



## FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3017565

Address: 1008 N. 109<sup>th</sup> Street

Applicant: Robin Murphy, Jackson Main Architects

Date of Meeting: Monday, August 03, 2015

Board Members Present: Dale Kutzera (Chair)  
Marc Angelillo  
Chris Bell  
Keith Walzak

Board Members Absent: Ellen Cecil

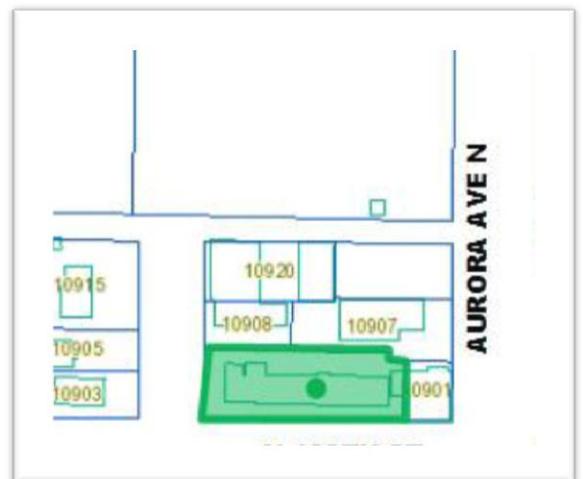
DPD Staff Present: Michael Dorcy

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial 1-40'

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-40  
(South) C1-40, LR2  
(East) C1-40  
(West) SF 5000

Lot Area: 14,107 sf



### **Current Development:**

The site faces onto N. 109th Street and is located just west of Aurora Avenue N. (just to the west of Rose Corner Flower Shop) , extending west to Whitman Avenue N. The site is now an earthen berm and provides a resting place for soil storage and other detritus. The street edges of the site are without gutter, planting strip or sidewalks.

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

The site is located within the Aurora/Licton Springs Urban Village. One block to the north, either side of Aurora Avenue N. is fronted by divisions of Washelli Cemetery. South of the cemetery, running along either side of Aurora there is a strip of C1-40 zoning, varying between a half and a full block in width. West of Whitman Avenue N. which abuts the subject site on the west there is a generally large swath of single family zoning developed with single-family dwellings. Lower commercial buildings and some warehouse structures are aligned along the Aurora corridor. Some multi-family structures of more recent vintage are intermingled with older single family houses across N. 109<sup>th</sup> Street and south of the site.

### **Access:**

Access to the site is available from both N. 109<sup>th</sup> and Whitman Avenue N.

### **Environmentally Critical Areas:**

There are no ECA's on the site.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

At the time of the first EDG meeting, on November 24, 2014, the applicant proposed a mixed-use structure with some retail and office space at grade, 12 live/work units and 93 studio apartments in a four-story building of either site-built or modular construction.

### **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

For the final recommendation meeting, the proposed number of efficiency apartment units remained at 93, while the number of live/work units changed to seven. The two proposed retail spaces totaled 3, 222 square feet. Parking for 13 vehicles (including one van space) would be provided at grade within the structure. While construction of the ground floor would be site-built, the upper floors would consist of off-site constructed modular units, to be assembled on site.

The packet includes materials presented at the August 3, 2015 meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3017565) 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)

## DEPARTURES

The proposal would require an integrated set of three departures to enable garbage/trash/recycle pickup within the structure, without having to move it out to the street side opposite the single-family structures. (See page 26 of the packet for the trash storage configuration and page 43 for details and an explanation of the departure requests).

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Concerns were raised regarding the impacts on parking availability in the area and for safety and security considerations. Security regarding the parking area and driveway and at the entries to the units at street level was considered especially important.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

At the earlier EDG meetings the Board voiced the following concerns:

- The options shown did not address the transition to the SF 5000 zone and the single-family homes to the west across Whitman Avenue N
- The options and preferred option lacked convincing modulation
- It was unclear how the so-called amenity areas proposed would actually function as “amenities”
- It was not clear how the live/work spaces would function as live/work spaces

The design team noted how care had been taken to place openings along the west elevation to not only activate the façade but to provide privacy to both the west and north across Whitman Avenue N. The public amenity space had been moved to the southeast corner to provide separation and privacy to neighbors. The upper portions of the structure had taken on a significant amount of modulation. The corner-oriented entry into the retail space at the southwest corner of the site, together with the proposed tree planting and landscaping, provided an open and inviting gesture toward the existing residential neighborhood.

After hearing the applicants’ presentation and comments from the public, the Board commended the design team on its responsiveness to their guidance given at the earlier meetings and on the quality of the current design. The Board also expressed their support of the

sustainability goals embodied in the modular construction commitment and in the employment of a photo-voltaic array on the rooftop.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

Regarding the concerns for security and safety expressed by both members of the public and the Board, the Board directed that the driveway entry into the garage area should be gated and that the entries into the live/work areas should be ganged in twos and provided with closeable, lockable gates.

The Board also called for the fence proposed along the north side to provide both security and obscurity. It was to be at once opaque and vegetative.

The Board was also agreed that the stair from the ground floor to the basement where the bicycle storage area was provided should be made more capacious than shown, in order to facilitate the transport of bicycles to and from the area.

The Board members agreed that the stairwell was a strong design element, but thought it should be provided with windows of some kind to bring light into the well. It was thought best to explore bringing that light in through openings on the east side of the stairwell, a solution that would maintain the strong sculptural quality of the form.

The design team was also directed to work with the land use planner to address the location of the accessible parking space. At the very least it must be demonstrated that the maneuvering required by a user of the stall would not be burdensome or awkward.

## **Departures Requested**

Three departures would be required to enable the preferred storage option for storage of receptacles for solid waste and recyclable materials at the northwest corner of the building. By allowing the receptacles to be stored behind the north wall they would not need to be periodically relocated in the right-of-way of Whitman Avenue N. This configuration has already received approval by Seattle Public Utilities (see SPU letter of 1/29/2015), but would require three departures from the following Code requirements: SMC 23.54.030, the minimum and maximum widths of driveways; SMC 23.54.040, the minimum horizontal required dimension of 12 feet for the storage space; and, SMC 23.54.040, a reduction in the required size of the trash enclosure from 387.5 sf to 275 sf.

## **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUESTED DEPARTURES**

The Board agreed 4-0 on recommending approval of the trio of departures required to make the garbage/trash storage and pickup function as shown in the plans (and as approved by Seattle Public Utilities). The Board agreed that it was desirable to keep the trash away from the street-

front opposite the single-family homes and a design that better met Guidelines PL2—Walkability, DC1-B1—Access location, and DC1-C2—enhancing outdoor spaces.

It is the expectation of the Board and Department that the above conditions of approval be incorporated into the MUP plans and approved by the Land Use Planner prior to issuance of the MUP . With those conditions in place, the Board approved the design as presented by a vote of 4-0.