



City of Seattle

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



RECOMMENDATION OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3017002

Address: 2407 East Union Street

Applicant: Johnston Architects for Scott Roberts, 24 Union LLC

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 08, 2014

Board Members Present: Dan Foltz (substitute Chair)
Curtis Bigelow
Krystal Brun
Christina Orr-Cahall
Kevin Price

Board Members Absent: Natalie Gualy

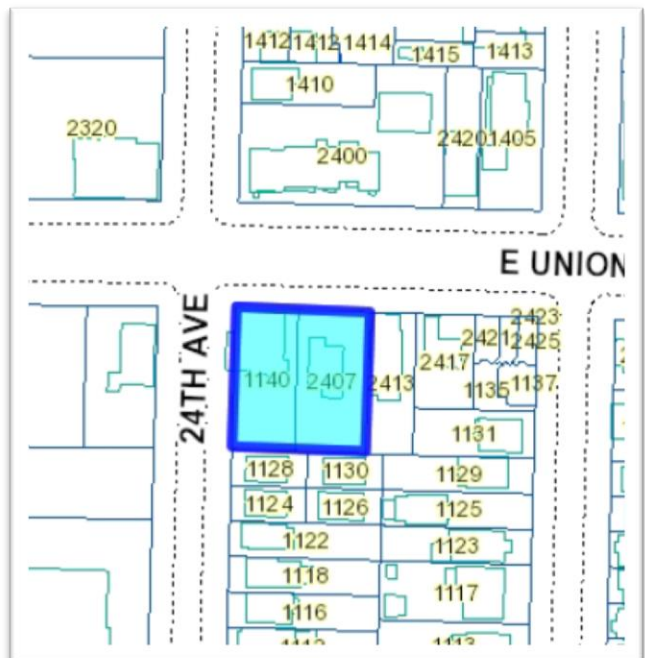
DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory and BreAnne McConkie

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC2P-40

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2P-40
(South) LR2
(East) NC2P-40
(West) NC2P-40

Lot Area: 13,560 square feet



Current Development:

The subject site includes one single-family structure and one commercial structure. Surface parking for the commercial structure is located off 24th Avenue. All existing structures are proposed for demolition.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The surrounding development and neighborhood character consists of two-story townhouse development to the south, one-story commercial development with surface parking to the west, two-story multi-family development to the north, and a two-story commercial use to the east.

The area includes a mix of single-family and multiple-family structures. Many of the single-family structures are wood frame structures with a Queen Anne cottage design. *Richlen's Grocery*, a commercial structure northwest of the site, is a historical site, and is an example of one of the few remaining brick mixed-use building that was developed at major streetcar intersections throughout the city.

Access:

Access to the subject site is currently from East Union Street and 24th Avenue. The preferred design scheme proposes vehicular access from 24th Avenue, and the main pedestrian entrance on East Union Street.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The preferred proposal is a four story mixed-use building containing 39 residential units, two live-work units, and 3,000 square feet of ground floor retail. Twenty-two vehicular parking spaces are proposed, with vehicular access from 24th Avenue. Main pedestrian access is proposed from East Union Street.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 23, 2014

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3017002) at this website:
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

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The architect presented three design concepts. All schemes propose retail at the corner of East Union Street and 24th Avenue, vehicular access from 24th Avenue, and a mix of commercial, residential, and live-work units.

Scheme A is identified as the zoning compliant option and contains six live-work units, retail at the corner and east along East Union Street, and no parking. The residential units above are oriented toward the north or the south with access via a central interior hallway.

Scheme B splits the structure's mass into two parts with the main pedestrian access on 24th Avenue, and central exterior walkways accessing the residential units on floors two through four. These residential units face north or south. On the ground floor the retail is concentrated in the center of the East Union Street façade, and live-work units dominate the 24th Avenue façade. Vehicular parking is proposed in this scheme, and is accessed via a driveway near the southern property line.

Scheme C, the preferred option, underscores the intention of placing retail at the corner, and gradually reducing intensity of use along East Union Street from west to east (commercial to live-work units). The applicant noted that East Union Street is sloped at this location, with the zoning transitioning from Neighborhood Commercial (NC2-P40) to Lowrise 2. The programming of the ground floor is a response to this change in scale. As with the other schemes, vehicular parking is accessed from 24th Avenue. The massing is shifted to the northwest, leaving a 15-foot setback to the single-family structures to the south and a 10-foot setback to the east.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were expressed at the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Encouraged additional landscaping within the deck along the southern property line.
- Suggested greater articulation of the building along the southern property line to reduce the bulk of the structure.
- Emphasized privacy as a major concern, recommending screening and setbacks along the southern property line.
- Supported the increase in density and intensity at this location.
- Encouraged respect for the architectural character of the area.
- Encouraged further articulation of all façades.

