City of Seattle

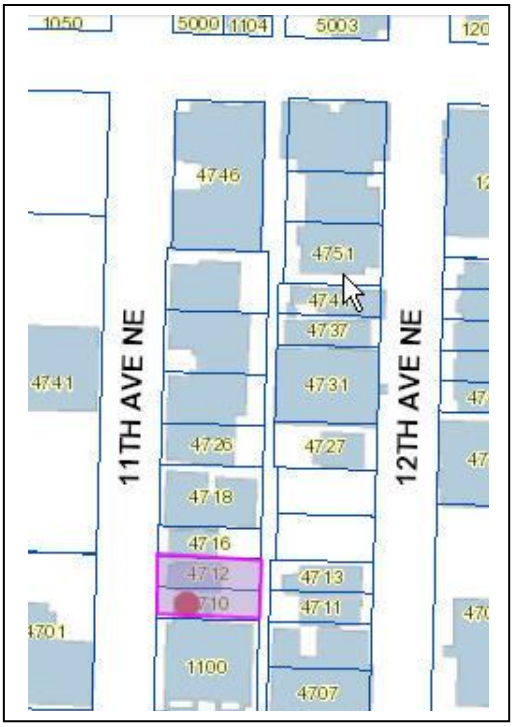
Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number:	3015550
Address:	4710 11th Avenue Northeast
Applicant:	Matt Driscoll
Date of Meeting:	Monday, September 30, 2013
Board Members Present:	Ivana Begley Joseph Hurley Peter Krech (substitute) Christina Pizana Martine Zettle
Board Members Absent:	Salone Habibuddin
DPD Staff Present:	Bruce Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three with a 65' height limit (NC3 65).



Zoning Pattern:	The site lies within a predominantly Neighborhood Commercial zone west of 15th Ave NE. South of NE 47th St. the height in the zone increases to 85'. To the north of NE 50th St., multi-family Lowrise Three (LR3) prevails from the alley east of Roosevelt Way to University Way NE. To the west, between Roosevelt Way/9th Ave NE and Interstate 5, the neighborhood has lowrise multifamily zoning classifications. The University Way NE corridor is primarily zoned Neighborhood Commercial with a pedestrian overlay.
Lot Area:	6,000 square feet. The site slopes from the highest point along the alley to the lowest point on the southwest with a difference of approximately four feet.
Current Development:	The site contains two single family residences.
Access:	Alley access. Major streets include I-5 and Roosevelt Way NE to the west, NE 45th St. to the south, NE 50th St to the north and 11th Ave in which the site borders. 11th Ave serves as a bus route with stop situated just to the south of the subject parcel.
Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character:	The site lies within the University District, an urban center, which includes University of Washington and its surroundings, catering, in part, to the collegiate experience. The vicinity includes a variety of uses from single family residences to commercial. New large scale development of mixed use structures and auto oriented sales and services are currently being permitted or constructed. New development includes University Audi across 11th Ave, the mixed use building called The Curve, an Avalon Bay residential project and a Residence Inn by Marriot all to the south of NE 47th St.
ECAs:	No environmental critical area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION The applicant proposes to design and build a six-story mixed use building with 40 residential units above 1,700 square feet of ground level commercial space. Parking for five vehicles would be located within the structure.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant's submittal illustrates three design options. They share a similar program of one floor of commercial space facing 11th Ave, parking at the rear of the first floor accessed from the alley and residential units on levels two through six. Above the first floor, Option 1 in plan forms a fattened "I" shape with light wells on the north and south sides. Three units per floor face west, three units look east and two units peer south. An elevator core projects from the north façade dividing the light well into two. The upper floors project over the ground floor on the east and west sides. Two stair tower would be expressed on the 11th Ave and the alley facades along with sawtooth shaped bays. In plan, Option # 2 forms a symmetrical double loaded corridor at the residential floors. The circulation spine extends east and west with four units on each side. Four light wells serves as modulation on the north and south facades. The massing appears symmetrical along the bilateral division. Similar to the first option, a series of serrated bays extend above and over the ground floor. Here too, the west facing stairwell appears open in elevation and centered on the central corridor.

The "C" shaped option # 3 places much of the vertical and horizontal circulation on the north elevation with corridors extending to the south. Units face east, west and south with a large void or light well on the south. Images from the booklet display extensive glazing along the storefronts, angled (serrated) bays with generous fenestration and an open staircase on the west. A habitable roof would provide an open air amenity for the tenants.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Three members of the public affixed their names to the Early Design Review meeting sign-in sheet. One individual recommended more modulation of those elevations adjacent to neighboring properties.

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.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

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

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

A-3 <u>Entrances Visible from the Street</u>. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

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

Guidelines:

1. **On Mixed Use Corridors, primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street.**
2. **In residential projects, except townhouses, it is generally preferable to have one walkway from the street that can serve several building entrances.**
3. **When a courtyard is proposed for a residential project, the courtyard should have at least one entry from the street.**
4. **In residential projects, front yard fences over four (4) feet in height that reduce visual access and security should be avoided.**

The Board encouraged the extensive amounts of glazing along the street front as presented in the diagrams. The entry to the residential portion from the street should be clearly articulated and distinct from the doors and fenestration for the commercial uses.

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

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: Pedestrian orientation and activity should be emphasized in the University Community, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors. While most streets feature narrow sidewalks relative to the volume of pedestrian traffic, wider sidewalks and more small

open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, and other activities would benefit these areas. Pedestrian-oriented open spaces, such as wider sidewalks and plazas, are encouraged as long as the setback does not detract from the "street wall."

