



ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION SOUTHWEST

Project Number: 3018597
Address: 6800 31st Avenue Southwest
Applicant: Milbrandt Architects for David Avenell with Polygon Northwest
Date: Friday, August 05, 2016
SDCI Staff: Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 2 (L-2) and Lowrise 4 (L-4) per Ordinance 121164

Nearby Zones: (North) L-4
(South) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)
(East) SF 5000 and Lowrise 1 (LR1)
(West) LR1

Lot Area: 188,653 square feet (sq. ft.)



Current Development:

There is no existing development on this site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development includes a mix of single family homes, townhouse developments and institution establishments. City-owned property (High Point Community Center with multipurpose outdoor playfield) and Seattle Public School property (West Seattle Elementary School) are located immediately to the west, across the street from the subject site. The properties east of the project site are a religious facility (Thien-An Baptist Church) and a mortuary business (Forest Lawn Mortuary/Crematory/Cemetery). High Point Community residential properties are to the north and single family residences are across the street, south of the proposal.

This corner proposal site oriented at the northeast corner of the intersection of 31st Avenue Southwest and Southwest Myrtle Street is sited on the southwestern edge of the High Point Community development. As noted above, the neighborhood character outside of the High Point Community to the east, west and south consists of institutions and single family residences. The neighborhood character within the High Point Community boundary consists of housing types that are typical to this community and reflect an architectural style and siting patterns that are representative of a planned development. The existing residential structures are two-story houses or three-story townhomes with varying types of entries, siting and access.

Access:

Vehicular access to the project site is possible from both 31st Avenue Southwest and Southwest Myrtle Street.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

A portion of the property along the eastern boundary line is identified as Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) 1-Steep Slope. The site's existing topography is characterized as having grades descending from the west towards the east with an elevation change of approximately 20'. The existing vegetation consists of primarily field grass, blackberry brambles and several mature native trees.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a 54 unit residential development to include 17 single family residences, one three-unit townhouse structure, three four-unit townhouse structures, two five-unit townhouse structures and two six-unit townhouse structures. Each residential structure is planned to be two-stories with a daylight basement and include private garages to accommodate one or two enclosed parking spaces. Parking for 85

vehicles will be provided on the site either within each unit attached garage, driveway apron or unclosed surface parking stalls.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE May 15, 2015

The subject property includes portions of Block 34 (34-2 through 34-7) located at the southernmost area of the High Point Community Plat. This “for sale” residential proposal is being developed as a partnership between the applicant and the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA).

The proposed residential housing project has been designed to reflect the redevelopment goals of the High Point Community as stated in the High Point Design Book, through a collaborative effort with SHA. The High Point Design Book, created by SHA, City of Seattle and Design Consultants, contains very detailed Design Standards for each block in the High Point Community Plat and also cites general architectural, landscape and drainage design guidelines. Design development reflects the influence of the City of Seattle Design Guidelines, the High Point Design Book and SHA.

One design scheme was offered by the applicant. This scheme proposed a 54 unit residential development comprised of single-family residences and townhouse structures whose location and access is illustrated in the design packet. The packet is available online by entering the project number (3018597) at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI:

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

SDCI received several public comments concerning this project during this Early Design Guidance Review phase. The public concerns voiced focused on parking and traffic impacts and weren't pertaining to the development's design.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

RECOMMENDATION August 5, 2016

The packet includes materials submitted to SDCI on May 20, 2016 during the recommendation phase and is available online by entering the project number (3018597) at this website: <http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The recommendation packet is also available to view in the land use file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI:

Mailing Public Resource Center
Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

SDCI did not receive public comment concerning this project during the Recommendation phase.

PRIORITIES & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site and considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the SDCI staff provides the following siting and design guidance described below. SDCI staff has identified the following Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project. **The guidance by SDCI staff appears after the bold guidelines text and the recommendations follow in bold text.**

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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.

In general, SDCI staff agrees that the applicant has sited the proposed structures in the most logical pattern in order to respond the site's existing topography, significant tree protection areas and established easements per the High Point Master Plan.

