



City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director



FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3019441

Address: 4201 Stone Way N.

Applicant: David May, Caron Architecture

Date of Meeting: Monday, February 22, 2016

Board Members Present: Ivana Begley (Chair)
Laura Lenss
Blake Williams

Board Members Absent: Eric Blank,
Julia Leavitt

DPD Staff Present: David L. Landry, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2,
Pedestrian Designation 40' height
limit (NC3P-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2P-40
(South) NC2P-40
(East) SF 5000
(West) SF 5000

Lot Area: 12,670 square feet (sq. ft.)

Current Development:

The site currently contains two adjacent single-story masonry buildings with one retail storefronts and a separate single-family residential structure to the rear of the project site, front N. 42nd Street.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The site is located at the northwest corner of Stone Way N. and N 42nd Street, within the Wallingford Neighborhood district. The project is made up of four distinct parcels with unique assessor parcel numbers. The project site is located within the Wallingford Residential Urban Village, with in a Frequent Transit Corridor in which the provision of off street parking is not a requirement for this site. The area is characterized as a mix of small commercial shops and newer multi-story apartment buildings in both directions of the project site. There are older residential structures located to the west along Midvale Ave N., which runs parallel to Stone Way N. Located immediately to the south of the site are two single-story masonry commercial buildings. Located to the north on the north side of the alley is the Stone Way Manor apartments built in 1989.

This area, especially further to the north and south, is an active pedestrian nodes with a focus on pedestrians, bicyclist and transit riders.

Access:

Proposed vehicular access into the site will be west off of Stone Way N. via an alley along the property's northern property line. Pedestrian access to upper level residential units will be via a stairway at mid-block from Stone Way or a smaller stairway from the building's southwest corner.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no mapped Environmentally Critical Areas onsite.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A 4-story mixed-use residential/commercial retail development at the corner of N. 42nd Street and Stone Way N. The development includes 2,785square feet of ground level commercial space, 8,507 square feet of residential space and 21 ground level parking spaces. There are 3 levels of residential units totaling 23,795 square feet above the commercial retail around a second level courtyard.

No parking is proposed. Parking is not required for the site since it is located within a frequent transit corridor.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at the following 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 DPD:

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

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

At the first Early Design Guidance meeting, the applicant presented three massing options to the Board and the public for consideration. While the applicant presented three massing options in total, all three options were very similar in appearance, especially Options 1 and 3. The only distinguishing feature between Options 1 and 3 was the insertion of an access stair in the middle of the Stone Way facing façade which splits the commercial space into two areas at ground level and as well as the residential units at the upper levels as well.

Options 1 and 3, unlike Option 2 which is code compliant rely heavily on several departures.

While all three options have a similar programming approach consisting of ground floor commercial space along Stone Way N. Options 1 and 3 have five ADA 'accessible' units along N. 42nd Street, with parking in the rear, while the code compliant option, (Option 2) places the trash and electrical vaults along N. 42nd Street, with the residential lobby and entry at the building's northeast corner. The commercial space remains along Stone Way N. in Option 2 with parking also at the rear. Option 2 has also been designed to accommodate a total of 72 efficiency dwelling units on levels 2-4 with a much smaller courtyard area but requires no departures. Options 1 and 2 are designed to accommodate 48 apartment units on level 2-4. Each floor is designed with nine units around a courtyard above the parking and seven street facing units above the commercial retail space.

Massing Options 1 and 2 are designed to maximize the building envelopes with minimal rear setbacks. Option 2 by placing the electrical and transformer vaults and trash along N. 42nd has allow for a much more generous rear setback from the adjacent residential property which is located within an SF 5000 zone.

Option 3 is the applicant's preferred option and consists of 48 residential units on floors 2-4 with five three story ADA accessible units facing N. 42nd Street with ground level parking and bicycle

storage, electrical vaults, mailroom and trash located along the buildings' northwest property line.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At the EDG meeting, members of the public were present and several speakers provided comments and raised the following issues:

- Concerned about height and mass of building in relation to adjacent residential properties
- Concerned about reduced ability to maintain the eastern edge of the adjacent residential property due to the projects close proximity.
- Concerned about the possible lack of light and air due to the proposed building being located so close to eastern property line.
- Concerned about the 2.5' minimal setback from the second ADU along the projects western property line.
- Concerned that the proposal does not take into account potential noise, odor, visual and shade impacts to the adjacent ADU.
- Concerned that the massive size of the proposal will create continuous shade thus destroying the vegetation located along the western property line.
- Concerned that there will be no windows or modulation on the rear façade.
- Concerned that small efficiency dwelling units are not allowed in this zoning district.
- Concerned that the existing trees were not properly identified through an arborist review.
- Expressed concern that the proposed structure is being pushed west-ward toward the existing single-family residences while asking for a departure on the opposite of the structure to accommodate the design for a wider sidewalk.

