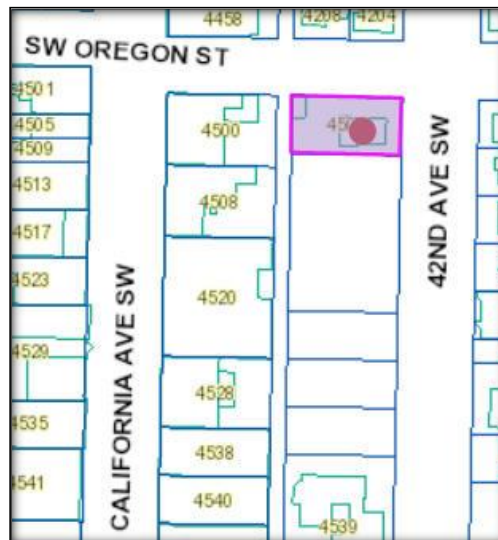


**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE
SOUTH WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Project Number: 3016195
Address: 4505 42nd Ave SW
Applicant: Steve Fisher, NK architects
Date of Meeting: Thursday, January 30, 2014
Board Members Present: Laird Bennion
Myer Harrell (Chair)
Todd Bronk
Daniel Skaggs
T. Frick McNaramara
DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC3-85 (Neighborhood Commercial 3 -85)
Nearby Zones: North: NC2-40 & NC2-65
South: NC3-85
East: NC3-65
West: NC3P-85
Lot Area: 6,900 sq. ft.
Current Development: The site is currently occupied by a single family residence.



Access: The corner site has street frontage on both 42nd Ave SW and SW Oregon St. and an improved alley.

Surrounding Development: Directly to the south of the site is a large surface parking lot for the Alaska Junction businesses, owned and operated by Trustee's Parking. Across the alley is a two-story 1950's building housing the Senior Center of West Seattle which fronts on SW Oregon St. and California Ave SW. Across SW Oregon St. directly to the north are two older single family residential structures with commercial uses. To the northeast is Hope Lutheran Church and to the northwest is a two-story commercial structure. Across 42nd Ave SW is a recently built seven-story mixed use structure with residential apartments and proposed retail at grade.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: The immediate neighborhood is one in transition with a new mixed use building at the southeast corner of SW Oregon St. and 42nd Ave SW and a six-story mixed use structure further south at the corner of SW Alaska St. which opened in 2008. The residential and retail uses in these structures have increased pedestrian traffic along 42nd Ave SW and SW Oregon St. as connectors to the vibrant retail uses along California Avenue SW. These commercial structures along California Ave SW are mostly single story.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a six to eight story mixed use development with at grade retail and approximately 50-62 residential units. Parking below grade will provide 16 spaces with access off of the alley. Either retail or live/work units will front SW Oregon St. and 42nd Ave SW.

Early Design Guidance Meeting January 30, 2014

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016195) 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 3016195), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD.

Mailing Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

APPLICANTS PRESENTATION

The site is located within the West Seattle Junction Urban Village. The site is relatively flat, but does drop down about seven feet at the southwest corner and has a six foot grade change along SW Oregon Street.

The applicant noted that the owner is investigating undergrounding the power lines located in the alley along the property. The project has a required 2' alley dedication and a 3' setback along SW Oregon St.

The applicant stated that exterior materials will be prefinished panels: metal or a low maintenance material.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Questioned the status of the parking lot to the south and how this may impact the south building façade.
- Supported and encouraged the proposed sidewalk improvements to enhance walkability.
- Encouraged the residential entry be located on SW Oregon St.
- Supported undergrounding the power lines in the alley.
- Encouraged the ground level retail use as shown in Option 3.
- Preferred the lower height Options 2 and 3.
- Suggested that gray not be used in the color pallet.

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.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

1. **Massing:** Option 1 proposed an eight-story building with the residential levels above the ground floor setback from the property line along the alley to avoid the existing power lines. The residential floors were modulated along SW Oregon St. and to a lesser degree along 42nd Ave SW. Options 2 and 3 both showed a six-story development and assumed the power lines in the alley were underground. Option 2 had the residential floors extending beyond the ground level into the required 3' setback along SW Oregon St. The street facing elevations showed no modulation. Option 3 was basically Option 2 with modulated structural building overhangs projecting 3' from the street facing facades. (B-1, C-2)

The Board had differing opinions as to what option they preferred and directed the applicant to return for a 2nd EDG showing massing options that respond to the guidance below. The options should all assume the power lines will be located underground. The proposed massing options need to clearly respond to and respect the West Seattle Junction Guidelines.

