



City of Seattle

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



DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINE DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3015044

Address: 1720 E Denny Way

Applicant: David Neiman, Neiman Architects

Date of Report: Wednesday, July 2, 2014

DPD Staff: Lindsay King

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise Three (LR3)

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3
(South) LR3
(East) LR3
(West) LR3

Lot Area: Approximately 14,400 square feet.

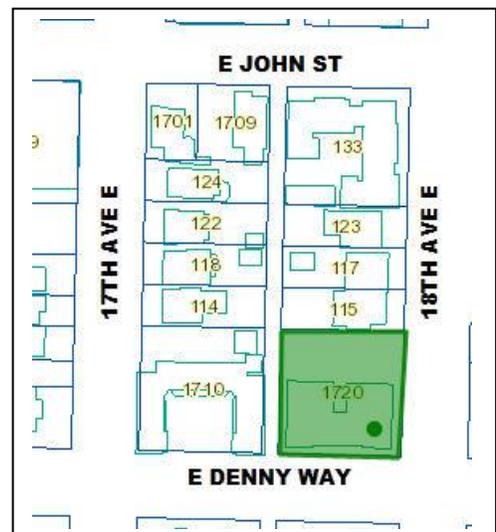
Current Development: Apartment Building.

Access: E Denny Way and 18th Avenue E.

Surrounding Development: Single family residences to the north, south and east. Multifamily structure to the west.

ECAs: None.

Neighborhood Character: Neighborhood is composed of single family and multifamily structures of multiple styles and generations.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Streamlined Design Review Application for a 3-story addition, containing 20 apartment units, to an existing 25 unit apartment building (Roxborough Apts). Streamlined Design Review is required due to the proposed removal of an Exceptional Tree.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The subject site is located on the northwest corner of 18th Avenue E and E Denny Way. The subject lot and all surrounding lots are zoned Lowrise Three (LR3) multifamily. The site contains one parcel with an existing 4-story apartment building. The subject lot is located 5 feet above the existing rights-of-way where a topographic berm is located adjacent to street property line. An Exceptional Tree is located in the northeast corner of the lot.

The neighborhood is characterized by small single family homes, low- and mid-rise apartment and condominium buildings, most of which date from the early to mid-twentieth century. Older buildings are typically 3-4 story brick structures, while later buildings tend to be wood frame or concrete structures, ranging from 3-5 stories. Recent developments are typically wood frame buildings, 4-6 stories in height. Most of these buildings occupy one or two parcels, creating a fairly consistent scale of development throughout the neighborhood. Many of the existing buildings are set back from the street and from adjacent property lines, while others, particularly larger buildings, are built out to their property lines. Brick is the most common cladding material, particularly in older buildings, while later buildings are clad in a variety of materials including wood, brick, stone and concrete masonry.

The proposed development consists of a twenty residential unit addition to an existing apartment building. The addition is proposed on the vacant lot area to the north of the existing structure. All residential units will be accessed from a lobby located off 18th Avenue E. Residential amenity areas are provided at ground level along the north and east property line and at the roof. The project proposal includes six parking stalls in an enclosed garage access from the alley along the west property line.

Landscaping is proposed along the north and east property line and on the roof.

Additions to existing structures generally are not subject to design review, however, SMC 23.41.004 states "as provided in Sections 25.11.070 and 25.11.080, streamlined administrative design review pursuant to Section 23.41.018 is required for any new development proposals in LR, MR, and commercial zones if an exceptional tree, as defined in Section 25.11.020, is located on the lot and is not proposed to be preserved, if design review would not otherwise be required by this subsection 23.41.004.A."

As noted previously the subject lot includes an exceptional tree located in the northeast corner of the site. The anticipated development will remove the Exceptional Tree which requires Streamlined Design Review.

PUBLIC COMMENT

DPD received two comment letters during the public comment period ending on July 9, 2014. The primary concerns included the following:

- Felt the design has improved since the first EDG meeting where a separate building was proposed.
- Expressed a preference for the proposed brick façade, the window alignment and the subdued cornice.
- Felt Exceptional Tree should be removed but would like to see increased screening provided along the north property line.
- Oppose the rear setback adjustment request noting that the adjustment is it is not consistent with CS2D-1 and CS2-D5.
- Expressed concern about the shadow and privacy impacts for the properties north of the proposed addition.

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 Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

1. Architectural Concept and Materials. The new addition should be respectful of the existing context but also read as a modern addition that is not trying and duplicate the existing building.

