



RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016160

Address: 7016 15th Ave NW

Applicant: Marsha Mawer-Olson for Caron

Date of Meeting: Monday, July 14, 2014

Board Members Present: David Neiman (Chair)
Marc Angelillo
Ellen Cecil
Dale Kutzera

Board Members Absent: Jerry Coburn

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

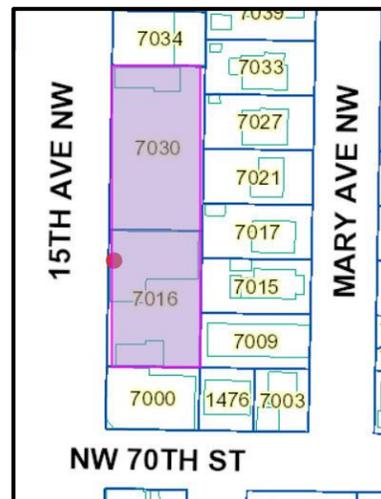
SITE & VICINITY

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 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.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: July 14, 2014

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The Recommendation packet includes materials presented at the Recommendation 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 Recommendation packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3016160), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

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PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Concerned about potential noise from the roof top deck.
- Concerned about the loss of solar access on nearby garden.
- Concerned about the impact of development on animals.
- Did not support the proposed exterior color palette, would prefer calmer colors.
- Questioned the maturity level of the landscape buffer to be provided between the proposed developments and abutting residential zoned properties. [The applicant stated the proposed green screen planting will be fast growing and trees will be 8' to 9' in height when planted.]
- Suggested clematis as a vine and advised against ivy being planted.

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.

RECOMMENDATION GUIDANCE:

1. **Materials and Color Palette:** Most of the Boards guidance revolved around the proposed color palette of the exterior facades. There was discussion about the use of cement board with two Board members concerned about its extensive use as the primary exterior material. The Board agreed that the applicant should work with the Land Use Planner on determining a more muted color palette for the east side. (C-4)
 - a. Consider a material change from the proposed cement board, especially at the parapet. (C-2, C-4)
 - b. Avoid 'natural' materials used in other Ballard projects as they are not aging well. (C-4)
 - c. Concerned that the proposed brick color will read as CMU and not brick. (C-4)
 - d. Modify the color palette on the east elevation facing the residential zones. (C-4)
 - e. The west façade design is suitable for 15th Ave NW. (C-4)
 - f. Encouraged the reference to the buff colored brick of the existing building to the south. (C-4)
 - g. Consider a more natural shade of yellow. (C-4)

2. **Relationship to Residential Zones:** The Board agreed that having landscaped open parking abutting the residential properties was preferable to having enclosed parking within a structure along the east property line. They encouraged the applicant and development team to talk to the residential property owners to the east to get feedback on what type of plantings they would prefer along the east property line. (A-5, A-8, E-2)
 - a. Provide a green screen on the east elevation of the concrete retaining wall where it faces the residential lots. (A-8, E-1, E-2)
 - b. Provide low maintenance landscaping along the east property line. (E-1, E-2)
 - c. Juliette balconies on the east elevation should not protrude more than 2' from the building. (A-5)
 - d. Shift the roof top amenity deck to the west, away from the residential zone. (A-5)

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 Recommendation meeting, the following eight 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 26'-6" for the retail space and live/work units along 15th Ave NW.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-5, A-8, D-1, and E-2. The design provides depth for landscaping at the surface parking and a setback from the street property line for landscaping.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

2. Street Level Development Standards (SMC23.47A.008.B.3): The Code requires a floor-to-floor height of at least 13' for street level non-residential uses. The applicant is proposing a floor-to-floor height of 11' for one retail space, and 12' for one retail space. Three live work units will include mezzanines that begin 17'-6" from the street façade. One unit will have a floor-to-floor height of 8'-5" below the mezzanine and 8'-0" at the mezzanine level. One unit will have a floor-to-floor height of 9'-2" below the mezzanine and 8'-0" at the mezzanine level. One unit will have a floor-to-floor height of 10'-2" below the mezzanine and 8'-0" at the mezzanine level.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guideline C-2. The design provides for a continuous floor line at the residential levels above the street level.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

- 3. Landscaping and Screening Standards (SMC23.47A.016.D.1.a.2)):** The Code requires a certain amount of landscaping when surface parking is provided for 20 or more vehicles. The landscaped area is required to be at least 4' in length or width. The applicant is proposing a landscape strip along the east property line that has a width of 3'.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-5, A-8, and E-2. The design provides area for landscaping and trees along the east property line while also providing depth for parking requirements and street level commercial uses, and avoids an enclosed parking structure abutting the residential properties to the east.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

- 4. Landscaping and Screening Standards (SMC23.47A.016.D.1.c.2)):** The Code requires 6' high screening and a 5' wide landscaped area inside the screening, when a lot abuts a residential zone. The applicant is proposing a 3' wide landscaped area.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-5, A-8, and E-2. The design provides area for landscaping and trees along the east property line while also providing depth for parking requirements and street level commercial uses and avoids an enclosed parking structure abutting the residential properties to the east.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

- 5. 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 applicant is proposing that for the elevated northern portion of the landscaping strip along the east property line the landscaping be located outside the screening.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-5, A-8, and E-2. The design provides landscaping that will abut and be level with the adjacent residential lots providing better screening, and landscaping that will be visible.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

- 6. Residential Setbacks. (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3.b):** The Code requires, for a structure containing a residential use that abuts the rear lot line of a lot in a residential zone a 15' setback for portions of the structure above 13' in height and an additional setback at the rate of 2' for every ten feet of height above 40'. The applicant is proposing the southern portion of the east facade to exceed the allowed 40' in height by 1.08'.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines C-2. The Board indicated they were willing to grant this departure as the

structure is providing an adequate setback from the residential zones and the departure will allow for architectural consistency of the proposed design and development.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

- 7. Parking Space Standards (SMC23.54.030.E):** The Code requires that the parking aisle width for the proposed parking layout be 22' wide. The applicant is proposing a width of 20'-0".

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-8 and E-2. The design allows more depth for landscaping and trees along the east property line and street-facing street-level commercial uses on a narrow site.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

- 8. Parking Space Standards (SMC23.54.030.F.2.b.2)):** The Code requires for non-residential parking access a curb cut a minimum width of 22' for two way traffic. The applicant is proposing a curb cut width of 20'-0".

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-8 and C-5 by reducing the size of the curb cut and presence of the garage entry along 15th Ave NW.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Monday, July 14, 2014, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Monday, July 14, 2014 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, three Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL (one Board member declined) of the subject design and departures with the following conditions:

1. Modify the color palette on the east elevation facing the residential zones to a more muted palette.
2. Provide a green screen on the east elevation of the concrete retaining wall where it faces the residential lots.
3. Provide low maintenance landscaping along the east property line where the landscaping will be difficult to access.
4. Juliette balconies on the east elevation should not protrude more than 2' from the building.
5. Shift the roof top amenity deck to the west, away from the residential zones.