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 & Relationship to Context:** At EDG, the Board expressed concerns that essentially only two massing options were explored, instead of three. The Board also noted that the siting of the two non-code compliant options did little to respect the location of adjacent residential properties. The non-code compliant options relied heavily on departures while imposing heavily on the adjacent project with extremely small setbacks and height and massing that will impact the residences on the adjacent site. In addition, the Board did not endorse the goals of the applicant's preferred option, as the option did not demonstrate why it was the best alternative or how it would meet both the Citywide and Wallingford design guidelines. The Board encouraged the applicant to further explore massing options that

either break up the building façade (possibly consolidating some elements and widening others), or develop a scheme that celebrates building entryways or building corner with grander gestures.

- a. The Board directed the applicant to explore other massing alternatives including a code compliant townhouse option that does not rely on departures that impact the ground level commercial spaces or one that eliminates the parking all together. The Board also suggested that there might be a better location for the façade break that was depicted in the preferred option. The Board stated that by introducing parking, the project is forced to deal with a self-imposed hardship impacting the commercial floor area, outdoor amenity space and site and circulation planning. **(CS2-C-2, CS3-A-4, DC2-I-1)**
- b. The Board expressed concerns with how the proposal did not respond to adjacent structures located to the west and north. For the next meeting, the applicant should explore opportunities for additional relief along the property's western property line and look at how negative spaces between buildings could help the proposal to better relate to the neighboring properties. **(CS1-B-2, CS2-D-5)**
- c. The applicant should provide additional study and information on the existing conditions of the adjacent property, including setbacks, openings, and an arborist report. **(CS1-B-2, CS2-D-5)**
- d. For the next meeting, the applicant should further develop conceptual treatment of any proposed blank facades and look at both precedence and innovative solutions for how to address any blank wall conditions located on the west and north sides of the structure. **(DC1-II-ii, DC2-B-2)**

2. Entries/Access & Security

- a. The Board expressed general support for an open-air internal courtyard concept presented at EDG, but noted that the courtyards presented in Options 1 and 3 were constrained spaces that will most likely become dead zones.
- b. The Board wanted to see a better defined entry hierarchy that is more recognizable in character. This could possibly be achieved by removing living units, removing parking and/or relocating and widening stair entryways or defining the south east corner in a grand design gesture.
- c. The Board suggested that the stair and entryway should be more inviting allowing visitors to see into the courtyard space, affectively drawing people deeper into the building visually and physically. The Board also suggested a circulation scheme that would allow pedestrians to enter into a courtyard from street level and then move upward to the residential levels via stair entry. For the next meeting, the Board directed the applicant to develop design options that have a stronger connection between the how the entry steps and walkways lead into the interior courtyard.
- d. The Board was concerned that the placement of the mail room forces activities (sense of community etc.,) to the rear of the building when it could be placed in a location that would better foster communal activity. **(PL2-A-1, PL2-B-1, 2, & 3, PL2-C-3, PL2-D-1, PL3-I, PL4-B-2)**

- e. The Board was not convinced that the placement of the trash, electrical vaults and bicycle storage were optimal locations as presented in Options 1 and 3. The Board expressed concerns that trash receptacles located immediately adjacent to the ADU on the adjacent property could have a potential impacts in terms of smells and noise. The Board was much more impressed with the placement of ‘back of house’ elements along 42nd St., as depicted in the preferred option, Option 2. The Board was interested in seeing easier access to ‘back of house’ components such as bike parking, mail boxes, and garbage as depicted in the non-code compliant options, and directed the applicant to incorporate better the back of features for easier accessibility. For the next meeting, the Board requested additional information on the placement of these facilities. **(PL4-A-2, PL4-B-2)**
- f. The Board was generally not supportive of the proposed site circulation and entries for both the residential and commercial uses as they felt that the parking aided in the creation of a self-imposed hardship as the parking unnecessarily constrained the site, which unnecessarily required the applicant to ask for departures for reduced commercial space depths and height which would otherwise not be necessary. **(CS2-III-1&5, PL2-A-1, PL2-A-2, PL2-B-1, PL2-B-3, PL2-I, PL3-I-1, DC2-I-1, DC2-I-3)**

