and C2 30 zoning extends along Stone Way N. Multi-family Lowrise One (LR1) begins midway between Stone Way N. and Interlake Ave N. The commercially zoned corridor along Stone Way changes to LR 3 to the west of Albion Place N. The site lies within the Fremont Hub Urban Village.



Lot Area: The ten parcel site comprises roughly 72,390 square feet including 200 linear feet of frontage on Woodland Park Ave N., 216 feet on N. 38th St. and 290 feet on Stone Way N. The development site includes a large portion of the block bounded by Bridge Way, N. 39th St., Stone Way N., N. 38th St. and Woodland Park Ave N. Its irregular shape occurs, in part, due to the presence of parcels not controlled by the developer at the northeast, northwest and southwest corners. The only true corner within the boundaries of the proposal lies at Stone Way N. and N. 38th St. The site slopes roughly 20 feet from the northwest to the southeast corner.

Current Development: Existing uses on the site include single family and duplex residential uses, retail, commercial (office and retail), warehouse and surface parking lots. Businesses occupying the site consist of Michaelo Espresso Inc. a coffee equipment supplier, Rockler Woodworking, and Hy-Lite Mirror and Glass.

Access: The development site fronts onto Woodland Park Ave N., North 38th St., and Stone Way North

Other businesses sharing the block include University Reprographics, Sea Gear, the Episcopal Bookstore, Kane Environmental, Dovetail, Inc., and the Bridgeway Building (offices).

Surrounding
Development
&
Neighborhood
Character:

Most of the structures in the vicinity are one and two stories with the exception of the Bridgeway Building, the Prescott and the Oslo Towers, a residential structure across N. 39th St. Construction trade businesses represent a considerable share of commercial land use along the Stone Way N. corridor. Other neighboring buildings include Stoneway Electric Supply to the south, Bastyr Center to the southeast, Pacific Rim Automotive, Seattle Interiors and Fusions Beads to the east.

A minor arterial street, Stone Way North runs north and south connecting Wallingford, North 45th Street, the Green Lake area, Fremont, and the north Lake Union waterfront. A separate bike lane travels north bound along Stone Way N. and a shared vehicle/bike lane (sharrow) runs southbound. Bridge Way North, also a minor arterial, connects Aurora Ave. N. to Stone Way N. North 39th Street, a local street, forms the northern boundary of the project site. Stone Way N. and N. 39th St. have curbs and sidewalks. Classified as a local street, Woodland Park Ave. N. connects to Bridge Way N. and provides southern views towards downtown Seattle. N. 38th St. is classified as a collector street.

ECAs: The site has a small, mapped steep slope environmental critical area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes a mixed use structure with 280 residential units, ground floor commercial on Stone Way N., and live-work units on Woodland Park Ave N., and below grade parking for 274 autos.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant provided three design options. Commonalities of the three approaches include the desire to locate the primary residential lobby near the site's northeast corner, the garage entrance and solid waste storage on N. 38th St., commercial use along Stone Way N. with the larger portion of it anchoring the corner with N. 38th St., and live/work units on Woodland Park Ave N. The building mass of all schemes wraps, almost nautilus-like, around the site's lengthy perimeter leaving an open space at the center. Scheme # 3, unlike the other options, sets back from the north property line leaving an open space that also serves as a passageway.

The four to five-story massing of option # 1 varies little at the upper levels until it erodes somewhat as the volumes approach the southwest corner. Option #2's parti provides a cut or chasm (varying in width) along the east/west axis connecting Stone Way N. to Woodland Park Ave. The separation creates a rectangular shaped volume extending along the north property line and two other volumes, one defining the southeast corner and the other smaller rectangular volume extending from Woodland Park Ave to the site's center. The heights of Option # 3's volumes vary little from one another. The volume which houses the live/work units is the most distinct of the three schemes as the rectangular block's length extends parallel to Woodland Park.

Residential open space occurs generally in the center of the site directly above the parking garage and on one or two roof tops closer to the Woodland Park Ave frontage. Only scheme # 3 departs from this model by locating exterior amenity space on the north side and on a roof sandwiched between taller volumes.

