



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014877

Address: 4745 40th Avenue Southwest

Applicant: Dave Knight with Alliance Realty Partners

Date of Meeting: Thursday, December 05, 2013

Board Members Present: Laird Bennion
Todd Bronk
Myer Harrell
Daniel Skaggs

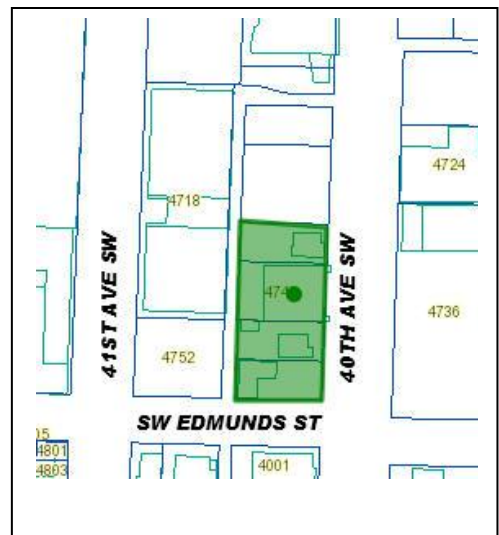
Board Members Absent: T. Frick McNamara (recused)

DPD Staff Present: Bruce P. Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Split zone: On the north half: Neighborhood Commercial Three with an 85' height limit (NC3 865). On the southern portion: NC3 with a 65' height limit (NC3 85).

Zoning Pattern: The predominant zoning classification is NC3 65 and NC3 85 in the vicinity. The zoning transitions to multi-family Lowrise Two (LR2) across SW Edmunds St. and Single Family 5000 (SF 5000) farther south.



To the east, zoning changes to LR2 from NC3 at the alley separating Fauntleroy Way SW and 38th Ave SW. To the west of the site, across the alley, the zone for one parcel is NC3 40, a neighborhood commercial zone with a 40' height limit.

The 28,875 square foot site, located within the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village, lies at the northwest corner of 40th Ave. SW and SW Edmunds St. Four parcels comprise the site.

Lot Area: SW Edmunds St. climbs approximately 20 feet from east to west. The alley's declination, an estimated 16 feet, occurs from the south to north. 40th Ave. SW is not parallel to the property lines on either side of the street. This off-center arrangement creates a broad zone between the property line and the roadway.

Current Development: A two-story office building with surface parking.

Access: Potential access would occur at the alley. The site currently has access from 40th Ave SW and SW Edmunds St.

As the topography ascends toward California Ave SW, two blocks of five to six-story multi-family and mixed use buildings sit west of the site. To the south is a low-rise multifamily complex and beyond that, a single family neighborhood.

To the east, the Masonic Temple and its parking lot lie across 40th Ave SW. Surrounding the Masonic Temple, the erstwhile Huling Brothers Auto Center occupies a majority of the block. A large mixed-use development is planned, including a grocery store, smaller retail shops, and approximately 400 residential units in two separate structures. City of Seattle Parks and Recreation has purchased property directly north of the subject site for a 11,000 square foot park. Design development for the park has not commenced. Further to the north on the same block, a Bank of America branch fronts the Alaska St and 40th Ave corner.

Surrounding
Development
&
Neighborhood
Character:

The West Seattle Triangle planning area possesses a gallimaufry of residential and commercial uses. Other developments in the immediate vicinity include Trader Joe's and a large excavated area to the north; parking lots, a Safeway, and Highline Medical Plaza to the west; a childhood learning center, the Thunderbird apartment complex and a parking lot to the south; and the West Seattle Produce Market to the east. The West Seattle Golf Course and Recreation Center sits five blocks further to the east.

New developments in the area include the Mural Apartments and a mixed use structure including a QFC grocery store on SW Alaska. A sizeable, mixed use project at the southeast corner of SW Oregon St and 42 Ave SW is currently under construction.

ECAs: The site does not possess an environmentally critical area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to build a six to eight story structure containing 150 dwelling units with nine live/work units and a 100 space parking garage. The existing structure would be demolished.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Within the proposed building program, the applicant submitted three concept massing schemes. The organization of the program offers variations on a theme. In each case, the parking garage, accessed from the alley on the west, sits tucked into the hillside. In scheme A, the lobby and commercial retail front onto 40th Ave SW. Schemes B and C allow residential units to front onto the proposed park to the north and introduce commercial live/work units and the building lobby to face 40th Ave.

In Scheme A, the rectangular volume housing the dwelling units sits on a one-story plinth facing 40th Ave. The building steps up in height to the north from six to eight floors as it gains its additional levels due to the change in zoning allowance. Similar to option A, Scheme B sits on a plinth, although slightly recessed at the central entrance, and steps up in height. The northern portion of the building forms an “L” shape in plan to create a court, enclosed on three sides above the plinth. Scheme C reduces the presence of the one-story plinth, although it remains as a central feature of the project. The volumes surrounding the second story court rise six floors on the south and west and seven floors on the north. Slight recessions in the volumes occur at the south and north facades and along 40th Ave at the base the concept drawings suggest an arcade.

