



RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3019528

Address: 8559 Mary Avenue Northwest

Applicant: Julian Weber of Julian Weber Architecture and Design

Date of Meeting: Monday, April 04, 2016

Board Members Present: Dale Kutzera (substitute Chair)
Christopher Bell
Emily McNichols

Board Members Absent: Marc Angelillo
Keith Walzak

DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC3P-40 (Neighborhood Commercial, Pedestrian Zone, 40-Foot Height Limit)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-40 (Commercial 1, 40-Foot Height Limit)
(South) NC3P-40
(East) LR2 (Lowrise 2)
(West) NC3P-40

Lot Area: 35,800 square feet



Current Development:

The subject site currently contains a single family structure and drive up banking structure for the adjacent Bank of America. Vehicular access to the single family structure is provided via NW 87th Street, while the drive up banking structure obtains access from the adjacent parcel to the west. A number of

existing trees line the property including street trees on NW 87th. Proposed vehicular access is via NW 87th Street, near the west property line.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development consists of a variety of uses and architectural styles. Multiple-family structures and big box retailers dominate the immediate area. Adjacent the site to the north, west, and south are big box retailers Grocery Outlet, Bank of American, Value Village, and Walgreens. The 15th Avenue NW corridor is a five lane arterial with sidewalks, planter strips, and a number of curb cuts to surface parking lots. Within walking distance are Soundview Playfield, Crown Hill Cemetery, Baker Park on Crown Hill, and Crown Hill Park.

Access:

Proposed vehicular access is via NW 87th St via one curb cut. The townhouse units front and take access from Mary Ave NW. Shared pedestrian access is provided via staircases from NW 87th St and Mary Ave NW.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance proposal to allow 21 townhomes. Covered parking for 21 vehicles to be provided. Existing structure to be demolished.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 27, 2015

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3019528) 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

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The architect presented three design options. Each proposed 21 townhouse units, on-site vehicular parking accessed from NW 87th St, and a shared central courtyard.

Iteration 1 was identified as the code compliant option, and proposed a four-story mass with angled stair penthouses. The townhouse units along Mary Ave NW were set back 10-feet from the property line, and were configured in a continuous street front. The central courtyard was proposed at 10-feet wide, and 19 on-site parking spaces were proposed within a shared garage.

Iteration 2 altered the roof lines, reduced the setback from Mary Ave NW, and increased the width of the central courtyard. The flat rooflines of *Iteration 1* were replaced with gabled roofs and the fourth story was set back from the street. One additional parking space was offered in this iteration.

Iteration 3, the preferred option, further developed the central courtyard by further decreasing the setback along Mary Ave NW to increase the courtyard width to 18-feet. A second pedestrian access point was added, providing access from Mary Ave NW and NW 87th St. One parking space is provided per unit, for a total of 21 spaces.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments at the Early Design Guidance meeting expressed concern about the width of the sidewalks, driveway location, and structure height.

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.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 27, 2015

1. **Streetscape and Context.** The Board discussed the existing character of NW 87th St. and Mary Ave NW, agreeing that NW 87th functions as a commercial street, and Mary Ave functions as a residential street, providing access to the adjacent single- and multiple-family homes. The Board recommended the development evaluate these characteristics and provide a design that responds appropriately (CS2-A, CS2-D).
 - a. The Board agreed residential units along Mary Ave NW are an appropriate response, but questioned the benefit of the raised stoops. The Board recommended the stoops be removed and the applicant explore a different way to create sense of entry. Recessed entries and building overhangs were suggested. (CS2-D, CS3-B, PL1-B, PL3-A, PL3-B, DC2-C)
 - b. The Board recommended that the entry sequence for units along Mary Ave provide space for a transition from public to private space.
 - c. The corner of NW 87th Street and Mary Ave NW provides a pivotal transition point from the commercial nature of 87th and the residential character of Mary Ave. The Board recommended fine detailing and treatment at the corner to mark a successful transition. (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS3-A)
 - d. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered. The Board requested that detailed information describing the central courtyard be included in the Recommendation packet. Visible access to the building entries should be provided. (PL1-B).

- e. Safety and security were identified as important concerns, and the Board recommended the use of lighting and clear pedestrian passageways in response. Details of the south passageway to Mary Ave should be included in the Recommendation packet. (CS2-B)

2. Massing and Design Concept. The Board described the housing type as innovative and supported Integration 3.

- a. The Board supported the upper level setbacks and balconies along Mary Ave NW, allowing for interaction with the street below.
- b. The central courtyard is proposed at 18-feet in width. The Board expressed concern about the availability of light and air to the interior units. Care should be taken to allow for maximum daylight for interior and exterior spaces. A detailed sunlight/shadow study should be included in the Recommendation packet (CS1-B, CS2-D, CS3-A)
- c. The Board agreed privacy is an important consideration, and should inform the design of the project, particularly for those units accessed from the central court. The Board requested that information related to the units accessed from the shared court be detailed in the Recommendation packet. (CS2-D)
- d. The Board requested details describing the walkway along the south property line, abutting the commercial structure to the south. It was recommended that on-site pedestrian walkways be connected with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project. (PL1-B, PL2-B)
- e. The applicant suggested live/work units may be placed along NW 87th St. The Board supported this suggestion, and encouraged these units to be designed such that they could be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future. (PL2-B, PL3-B)

RECOMMENDATION April 4, 2016

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PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered at the Recommendation meeting.