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

The existing character of the High Point Community neighborhood is defined by residential structures having varied front setbacks and principal entrance orientations as they relate to the established right-of-ways. Fenced ground-level front yards, pathways and landscaping typically separate the residences from the street lot lines. The design appears to be integrated into the street system established for the High Point Community.

The SDCI staff voiced concern regarding the siting of the two southernmost townhouse structures (Bldgs. 7 and 8) and requested that the applicant explore shifting the specified buildings in a manner that better aligns with the other townhouse structures along 31st Avenue Southwest.

At the Recommendation phase, the siting of the southernmost townhouse structure (Bldg. 8) did not change in order to avoid possible encroachment into the identified critical root zone area of the existing mature tree (Tree #799) near the site's southwest corner area. Conversely the townhouse structure just north of townhouse building #8 (Bldg. 7) was rotated slightly clockwise.

SDCI acknowledges the difficulty in relocating townhouse building #8 due to the intent to preserve Tree #799 and is supportive of the realignment townhouse building #7. SDCI agrees that the current siting of townhouse building #7 illustrated on the site plans creates an improved alignment of the townhomes' front facades, porches, fencing along 31st Avenue Southwest; as well as, supports CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principals by allowing better sightlines across townhouse buildings 6-8. SDCI is satisfied that the design meets this guideline.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

The proposal illustrates most of the single family residences with entrances abutting the proposed vehicular driveway whose addresses will not be visible from the two streets- 31st Avenue Southwest and Southwest Myrtle Street. SDCI feels that design methods (wayfinding, signage) to address this concern should be explored and provided in the next design iteration.

At the Recommendation phase, the design includes signage at the site two main vehicular entries located along Southwest Myrtle Street and 31st Avenue Southwest (pgs. S3 and S4) to assist in directing guest to the appropriate residences which don't front on the aforementioned streets. SDCI is satisfied that this signage meets the guideline.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

The proposal demonstrates an internal private drive that the majority of the residences will utilize in order to obtain vehicular access to onsite parking. The SDCI staff observed that none of the proposed townhouse structures provided direct access from the individual units to the private drive and was concerned that this design would discourage

interaction amongst the neighbors across the private drive. SDCI staff stated that design solutions should be explored to incorporate additional functionality in the vehicular circulation space that would promote community and positive interaction.

At the Recommendation phase, the design materials presented a well-defined pedestrian walkway abutting the single family residences east of the vehicular circulation space and nominal space for an informal path traversing the accessory vehicular driveways and low-level landscaping along the west side of said internal vehicular access drive. The townhouse units' lower level floor plans identified only vehicular garage entries abutting the internal drive.

Although the townhouse buildings' designs and site planning have not evolved to provide clear pedestrian circulation pathways and individual residential entries, SDCI feels that the combination of the streetscape design east of the internal vehicular drive and the expansive townhouse units' second-story balconies facing the drive will meet the intent of this design guideline by fostering opportunities for positive interaction amongst neighbors.

- A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street. For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.**

SDCI staff voiced concern that the proposed development did not illustrate pathways or direct connections to the streets. The future design should address this concern.

At the Recommendation phase, in addition to direct paths from each residential unit's/residence's private main entry to a sidewalk abutting a street or an internal vehicular drive, the design materials illustrated two pedestrian stair pathways between townhouse buildings 3 & 4 and 6 & 7 intended to provide direct pedestrian connections from 31st Avenue Southwest to the single family residences.

SDCI appreciates the design of the pedestrian infrastructure on the site and feels it will positively connect the proposed individual onsite open spaces with each other as well as with the existing open spaces west of the project site (Walt Hundley multipurpose outdoor playfield).

- A-7 Residential Open Space. Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.**

The High Point Design Book includes an Open Space Network Plan that *“provides a wide range of parks and open spaces designed to connect with each other and the natural open spaces on the community's edges...”* The parks are identified as “Community Parks”, “Neighborhood Parks” and “Pocket Parks”. Community Parks are large sized parks. Neighborhood Parks are designed to serve residents living within a two block radius. Pocket Parks are smaller parks situated on residential streets fronted directly by houses.

