



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE of the NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3016656

Address: 6301 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW

Applicant: Hugh Schaeffer – S+H Works

Date of Meeting: Monday, September 29, 2014

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil  
Jerry Coburn  
Dale Kutzero  
David Neiman (Chair)

Board Members Absent: Marc Angelillo

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

### SITE & VICINITY

**Site Zone:** NC3-40 (Neighborhood Commercial 3-40)

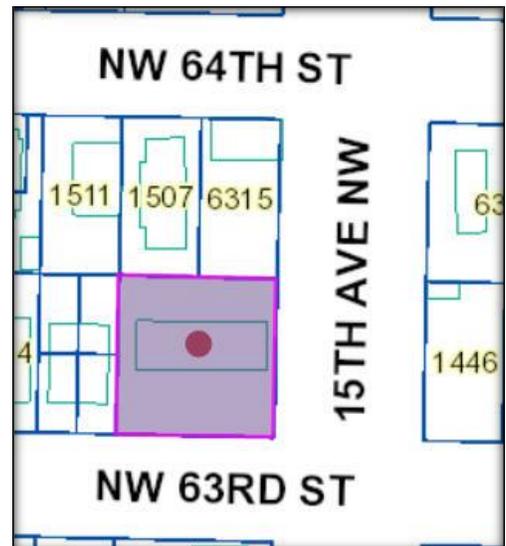
**Nearby Zones:** (North) NC3-40  
(South) NC3-40  
(East) NC3-40, LR3  
(West) LR1

**Lot Area:** 10,000 sq. ft.

**Access:** Access is from 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and NW 63<sup>rd</sup> St.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:** None

**Current Development:** The project site is currently occupied by a one story commercial structure and surface parking.



### **Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

To the north of the subject site is a single-story commercial building with surface parking and a 3 story apartment building constructed in 1966. Directly to the west in the LR1 zone are four recently built single family residences. Across NW 63rd St. to the south is a two-story auto related commercial structure. To the east, across 15th Ave NW. are two single-story auto related commercial buildings.

15th Ave NW is a busy arterial that connects the northwestern neighborhoods of Seattle to areas south of the Ship Canal and downtown. The D Rapid-ride bus line runs past the site with bus stops within two blocks. This stretch of 15th Ave NW consists mostly of one or two story commercial structures, housing fast food type eateries, neighborhood commercial services and auto related services. A few blocks to the north is a new mixed use development with residential opportunities.

The Ballard swimming pool and Ballard High School are two blocks north of the site. One block to the west is a small pocket park and the larger Salmon Bay Park is a few blocks to the northwest. The lowrise zone to the west is in transition with many of the older single family residences being converted to multifamily uses or being demolished to make way for townhomes.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposal is for a 4-story structure containing 53-61 residential units, 2-7 live/work units and zero to approx. 3,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. No parking is provided.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number #3016656 at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The packet is also available to view in the file, 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](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

### **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

Scheme A, the code compliant option, showed a 4-story structure containing 53 studio type residential units, and 7 live/work units. The residential entry was located mid site along NW 63<sup>rd</sup> St. An amenity deck was located at the east edge of the roof.

Scheme B, showed a 4-story structure containing 57 studio type residential units, 4 live/work units and approx. 1,682 sq. ft. of commercial space. The residential entry was located mid site along NW 63<sup>rd</sup> St. An outside amenity deck was located at the northwest corner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> level with the upper levels wrapping around the deck. Two departures were requested (see Departures at the end of the report).

Scheme C, the preferred option, showed a 4-story structure containing 61 studio type residential units, 2 live/work units and approx. 3,011 sq. ft. of commercial space. The structure was set back from the abutting lowrise parcel by 10 to 15 feet. A courtyard, access to 4 ground units and the main residential entry were located in this setback, at the 'back' of the building, accessed from NW 63<sup>rd</sup> St. An amenity deck was located at the southeast corner of the roof. One departure was requested (see Departures at the end of the report).

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Several members of the public were in attendance and offered the following comments:

- Noted that the rear entry location of the preferred scheme will create too much activity near the lowrise zone, yet be unsafe as there will no direct eyes on the space.
- Encouraged the applicant to make sure windows of the development do not align with the windows of the residences to the west.
- Preferred the southeast corner location for the roof deck.
- Expressed support for the design and the addition of the project in a changing neighborhood.
- Concerned about the height, bulk and scale of the project near a lowrise zone.
- Questioned if a roof deck along busy 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW will be used.