- a) Continue to utilize brick for the primary material along the front street façade. Consider changing the color, size and texture of the brick so it does not attempt to match the existing building (CS2-A2, CS3-A1, DC4-A1).
- b) The gasket provided between the existing building and new building is very important to distinguish the old from the new. The architecture and material treatment of the gasket should relate to both the old and the new building. Please consider the following changes:
 - i) The proposed white door feels out of place and out of scale with the remainder of the structure. Please consider a different entry door, with a substantial entry canopy placed at one and a half stories to add a feeling of prominence to the entry way (CS2-A2, CS3-A1, CS2-B, PL3-A2, PL3-A4, DC4-A).
 - ii) The windows within the gasket appear too substantial for the width provided. Please revise to achieve a better proportion (CS2-A2, CS3-A1).
- c) The currently attempt to mimic the existing building is overly static. Consider embracing a more modern language for the street facing windows. The windows must maintain a regular rhythm consistent with the existing structure but the

windows would benefit from being larger. You might also consider a quality Juliette balcony along the front façade. (CS2-A2, CS3-A1).

- d) If you choose to maintain the metal railing along the front façade, please select a quality material that is complementary to the existing brick. The provided metal railing appears too insubstantial for the existing context (CS2-A2, CS3-A1, DC4-A1).
- e) At building permit please provide more detail on the façade finish at the roof line. Please consider a stronger finish at the roof but still less substantial than the existing building (CS2-A2, CS3-A1).

3. Street Setback. Maintain the topographic berm within the street setback consistent with the existing building and the adjacent structures on 18th Avenue E.

- a) Maintain a front setback sufficient to provide substantial landscaping between the sidewalk and the partially below grade units (PL3-B2).
- b) Minimize and terrace the retaining walls around the ground level entry to provide walls no higher than 3 feet and with sufficient depth to provide substantial landscaping (CS2-C, CS2-D, PL3-A).
- c) Consider providing curved or angled walls to provide a more generous approach to the primary entry (CS2-C, CS2-D).

2. North Façade and Setback. Maintain a 15-foot rear setback to provide a buffer between the existing building and the north property line.

- a) Remove all Juliette balconies facing the existing single family home, unless you are able to demonstrate through a thorough privacy study in section view showing that each Juliette balcony will be screened from the existing single family home by year round vertical vegetation (CS2-D5).
- b) Consider a lighter material application along the north façade to reflect light into the north setback area (DC4-A1, DC4-A2).
- c) Provide substantial layered vertical landscaping within the north setback to soften the transition between the single family home and the proposed addition. SMC 25.11.090 states each Exceptional Tree and tree over two (2) feet in diameter that is removed in association with development in all zones shall be replaced by one or more new trees, the size and species of which shall be determined by the Director; the tree replacement required shall be designed to result, upon maturity, in a canopy cover that is at least equal to the canopy cover prior to tree removal (C1-D).
- d) Provide direct access for ground level units to ground level amenity space. At building permit submittal provide more information about landscaping/hardscape and amenity programming within the north setback area (DC3-A1, DC3-C2 and C3).

4. Alley. Consider ways, such as additional landscaping, that the alley treatment can meld into the existing neighborhood alley context.

- a) Consider a more transparent façade so that you can see the lift from the alley (DC2-B).
- b) Maintain solid waste and recycling storage space within the building ((CS2-D5).

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-1. On-Site Features: Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

PL2-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas: Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. 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.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle’s climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the **Streamlined Design Review** the following adjustments were requested:

- 1. Rear Setback (SMC 23.45.518 A):** The Code requires a 15’ minimum rear setback. The applicant proposes a rear setback of 10’ minimum, 12’-7” average.

DPD staff does not support an adjustment of the rear setback. It is unclear how the rear setback adjustment request better meets the intent of multiple design guidelines. The addition will have a better proportion to the existing building along the front façade by maintain the 15 foot rear

setback, consistent with design guideline CS3-A Fitting Old and New Together. The area of setback that is requested to be adjusted is directly adjacent to an existing single family home. Reducing a setback at this location is inconsistent with CS2-D5 Respect for Adjacent Sites. The rear setback is designed to provide a substantial buffer between a structure and the rear lot line. The rear setback adjustment next to the alley is necessary to provide parking which does not relate to adopted city design guidelines.

STAFF DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the DPD Staff recommended the project should move forward to building permit application in response to the Design Guidance provided.

1. Please be aware that this report is an assessment on how the project is meeting the intent of the Design Guidelines. This review does not include a full zoning review. Zoning review will occur when the MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.
2. Please prepare your Master Use Permit for SEPA review with a thorough zoning analysis listing the 23.45 and SMC 23.54 code section criteria, showing both required and proposed information (include page number where you graphically show compliance). You may want to review Tip 201 (<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/cams/CamList.aspx>) and may also want to review the MUP information here: <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/mupoverview/default.htm>
3. Along with your Master Use Permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report.
4. At Master Use Permit submittal please provide graphics demonstrating the actual material application for the existing building including the white framed windows.