The SDCI staff review of the proposed project identified a nearby public community park (High Point Park) and private residential open spaces (individual decks/porches) as possible open space that would be utilized by the residents. SDCI staff is concerned that the design lacked a main pedestrian access point from 31st Avenue Southwest.

The future design should clearly document planned residential open spaces and clearly differentiate between public residential open spaces and private residential open spaces. Opportunities to create a dedicated pedestrian pathway which would provide a direct connection to informal pathways from the City Park onto the subject site should be explored. The creation of focal points throughout the site should also be explored.

SDCI is pleased that at the Recommendation phase the site and landscape designs have been improved to meet this guideline. (See also A-6)

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.

A-10 Corner Lots. Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

The SDCI staff recognized that this corner lot should also be considered a gateway lot due to its visibility by persons entering the High Point Community from the south. The SDCI staff appreciated that the parking and vehicular access to the site is planned to be sited away from the corner. However, concerns remain with the lack of residential frontage/entrances along Southwest Myrtle Street. The future design of those building's within close proximity to Southwest Myrtle Street (Bldgs. 8 and 10) should be tailored to address that street front in a meaningful manner. Architectural features such as wrap-around decks/stairs and secondary garage entrance were options offered by the SDCI staff as design solutions that would meet the intent of this guidance.

At the Recommendation phase, the design included enhanced exterior elevations for the townhouse building and the single family residence within close proximity to Southwest Myrtle Street (Bldgs. 8 and 10). The updated street-facing side elevations included a combination of varied material treatments, façade colors, wrap-around porches, decks and landscaping between the sidewalk and the wall facades.

SDCI is pleased with the applicant's response to this guideline and feels strongly that the proposed design treatments (varied siding materials/colors), porches, decks and landscaping should be incorporated with the future design and construction of the specified residential structures.

SDCI Recommended Condition:

- 1. Install design treatments inclusive of varied siding materials, colors and landscaping for the townhouse structure and single family residence (Buildings 8 and 10) whose southern street-facing wall facades are within close proximity to Southwest Myrtle Street.***

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.

A conceptual lighting plan is required to illustrate that this guideline is appropriately addressed.

At the Recommendation phase, the design included light poles installed at the main entrances, at the pedestrian walkways, at the surface parking areas and along the proposed interior vehicular access driveways. SDCI feels the quantity and placement of the proposed lighting is sufficient to ensure comfort and security for pedestrians. (See also D-7.)

- D-2 Blank Walls.** Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

At the Recommendation phase, the design addressed potential blank wall conditions appropriately. (See also A-10.)

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

A conceptual lighting plan should be provided to illustrate that this guideline is appropriately addressed.

At the Recommendation phase, the design addressed safety and security appropriately. (See also D-2.)

E. Landscaping

- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.** Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

SDCI recommends development of a landscape design that incorporates landscaping cues from the nearby parks owned by the City and public open spaces designed by SHA. The plan should include details regarding future landscaping elements appropriate for corner sites consistent with the landscaping design offered in the High Point design book.

At the Recommendation phase, the landscape design presented was based on the overall landscape philosophy of the High Point Community as explained in the High Point Design Book. Overall, SDCI is satisfied with the landscape design.

E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions. The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

The plan should include details regarding the preservation of the identified exceptional trees and the proposed landscaping design treatment for those sloped areas between the residential structures.

At the Recommendation phase, the landscape plan identified two exceptional trees that are proposed to be retained (Tree #786 and #799); and trees and vegetation in delineated undisturbed steep sloped areas all incorporated as open space landscaping. SDCI feels the design successfully addressed this special site condition. (See also E-2.)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES
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SDCI's recommendation on the requested departure(s) is based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet the design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s). SDCI also recognizes that the proposed residential housing project has been designed to reflect the redevelopment goals of the High Point Community as stated in the High Point Design Book, through a collaborative effort with SHA. SDCI has received written comments from SHA in support of the applicant's requested departures. SDCI acknowledges SHA's comments in consideration of the requested departures.

The requested departures are identified on the departure summary table.