RECOMMENDATION October 8, 2014

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3017002) at this website:

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

In response to the Early Design Guidance (EDG), the applicant described how the design concept for the preferred scheme had been further developed. The applicant specifically addressed the transition from commercial to residential zoning along 24th Avenue, noting modifications including relocation of the utility vault to the interior of the building, increasing the size and transparency of the bike room, and the inclusion of cascading planters at the southwest corner and southern edge of the building.

Along the southern façade, a window study was conducted to inform areas in which enhanced privacy would be necessary. To increase privacy and help transition to the neighboring properties to the south, the proposal included stepping back the central portion of the upper floors, incorporating mesh railings for screening, and increasing the width of the second floor patio planters while sinking them down into the patio platform structure.

Proposed landscaping includes use of year-round lush plants to act as a buffer, setbacks and planters on the roof terrace, and perimeter trees along the southern edge of the project for screening.

The materials and finishes include pre-weathered steel panel siding, horizontal cedar accent siding with semi-transparent stain, black vinyl windows, steel railings with woven wire mesh, painted cement board panel siding, steel canopies with cedar soffit, reclaimed fir entries and board formed concrete. Entry portals for the pedestrian entrances along East Union Street are emphasized. Incorporation of bi-folding doors and windows at ground floor are intended to enhance to the pedestrian experience and add to the activity of the corner of East Union Street and 24th Avenue. Additionally, a large canopy on the first floor is included to emphasize the prominence of this corner.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were expressed at the Recommendation meeting:

- Supported the redevelopment of this property and expressed excitement for the activity that it will bring.
- Supported the increase in density and intensity at this location.
- Supported the modifications that were made since EDG, specifically along the southern portion of the building, but expressed some concerns with the overall scale and impacts on privacy of neighboring properties.
- Expressed concern for privacy and potential impacts of shadows related to the general bulk and scale of the project and the setback departure along the southern property line.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (APRIL 23, 2014)

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.

- 1. Massing and Site Response.** The Board agreed that Scheme C provided the best option for arrangement of uses, location of entries, and transition to adjacent properties (CS2-B, DC1-A, PL3-B).
 - a. The Board supported the initial design response to the corner condition, and recommended a continued design focus on the corner expression ensuring accessibility for all (PL2 -A, PL3-A, PL4-A).
 - b. The Board supported the 15-foot setback and second level deck at the south facade, and asked for additional landscaping at this location to provide additional privacy for the residential development adjacent to the south (CS2-D, DC4-D).
 - c. The Board agreed that vehicular access ought to be from 24th Avenue rather than East Union Street. The Board encouraged further exploration of the interaction among uses at this location (CS2-B, PL3-B, PL4-A).
 - d. The Board supported the departure request for side yard setback at the south façade (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS2-D).
- 2. Transition to South.** The Board supported the initial design concept, including the setback at the south and landscaping to provide an appropriate transition to the residential zone to the south (CS2-D, DC4-D).
 - a. The Board recommended further development of façade composition, texture, articulation, and building materials to further express the transition from commercial to residential zoning along 24th Avenue (DC1-A, DC2-B, DC4-A).

- b. The Board supported the conceptual design of the decks on the east and south sides giving particular attention to using appropriate landscaping for privacy (CS3-D, DC2-A, DC3-D).
 - c. The Board requested a privacy study documenting the visual relationship between the proposed deck on the south façade and the adjacent development to the south. Elevation views should detail existing windows and outdoor space whose privacy will be impacted by proposed development. The location of existing windows should inform the location of proposed windows and landscape screening along the deck on the south façade (CS2-D).
- 3. Ground Level Uses and Access.** The 24th Avenue façade response to the public realm may be a challenge due to the need to place services and access on this façade. The Board recommended use of high quality elements and finishes to enhance human scale and interaction (CS2-B, DC1-A , PL3-B).
- a. The Board noted that the design should locate uses and transparency to maximize activation and safety of the pedestrian experience along the 24th Avenue façade (CS1-C, PL1-B, PL2-B).
 - b. The bike storage space on 24th Avenue should be designed to encourage human activity and visual interest. The Board noted that the room should include creative bicycle themes and large amounts of transparency, in order to provide visual interest at the sidewalk (CS2-B, PL3-A, PL3-B, PL4-A, DC1-A).
 - c. The Board supported the proposed retail at the northwest corner, and encouraged adequate accessibility for all (PL2-A, PL3-A, PL4-A).
 - d. The Board agreed that 24th Avenue seemed to be the best option for placement of the driveway, and recommended it be designed to be safe for users and pedestrians, while also minimizing visual impacts to the street frontage (CS2-B, DC1-A, PL3-A, PL3-B, PL4-A).
 - e. The Board expressed some concern about the façade treatment at the proposed solid waste storage entrance, but agreed it is best accessed from 24th Avenue. The use of high quality elements and treatments on this façade was recommended (CS2-B, PL3-A).
- 4. Colors and Materials.** In order to respond to the street-level experience, the Board recommended the use of high quality elements, architectural features, details, and finishes that are of human scale to provide a strong connection between the project and the public realm (CS2-B, DC2-D, DC4-A, PL2-B).
- a. The Board noted that the overall design should set a context of visual interest and human scale at the street level (CS3-A, DC4-A).
 - b. The Board recommended that the proposed application of materials be thoughtfully detailed to enhance the design concept and human interaction, especially along the 24th Avenue facade (DC2-B, DC2-D, DC4-A).
 - c. The Board expressed concern regarding blank walls on 24th Avenue, and recommended that any blank walls resulting from the garage entrance should include design treatments of high quality elements and finishes to respond to human scale and visual interest (DC2-B, DC3-D, DC4-A).