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

A-5 **Respect for Adjacent Sites. Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.**

University-specific supplemental guidance:

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

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

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.**

The area between the building and sidewalk needs to well designed to encourage pedestrian activity. See guideline A-4.

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.**

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: The residential areas are experiencing a change from houses to block-like apartments. Also, the proximity of lower intensive zones to higher intensive zones requires special attention to potential impacts of increased height, bulk and scale.

These potential impact areas are shown in Map 4 . The design and siting of buildings is critical to maintaining stability and Lowrise character.

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

The Board responded well to the serrated elevations. In order to distinguish a base, middle and top for the structure and to produce a scale in keeping with the structure to the south, the height of the sawtooth bays should end at a floor level that relates to the lower height of this adjacent building.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-1 <u>Architectural Context</u>. 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.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: Buildings in the University Community feature a broad range of building types with an equally broad range of architectural character. Because of the area's variety, no single architectural style or character emerges as a dominant direction for new construction. As an example, the University of Washington campus sets a general direction in architectural style and preference for masonry and cast stone materials, however, new buildings on and off campus incorporate the general massing and materials of this character, rather than replicating it.

Guidelines:

1. **Although no single architectural style or character emerges as a dominant direction for new construction in the University Community, project applicants should show how the proposed design incorporates elements of the local architectural character especially when there are buildings of local historical significance or landmark status in the vicinity.**
2. **For areas within Ravenna Urban Village, particularly along 25th Avenue NE, the style of architecture is not as important so long as it emphasizes pedestrian orientation and avoids large-scale, standardized and auto-oriented characteristics.**
3. **On Mixed Use Corridors, consider breaking up the façade into modules of not more than 50 feet (measured horizontally parallel to the street) on University Way and 100 feet on other corridors, corresponding to traditional platting and building construction.**
4. **When the defined character of a block, including adjacent or facing blocks, is comprised of historic buildings, or groups of buildings of local historic importance and character, as well as street trees or other significant vegetation (as identified in the 1975**

Inventory and subsequent updating), the architectural treatment of new development should respond to this local historical character.

5. **Buildings in Lowrise zones should provide a "fine-grained" architectural character.**

Noting the emerging context from new construction (many of which the NE Board has reviewed) in this portion of the University District, the Board encouraged the modern or contemporary vocabulary proposed by the architect. Emphasize both the openness of the structure and the extensive glazing.

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.**

Discussion focused on the merits of the three options, in particular, the variations in the partis. The Board recognized the efficiencies inherit in Option # 2, the bilaterally symmetric scheme, due to the proposal's relatively small size and compact site. The quality of the light wells and the inability to combine the commercial spaces concerned the Board members.

The image or diagram produced on p. 14 (of the EDG packet) communicates a strong central organizing element, the vertical circulation expressed on the exterior. With later images (pages 18-19) this organizing idea appears diminished.

Detailing of such elements as the upper floor railings should relate to the building elements at the storefront level.

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

Ensure that the residential entrance is clearly defined. Other elements along the street edge need to be clearly shown in the Recommendation meeting drawings.

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

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Guidelines:

1. **New buildings should emphasize durable, attractive, and well-detailed finish materials, including: Brick; Concrete; Cast stone, natural stone, tile; Stucco and stucco-like panels; Art tile; Wood.**
2. **Sculptural cast stone and decorative tile are particularly appropriate because they relate to campus architecture and Art Deco buildings. Wood and cast stone are appropriate for moldings and trim.**

3. **The materials listed below are discouraged and should only be used if they complement the building's architectural character and are architecturally treated for a specific reason that supports the building and streetscape character: Masonry units; Metal siding; Wood siding and shingles; Vinyl siding; Sprayed-on finish; Mirrored glass.**
4. **Where anodized metal is used for window and door trim, then care should be given to the proportion and breakup of glazing to reinforce the building concept and proportions.**
5. **Fencing adjacent to the sidewalk should be sited and designed in an attractive and pedestrian oriented manner.**
6. **Awnings made of translucent material may be backlit, but should not overpower neighboring light schemes. Lights, which direct light downward, mounted from the awning frame are acceptable. Lights that shine from the exterior down on the awning are acceptable.**
7. **Light standards should be compatible with other site design and building elements.**

Signs

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

Guidelines:

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

Given that the proposal has one major elevation, 11th Avenue, the Board expects the specification of higher quality materials for this façade.

D. Pedestrian Environment

D-1 **<u>Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances</u>. Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.**

University-specific supplemental guidance:

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

Guidelines:

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

Ensure that security concerns are addressed at the alley. This elevation must be clearly delineated in the Recommendation meeting packet.

D-6 **<u>Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas</u>. 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.**

Show the solid waste storage area and explain how it functions for the Recommendation meeting.

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

The Board emphasized the importance of this guideline.

D-10 **<u>Commercial Lighting</u>. 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.**

Include a concept lighting plan to the Recommendation booklet.

D-11 **<u>Commercial Transparency</u>. 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.**

The extensive use of glazing at the storefront received praise.

D-12 **<u>Residential Entries and Transitions</u>. For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and**

privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

E. Landscaping

E-2 <u>Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site</u>. 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.

The applicant must provide drawings and information detailing how plantings will flourish on the green screens that grace the light wells.

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 Early Design Guidance meeting, the applicant had not requested a departure from the Land Use Code.

BOARD DIRECTION

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

At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant will need to delineate more of the neighborhood context into the drawings and show how the context influenced the design.