



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016160

Address: 7016 15th Ave NW

Applicant: Marsha Mawer-Olson for Caron

Date of Meeting: Monday, January 13, 2014

Board Members Present: Ted Panton (Chair)
Ellen Cecil
Jerry Coburn
Mike DeLilla
David Neiman

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

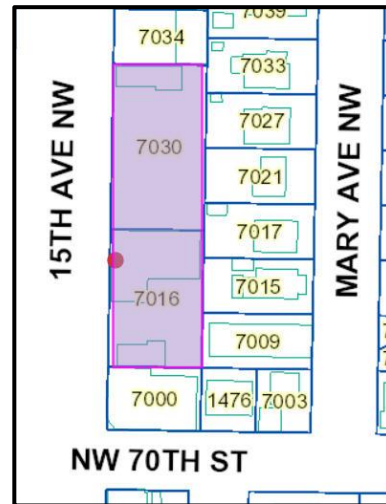
SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC2-40 (Neighborhood Commercial 2-40)

Nearby Zones: North: NC2-40
South: NC2-40
East: SF 5000 & LR2 RC
West: SF 5000

Lot Area: 23,375 sq. ft.

Current Development: A single-story commercial structure, a two-story mixed use building, a single family residence converted to a multifamily use and surface parking.



Surrounding Development: Directly to the north is a single-story structure built in 1942 currently used as a drinking establishment. To the south is a commercial use in a recently renovated, single-story brick building constructed in 1927. At the rear of the site, to the east, are one story single family residences built in the first half of the 20th century, and a single story brick apartment building in the LR2 zone. Across 15th Ave NW are older single story commercial buildings and single family residences converted into commercial or multi-family uses.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: 15th Ave NW is a busy arterial that connects the northwestern neighborhoods of Seattle to areas south of the Ship Canal and downtown. This section of 15th Ave NW is under-developed and consists of older, mostly single story, commercial structures interspersed with single family residences converted to apartments or commercial space. Many of the businesses along 15th Ave NW Ave. are not pedestrian oriented. In contrast, in the LR2 RC zone around the corner from the site on NW 70th St., many of the older one-story commercial buildings are occupied by small restaurants and retail uses. This has created a vibrant micro-neighborhood that attracts people from outside of the neighborhood. Outside of the commercial zones, the neighborhood is developed with smaller single family residences.

Access: Off of 15th Ave NW.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a four-story mixed use building with approximately 82 residential units located above ground level commercial use. The approximately 49 surface parking stalls for the proposed development are to be provided at grade behind the commercial uses.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: January 13, 2014 DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016160) 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 3016160), 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

At the EDG meeting, the applicant presented the three options shown in the packet, available online.

The applicant clarified that in Options A and C, a green screen will be provided at the east property line to screen the parking from the abutting residential properties. This is in lieu of the code required landscaping and fence shown in code compliant Option B. The roof deck is located at the southern portion of the structure to take advantage of the views.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Encouraged providing trees and an increased setback between the street and building as 15th Ave NW is very busy.
- Stated that it is odd the development team does not think commercial uses at street level are viable.
- Encouraged a design that would carry the commercial street life on NW 70th St around the corner and up 15th Ave NW.
- Preferred the overall design of Option A, and the courtyard shown in Option B.
- Encouraged providing screening of the parking along the east property line adjacent to the residential zone.
- Discouraged balconies along the east elevation.
- Encouraged moving the roof deck away from the residential zones.
- Stated that a barrier is needed to make sure vehicles would not be able to cross onto the abutting residential properties.
- Expressed that the proposed project is an improvement over the current use of the site.

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.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

- 1. Building Massing: The applicant presented three different massing options. The Board liked both Option A and the applicants preferred Option C. Option A separates the commercial and residential uses with a well-defined architectural feature the applicant is calling a “bar” or “wrap”. The wrap breaks and shifts as grade changes along 15th**

Ave NW to allow the massing to stay within the allowable height limit. Option C proposes a courtyard at the residential entry off of 15th Ave NW and a second courtyard off the parking area on the east side of the structure. The courtyards provide the predominate break in the building massing. The commercial uses are set back from the lot line and the residential façade overhead. (B-1)

- a. The Board expressed that the applicant should move forward with the design using the massing shown in either Option A or C. There was some skepticism of the viability of the street facing courtyard as an amenity space.
- b. The Board noted that the project responds well to the constraints of the site except for the east side. The applicant should consider softening up the massing in response to the adjacent residential uses. It was expressed that the east side of Option A had a more residential scale.
- c. The Board expressed a like of the roof treatment of Option A.