3. Pedestrian Realm, Streetscape & Uses

- a. The Board raised concerns and requested more information on how the proposal responds to pedestrian circulation and the streetscape. Of primary concern was that the courtyard space and entry were not inviting and did not foster a sense of community. The Board suggested that the south east corner of the site could have a grander gesture with a better visual as well as a physical connection from an entry at the corner into an interior courtyard for the purpose of making it more inviting and possibly helping to foster a sense of community and activity. **(CS2-B-2, CS2-I-1, CS2-I-2, CS2-II-5, PL3-A-1-a&d, PL2-I-1)**
- b. The Board generally did not express support for the commercial retail floor space presented at EDG although they felt that the commercial layout in the code compliant option worked better in terms of depth of commercial space but were still concerned with the pedestrian circulation pattern and the lack of a grand gesture marking the buildings entries. The Board wanted to see more interior connections and porosity into the site from the street and for residential and retail entries relate better to the street. **(PL2-B-3, PL3-I, DC2-I-3)**

4. Architectural Character

- a. The Board was generally not supportive of the architectural character of the imagery depicted in the EDG packet as there were no grand gestures or welcoming connections from the street edge into the building’s interior. **(DC2-I-1, DC2-I-2, DC2-II-3, DC2-B-1, DC2-D-1)**
- b. The Board agreed that materials and façade treatments would be important for the success of the project and directed the applicant to explore different textures and materials designed to create interest. For the next meeting, the applicant should include conceptual sketches of material character and application, showing how the façade will be treated. **(DC4-A-1, DC4-A-2)**

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-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 such as: existing trees, native plant species or other vegetation 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.

Wallingford Supplemental Guidance:

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-I. Responding to Site Characteristics:

CS2-I-1. Upper level building setbacks and setbacks along the building base are encouraged to help minimize shadow impacts on public sidewalks.

CS2-III-5. Corner Lots:

CS2-III-5. Typical corner developments should provide:

- a main building entrance located at corner;
- an entrance set back to soften corner and enhance pedestrian environment; and
- use of a hinge, bevel, notch, open bay or setback in the massing to reflect the special nature of the corner and draw attention to it. (Example: Julia's open bay with bevel.)

CS2-IV. Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility:

CS2-IV-1. Cornice and roof lines should respect the heights of surrounding Structures

CS2-IV-4. Consider dividing building into small masses with variation of building setbacks and heights in order to preserve views, sun and privacy of adjacent residential structures and sun exposure of public spaces, including streets and sidewalks.

CS2-IV-7. Consider additional setbacks, modulation and screening to reduce

the bulk where there are abrupt changes, which increase the relative height above grade along the street or between zones.

PUBLIC LIFE

Wallingford Supplemental Guidance:

PL2. Walkability: Create a safe, comfortable, and interesting environment that encourages walking for pleasure and for transportation.

PL2-I. PEDESTRIAN OPEN SPACES ENTRANCES: Provide convenient, attractive and protected pedestrian entry for both business and upper story residential uses.

PL2-I-1. Entries for residential uses on the street (rather than from the rear of the property) add to the activity on the street and allow for visual surveillance for personal safety.

PL3. Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human activity and interaction at street level.

PL3-I. ENTRIES VISIBLE FROM THE STREET: Primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street (for development along North 45th Street and Stone Way North).

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.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces by considering the following:

- a. a location at the crossroads of high levels of pedestrian traffic;
- c. amenities that complement the building design and offer safety and security when used outside normal business hours.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses, particularly activities along sidewalks, parks or other public spaces.

Wallingford Supplemental Guidance:

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-I. ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT AND CONSISTENCY

DC2-I-1. The massing of large buildings should reflect the functions of the building and respond to the scale of traditional buildings by including major façade elements, which help to break the building into smaller pieces with distinctive appearances.

DC2-I-3. Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest. Encourage pedestrian scale pole lights along streets and walks.

DC2-I-4. Signage:

- Signage should reflect the pedestrian scale of the neighborhood.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the design of the building so that each complement the other.

DC3-A. BUILDING-OPEN SPACE RELATIONSHIP

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

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-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces should connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate. Look for opportunities to support uses and activities on adjacent properties and/or the sidewalk.

