



City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director



THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014789

Address: 4302 7th Ave NE

Applicant: Carlos de la Torre, H + dIT collaborative

Date of Meeting: Monday, January 6, 2014

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

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

Nearby Zones: North: LR3 & NC3-65'
South: LR3
East: LR3, NC3-85 & MR
West: LR3

Lot Area: 10,000 square feet



Current Development: Two single family residences

Access: NE 43rd St. and 7th Ave NE

ECAs: None

Surrounding Development: Residential uses, mostly apartment structures. To the north is a recently constructed building. To the east is a converted single family structure.

Neighborhood Character: The block is located between I-5 directly to the west and a commercial zone a couple blocks to the east. Traffic along 7th Ave NE is busy and fast as this is an arterial that leads to the I-5 entry ramps at 45th St. I-5 north exits just north of the site. 43rd St. is narrow and quiet.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is a four-story 47 unit, apartment structure. Parking for 13 vehicles is to be provided in a below grade garage.

INITIAL EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: June 17, 2013

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number 3014789 at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3014789), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include residential units above underground parking for 19 vehicles.

The first scheme (Alternative 1) has its main residential entry off of NE 43rd St. and parking access along the north property line off of 7th Ave NE. The units have windows facing west, north and east. Amenity areas are provided at the SW and SE corners of the site.

The second scheme (Alternative 2) has its main residential entry off of 7th Ave NE and parking access along the east property line off of 7th Ave NE. The units have windows facing east and west. Amenity areas are provided along 7th Ave NE and NE 43rd St.

The third preferred scheme (Alternative 3) has its main residential entry off of NE 43rd St. and parking access along the north property line off of 7th Ave NE. The units have windows facing north and south. Amenity areas are provided along the two streets and the east property line.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were offered from the public at this Early Design Review meeting:

- Noted that 7th Ave NE is a very busy street with lines of vehicular traffic in the morning, waiting to get on the express lanes.
- Suggested that access from NE 43rd St would be better for traffic flow.

SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: October 7, 2013

At the initial EDG meeting the Board had recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application. However, it was brought up at that meeting that the applicant would need to work with SDOT, to approve removal of a tree in the right-of-way where the proposed garage access was located. Additionally, a survey of trees on the site should be done.

SDOT determined that removal of the tree along 7th Ave NE would not be allowed. The tree survey by an arborist determined two Exceptional Trees were located on the site. One Exceptional Tree along the north property line was determined by the arborist and DPD to be a hazard tree that should be removed. The second Exceptional Tree, a White Pine, located close to the middle of the site would need to remain or get a recommendation for removal from the Design Review Board. The project came back to the Board at this Second EDG meeting to request removal of the tree.

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented.

The first scheme, which is code compliant, (Option 1) has its main residential entry off 7th Ave NE and parking access for 19 vehicles along the north property line off of NE 43rd St. The 47 residential units are oriented facing east and west. Amenity areas are provided at the western portion of the site. Removal of the Exceptional Tree is required for this scheme.

The second scheme (Option 2) is the applicants preferred option. The residential entry is within a courtyard accessed from NE 43rd St. Below grade parking for 28 vehicles is accessed off of NE 43rd St. Most of the 48 units face north and west. The courtyard and area at the north of the site will provide amenity areas. Removal of the exceptional tree is implicit in this alternative.

The third scheme (Option 3) retains the exceptional tree. The residential entry is within a courtyard accessed from NE 43rd ST. The structure is pushed to the western portion of the site to keep out of the drip line and exceptional root zone of the tree. Most of the 44 units face west. No parking is provided.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public was present at the Second Early Design Review meeting.

THIRD EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: January 6, 2014

At the Third Early Design Guidance meeting the Board had recommended the project to move forward to MUP application. The project was then sold to a new owner with a new design team. The project use and scale remained essentially the same but the physical design being proposed was different than what the previous team had presented to the Board. DPD determined the project needed to come in for another EDG meeting.

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options included a four-story residential structure. Schemes 1 and 3 have underground parking for 13 vehicles.

The first scheme (Scheme 1) has its main residential entry and parking access off of 7th Ave NE. The main unit window orientation is to the south and north. Amenity areas are provided along the north property line and SE corner of the site. No departures were requested. The exceptional tree would be removed.

The second scheme (Scheme 2) retains the exceptional Western White Pine located close to the center of the site. The structure is pushed to the west and provides no or minimal setbacks at the north and south lot line. The main residential entry off of 7th Ave NE and no parking is provided. Most units have windows facing west and south. A generous amenity area is provided at the eastern portion of the site.

