



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3019917

Address: 417 NE 73rd Street

Applicant: Brian Kim, Caron Architecture

Date of Meeting: Monday, August 10, 2015

Board Members Present: Eric Blank (Alt Chair)
Laura Lenss
Blake Williams

Board Members Absent: Ivana Begley (Chair)
Julia Levitt

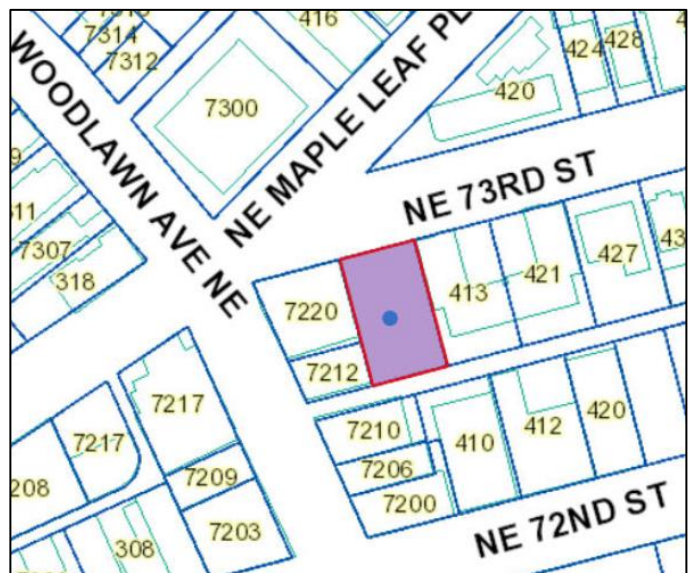
DPD Staff Present: Katy Haima

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC2P-65

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3
(South) NC2P-65/C1-40
(East) LR3
(West) MC2P-65

Lot Area: 6,000 square feet



Current Development:

The site is currently a paved surface parking lot.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The site is located in the Green Lake Residential Urban Village, at the east edge of the Green Lake commercial district. Surrounding structures are a mix of older 1-3 story commercial structures, low- and mid- rise residential structures, and more recently developed mixed-use projects. Many of the older commercial structures are smaller scaled, and feature extensive use of brick and traditional architectural detailing.

The site is one block to the east of Green Lake Park. Billings Middle School is located one block west on NE 73rd Street.

To the east of the site is a two-story apartment building built to the property line, with no windows on the west façade. To the west of the site is the Great Hall at Green Lake, a three-story colonial style structure, formerly the Green Lake Congregational Church. The structure features an arched stained-glass window on the west façade, which is built at the property line.

The site is relatively flat, with a slope of about three feet from the northeast down to the southwest corner of the site. There is one power pole on the northeast corner of the site.

Access:

Access is taken from a curb cut on NE 73rd Street, as well as from the alley abutting the south end of the site.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a six-story mixed use building with approximately 45 units, 1,500 square feet of ground-level commercial space. No parking is proposed.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3019917) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

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

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019

Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the public meeting:

- Noted that the site (parking lot) currently houses dumpsters and parking spaces for service vehicles used by adjacent businesses, and expressed concern over where these would be relocated.
- Concerned over the lack of parking, increased traffic in the alley, and safety concerns related the pedestrian use of the alley.
- Noted that all the windows on the Great Hall facing the proposal site are operable, and expressed concern over the setbacks in that that the proposed development would impact access to light and air.
- Felt that the proposal would not allow for adequate light in the Great Hall, especially the large stained glass window, as it faces east.
- Concerned that the proposal will create unsafe conditions for full sized delivery trucks for adjacent businesses and garbage trucks to use the alley.
- Noted that the Great Hall is likely to remain for some time (not be redeveloped), and the proposal is out of scale with the immediate context.
- Felt that the zoning is inappropriate for the location, considering the context and existing development.
- Felt that the location is not appropriate for SEDUs, and encouraged the applicant to provide more family-sized units.
- Felt that the proposal should not maximize the FAR to be more compatible with the surrounding character of the nearby single family neighborhoods.
- Felt that the proposal appears out of place, and is taller than any of the existing development.
- Felt that the programming is too dense for the site.
- Questioned the historic status of the Great Hall.
- Questioned the addressing of the Great Hall.
- Encouraged the applicant to use departures to make the proposal more inspiring and to respond more adequately to the Great Hall.
- Appreciated the gesture to provide light and air for the Great Hall.
- Felt that the commercial space is too small to be viable.