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. Some examples include areas for gardening, children’s play (covered and uncovered), barbeques, resident meetings, and crafts or hobbies.

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-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.

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 both the City Wide and Wallingford 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. **Non-Residential Use Average Depth. (SMC 23.47.008.B.3):** The Code requires that nonresidential uses shall extend an average depth of at least 30 feet and a minimum depth of 15 feet from the street-level street-facing facade. The applicant proposes a reduction from the required 30 feet to a varied depth for the commercial spaces with a minimum average depth of 27 feet.
 - Applicant is requesting a reduction from the required 30 feet to a varied depth for the commercial spaces with a minimum average depth of 27 feet.

The Board noted that with the development of Option 2 (Stack), this departure may not be necessary. The Board indicated that they would possibly be open to this departure if it is required to create improved views to Lake Union and clearly express the design concept of Option 2.

The Board noted that this departure may not be necessary if the parking were reduced or eliminated altogether. The Board felt that providing parking created a space constraint resulting a self-imposed hardship. The Board in general was not supportive of this departure and requested that the applicant develop an alternative that eliminated the need for this departure by either removing or reducing the parking.

2. **Height provisions for new structures or new additions to existing structures. (SMC 23.47A.008.B.4):** The Code requires that Non-residential uses at street level shall have a floor-to-floor height of at least 13 feet. The applicant is proposing a reduction from the required 13 feet to a varied floor to floor height for the commercial spaces with a minimum of 10 feet.
 - Applicant is requesting a reduction from the required 13 feet to a varied floor to floor height for the commercial spaces with a minimum of 10 feet.

The Board noted that with the development of Option 2, this departure may not be necessary. The Board indicated that they would need additional information in order to make a more definitive decision. The Board was also interested in seeing either a revised or additional options that may not require these departures.

3. **Residential uses located along a street-level street-facing façade. (SMC 23.47A.008.B.4):** The Code requires that the floor of a dwelling unit located along the street-level street-facing facade shall be at least 4 feet above or 4 feet below sidewalk grade or be set back at least 10 feet from the sidewalk.
 - Applicant is asking that the residential uses at sidewalk grade be allowed.

The Board noted that with the development of Option 2, this departure may not be necessary. The Board indicated that they might be open to this departure if it is necessary for viable options that target the introduction of ADA units. However the Board was generally not in support of the options that relied on the need for the departures described in this section.

- 4. Setback requirements for lots abutting or across the alley from residential zones. (SMC 23.47A.014.B.1):** Per the Code a setback is required where a lot abuts the intersection of a side lot line and front lot line of a lot in a residential zone. The required setback forms a triangular area. Two sides of the triangle extend along the street lot line and side lot line 15 feet from the intersection of the residentially zoned lot's front lot line and the side lot line abutting the residentially zoned lot.
- Applicant is requesting a reduction from 15 feet to 5 feet for *'Triangular Setback at Property Corner From Residential Zone'*.

The Board was not favorable with this departure as it was not demonstrated how it would help the project to better meet the design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board suggested that a reduction from 15 to 5 feet for the triangular Setback would cause an impact to the adjacent residential property.

- 5. Setback Abutting a Side or Rear Lot Line of a Residentially-Zoned Lot. (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3):** The Code requires that for a structure containing a residential use, a setback is required along any side or rear lot line that abuts a lot in a residential zone or that is across an alley from a lot in a residential zone, or that abuts a lot that is zoned both commercial and residential if the commercial zoned portion of the abutting lot is less than 50 percent of the width or depth of the lot, as follows:
- a. Fifteen feet for portions of structures above 13 feet in height to a maximum of 40 feet; and
 - b. For each portion of a structure above 40 feet in height, additional setback at the rate of 2 feet of setback for every 10 feet by which the height of such portion exceeds 40 feet.
- Applicant is requesting a reduction from 15 feet to 10 feet with no additional setback over 40 feet for the requirement of a *'15 Feet Setback From Residential Zone Above 13 Feet Up To 40 Feet. Additional Setback Above 40 Feet'*.

The Board was not in support of this departure as they were concerned with the ensuing height and mass of the proposed building and its associated impacts to the adjacent residential properties such as lack the of light and air and the potential for odors and excessive noise associated with garbage pickup. The Board requested that the applicant develop code compliant design alternatives which did not rely so heavily on departures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the conclusion of the First Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board recommended the project return for another meeting in response to the guidance provided.