At the second EDG meeting, the applicant presented an exploration of varying massing schemes relating to the structures across the alley, a concept landscape plans along 40th Ave SW, and varying options for uses at the street front.

By the Recommendation meeting, the applicant refined the preferred concept and continued developing the landscape plan presented at the 2nd EDG meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Five members of the public affixed their names to the Recommendation meeting sign-in sheet. Speakers continued to raise concerns about the amount of privacy for the residents of the buildings to the west and the level of safety for both vehicles and pedestrians in the alley and at its intersection with SW Edmunds due to shading and poor sight lines. Another comment focused on the handling of the blue panels at the base of the south elevation

The recessed two-story units facing the north would create a dark terminous or edge at the park. In general, speakers praised the transition to the park and commended the landscaping design along the 40th Ave SW frontage.

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

West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:

A pedestrian-oriented streetscape is perhaps the most important characteristic to be achieved in new development in the Junction's mixed use areas (as previously defined). New development—particularly on SW Alaska, Genesee, Oregon and Edmunds Streets—will set the precedent in establishing desirable siting and design characteristics in the right-of-way.

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

The exterior of the residential lobby should have a more visible presence. In order to produce greater clarity, establish a stronger relationship between the lobby / entrance and the larger residential massing above it.

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

West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:

An active and interesting sidewalk engages pedestrians through effective transitions between the public and private realm. Particularly in the California Avenue Commercial Core, proposed development is encouraged to set back from the front property line to allow for more public space that enhances the pedestrian environment. Building facades should give shape to the space of the street through arrangement and scale of elements. Display windows should be large and open at the street level to provide interest and encourage activity along the sidewalk. At night, these windows should provide a secondary source of lighting.

- 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.

After evaluating the west elevation and the overlay diagram depicting the relationship of the windows of the facing structures, the Board noted its comfort with the issue of tenant privacy.

- 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.

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

The design of the panels or screens separating the park from the units facing it received praise. Locate an additional screen parallel to the alley and adjacent to the west patio.

- 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.**

West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:

Pedestrian activities are concentrated at street corners. These are places of convergence, where people wait to cross and are most likely to converse with others. New development on corner lots should take advantage of this condition, adding interest to the street while providing clear space for movement. New buildings should reinforce street corners, while enhancing the pedestrian environment.

After some discussion, the Board noted its general agreement with the composition of the building's northeast corner at the park.

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.**

West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:

Current zoning in the Junction has created abrupt edges in some areas between intensive, mixed-use development potential and less-intensive, multifamily development potential. In addition, the Code-complying building envelope of NC-65' (and higher) zoning designations permitted within the Commercial Core would result in development that exceeds the scale of existing commercial/mixed-use development. More refined transitions in height, bulk and scale—in terms of relationship to surrounding context and within the proposed structure itself—must be considered.

The alley façade met the Board's design expectation established at the 2nd EDG meeting. See guidance for A-5.

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.

West Seattle Junction-specific supplemental guidance:

New multi-story developments are encouraged to consider methods to integrate a building's upper and lower levels. This is especially critical in areas zoned NC-65' and greater, where more recent buildings in the Junction lack coherency and exhibit a disconnect between the commercial base and upper residential levels as a result of disparate proportions, features and materials. The base of new mixed-use buildings – especially those zoned 65 ft. in height and higher - should reflect the scale of the overall building. New mixed-use buildings are encouraged to build the commercial level, as well as one to two levels above, out to the front and side property lines to create a more substantial base.

Revise the south elevation to eliminate the blue cementitious panel at the base. The composition should appear consistent with the east elevation. Exposing the concrete wall is a satisfactory solution.

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

West Seattle Junction-specific supplemental guidance:

- **Facades should contain elements that enhance pedestrian comfort and orientation while presenting features with visual interest that invite activity. Overhead weather protection should be functional and appropriately scaled, as defined by the height and depth of the weather protection. It should be viewed as an architectural amenity, and therefore contribute positively to the design of the building with appropriate proportions and character.**
- **Signage: Signs should add interest to the street level environment. They can unify the overall architectural concept of the building, or provide unique identity for a commercial space within a larger mixed-use structure. Design signage that is appropriate for the scale, character and use of the project and surrounding area. Signs should be oriented and scaled for both pedestrians on sidewalks and vehicles on street.**

Provide a joint or score line at the base of columns that form the arcade to provide a greater sense of detail and scale.

- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.**

The Board noted the preponderance of cementitious panels and recommended the introduction of a second material, perhaps, substituting for the grey panels. The new material should not represent an insignificant or incidental amount of the elevations.

In addition, use a grade of cementitious panel that matches the manufacturer's recommended quality thickness for a commercial building.

Several other modifications to the south, east and west elevations were recommended as well. On the south, the blue cementitious panel should terminate prior to reaching grade to stay consistent with the other major elevations. Use one material, either fiberglass or aluminum for the storefront windows to comprise the base of the east façade. This will provide greater consistency. At the concrete base of the alley façade score the wall to provide a sense of scale.

