



City of Seattle

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

DESIGN
REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016207

Address: 6800 Greenwood Ave. N

Applicant: Steve Fisher – nk architects for Isola

Date of Meeting: Monday, December 16, 2013

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil
Jerry Coburn
Mike De Lilla
Ted Patton (Chair)

Board Members Absent: David Neiman

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick & Lisa Rutzick

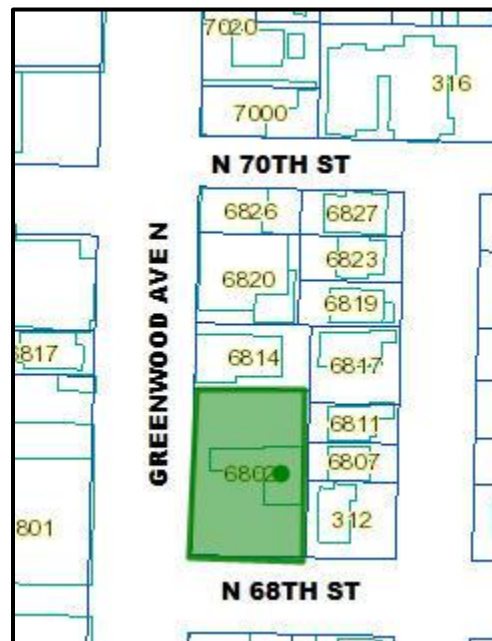
SITE & VICINITY

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

Nearby Zones: North: NC2-40
South: NC2-40 & LR3-RC
East: SF 5000
West: SF 5000

Lot Area: 11,700 sq. ft.

Current Development: The site is currently vacant.



Access: The corner site has street frontage on both Greenwood Ave N and N 68th St.

Surrounding Development: Directly to the north is a structure with a commercial use in the street facing one story portion, and residential uses in the back, two story portion. To the east are three single family structures. Across N 68th St. is a single story older commercial structure and across Greenwood Ave N is a four-story mixed use condo development built in 2007.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: The neighborhood was originally developed in the early 1900's with single family residences, and brick apartment buildings and one story commercial structures along Greenwood Ave N. and Phinney Ave N. Over the past century a few newer commercial structures and apartment buildings have replaced the older structures. More recently, a few four-story mixed use developments have been constructed within the immediate neighborhood. The commercial uses along Greenwood Ave N are predominately neighborhood related or eating establishments. Phinney Ave N, to the south has a more residential feel befitting its Lowrise- Residential commercial zoning.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a mixed use development with at grade retail and approximately 39-44 residential units. Two of the three options provide 12-15 parking spaces either at or below grade, with access off of 68th Street. Approximately 3,700 sq. ft. of retail space will front along Greenwood Ave.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING December 16, 2013

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016207) 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 3016207), 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

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

The applicant clarified that the amenity areas shown at grade in Options 1 and 3 will provide landscaping and private areas for the adjacent units. The at grade amenity area along the north side will include an exit path to the street. The roof top amenity area in Option 2 and 3 was located to take advantage of the views and southern exposure.

The size of the structural building overhangs proposed in Option 3 will be determined during the zoning review.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Questioned the fact that Greenwood Ave N. is a Frequent Transit Corridor which determines if parking is required. (It was explained that this will be verified during the MUP zoning review.)
- Questioned what the retail use will be. (Unknown at this time.)
- Questioned why a shadow study was only done for the preferred option.
- Supported more modulation and setbacks, suggested a study of the Fini Condos across Greenwood Ave N.
- Supported fewer units in the structure, decreasing the height, bulk and scale, providing modulation and a prominent corner.
- Concerned about vehicle and pedestrian entries being located on 68th St.; all access should be from Greenwood Ave N.
- Supported additional landscaping and greenery.
- Supported a design that reflects the surrounding residential character, not the commercial character of Greenwood Ave N.
- Encouraged a design that uses traditional materials and is not modern.
- Noted that the intersection of Greenwood Ave N. and N 68th St. is a “blind” corner and not safe.
- Encouraged increased setbacks on the east elevation for a better height, bulk and scale relationship to the residential community.
- Encouraged a design that reflects the older residential styles such as craftsman instead of a modern design.
- Questioned if a walkway will be located in the north amenity area. (Applicant responded that an exit walkway will be located in part of the setback.)
- Concerned that the project will block light to solar panels located on residential property located to the east.
- Encouraged a design that adheres to the Greenwood-Phinney Design Guidelines, especially as relates to height, bulk and scale.
- Supported protection of the tree on neighboring property.