## **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 September 29, 2014**

- 1. Massing and Height, Bulk and Scale: The Board debated the merits of both Schemes B and C, noting that Scheme C provides the most space for the benefit of the lowrise zone to the west. The following guidance was given. (CS2.D.5, DC3.C.2, DC2.C.3)**
  - a. Hold the corner at NW 65th St and 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW. (CS2.C.1)
  - b. Consider a version of scheme B with the required 15' residential setback for the upper levels. (CS2.D.5)
  - c. Increase the setback from the west property line as much as possible. (CS2.D.5)
  - d. Set back the structure so that no departure will be needed for the portion of the structure above 40' in height. (CS2.D.5)
  - e. Maintain the location of the southeast corner roof deck. (DC3.C.2)

- f. The area between the structure and the Lowrise zone to the west should be used as a landscaped buffer. (DC2.C.3, DC3.C.2)
  - g. Consider removing the two units that have only north facing windows that may be blocked by future development. (CS2.D.1)
- 2. Respect for the Adjacent Sites: Much of the EDG Board deliberation centered on the relationship of the proposed development to the Lowrise zoned parcel to the west. (CS2.D.5, DC2.A.2, DC2.C.3)**
- a. Remove all occupiable decks that face the residential zone to the west. (CS2.D.5)
  - b. Respect the location of the windows of the residential structures to the west when locating the developments windows. (CS2.D.5)
  - c. Set back the structure so no departure will be needed for the portion of the structure above 40' in height. (CS2.D.5)
  - d. The area between the structure and the Lowrise zone to the west should be used as a landscaped buffer. (CS2.D.5)
  - e. Locate the roof deck at the southeast corner. (DC3.B.1)
- 3. Street-Level Interaction: The Board encouraged the commercial space along 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and was not supportive of the residential entry location of the preferred scheme at the back of the structure, expressing safety and privacy concerns. (CS2.B.2, PL2.B, PL3.A.4, PL3.B.3, PL3.C.1, DC3.C.2)**
- a. Provide the residential entry on 15th Ave NW. (PL3.A.1)
  - b. The ground level west setback area should act as a landscaped buffer not an outside amenity area. (DC3.C.2, DC4.D.1)
  - c. Push back the location of the solid waste storage from NW 63<sup>rd</sup> St. as much as possible. (DC1.C.4)
  - d. Consider the appearance of the blank north wall as it will be highly visible from 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW. (DC2.B.2)

**For the Recommendation Meeting the applicant should provide the following:**

- a. Provide shadow studies showing the impact on the neighboring properties.
- b. Provide a rendering of the residential entry.
- c. Provide floor plans, including the live/work unit's layouts.
- d. Provide elevations and sections. Provide a detailed elevation of the north façade.
- e. Provide a study of the window locations in the structures to the west. Use this information to inform the projects window location.
- f. Provide a materials Board that will be left with the planner.
- g. Provide a full Landscape plan.
- h. Provide a lighting plan of the site.

**DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

## CONTEXT & SITE

**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

### **CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation**

**CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind:** Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

### **CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

### **CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-1. Corner Sites:** Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

### **CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions:** For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

### **CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods:** In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

## PUBLIC LIFE

**PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

### **PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities**

**PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas:** Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

### **PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

**PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses:** Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

**PL3-C Retail Edges**

**PL3-C-1. Porous Edge:** Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

**PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.**

**PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists**

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

**DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.**

**DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-4. Service Uses:** Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

**DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

**DC2-A Massing**

**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass:** Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

**DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

**DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.**

**DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities**

**DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space:** Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

**DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

**DC4-A-1. 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.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure’s potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project 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, three departures were requested.

For Scheme B the following two departures were requested.

- 1. Setback requirements for lots abutting residential zones (SMC 23.47A.014.B1):** The Code requires a 15’ by 15’ triangular area setback where a NC zoned lot abuts the intersection of a side and front lot line of a lot in a residential zone. The applicant is proposing an 8’x 8’ ground floor portion of the structure and an 8’x 8’ portion of the three upper stories to be in the triangle setback area.

The Board indicated they would not support granting this departure for the upper stories and have given guidance to pull the structure away from the abutting Lowrise zone so no departures are needed. (Guideline CS2.D.5)

- 2. Setback requirements for lots abutting residential zones (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3.a&b):** The Code requires structures along a rear or side lot line that abuts a residential zoned lot to be setback 15' for portions of the structure above 13' in height up to 40', and an addition 2' for every ten feet of height above 40'. The applicant proposes a 7' setback from the west lot line for the upper floors.

The Board indicated they would not support granting this departure for the upper stories and have given guidance to pull the structure away from the abutting Lowrise zone so no departures are needed. (Guideline CS2.D.5)

For Scheme C the following departure was requested.

- 3. Setback requirements for lots abutting residential zones (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3.b):** The Code requires structures along a rear or side lot line that abuts a residential zoned lot to be setback 15' for portions of the structure above 13' in height up to 40', and an addition 2' for every ten feet of height above 40'. The applicant proposes a continuous setback from the west lot line for 15' including the portion of the structure above 40'.

The Board indicated they would not support granting this departure and have given guidance to pull the structure away from the abutting Lowrise zone so no departures are needed. (Guideline CS2.D.5)

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **BOARD DIRECTION**

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.