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.**

West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:

Design projects to attract pedestrians to the commercial corridors (California, Alaska). Larger sites are encouraged to incorporate pedestrian walkways and open spaces to create breaks in the street wall and encourage movement through the site and to the surrounding area. The Design Review Board would be willing to entertain a request for departures from development standards (e.g. an increase in the 64% upper level lot coverage in NC zones and a reduction in open space) to recover development potential lost at the ground level.

The capacious planting strip (more like a runway) provides a large palette for a significant landscape design. The Board and the public both commended the landscape architect's efforts.

- 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.**

- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures. The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.**

West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:

- **Parking structures should be designed and sited in a manner that enhances pedestrian access and circulation from the parking area to retail uses.**

- **The design of parking structures/areas adjacent to the public realm (sidewalks, alley) should improve the safety and appearance of parking uses in relation to the pedestrian environment.**

Add score lines to minimize the breadth of the concrete wall at the alley.

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

Wash the lower alley façade with light to ensure a safe environment for vehicles and pedestrians.

D-8 Treatment of Alleys. The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.

See D-7.

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.

The Board accepted the signage concepts presented at the meeting.

D-10 Commercial Lighting. Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.

The pole lights illustrated on pages 39 and 40 should remain as part of the landscape design.

E. Landscaping

E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites. Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

The robust landscape along the 40th Ave SW frontage will correspond well to the proposed landscaping at the Whole Foods site across the street.

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.

Keep the benches shown on page 39 of the Recommendation packet.

Consider simplifying the variety of pavers on the 40th Ave frontage.

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.

As mentioned above, the Board noted its pleasure with the landscaping along the 40th Ave frontage.

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the December 5th, 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 December 5th, 2013 public meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). The Board recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

- 1) In order to produce greater clarity and visibility for the lobby entrance, establish a stronger relationship between the lobby / entrance and the larger residential massing above it. (A-3)
- 2) Locate an additional screen parallel to the alley and adjacent to the west patio to ensure additional privacy for the corner unit. (A-7, E-1)
- 3) Revise the south elevation to eliminate the blue cementitious panel at the base. The composition should appear consistent with the east elevation. Exposing the concrete wall is a satisfactory solution. (C-2, C-4)
- 4) Provide a joint or score line at the base of the columns that form the arcade to provide a greater sense of detail and scale. (C-3)
- 5) Introduce a second material (perhaps, substituting for the grey panels) for the facades. The new material should not represent an insignificant or incidental amount of the elevations. (C-4)
- 6) Use a grade of cementitious panel that is the manufacturer's recommended quality thickness for a commercial building. (C-4)
- 7) Use one material, either fiberglass or aluminum, for the storefront windows that comprise the base of the east façade. This will provide greater consistency. (C-4)
- 8) At the concrete base of the alley façade score the wall to provide a sense of scale. (C-4, D-5)
- 9) Wash the lower alley façade with light to ensure a safe environment for vehicles and pedestrians. (D-7)
- 10) Ensure the installation of the benches shown on page 39 of the Recommendation packet. (E-2)

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. Setback SMC 23.47A.009B.4.b.	A setback of at least 10' from the street lot line is required along non-arterial north-south avenues for at least 25% of the lot frontage or 100' of the lot frontage, whichever is less.	Allow a ground level setback of 8' from the street.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lot has a usually wide planting strip between the structure and the road way. Provides a consistent street edge and a more unified design building and landscape design. (C-2, E-2) 	Recommended Approval
2. Street Level Uses. SMC 23.47A.032B.1.b	Within a structure, parking shall be separated from street-level, street facing facades by another permitted use.	A triangle portion of the parking garage appears at the base of the structure along SW Edmunds St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal amount of parking garage exposure on a sloping grade. Difficult to place another use in the location. 	Recommended Approval
3. Street Level Uses –Residential Uses at Street Level SMC 23.47A.005C.1	Residential uses may not occupy, in the aggregate, more than 20% of the street-level, street-facing façade within a zone that has a height limit of 85' or higher.	Applicable to the northern portion of the 40 th Ave SW façade. Request represents approximately 25% of total façade. The request exceeds a code compliant lobby by 31'6".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The broader lobby provides for a more convenient and attractive access to the building entrance. (A-3, D-1) 	Recommended Approval. In order to facilitate this departure, the applicant must meet recommended condition # 1.
4. Street Level Development Standards. SMC 23.47A.008D.2	The floor of a dwelling unit located along the street-level, street facing façade shall be at least 4' above or below sidewalk grade, or be set back at least 10' from the sidewalk.	Allow one unit to be within 4' feet of sidewalk grade due to the slope along SW Edmunds St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a consistent floor line and residential use along the street front. (C-2). 	Recommended Approval
5. Non-residential Street-level Requirements. SMC 23.47A.008B.2	60% of the street facing façade between 2 and 8' above the sidewalk shall be transparent.	Proposes 20% (12'10") transparent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A live/work and a parking garage occupy the greater portion of the Edmunds St. façade. The applicant requests a green screen rather than an opening. 	Recommended Approval