- Encouraged brick as an exterior material don't use cement board.
- Supported pulling back the massing on N. 68th Street.
- Concerned retail space in basement won't work, encouraged more parking instead.

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](#).

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

1. **Height Bulk and Scale:** The site of the proposed development abuts parcels along its east lot line that are split zoned NC2 and SF 5000. As the zone change happens approximately 8-10' into the lots, these parcels are predominately in the single family zone and developed with single family residences. Given this zone change location, the proposal does not need to provide Commercial zone required residential setbacks, however the applicant is proposing a 10' setback. The Board expressed that the proximity to the zone change means this project is essentially at the zone edge and should follow the Greenwood-Phinney guidelines for Height, Bulk and Scale (B-1).
 - a. Increase the building setback from the east property line. (B-1, A-5)
 - b. The massing should be oriented towards Greenwood Ave N. (A-2)
 - c. Consider extending the upper level amenity deck further north. (A-1, A-5)
 - d. Setback the south elevation at grade. (A-1, A-2)
2. **Streetscape Compatibility:** The Board agreed that the design proportions, rhythm, materials and character should be informed by both the older simple brick apartment structures and single story storefronts in the neighborhood. Follow the Greenwood-Phinney Design Guidelines. (C-2)
 - a. Maintain a filled out corner at Greenwood Ave N. and N 68th St., at the upper stories. (A-2)
 - b. The retail space along Greenwood Ave N should be broken into smaller storefronts. (B-1) (D-1)
 - c. Setback the lower level of the south elevation along N 68th St. to provide view opportunities for pedestrians. (A-2)
 - d. Modulation should be avoided unless it provides usable space and is "traditional" in form and materials. (C-1)
3. **Street level Safety:** Set back the south elevation at grade level to provide for views and safety. The location of a bus stop on Greenwood Ave N. and code requirements stipulate

that parking access be located off of N. 68th St. Due to the close proximity to a residential neighborhood, pedestrian safety needs to be considered. (A-8)

- a. Set back the south elevation along N. 68th St. to provide a wider sidewalk. (C-4)
 - b. Provide generous visual clearance at the parking entry/exit along N. 68th St. (A-8)
 - c. The width of the parking driveway and curb cut should be the minimum allowable size. (C-5)
4. **Building Materials:** The Board strongly encouraged the use of “timeless materials” such as brick as the exterior building material. (C-4)
- a. Use brick as the main exterior building material, which is identified as one of the preferred materials in the Greenwood-Phinney Design Guidelines. (C-4)
 - b. If modulation is provided, consider wood as the material in contrast to the brick. (C-1)
 - c. The spacing and size of the fenestration should provide the main visual interest and detailing of the street facing facades. (C-2)
5. **At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant should provide the following additional information:**
- a. A materials board.
 - b. A landscape plan.
 - c. Detailed elevation of the storefronts along Greenwood Ave N.
 - d. A site plan detail showing how the site triangles for the parking access will work.

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

Numerous east-west streets offer excellent views of Green Lake, Puget Sound and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains from Greenwood Avenue North. Where possible buildings should be located to take advantage of these views and to enhance views from the public right-of-way. Examples of methods to do this include setbacks from view corridors, landscape elements and street trees to frame views rather than block them, and pedestrian spaces with views of the water and mountains.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

a. Reinforcement of Commercial and Residential Development Patterns
Commercial development in the Greenwood/Phinney corridor has historically been

oriented toward the street, with buildings up against the sidewalks. Most residential developments have modest landscaped setbacks and first floors are built slightly above grade to allow for privacy and a sense of transition from the street. Continuing this pattern will reinforce the character of both the business districts and residential areas. Consider:

1. Build commercial development up to the sidewalk where possible. Commercial buildings may be setback off the street if pedestrian-oriented space is provided that is enhanced with humanizing components such as trees and other plants, site furnishings and high-quality, well-detailed pavements between the sidewalk and the building.

b. Treatment of Side Streets

Some treatment of side-streets off of Greenwood Avenue North and 85th Street is important to create an effective transition to residential neighborhoods. Some options to consider include:

- setbacks with view-framing landscaping (see A-1);
- arbors with hanging plants; and
- small outdoor spaces with trees and landscaping.