The preferred third scheme (Scheme 3) has its main residential entry off of the corner of NE 43rd St. and 7th Ave NE with the primary pedestrian access off of NE 43rd. Underground parking is accessed off of 7th Ave NE. The units have windows facing east and west. Amenity areas are provided along the 7th Ave NE and the NE corner of the site. No departures were requested. The Exceptional Tree would be removed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

One person from the public was present at the Third Early Design Review meeting.

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

University District Supplemental Guidelines: *In residential projects, except townhouses, it is generally preferable to have one walkway from the street that can serve several building entrances. At least one building entrance, preferably the main one, should be prominently visible from the street. To increase security, it is desirable that other entries also be visible from the street; however, the configuration of existing buildings may preclude this.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that they preferred the main entry be located off of NW 43rd St. as this was the more pedestrian friendly street. See Guideline A-4.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was enthusiastic about the courtyard entry off of NW 43rd St. As the entry door will not be visible from the street the Board stressed the need for a prominent entry sequence from the street to the door. At the recommendation meeting the applicant needs to present the experience of the entry sequence in plan and sketches. See guidelines A-6 & D-1.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board suggested locating the south interior exit stair door off the “patio”. The stair will probably be heavily used as circulation by the many of the tenants. See Guideline A-4.

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

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority though it was not discussed.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, The Board noted that the entry courtyard should be designed to encourage activity. Consider landscaping and solar access to create a compelling social environment.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board expressed that they would like to see the area outside the main pedestrian entry designed as a ‘patio’ space where tenants could gather and interact. It was agreed that NE 43rd St. would most likely be more successful in achieving a usable space, given the heavy traffic along 7th Ave NE.

The Board suggested extending the exterior stairs from the sidewalk to the entry further south and designing the stairs to provide for human interaction.

It was also suggested to have the south interior exit stair door located off the “patio”. The stair will probably be heavily used as circulation by the many of the tenants.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this guideline was not a priority if the current setbacks presented at EDG are maintained.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board did not discuss this guideline. The setbacks of the preferred option have changed but continue to provide adequate separation from the surrounding structures.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board did not discuss this guideline.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority though it was not discussed.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board spent much time discussing this guideline. The entry experience from NW 43rd St. should be welcoming, yet secure. Consider weather protection and where the secure point will be located. Windows should face into the courtyard to provide “eyes” on the entry path. Other building entries should be avoided. See guidelines A-3 & D-1.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed this guideline. See Guidelines A-4 & A-3.

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

University District Supplemental Guidelines: *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. Successfully designed ground level open space should meet these objectives:*

- *Reinforces positive streetscape qualities by providing a landscaped front yard, adhering to common setback dimensions of neighboring properties, and providing a transition between public and private realms.*
- *Provides for the comfort, health, and recreation of residents.*
- *Increases privacy and reduce visual impacts to all neighboring properties*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority though it was not discussed.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board saw the entry courtyard as providing an opportunity for a great residential amenity space. Landscaping, solar access and lighting need to be carefully considered.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board encouraged the design and programming of the open space at the northeast corner of the site to provide areas for barbecuing, relaxation and interaction.

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

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the pros and cons of access off of 7th Ave NW or NW 43rd St. The Board recommended the applicant work with DPD and SDOT to determine the access location for parking. Issues that need to be determined are:

- Can the street tree along 7th Ave NW where the applicant wants to take access be removed? [Staff note; applicant should contact Bill Ames at SDOT.]
- Location of the curb cut in relationship to the existing utility poles.
- Does SDOT have a strong preference on which street the curb cut should be located?

- What is the opinion of DPD's traffic reviewer?

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, it was presented to the Board that the entry to below grade parking will be located at the SE corner of the lot off of NW 43rd St. The Board noted that the entry should be sited and designed to provide safety for pedestrians. At the recommendation meeting, sketches showing the experience of entering the garage should be provided.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that the driveway width should be the minimum needed at the intersection with the sidewalk and street. Sight triangles and other measure should be shown that will provide for 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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority and encouraged the design make a gesture to the corner.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, The Board indicated that given the traffic along 7th Ave NW and the entry court location, the building corner should be strong and consistent, not the central focus point of the design.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted they preferred the parking access away from the corner.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority though it was not discussed.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stressed that the concept of the design needs to be well addressed at the street and courtyard elevations. They encouraged the portions of the building housing circulation functions to be distinct from the residential units, with color and materials, as presented in the EDG packet.