- Suggested relocating the non-commercial uses, such as the office and storage, to the second floor to allow for more retail space at the ground floor.

In addition, the following written comments were received regarding the following issues, and concerns, and comments:

- Supported the increase in density.
- Concerned over the lack of parking and increased traffic.
- Felt the architectural character should be consistent with the Great Hall.
- Concerned over the height of the proposal.
- Concerned that the commercial space is too small to be viable.
- Felt the scale is incompatible with the established context.
- Felt the landscaping is too limited.
- Concerned that the materials and lighting will not relate to a human scale.
- Preferred Option 1 due to the transition in massing to the LR3 zone.
- Felt the proposed modulation of the upper levels draws attention to the height.
- Encouraged moving bike storage and lobby to upper floors to allow greater commercial space at ground level.
- The design of the façade should fit with the established character of the area.
- Would like to see greater set back from the Great Hall and from the LR3 zone.
- The proposed modulation of the upper levels emphasizes the verticality of the proposal, which appears incompatible with the existing context.
- The materials should be of a high quality and respond to the established neighborhood character.
- Felt the lighting of the commercial first floor and entry will not contribute to creating a human scale at the street level.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

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- 1. Massing and Context Response:** The Board generally supported the massing concept presented in Option 2 (preferred alternative), and provided the following guidance for reducing the perceived height bulk and scale, and responding to site context and adjacencies. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS2-II, DC2-A)
 - a. The proposal should prioritize minimizing impacts to the Great Hall, and strive to maximize the west setback. The Board encouraged a continuous setback on the west side that would allow for greater light and air access to the windows on the east façade of the Great Hall. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS2-II, DC2-A)

- b. The massing should provide a sensitive transition to the adjacent LR3 zone. The Board preferred the set back in the massing concept of the east façade in Option 2, and encouraged the applicant to further develop a massing scheme that balances the transition to the LR3 zone with the response to the Great Hall. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS2-II, DC2-A)
- c. Provide a window study and the floor layout of the Great Hall to demonstrate how the design responds to the light and use of the facility. (CS2-B, CS2-D)
- d. The Board suggested that the applicant explore using exterior stairs and circulation for the upper massing in a layout similar to Option 2 to increase the amount of light and air access to the Great Hall. (SC2-B, CS2-D, CS2-II, DC4-I)
- e. The architectural concept should have a clearly defined base, middle and top to reduce the perceived height, bulk and scale. The Board suggested using setbacks and plane shifts, as well as change in materials, to further break down the verticality of the structure. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C)
- f. The Board supported the substantial modulation that breaks the street-facing façade into two distinct masses. (CS2-II, DC2-A, DC2-B)
- g. The Board felt that the context study should incorporate a wider area to adequately analyze the massing response. (CS2-A, CS2-B, CS3-A, CS3-B, CS3-I)

2. Vehicular Access and Alley

- a. The Board supported the location of trash access from the alley, and encouraged working with the neighborhoods to address concerns over alley circulation and safety. (DC1-C)
- b. The Board supported the vehicular access to parking off the alley. The site is in a pedestrian overlay and access from the street would disrupt the pedestrian experience. However, the Board echoed the concerns of the public in regards to safety in the alley, and requested the applicant to consider safety measures that respond to how the alley is used. The Board suggested mirrors and lighting. (CS2-B, PL4-A, DC1-B)

3. Street-Level Uses and Streetscape Compatibility

- a. Shift the retail space toward Woodlawn to provide more continuity with the commercial uses to the west. Similarly, shift the residential entry and lobby to the east to provide a transition to the adjacent residential uses. (PL3-A,
- b. The retail space should activate and engage the streetscape. The Board was concerned that the retail space was not large enough or deep enough in Option 2 to be viable, and encouraged a ground-floor layout that maximizes the size of retail space, or to relocate residential uses, such as the office or storage areas to other levels of the building. The Board noted that they would be open to considering departures, such as a steeper parking ramp, to increase the retail area. (PL3-C)
- c. The Board suggested the applicant explore live-work units, as it may be conducive to creating a more consistent and compatible streetscape character and pedestrian experience with the residential uses to the east. (CS3-A, PL3-A)