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.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

a. Impact of New Buildings on the Street

Also, new commercial development should respect the small-scale historical pattern of storefronts on Greenwood Avenue North. Typically, the older storefronts are about 50 feet in width and feature brick, stone or other masonry units. Some also feature architectural details that provide interest and a human scale to the buildings.

b. Zone Edges

Careful siting, building design and massing are important to achieve a sensitive transition between more intensive and less intensive zones. Consider design techniques including:

- increasing the building setback from the zone edge at the ground level;
- reducing the bulk of the building's upper floors nearest to the less intensive zone;
- reducing the overall height of the structure; and
- using of extensive landscaping or decorative screening.

Design departures

If alternative techniques are used to successfully achieve a sensitive transition between these zones, the following departures are suggested for consideration by applicants and board members to offset the loss of any development opportunity within the Greenwood/Phinney neighborhood:

- relax the residential amenity or setback requirements.

This provision is not meant to preclude the granting of departures as allowed in section 23.41 of the Seattle Land Use Code.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-1 Architectural Context. 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.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

a. Signage

The design and placement of signs plays an important role in the visual character and identity of the community. Key aspects of this effort are to ensure that the signs are at an appropriate scale and fit in with the building's architecture and the local district. Small signs are encouraged in the building's architecture, along a sign band, on awnings or marquees, located in windows or hung perpendicular to the building façade.

The following signs are generally discouraged:

- Large illuminated box (back-lit "can") signs, unless they are treated or designed to be compatible with the character of surrounding development. Back-lit awnings should be limited to one horizontal-mounted lighting tube. Small neon signs are an alternative as long as they are unintrusive to adjacent residences.

b. Façade Articulation and Modulation

Façade modulation and articulation are less critical in commercial or mixed-use

structures as long as appropriate levels of detail are present to break up the façade. Many of these structures are simple boxes that are well-fenestrated and contain a number of details that add interest at the ground level and lend buildings a human scale. Modulation of commercial and mixed-use structures at the street level is discouraged unless the space or spaces created by the modulation are large enough to be usable by pedestrians.

- 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.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

a. **Architectural Styles**

The Greenwood Avenue North/Phinney Avenue North and North/Northwest 85th Street corridors are characterized by their utilitarian, non-flamboyant, traditional architectural styles (except for churches). Some important points to consider in making new development consistent and compatible with existing development include:

- small-scale architectural details at the ground level, including color, texture/patterns, materials, window treatment, sculptural elements, etc;
- landscaping is an important component of the overall character, particularly for residential development; and
- personalization of individual businesses is a key feature of both corridors.

- 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.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

New buildings should feature durable, attractive and well-detailed finish materials. Examples of structures in the neighborhood that feature desirable exterior finish materials are provided in the Appendix.

a. **Building Materials in the Greenwood Avenue North/Phinney Avenue North and North/Northwest 85th Street Corridors**

Again, buildings within these corridors are characterized by their utilitarian, nonflamboyant, traditional architectural styles. Brick is the most common surface treatment in the commercial areas and should be encouraged. Plastic awnings should be strongly discouraged. As an alternative, architectural canopies are encouraged to provide weather protection and a place for business signage.

- C-5 **Structured Parking Entrances.** The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

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.

Greenwood/Phinney-specific supplemental guidance:

a. Pedestrian Open Spaces

- Small, usable open spaces are an important design objective. Open space incorporating the following features are encouraged with new commercial and mixed-use development:
- Good sun exposure during most of the year
- Located in areas with significant pedestrian traffic
- Storefront and/or residential windows face onto open space, at or above the ground level
- There are a variety of places to sit
- Pedestrians have something to look at, whether it is a view of the street, landscaping, a mural, etc.

b. North/Northwest 85th Street Corridor and Greenwood Avenue North Corridor, North of North 87th Street

New development should enhance the pedestrian environment and encourage pedestrian activity along the North/Northwest 85th Street corridor and the Greenwood Avenue North corridor, north of North 87th Street. The following measures should be encouraged:

- Building entries facing the street
- Pedestrian-oriented facades
- Weather protection
- Below-grade parking, when possible

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.

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

E. Landscaping

- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites. Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.**

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 move forward to MUP Application in response to guidance provide at this meeting.