RECOMMENDATION (OCTOBER 8, 2014)

1. **Transition to the South.** The Board supported the design concept and landscaping proposed to transition from commercial uses at East Union Street, to the residential zone to the south (CS2-D, DC4-D).
 - a. The Board suggested consideration of additional modulation, setbacks, and/or secondary architectural features on the upper floors along 24th Avenue to further transition in height, bulk, and scale to the residential zone to the south (CS2-D, DC2-A, DC2-B).
 - b. The Board expressed concern with the pedestrian safety and visibility along 24th Avenue near the garage and bike room entrances, and noted that lighting and landscaping will be an important component for pedestrian safety in this area (PL2-B, PL4-A, DC4-C, DC4-D).
 - c. The Board supported the size and transparency of the bike room along 24th Avenue, identifying it as an important component of enhancing the public realm (PL2-B, PL4-B, DC1-A, DC4-A).

2. **Colors and Materials.** The Board supported the use of high quality materials, architectural features, details, and finishes (CS2-B, DC2-D, DC4-A).
 - a. The Board noted that the quality of materials and proposed architectural details, including the pre-weathered steel panel siding, cedar accent siding with transparent stain and natural color variation in the wood, and board-formed concrete, are critical to the design concept (DC4-A).
 - b. The Board acknowledged that the proposed stencil artwork for the building may enhance the façade if executed well, but was not a necessary element of the project (CS3-B, DC2-B, DC2-D).

The Citywide and Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. 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-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

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-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

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-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

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-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

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

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

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

PL2-B Safety and Security

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-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

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-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

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

PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships

PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

PL4-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

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-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

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.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

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.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

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 Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Uses along a Principal Pedestrian Designated Street (SMC 23.47A.008.C.):** The Code requires that a minimum of 80 percent of the width of a structure’s street level street-facing façade (that faces a principal pedestrian street) be occupied by certain commercial uses listed in SMC 23.47A.005.D.1. The remaining 20 percent may contain other permitted uses such as residential and/or pedestrian entrances. The applicant’s

departure requests that the required 80 percent be reduced to 63 percent of the structure's street level street-facing façade to contain approved uses, and the remaining width to contain residential and live-work uses.

At the Recommendation meeting, the Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure. The Board indicated that the live-work units promote a thoughtful transition in intensity from west to east, consistent with the zoning and development along East Union Street (CS2-D-1.).

- 2. Setback Requirement (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3.):** The Code requires that the portion of the structure between 13- and 40-feet in height be set back from adjacent residential uses by a minimum of 15-feet. The applicant proposes compliance with this requirement save for an area five and a half inches by 14-feet eight and a half inches, at the southeast corner of the site. This departure request is in response to the existing topography of the site, and the desire to maintain a 13-foot floor-to-floor retail space at the northwest corner, and provide a matching elevation with the existing sidewalk (CS2-A, CS2-B, PL2-A).

At the Recommendation meeting, the Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure. The Board agreed that the departure request encourages a design that better meets the design guidelines by ensuring accessibility for all at the corner retail space (PL2-A, PL3-A, PL4-A).

- 3. Setback Requirement (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3.):** The Code requires structures containing a residential use to set back along any side lot line that abuts a lot in a residential zone. The setback shall apply to that portion of the structure above 40-feet, and shall be at the rate of two-feet of setback for every 10-feet by which the height of such portion exceeds 40-feet. The applicant proposes penetrating this setback requirement by approximately three-feet for a distance of approximately 31-feet. The departure request is in response to the existing topography of the site and a desire to maintain a continuous vertical south façade height at the fourth floor.

At the Recommendation meeting, the Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure. The Board agreed that the departure request is a good response to the existing topography of the site by maintaining a continuous vertical south façade height at the fourth floor (CS1-C, CS2-B, CS2-D, DC2-3).

- 4. Intervening Use between Garage and Street (SMC 23.47A.032.B.1.b.):** The Code requires an intervening use between parking within a structure and the right-of-way. As an intervening use, the applicant proposes a bike storage room at the north side of the garage, and a green wall at the south end. The applicant finds that these elements respond to the existing neighborhood character and adjacent sites by transitioning in intensity from north to south.

At the Recommendation meeting, the Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure. The Board supported the use of high quality elements that will provide enhanced texture, interaction, and human scale to the pedestrian experience (DC2-B, DC3-D, DC4-A).

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Friday, February 14, 2014, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Wednesday, October 08, 2014 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the five Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with no conditions.