



## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3018644

Address: 5221 Ravenna Avenue Northeast

Applicant: Dylan Fuller of Caron Architecture

Date of Report: Wednesday, May 27, 2015

DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise-Two (LR2)

Nearby Zones: (North) Lowrise Three (LR3)  
(South) LR2  
(East) LR3 and Lowrise One (LR1)  
(West) LR3

Lot Area: 6,810 square feet

### Current Development:

The subject site is currently occupied by a single family structure, detached garage, and three Exceptional Trees. The site slopes gradually, rising from the southeast corner to the northwest corner approximately 10-feet.



### Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development and neighborhood character consists of residential, commercial, and office uses of a variety of architectural styles. Nearby uses include the University of Washington, Ravenna Park, University Village, and the Burke Gilman Trail. Abutting the site to the north and south are multiple-family structures. The site lies within the Ravenna Urban Center Village.

**Access:**

Current vehicular access to the site is provided via Ravenna Avenue Northeast. The proposal will eliminate vehicular access, and provide pedestrian access via Ravenna Ave NE. The main entry is accessed via a stair and ramp at the street facing façade.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:**

None

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Streamlined Design Review to allow a 3-story residential structure containing 35 units. No parking proposed. Existing structure to be demolished. There are 3 potentially exceptional trees on site.

**DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The project proposes one, four-story structure with one residential floor below grade, containing 35 small efficiency dwelling units. Three Exceptional trees are located on the lot near Ravenna Ave NE. Site planning responds to two of the Exceptional trees by setting the structure back toward the southwest corner of the site. The Exceptional tree at the southeast portion of site is proposed for removal. From the east façade, the structure appears as two attached volumes, differentiated by changes in materials, color, and change in plane. Materials proposed include cedar siding, cement siding, green screens, and metal railings. Bicycle parking and the trash and recycling are located near the street, and are screened via a horizontal cedar fence enclosure with trellis and green screen.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comment was received and is summarized into four categories/topics: parking, density, location of solid waste and recycling, and height, bulk, and scale.

*Parking*

- Concerned about parking impacts. (received multiple comments)
- Encouraged on-site vehicular parking.
- Encouraged more bicycle parking spaces on site.

*Density:* Encouraged a structure containing fewer units.

*Location of Solid Waste and Recycling*

- Concerned about garbage in the street in on private property.
- Encouraged locating the solid waste and recycling away from the right-of-way.

- Supported the use of fencing to screen the solid waste and recycle, and encouraged the can to remain within this screened area.

*Height, Bulk, and Scale*

- Encouraged the retention of the existing trees on site and along Ravenna Ave NE.
- Encourage development that is compatible with general aesthetic and practical tone of the neighborhood.
- Concerned about privacy impacts and placement of windows.
- Concerned about impacts to light and air.
- Encouraged ground level landscaping.
- Encouraged a front setback equivalent to adjacent existing structures.

**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 Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

**DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

1. **Site Planning and Public Realm.** The subject site abuts residential uses to the north, south, and west. The structure is set back from approximately 17-feet from the front property line and proposes to locate the trash/recycle area between the street-facing façade and the street.
  - a. The open space concept for the front setback includes landscaping, hardscape, bicycle facilities, benches, the main residential entryway, and the trash and recycling area. Ensure the design of these elements results in a strong connection to the street and public realm, and provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation. Relocate the trash and recycling area from the front setback (CS2-B, PL1-B, PL1-I, PL2-B, DC2-B, DC2-C).
  - b. Exterior lighting should be used to increase safety in areas used by pedestrians. Include in the Master Use Permit plan set a conceptual lighting plan illustrating lighting along the pedestrian walkways and at the main entry (PL2-B, DC4-C).
  - c. Provide information describing the hardscape materials proposed for the pedestrian walkways and main entry. Differentiate these shared on-site circulation areas from the public sidewalk (PL1-B).
2. **Trees.** The subject site contains a number of trees including cedar, cypress, hemlock, and apple. Four of these trees appear to meet the criteria for designation as an Exceptional

tree due to their size; however, one of these trees, the Common Apple tree, is described as being in poor condition.