By the second EDG meeting, the applicant submitted a revised concept featuring a slightly modulated Stone Way N. façade with a open portal leading into a courtyard enclosed on most sides. Characteristics of the scheme include commercial spaces at the north and south corners of the structure along Stone Way N. and double loaded corridors of residential units that wrap around the edges of the site along the north, east and south. On the western portion of the irregular shaped site, the façade contains live/work units at grade and additional apartments above the units. A secondary residential entrance occurs on the Woodland Park Ave N. elevation. This lies directly across the courtyard opposite the entry on Stone Way N. Another portion of the overall building mass extends from Woodland Park Ave eastward splitting the courtyard roughly two districts--- a narrow band extending east/west saddled between three wings of the building and a larger north/south court near the center of the site. In mass, the entire building appears to have a continuous roof line. Parking access would occur on N. 38th St. at a location topographically lower than the bulk of the complex.

At the Initial Recommendation meeting, the applicant introduced refinements to the scheme discussed at the second EDG meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Twenty-two people affixed their names to the sign-in sheet. The attendees raised the following issues:

Programming

- Increase the amount of real commercial space. All spaces need to be deeper and larger.
- The project will need lots of bike lockers. The building should have direct access to the bike storage area.
- Deep bay depths on retail don't invite good retail.
- Deeper retail spaces are needed.

- Move the leasing office away from the street. Add commercial where the leasing office is designated. The leasing can still be part of the plaza but it should face the courtyard.

Massing

- The treatment of the corner at Stone Way and 38th St. is attractive.
- The three pavilions are not evident on Stone Way.
- Increase the height of the brick on the northern most mass along Stone Way.
- Set back the structure at the upper levels.
- Chamfer the 38th and Stone corner similar to the Noble Apartments just south of Tutta Bella restaurant on Stone Way.
- The roof is a single horizontal plane. The roofline should follow the topography.
- The parapets are weak. The structure needs a greater step down along Stone than what is shown.

Relationship to the Streets

- Increase the depth of the overhead weather protection on 38th St and on Stone Way. (mentioned by several speakers)
- Ensure that the amount of transparency remains at the corner of 38th St. and Stone Way.
- The bike storage area should not be located on Stone Way where the space ought to be commercial. Locate bike storage on 38th St. or in the garage. (Reiterated by others)

Open Space

- The area devoted to open space is impressive.

Amenities

- The greenhouse is appealing.
- The dog amenity on the roof is a nice feature.

Other

- Ensure that the project consumes less energy and water consumption.
- Many of the security concerns raised at the earlier meetings have been addressed.
- The design is attractive.

DPD received approximately 15 letters commenting on the proposal. Topics include impacts on traffic congestion, parking, pedestrian and vehicular safety, bulk and scale, and the large trees on Stone Way and on the site. Authors favored greater building setbacks from Stone Way, more robust landscaping, greater amounts of open space, and a design that reflects the industrial heritage of the neighborhood. A letter questioned the accuracy of the proposed floor area ratio (FAR), the loss of small businesses and the small size of the proposed commercial spaces.

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.**

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The very modest changes in parapet heights on Stone Way and Woodland Park Ave did not satisfy the Board's expectation that the building's roof line actually step down as the slope changes. See discussion for guideline C-2.

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

Initial Recommendation Meeting: At all of the design review meetings, the Board emphasized the prospect of a great commercial edge along Stone Way. The placement of the bike storage room and the leasing office along Stone undermines this desire for the community. Revise the programming to add commercial space at these locations. See discussion under guidance A-4.

The Board did not discuss the design of the live/work units on Woodland Park Ave.

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

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

Initial Recommendation Meeting: By prioritizing the bike storage area and the leasing office to front onto Stone Way N., the applicant has overlooked the community desire to have commercial storefronts engaging with this important corridor. Relocate the bike storage area to N. 38th St. either on the street or inside the garage. Shift the leasing office away from Stone Way and have it face the courtyard where the drawings currently show an amenity area. The areas once designated for bike storage and leasing should be used for commercial use ensuring that future development encourages human activity on the street.

- 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.**

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The applicant added an additional space between the proposed structure and the adjacent buildings to the north. The Board did not comment on either this relationship or the building's proximity to the other two adjacent businesses.

- 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**

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The Board did not comment on the transitions between the sidewalk on Woodland Park Ave and the live/work units and the two-story residential units, the subject of the second EDG meeting.

For discussion of the primary residential entry on Stone Way N. see Board guidance for D-1.