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
1. STRUCTURE WIDTH STANDARDS SMC 23.45.011.A (Table A) (Building 8 - Townhome)	Maximum building width with modulation for townhomes in a Lowrise 2 (L-2) zone is 90'.	Allow a maximum building width of 107' for this townhome building.	Building 8 is located in the L-2 zone portion of a site that contains both L-2 and Lowrise 4 (L-4) zones. SMC 23.45.011.A allows townhome structures in L-4 zones be a maximum width of 150' with modulation. Consequently, the townhomes sited in the L-4 portion of the project site have building widths more than 90'. Allowing townhouse building 8 to have a building width more than 90' would assist in creating a balanced streetscape. Also, design techniques inclusive of a 6' deep shift at the center of this building has been applied to reduce the width of the structure visible from the street (31 st Avenue Southwest).	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1)

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
2. SIDE FAÇADE MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.B (Building 8 - Townhome)	On corner lots, the side façade which faces the street shall be modulated if greater than 40' feet in width for ground-related housing.	Allow 61' side façade facing Southwest Myrtle Street to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the façade has been provided in the form of a wrapped entry porch approximately 6' feet in width, a vertical bay at the upper two levels and varied siding and materials. The design intent is to create interest and variation to this side façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1)
3. SIDE FAÇADE MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.B (Building 10 – Single Family Residence)	On corner lots, the side façade which faces the street shall be modulated if greater than 40' feet in width for ground-related housing.	Allow 64' side façade facing Southwest Myrtle Street to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the façade has been provided in the form of a wrapped entry porch approximately 6' feet in width, a vertical bay at the upper two levels and varied siding and materials. The design intent is to create interest and variation to this side façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1)

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
4. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 1 – Townhome)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 55' at an interior facade (south) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)
5. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 2 – Townhome)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 55' at the interior facades (south and north) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
6. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Buildings 3, 4, 6 – Townhomes)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 55' at the interior facades (south and north) and 75' at the interior façade facing the private drive (east) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of rear decks 6' in depth; recessed garage entrances; together with the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade. Also differentiation in the rear decks' roof coverage also assists in breaking up the mass and reinforces a sense of verticality and individualism.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)
7. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 5 – Townhome)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 55' at the interior facades (south and north) and 91' at the interior façade facing the private drive (east) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of rear decks 6' in depth; recessed garage entrances; together with the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade. Also differentiation in the rear decks' roof coverage also assists in breaking up the mass and reinforces a sense of verticality and individualism.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
8. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 7 – Townhome)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 55' at the interior facades (south and north) and 59' at the interior façade facing the private drive (east) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of rear decks 6' in depth; recessed garage entrances; together with the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade. Also differentiation in the rear decks' roof coverage also assists in breaking up the mass and reinforces a sense of verticality and individualism.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)
9. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 8 – Townhome)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 61' at the interior facade (north) and 107' at the interior façade facing the private drive (east) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of rear decks 6' in depth; recessed garage entrances; together with the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade. Also differentiation in the rear decks' roof coverage also assists in breaking up the mass and reinforces a sense of verticality and individualism.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
10. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 10 – Single Family Residence)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 64' at an interior facade (north) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)
11. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Buildings 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 – Single Family Residences)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 63' at the interior facades (south and north) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)
12. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Buildings 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 – Single Family Residences)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 64' at the interior facades (south and north) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)

Departure Summary Table				
STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	SDCI RECOMMENDATION
13. INTERIOR MODULATION STANDARDS SMC 23.45.012.C (Building 25 – Single Family Residence)	Within a cluster development, all interior facades wider than 40' shall be modulated provided the maximum modulation width is 40' and perimeter facades follow standard requirements.	Allow upper floors measuring 63' at an interior facade (south) to not meet modulation standards.	Combination of the horizontal and vertical articulation across the townhome façades has been used to create variation to the façade.	Recommend approval. (A-1, C-1, C-4)

RECOMMENDATIONS

SDCI DIRECTION

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated May 20, 2016. After considering the site and context, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review staff recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed above), in association with the following recommended condition:

1. Install design treatments inclusive of varied siding materials, colors and landscaping for the townhouse structure and single family residence (Buildings 8 and 10) whose southern street-facing wall facades are within close proximity to Southwest Myrtle Street.