- a. DPD Senior Environmental Analyst reviewed the proposal and arborist report and agrees that the apple tree is in too poor of a condition to be considered Exceptional and may be removed. This tree is located in the center of the site, nearest the rear property line and is identified as tree #5 in the arborist report (CS1-D, CS1-II, CS2-B, CS3-A, PL1-I, PL3-I, DC3-B, DC3-C, DC4-D, DC4-I).
  - b. The two Western Red Cedar trees located near the northeast portion of the site are both proposed to remain. To protect these trees, the project responds by setting the structure back toward the southwest corner of the site. An adjustment for a reduced setback is requested in response to this condition. Keep these two trees (trees #1 and 2 as identified in the arborist report), and include in the Master Use Permit plan set all required tree protection area measurements (CS1-D, CS1-II, CS2-B, CS3-A, PL1-I, PL3-I, DC3-B, DC3-C, DC4-D, DC4-I).
  - c. The cypress tree located on the southeast portion of the site is considered Exceptional and is proposed for removal. Removal of an exceptional tree is permitted only if all adjustments and departures have been exhausted in order to achieve the maximum floor area permitted. The two options proposed both include a ramp and the trash/recycling area at the front of the lot between the street-facing façade and the street. With removal of the trash/recycle area from the front setback and a relocation of the ramp, it appears plausible that the cypress tree could be protected. The University Neighborhood Guidelines describe the importance of retention of existing large trees, especially on the wooded slopes of the Ravenna Urban Village, of which this lot is near. Removal of the Lawson Cypress tree (tree #3 as identified in the arborist report) may not be approved (CS1-D, CS1-II, CS2-B, CS3-A, PL1-I, PL3-I, DC3-B, DC3-C, DC4-D, DC4-I).
3. **Privacy.** The subject site abuts existing residential development to the north, south, and west. Development must provide privacy for adjacent development.
- a. An exterior stairway is proposed at the rear of the structure, along the west property line. Include with the Master Use Permit plan set elevations, site plan, and landscape plan illustrating how the proposal is designed to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings (CS2-D).
  - b. Walkways are proposed along the north, south, and west property lines. Include narrow planting areas, or other form of screening, to mitigate privacy impacts along the pedestrian walkways (CS2-D, DC1-B, DC4-D).
  - c. Clarify the size, location, and type of windows shown. Obscuring glazing, landscaping, and fencing may be used to mitigate adverse privacy impacts to neighbors (CS2-D).
  - d. Care should be taken to design the north, south, and west facades to minimize views into abutting residential uses (CS2-D).
4. **Design Concept.** Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.
- a. Choose durable materials to enhance the structure, add variety to the architectural form, and knit the structure into the neighborhood context (DC2-A).

- b. The use of materials, colors, and changes in plane on the street facing façade create a sense of massing variety that better relates to the scale of the pedestrian and neighboring structures. Maintain this modulation and variety in colors and materials (DC2-A).
- c. The primary entry is designed to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight while being visually connected to the street. The changes in plane, glazing, walkways, overheard weather protection, and signage are used as an ensemble of coordinated elements. Maintain this ensemble of elements. Provide information describing the proposed on-site paving material (PL3-A, PL3-II, DC2-C, DC2-IV, DC4-A, DC4-B, DC4-I, DC4-II).
- d. The primary entry is further identified with the use of two large vertical windows extending to the butterfly roof above. Maintain this glazing element to further identify the primary entry (PL3-A, PL3-II, DC2-C, DC2-IV, DC4-A, DC4-B, DC4-I, DC4-II).
- e. Maintain the entry canopies over the entry doors for weather protection (PL3-A).
- f. Strive for balance between the building legibility and functionality. The internal staircase is located at the northeast portion of the structure. Consider further refinement of the street-facing façade, such as an increase in glazing, to articulate this internal function (DC3-E).
- g. Each façade is designed as a coordinated architectural concept with materials wrapping corners and highlighting various planes and volumes. Being located at the terminus of NE 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, the street-facing façade has an opportunity to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future. Include in the Master Use Permit plan set information describing proposed materials and colors (CS3-A, DC2-A, DC2-C, DC2-IV, DC4-A).
- h. The trash and recycle area is proposed between the street-facing façade and the street. The proposed trellis and horizontal cedar fencing relate well to the horizontal cedar siding of the front façade; however, the location is not compatible with the neighborhood context and does not better meet the intent of the design guidelines. Move the location of the trash and recycle area outside of the front setback and integrate the area into the architectural concept. Submit in the Master Use Permit plan set elevations, graphics, and material callouts, as appropriate, to describe the response to this guidance. See also guidance 1.b. above. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC2-IV, DC4-A).
- i. Integrate the mailbox block into the structure's architectural concept (DC3-B).

## 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-2. Daylight and Shading:** Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

**CS1-D Plants and Habitat**

**CS1-D-1. On-Site Features:** Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

**University Supplemental Guidance:**

**CS1-II Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions**

**CS1-II-i. Existing Trees:** Retain existing large trees wherever possible. This is especially important on the wooded slopes in the Ravenna Urban Village. The Board is encouraged to consider design departures that allow retention of significant trees. Where a tree is unavoidably removed, it should be replaced with another tree of appropriate species, 2 ½ inch caliper minimum size for deciduous trees, or minimum size of 4' height for evergreen trees.