- a. Provide a massing option that addresses the corner as the design focus. Consider a two-story base at the street level and step back the upper floors away from the corner. The street corner massing should be a “special” element. Consider a roof deck above the corner massing. (A-10, B-2, C-2)
 - b. Provide an option similar to Option 1 but with the power lines located underground. (B-1)
 - c. The massing height should relate to the new project across 42nd Ave SW. (B-1)
 - d. Avoid massing that makes the structure appear squat and boxy. (B-1, C-2)
 - e. Provide modulation at the upper levels for visual interest. (B-1)
 - f. Provide a well-defined podium with breaks in the massing. (C-2)
2. **Pedestrian Experience at the Streetscape:** The streetscape environment along the two street fronts had much discussion. Even with the required 3’ setback along Oregon Street, 42nd Ave SW will have a much wider right-of-way to provide for potential pedestrian activities and open space. (A-2, A-4)
- a. The Board strongly encouraged retail instead of Live/Work units as the ground level use. (A-2)
 - b. The Board discouraged having the building overhang the street level on both street fronts, but especially along SW Oregon Street. A solid mass above the street will block solar access and will not enhance the pedestrian experience. (A-4, C-3, D-1)
 - c. Provide some form of modulation to the street level facade. (A-4)
 - d. 42nd Ave SW should be designed to encourage retail and the pedestrian environment as there is more room for uses to “spill” outside. (A-4, D-1)
 - e. SW Oregon St. should be considered a connector from California Ave SW to 42nd Ave SW. (A-4)
 - f. Address the condition of the intersection of the alley and SW Oregon St. (A-4)
3. **Corner Treatment:** The corner of SW Oregon St. and 42nd Ave NW needs more presence and articulation. The Board does not want the applicant to design a chamfered entry corner, as the West Seattle Design Guidelines suggest as the guidelines were drafted years ago and more recent successful developments have a stronger corner presence and their main entries away from the corner. (A-10)
- a. The corner needs a stronger design gesture. (A-10)
 - b. Consider a glazed corner at street level that is highly transparent. (A-4, A-10)
 - c. Provide any entries near but not at the corner. (D-1)
 - d. Provide a massing option that addresses the corner as the design focus. Consider a two-story base at the street level and step back the upper floors away from the corner. The street corner massing should be “special”. Consider a roof deck above the corner massing. (B-1)

4. **South Elevation:** The proposed development will be constructed up to the south lot line abutting the surface parking lot. The south elevation will be very visible. The parking lot is currently under obligation to remain public parking for the benefit of the local commercial businesses. The Board expressed some concern that this may not always be the case or structured parking could be built in the future. (B-1, D-2)
 - a. Show how materials and detailing will provide visual interest. (D-2)
 - b. Use the stair tower to provide modulation to break up the facade. (D-2)

5. **At the Second EDG meeting, the applicant should provide the following information:**
 - a. Provide massing options as describe above.
 - b. Provide more information about how the south elevation will be designed.

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 Supplement:

A pedestrian-oriented streetscape is perhaps the most important characteristic to be achieved in new development in the Junction’s mixed use areas. 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.

Considerations:

- Reduce the scale of the street wall with well- organized commercial and residential bays and entries, and reinforce this with placement of street trees, drop lighting on buildings, benches and planters.
- Provide recessed entries and ground-related, small open spaces as appropriate breaks in the street wall.

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

West Seattle Junction Supplement:

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. When such a setback is not appropriate or feasible, consider maximizing street level open space with recessed entries and commercial display windows that are open and inviting.

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 Supplement:

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.

Public space at the corner, whether open or enclosed, should be scaled in a manner that allows for pedestrian flow and encourages social interaction. To achieve a human scale, these spaces should be well defined and integrated into the overall design of the building.

Consider:

- providing seating;
- incorporating art that engages people;
- setting back corner entries to facilitate pedestrian flow and allow for good visibility at the intersection.

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 Supplement:

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. See the Guidelines for the full text.

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 Supplement:

New multi-story developments should employ methods that integrate the building's upper and lower levels. The levels of the building should function as a composition – not necessarily requiring the top and bottom to be identical, but rather extending or repeating elements throughout the facade.

- 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 Supplement:

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.

- 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-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.**
- 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.**
- D-11 Commercial Transparency. 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.**

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, no departures were requested:

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should return for a second EDG meeting.