



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3018316 & 3019797

Address: 9002 Greenwood Ave N & 308 N 90th Street

Applicant: Peter Tallar, Caron Architecture & Mike Perry, Dimensions, Inc.

Date of Meeting: Monday, November 16, 2015

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil (Chair)
Marc Angelillo
Keith Walzak
Dale Kutzera

Board Members Absent: Chris Bell

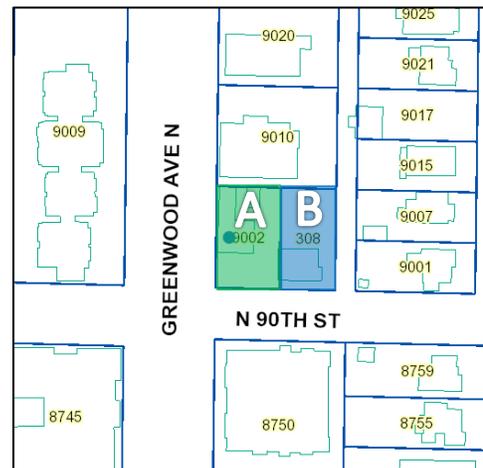
DPD Staff Present: Katy Haima

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial (C1-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-40
(South) NC2-40
(East) SF 500
(West) C1-40

Lot Area: 9002 Greenwood Ave N: 6,365 sq.ft.
308 N 90th St: 5,535 sq.ft.



Current Development:

Site A (9002 Greenwood Ave N) is occupied by a one-story commercial building. Site B (308 N 90th St) is occupied by a single-family structure.

The site as a whole slopes up approximately 20 feet from Greenwood Ave N to the unimproved alley.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

To the north of the site is a four-story apartment building. To the east of the sites, across the unimproved right of way, are two single family structures. Across N 90th Street to the south is a five-story apartment building, and across Greenwood Ave N to the west is a five-story apartment building.

The sites are located within the Greenwood-Phinney Residential Urban Village. The uses along the Greenwood Ave N corridor are primarily commercial to the south, transitioning to a mix of multi-family and commercial near the intersection with N 90th St and to the north. To the east and west of the corridor are single-family residences.

Access:

Access is via curb cuts from Greenwood Ave N and N 90th St. The alley is unimproved.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

Both sites are mapped as ECA Steep Slope areas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for two four-story residential structures containing a total of 63 units and 31 parking stalls at- and below-grade.

The proposed project consists of two adjacent parcels (Site A and Site B) that are being developed separately. The two projects have proposed to combine parking and access to parking.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project numbers (3018316 & 3019797) 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

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Concerned about the current condition of N 90th Street and the intersection with Greenwood Ave N regarding pedestrian safety, the width of the streets, blind spots, traffic congestion, street parking, the ditch adjacent to the roadway, and access for fire and safety.
- Felt there was too much density in the neighborhood, and not an appropriate amount of public transit to support it.
- Questioned why the alley couldn't be improved to provide access.
- Concerned about privacy to adjacent structure.
- Would prefer access off Greenwood Ave N.
- Concerned about cumulative impacts of nearby projects on traffic and parking.
- Felt the proposal should take into account possible future development on the south side of N. 90th Street.
- Concerned about space and circulation for move in/out, and how this might impact traffic and parking.
- Felt Option B was best.
- Felt sidewalks should be installed continuously up N 90th St.
- Appreciated the project team reaching out to nearby residents.
- Felt the proposal should keep, and increase the amount of parking.
- Expressed excitement for potential improvements to the corner.

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.

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- 1. Massing and Response to Context:** The Board supported the general site layout of the preferred option, and noted the specific components of each structure that demonstrated successful massing strategies, and gave direction that those aspects of the massing should be carried forward as the design evolves.