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

**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.

**PUBLIC LIFE**

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

**PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL1-I Residential Open Space**

**PL1-I-i. Active, Ground-Level Open Space:** The ground-level open space should be designed as a plaza, courtyard, play area, mini-park, pedestrian open space, garden, or similar occupiable site feature. The quantity of open space is less important than the provision of functional and visual ground-level open space. Successfully designed ground level open space should meet these objectives:

- a. Reinforces positive streetscape qualities by providing a landscaped front yard, adhering to common setback dimensions of neighboring properties, and providing a transition between public and private realms.
- b. Provides for the comfort, health, and recreation of residents.
- c. Increases privacy and reduce visual impacts to all neighboring properties.

**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.

**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.

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL3-I Entrances Visible from the Street**

**PL3-I-ii. Walkways Serving Entrances:** In residential projects, except townhouses, it is generally preferable to have one walkway from the street that can serve several building entrances. At least one building entrance, preferably the main one, should be prominently visible from the street. To increase security, it is desirable that other entries also be visible from the street; however, the configuration of existing buildings may preclude this.

**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-1. Early Planning:** Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

**PL4-B-3. Bike Connections:** Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

## **DESIGN CONCEPT**

**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-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.

### ***University Supplemental Guidance:***

#### **DC2-I Architectural Elements and Materials**

**DC2-I-ii. Fine-Grained Architectural Character:** Buildings in Lowrise zones should provide a “fine-grained” architectural character. The fine grain may be established by using building modulation, articulation and/or details which may refer to the modulation, articulation and/or details of adjacent buildings. To better relate to any established architectural character encountered within the community, consider the following building features:

- a. Pitched roof;
- b. Covered front porch;
- c. Vertically proportioned windows;
- d. Window trim and eave boards;
- e. Elements typical of common house forms.

**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.

### DC3-C Design

**DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features:** Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

**DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas:** Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

## 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-2. Climate Appropriateness:** Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

### DC4-B Signage

**DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design:** Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

### DC4-C Lighting

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

### 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.

## University Supplemental Guidance:

### DC4-I Exterior Finish Materials

**DC4-I-i. Desired Materials:** See full Guidelines for list of desired materials.

**DC4-I-iii. Discouraged Materials:** See full Guidelines for list of discouraged materials.

### DC4-II Exterior Signs

**DC4-II-iii. Sign Location:** The location and installation of signage should be integrated with the building's architecture.

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS

Design Review Staff's recommendation on requested adjustment(s) is to be based upon the adjustment's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the adjustment(s).

At the time of Design Guidance, the following adjustments were requested:

- 1. Setbacks and Separations (SMC 23.45.518.A.):** The Code requires a 15-foot setback for apartment structures with no alley. The applicant proposes a 50% reduction for a 7.5-foot rear setback.

DPD staff indicated support of the adjustment as the reduced rear setback provided allowance for a larger setback at the northeast portion of the site to retain the two existing Exceptional trees on site.

- 2. Structure Width and Façade Length (SMC 23.45.527):** The Code permits a façade length of 65% of the lot depth. The applicant proposes a 10% increase.

DPD staff indicated support of the adjustment as the reduced rear setback provided allowance for a larger setback at the northeast portion of the site to retain the two existing Exceptional trees on site.

- 3. Trash and Recycling Area (SMC 23.54.040.E.):** This item is identified in the SDR packet as an adjustment request; however, an adjustment to the standards of SMC 23.54.040.E. are not permitted. Instead, a Type I decision may be made to modify the trash/recycle area standards.

DPD staff does not support the proposed location of the trash/recycle area between the street-facing façade and the street. This location does not better meet the intent of the Design Guidelines. Design guidance is provided above. Relocation of the trash/recycle area and reconfiguration of the entry access should allow preservation of the Cypress tree.

## **STAFF DIRECTION**

**At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the DPD Staff recommended the project should move forward to building permit application in response to the Design Guidance provided.**

1. Please be aware that this report is an assessment on how the project is meeting the intent of the Design Guidelines. This review does not include a full zoning review. Zoning review will occur when the MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.
2. If applicable, please prepare your Master Use Permit for SEPA review with a thorough zoning analysis listing the 23.45 and SMC 23.54 code section criteria, showing both required and proposed information (include page number where you graphically show compliance). You may want to review Tip 201 (<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/cams/CamList.aspx>) and may also want to review the MUP information here: <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/mupoverview/default.htm>
3. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report.
4. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.