The Board encouraged the change of the window rhyme at the NW corner of the west elevation and taking advantage of the corner units to provide more windows. The south elevation along NW 43rd St. needs more fenestration and interest.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the entry, stair tower and elevations. It was noted that most pedestrian traffic is expected along NW 43rd St. so

the design of the stair tower and entry along the south elevation should provide visual interest.

In the preferred scheme, the west elevation was presented showing modulation and a material color change. The Board debated suggesting the same level of detailing and material interest on the east elevation. They observed that for this project, the east, west and south elevations are all visible.

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

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board advised the applicant to strengthen the street edges of the structure. At the Recommendation meeting they would like to see sketches showing the character and landscaping of the proposal.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, indicated this guideline as a highest priority. The entry sequence and the elevations facing the courtyard should provide elements to meet this guideline.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that human scale elements should be provided, especially at the pedestrian entry.

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 District Supplemental Guidelines: 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*

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 with large aggregate.*
- *Mirrored glass*

For the full text of this section see the University Community Design Guidelines at http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cms/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/dps021313.pdf

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board advised the applicant provide a materials board and proposed detailing at the Recommendation Meeting.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board advised the applicant provide a materials board and proposed detailing at the Recommendation Meeting. See guideline C-2.

Consider Juliette balconies along NW 43rd St instead of 7th Ave NW.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated that they want to see quality materials used on the project. Provide a materials board at the Recommendation meeting. See Guideline C-2.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority though it was not discussed.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, The Board spent much time discussing this guideline. To ensure the main entry off the courtyard is well used, other required egress locations should be exits only. See guidelines A-3 & A-6.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this as highest priority. See Guidelines A-3 & A-4.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority though it was not discussed.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated that some portion of blank wall facing the street may be acceptable depending on the massing of the structure, window location, materials and detailing of the elevations. See guideline C-2.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board expressed concern about the amount of blank walls and service uses oriented along 43rd Ave NE. Most pedestrian traffic is expected along 43rd.

The south interior exit stair towers should provide windows to break up the blank facade. Consider shifting the south stair to provide window access into interior circulation corridor.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority and advised the applicant to contact Liz Kain at SPU about solid waste storage location and handling.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the proposed location along 7th Ave NE where solid waste will be housed on pick up day. The Board would like more information on how the solid waste will be transferred to that location and how that space will look when not holding solid waste.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was concerned about the location of a concrete pad located along NW 43rd St. that trash, recycling, etc. would be moved to on collection day. The concern is that this will become a permanent location for trash collection instead of the proposed below grade location. The Board wants to see this area screened even if it is used only on collection day.

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

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority. The Board requested a lighting plan be presented at the Recommendation Meeting. Landscaping should be chosen and sited to enhance security.

At the Second Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board expressed this guideline as highest priority. Provide windows on the elevations facing the entry courtyard. Consider flipping the stair and elevator location to provide another unit facing the courtyard.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board stated they want shown at the Recommendation meeting how security for the garage and the NE common amenity space will work.

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.*

At the Initial Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority. The Board questioned how the proposed roof top P-patch would work.

At the 2nd Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this guideline as highest priority. The Board is recommending removal of the exceptional white pine tree and an exceptional tree which has been determined to be a hazard tree will be removed.

Provide a landscape plan that includes trees that will replace the canopy of the trees to be removed.

Consider placement of landscaping to provide solar light in the courtyard.

At the Third Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated this guideline as a highest priority. Provide a detailed landscape plan at the Recommendation meeting.

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 Third Early Design Guidance meeting, no departures were requested for the preferred scheme.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Third EDG meeting, the five Board members present recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.

At that meeting the five Board members all voted to recommend to DPD that the exceptional White Pine tree be allowed to be removed. The Board felt the tree was not a 'beautiful' tree that would enhance landscaping (E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the building and site) as most of the lower branches have been removed. The Board also stated that the location of the tree would force a design that would hinder the building design (C-2 Architectural concept and consistency), and require departures for setbacks that would impact the adjacent sites (A-5 Respect for adjacent sites).

At the Recommendation Meeting the applicant is to provide the following.

1. A detailed landscape plan. Provide information on the trees that will replace the exceptional trees to be removed.
2. A lower level plan showing all uses and functions.
3. A rendering showing what the trash pickup area will look like.
4. A full materials board – use quality materials .