- 4. Architectural Concept and Composition:** The architectural concept should respond to the scale and character of the Great Hall. The Board suggested relating datum lines, plane shifts, materials, and architectural detailing. (CS3-A, CS3-B, CS3-I, DC4-A, DC4-I)

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

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-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

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

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

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

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

Greenlake Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-II Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

CS2-II-i. Zone Edges: In such cases where a property with more-intensive zoning is adjacent to a property that contains such split zoning, the following design techniques are encouraged to improve the transition to the split-zoned lot:

- a. Building setbacks similar to those specified in the Land Use Code for zone edges where a proposed development project within a more intensive zone abuts a lower intensive zone.
- b. Techniques specified in the Seattle Design Guidelines regarding height, bulk, and scale; and relationship to adjacent sites.
- c. Along a zone edge without an alley, consider additional methods that help reduce the potential 'looming' effect of a much larger structure in proximity to smaller, existing buildings.
- d. One possibility is allowing the proposed structure's ground floor to be built to the property line and significantly stepping back the upper levels from the adjacent building (see sketch in the left column). The building wall at the property line should be designed in a manner sympathetic to the existing structure(s), particularly regarding privacy and aesthetic issues.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

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

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

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References: Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

Greenlake Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-I Architectural Context

CS3-I-ii. Residential Urban Village: Build on the core’s classical architectural styles (e.g., community center, library, Marshall School, VFW building). Also, many of the existing buildings are simple “boxes,” with human scale details and features (i.e., building at the NE corner of E. Green Lake Dr. and NE 72nd Street). Brick and detailed stucco are appropriate materials.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-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-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships

PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

PL4-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

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

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

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

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

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

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

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

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

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

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

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.

Greenlake Supplemental Guidance:

DC4-I Exterior Finish Materials

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

DC4-I-ii. Relate to Campus/Art Deco Architecture: Sculptural cast stone and decorative tile are particularly appropriate because they relate to campus architecture and Art Deco buildings. Wood and cast stone are appropriate for moldings and trim.

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

DC4-I-iv. Anodized Metal: Where anodized metal is used for window and door trim, then care should be given to the proportion and breakup of glazing to reinforce the building concept and proportions.

DC4-I-v. Fencing: Fencing adjacent to the sidewalk should be sited and designed in an attractive and pedestrian oriented manner.

DC4-I-vi. Awnings: Awnings made of translucent material may be backlit, but should not overpower neighboring light schemes. Lights, which direct light downward, mounted from the awning frame are acceptable. Lights that shine from the exterior down on the awning are acceptable.

DC4-I-vii. Light Standards: Light standards should be compatible with other site design and building elements.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure’s potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board’s recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance the following departures were requested:

1. **Setback requirements for lots abutting residential zones (SMC 23.47A.014.B.1):** The Code requires a setback where a commercial 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. The third side connects these two sides with a diagonal line across the commercially-zoned lot.

The applicant proposes to exchange the same area of the triangular-shaped setback for a rectangular-shaped setback.

The Board indicated they would be open to the departure, provided the resulting design demonstrates a more appropriate transition to the adjacent LR3 zone and relates to the overall architectural concept. The Board noted that the space created by the required setback is awkward, and the location may not receive adequate light to support a landscaping buffer. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS2-II, DC2-A, DC2-B)

2. Setback requirements for structures containing residential uses (SMC 23.47A.014B.3):

The Code requires structures in commercial zones that contain residential uses that abut a residentially zoned lot along any side or rear lot line to setback 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 the such portion exceeds 40 feet.

For Option 2, the applicant proposed to reduce the setback for portions over 40 feet in height. For Option 3, the applicant proposes to reduce setback above 15' for portions of the structure above 13 feet in height, as well as the additional setback of 2 feet for every 10 feet above 40 feet.

The Board indicated that they would be open to the departure, noting that the departure allows portions of the massing to shift towards the LR3 zone and increase the setbacks at the west. This corresponds with the Board's guidance that the setbacks on the west property line should be prioritized to reduce impacts to the Great Hall, especially in regards to allowing for adequate air and light to the existing windows. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS2-II, DC2-A)

BOARD DIRECTION

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