- a. The Board generally supported Option 3 for Structure A, including the large proposed upper level setback, the location and size of the roof deck, the setback at street level, the recessed alcoves for the residential entries at ground level, and the expression of two masses demarcated by the elevator and stair tower. (CS2-D, PL3-B, DC2-A, DC2-B, DC3-B)
- b. The Board preferred Option 2 for Structure B, as it provided a more sensitive transition to the adjacent single-family zone by tucking into the hillside and not stepping up with grade. (CS2-B, CS2-D, DC2-A)
 - i. However, the Board did not support the pitched roofs on Option 2 for Structure B, noting that this roof form is not necessary to relate to the nearby single-family homes and that the additional height should be avoided to minimize the perceived bulk of the building. The Board supported a flat roof, on which amenity space could be located. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS3-A)
- c. The Board gave guidance that there should be adequate room between the buildings to maximize light and air. While the Board supported stepping back Structure A along Greenwood, they noted that this should not result in shifting Structure A closer to Structure B. The separation between Structures A and B should be maximized while retaining the setback at the upper level of Structure A. (CS1-B, CS2-B, CS2-D, DC2-A)
- d. The Board expressed concern regarding the potential north blank wall and other impacts to the adjacent structure to the north. At the Recommendation phase of review, the applicant should provide graphic information demonstrating how the proposal relates to the building to the north, including sections, elevations, and perspectives. (CS2-B, CS2-D, DC2-B)
- e. The Board supported the proposed modulation of both structures along N 90th Street, as it breaks down the scale and bulk and relates to the scale of the nearby single-family zone. (CS2-D, CS3-A, DC2-A, DC2-B)

2. Materials & Composition. The design scheme and materials for each structure should respond appropriately to the location and context.

- a. The Board noted that the preferred massing of Structure A provides an opportunity to differentiate the design expression of the north and south masses facing Greenwood Ave N. (CS2-A, CS3-A, DC2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C)
 - i. Materials, articulation, and scalar references should be used to result in a cohesive design, if these two masses are designed differently.
 - ii. The Board advised that the design concept and material composition should reinforce the corner, but that the corner expression need not be dramatic, as it is not a commercial use or prominent intersection.
- b. The Board supported taking design cues from the character of Greenwood Ave N for Structure A. (CS3-A, DC2-B)
- c. The materiality and composition of Structure B should demonstrate a thoughtful transition to the single-family residential uses to the east. (CS2-B, CS3-A, DC2-B, DC2-C)

3. Streetscape and Pedestrian Experience.

- a. The Board preferred the increased setback and recessed alcoves at the residential entries along Greenwood Ave N on Option 3 for Structure A, noting that these areas

- allow for more transitional space and greater privacy and security for the street level units. (CS2-B, PL2-B, PL3-A, PL3-B)
- b. The Board was concerned about the transition between the sidewalk and the ground-level corner unit in Structure A. The Board gave guidance that this unit should read as residential, and be consistent with the residential expression of the other units. The Board noted that they would support a main residential entry at the corner for Structure A if it might alleviate privacy impacts to street level residential units and provide a better composition at the corner. (PL2-B, PL3-A, PL3-B, PL4-A, DC2-B, DC2-C)
 - c. The Board was concerned about the impacts of the service uses to the pedestrian realm along N 90th Street, including refuse storage, service and delivery, and the above-grade parking. At the Recommendation phase of review, the applicant should provide more information of how these services will function, and any screening and other design strategies to minimize the impact to the streetscape. All trash areas should be enclosed. (PL4-A, DC1-B, DC1-C)
 - d. The Board supported the reduction of three curb cuts to two, and encouraged further reduction of the impact of parking on the pedestrian realm by exploring options for a split-ramp or single access point. (PL4-A, DC1-B, DC1-C)
 - e. The Board encouraged a more thorough exploration of the location of service uses on Greenwood Ave, with the goal of providing relief to the pedestrian realm along N 90th Street. (PL4-A, DC1-B, DC1-C)

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-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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

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

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

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-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

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-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-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-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-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-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

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-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

DC1-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation: Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-1. Below-Grade Parking: Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children’s play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

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-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

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-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

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-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

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-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-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

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 Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Distance Between Curb Cuts (SMC 23.54.030.F.1.c):** The Code requires a minimum distance of 30 feet between any two curb cuts located on a lot. The applicant proposes a distance of 17'-8".

The Board indicated that they may be open to the departure, providing there is a clear demonstration of how the design better meets the intent of the Design Guidelines. The Board requested studies of other options and locations for access at the Recommendation meeting, and suggested combining entries or designing a split ramp to minimize the impacts to the pedestrian realm. (PL4-A, DC1-B, DC1-C)

2. **Amenity Area (SMC 23.47A.024.B.5):** The Code requires private balconies and decks to have a minimum area of 60 square feet, and no horizontal dimension less than 6 feet, to be counted for required amenity area. The applicant proposes a private balcony dimension of 35 square feet.

The Board indicated that they are not inclined to support the departure. The Board felt that the open-space provided by the undersized balconies located on the west side of the Structure B were not adequately sized and would receive limited access to light and air. (DC3-B)

BOARD DIRECTION

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