2. Screening of Parking: The parking at the rear of the site is surface parking. Code requires screening and landscaping of surface parking when it abuts a residential zone. The applicant is asking for departures from these requirements and proposing a green screen at the property line. The Board indicated that they preferred the landscaping and screening shown in the code compliant option. (A-5, E-2)

- a. The applicant should provide screening and a planting strip with landscaping and trees at the east lot line where the parking is close to grade with the adjacent properties.
- b. Where there will be a significant grade change between the residential properties to the east and the parking level, the applicant should provide tree wells and landscaping at the higher level.
- c. The applicant should decrease the depth of the Live/Work units to provide area for screening and landscaping of the parking meeting code requirements.

3. Relationship to the Street at Ground Level: The Board expressed that the design of the street level along 15th Ave NW should take its cues from the commercial storefronts along NW 70th St. (D-1)

- a. The applicant should provide a more generous setback from the property line at the live/work units. If needed, decrease the depth of the Live/Work units to provide this area.
- b. If provided, the entry courtyard should be designed to be a usable space for the tenants and discourage unwanted public use.

4. Materials: The Board encouraged the project to use the type and quality of materials shown in the examples on page 9 of the EDG packet. (C-4)

- a. The applicant should show what materials are being proposed for the blank north and south elevations.
- b. Consider pulling the south façade back from the property line and providing windows as the adjacent single-story property was recently renovated.

5. **At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant should provide the following additional information:**
 - a. A rendering of the east elevation.
 - b. A rendering showing the project looking south along 15th Ave NW.
 - c. A rendering at eye level looking north, showing the east elevation and surface parking area at the lowest elevation point.
 - d. A rendering of the green screen fence.
 - e. A full landscape plan of the parking level, street level and roof deck.
 - f. A full materials board.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines listed below of highest priority for this project.

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.
- A-4 **Human Activity.** New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.
- A-5 **Respect for Adjacent Sites.** Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.
- 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.

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.

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.

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

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.
- 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-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.

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.

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 following departures were requested:

1. **Street Level Development Standards (SMC23.47A.008.B.3):** The Code requires an average depth of at least 30’ for street level non-residential uses. The applicant is proposing a depth of 25’ for the live/work units along 15th Ave NW in Options A and C.

The Board indicated preliminary support for this departure. The Board directed the applicant to narrow the depth of the live/work units further to provide area for landscaping at the

surface parking and a greater setback amount from the street property line. (A-8, C-2, D-1, E-2)

- 2. Landscaping and Screening Standards (SMC23.47A.016.D.1a):** The Code requires a certain amount of landscaping when surface parking is provided for 20 or more spaces. The applicant proposes no landscaping in Options A and C. Instead they are proposing a green screen at the east property line.

The Board indicated they are not inclined to grant this departure. The Board gave direction to the applicant to provide screening and a planting strip with landscaping and trees at the east lot line where the parking is close to grade with the adjacent properties. Where there will be a significant grade change between the residential properties to the east and the parking level, the applicant should provide tree wells and landscaping at the higher level. (A-5, A-8, E-2)

- 3. Landscaping and Screening Standards (SMC23.47A.016.D.1b):** The Code requires trees when surface parking is provided at a rate of one tree per 10 parking spaces. The applicant proposes no trees in Options A and C. Instead they are proposing a green screen at the east property line.

The Board indicated they are not inclined to grant this departure. The Board gave direction to the applicant to provide screening and a planting strip with landscaping and trees at the east lot line where the parking is close to grade with the adjacent properties. Where there will be a significant grade change between the residential properties to the east and the parking level, the applicant should provide tree wells and landscaping at the higher level. (A-5, A-8, E-2)

- 4. Landscaping and Screening Standards (SMC23.47A.016.D.1c.2):** The Code requires 6' high screening and a 5' wide landscaped area inside the screening when a lot abuts a residential zone. The landscaping provided through this development standard may be used to satisfy other landscaping and screening requirements. In Options A and C, the applicant is not providing a 5' wide planting strip next to their proposed green screen at the east property line.

The Board indicated they are not inclined to grant this departure. The Board gave direction to the applicant to provide screening and a planting strip with landscaping and trees at the east lot line where the parking is close to grade with the adjacent properties. Where there will be a significant grade change between the residential properties to the east and the parking level, the applicant should provide tree wells and landscaping at the higher level. (A-5, A-8, E-2)

RECOMMENDATIONS

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.