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.

RECOMMENDATION April 4, 2016

1. Site and Public Realm.

- a. The central stair on Mary Ave acts as a ceremonial entrance to the courtyard and townhouse units. The Board questioned whether this stairway was too narrow due to the three story volumes adjacent, and encouraged elements, materials, and/or other design treatments that have human scale to reduce perceived mass and accentuate the shared entry sequence (DC2-B, DC2-D, DC4-A).
- b. The Board expressed concern that the central courtyard was too narrow and had not sufficiently responded to guidance provided at the EDG meeting. Referencing the setback at the west property line, the Board discussed the opportunity to reduce that setback in order to increase the width of the central courtyard. The Board conditioned the project to increase the width of the courtyard to maximize light and air and mitigate privacy impacts between units (CS1-B, CS2-D, CS3-A).

2. Architectural Concept. The Board supported the architectural concept, finding that the concept has been clearly articulated throughout the design process.

- a. The Board supported the gabled rooflines, finding they break the scale of the mass and clearly and successfully articulate the architectural concept (CS2-D, CS3-B, DC2-B).
- b. The Board discussed the functionality of the gabled roofline and need for special attention to detail, particularly gutter type and downspouts. It was agreed that these details will be an important element of the architectural concept and should be done properly to avoid jumbling the facades. Strong, industrial elements were recommended. The Board conditioned the project to include details on the elevations demonstrating gutter and downspout locations (DC2-B, DC2-D).
- c. The two residential units fronting NW 87th St are designed with flexibility to convert to commercial uses in the future. The Board supported this approach, agreeing that large windows respond successfully to the commercial character of the street, but that the doors exude a residential character. To further respond to this commercial character, the Board recommended using a door type of a stronger commercial quality. A condition is included (DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D).
- d. A variety of materials and colors are proposed, including dark grey lap siding, horizontal cedar siding, and yellow Hardie panel. The Board agreed the jointing of these materials is an important element of a successful architectural concept and should be included on the elevations. A condition is included (DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D).
- e. The location of the trash and recycle staging area caused concern for the Board as it is located in front the unit entry nearest the south property line (unit A8). The Board expressed concern regarding odor and impacts to the unit's entry sequence. The Board

conditioned the project to resolve the trash and recycle staging area to mitigate impacts to unit A8 (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-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.

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-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

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.

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.

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-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

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-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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departures was based on the departures’ 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.

At the time of the Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

- 1. Residential Uses along a Street-Level Street-Facing Façade, NW 87th St (SMC 23.47A.008.D.):**
The Code requires the floor of a residential unit located along the street-level street-facing façade to be at least four-feet above or four-feet below sidewalk grade, or be set back at least ten-feet from the sidewalk. The applicant proposes a setback of 7-inch minimum and 1-foot, 6-inch average NW 87th St.

The Board supported the departure request along NW 87th St, finding the proposal responded well to the guidance provided at EDG and provided an appropriate response to the commercial character of the street while allowing flexibility to convert to commercial in the future (PL3-A, DC1-A).

- 2. Residential Uses along a Street-Level Street-Facing Façade, Mary Ave NW (SMC 23.47A.008.D.):**
The Code requires the floor of a residential unit located along the street-level street-facing façade to be at least four-feet above or four-feet below sidewalk grade, or be set back at least ten-feet from the sidewalk. The applicant proposes a minimum setback of 6-feet, 4-inches and 10-feet, 10-inches at the doorways along Mary Ave NW.

The Board supported the departure request along Mary Ave NW, finding the proposal responded well to the guidance provided at EDG and provided sufficient space and design elements to allow for a sense of entry, open space, landscape, privacy and safety (PL2-A, PL2-B, PL3-B).

3. **Sight Triangle (SMC 23.54.030.G.):** The Code requires a sight triangle on each side of a driveway that is greater than 22-feet wide. The applicant proposes encroachment into the sight triangle on both sides of the driveway, and installation of mirrors and an alert system to warn pedestrians of oncoming vehicles.

The Board supported the departure request finding that the encroachment into the sight triangle by the structure successfully reduced the visual impact of the parking entrance and improved the pedestrian experience along NW 87th St (CS2-B, DC1-C).

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the RECOMMENDATION meeting, the Board recommended approval of the project with conditions. The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Monday, April 4, 2016, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Monday, April 4, 2016 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the three Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with the following conditions:

1. Increase the width of the courtyard to maximize light and air and mitigate privacy impacts between units (CS1-B, CS2-D, CS3-A);
2. Include details on the elevations demonstrating gutter and downspout locations (DC2-B, DC2-D);
3. Detail reveals on the elevations (DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D);
4. Change the ground level entry doors along NW 87th St to a design that better reflects the commercial character of NW 87th St (DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D); and
5. Resolve the trash and recycle staging area to mitigate impacts to unit A8 (DC1-C).