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

Initial Recommendation Meeting: Repeating much of the concerns raised at the second EDG meeting, the Board directed the applicant to revise the nature of the plaza entry area on Stone Way. See D-1 guidance.

Deliberation did not focus on the design of the sunken courtyard or the roof top garden.

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.

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.

Initial Recommendation Meeting: Discussion did not dwell on the design for the commercial corner at Stone Way and N. 38th St. with the exception that transparency remains critical for the success of the commercial space.

The vertical corner bay of windows should assume a different plane than the adjoining east and south elevations.

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.

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The use of limestone on the façade received commendation. The brick module relates to many of the older and now new mixed use structures in the neighborhood.

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: Board members, as well as the public, noted the strides in overall design development since the EDG meetings. The Stone Way façade exudes more restraint and calm than earlier versions. The subject elevation, in part, remains diffident to guidelines A-1, site characteristics, and A-2, streetscape

compatibility. The minimal changes in parapet heights ignore the significant sloping terrain. From the right of way, the slight variation in the parapet won't be acknowledged. The central portion of the scheme lacks a coherent relationship to the street. Accessory uses to the residential component (bike storage, leasing office) consume much of the street frontage and their placement leaves them significantly above or below grade.

In addition to the above, other elements of the three major pavilions (and an entry gasket) work against the elevation from appearing as a refined ensemble. Unlike the other large mixed use projects recently reviewed or built along Stone Way, this project has neither a significant setback along the frontage (3636 Stone Way) nor a strategy such as the Prescott to create three or four visually arresting pavilions. (Staff note: Part of the difficulty of evaluating the subject elevation is that the perspective renderings use foliage to obscure the architecture.) The Board provided the following ideas to create a stronger A,B,C,A rhythm on the façade:

- Changes in materials ought to signify changes in the vertical plane.
- The upper levels on the bookend pavilions should step back from the predominant brick plane.
- Raise the height of the limestone on the northern segment to create a more coherent association with the south segment.
- The lantern at the southeast corner ought to stand proud of the prominent vertical plane.
- The central "B" segment needs distinguishable or identifiable characteristics in spite of it representing the longest segment and projecting forward from its adjacent planes. Consider changing the design of the parapet as part of the revisions.

The roof line on Woodland Park Ave N must step down in plane as it follows the descent of the terrain.

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: Discussion focused on the overhead weather protection. The Board decided that continuous canopies were not a necessity rather the architect should increase the depth of the canopies to extend into the rights of way when they do not interfere with the existing street trees.

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.

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The Board indicated a preference to see the brick on the northern pavilion raised another floor.

- 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.

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.

Initial Recommendation Meeting: Redesign the entry/plaza on Stone Way to address three issues: the need for an appropriate scale for such a large project; the importance of providing the appropriate type of programming surrounding the space; and the desire to create an open space that allows tenants and customers to collect and socialize. As presented to the Board and the public, the space appears small and tunnel-like, accentuating circulation rather than providing a plaza or heart. A Board member stated that it resembled a wide thoroughfare without a place to pause or gather.

Enlarge the portal by creating a two-story opening that befits a façade length of nearly 300 feet. Rearrange the open space to emphasize gathering over passage, this space ought to complement commercial spaces that will flank it. See the discussion in guidance A-4 to relocate the leasing office for additional commercial space to adjoin the plaza. The south wall of the north commercial space ought to have glazing visually connecting to the plaza. These changes will create a space for people to occupy and that will supplement the adjacent commercial uses.

- 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.

- 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.

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The Board did not discuss the concept signage images for the commercial spaces.

- 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.

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The Board did not discuss the lighting plan. Earlier Board notes on incorporating Wallingford community specified pedestrian lighting fixture remain relevant.

- 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.**

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The Board conveyed its interest in ensuring maximum transparency along Stone Way and N. 38th St.

- 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.**

Initial Recommendation Meeting: The primary residential entry's emphasis on circulation overlooks the desire to combine passage with a plaza that supplements flanking commercial spaces. See guidance for D-1.

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.**

Initial Recommendation Meeting: Add patterns and variations to the paving design along the rights of way to articulate entries, plazas and corners. Patterns, street identification markers, etc. on the ground plane will help imbue the project with a sense of place.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The applicant did not request a departure.

BOARD DIRECTION

The Board unanimously requested that the applicant return for a second Recommendation meeting.

Ripsb/doc/design review/REC.3014111.docx