



City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020114

Address: 6726 Greenwood Avenue N

Applicant: Jay Janette, Skidmore Janette, for Johnson & Carr

Date of Meeting: Monday, September 26, 2016

Board Members Present: Dale Kutzera, Chair
Chris Bell
Emily McNichols
Keith Walzak

Board Members Absent: Marc Angelillo
Keith Walzak

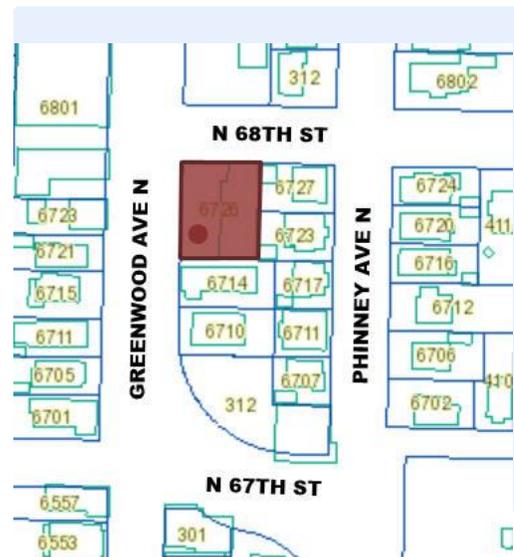
SDCI Staff Present: Michael Dorcy

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC2-40

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2-40
(South) NC2-40
(East) NC2-40/ SF5000
(West) NC2-40

Lot Area: 8,036 SF



Current Development:

Single-story commercial building (to be demolished)

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Single-family development to the east, northeast and southeast. Four story mixed-use (commercial/residential) structure is under construction directly to the north across N. 68th Street. Across Greenwood Avenue N., to the west and northwest, is a large, four-story mixed use building. The project is compatible with neighborhood development trends.

Access:

No automobile parking for residential or commercial uses are proposed on site. Pedestrian access is proposed from both Greenwood Avenue N. and N. 68th Street.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no ECA's on site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a four-story mixed-use building, with three stories of residential units (totaling 55) above a ground floor of 2,900 square feet of retail space and two live/work units. The existing one-story commercial building on site will be demolished.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

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

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

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

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PRESENTATION

The meeting began at 8:00 PM with an introduction of Board members and the planner. After remarks by the Chair and staff, a presentation of the current design was made by the project architect, lasting approximately 20 minutes. The general description of the scope of the proposal remained largely unchanged: a four-story building with 55 residential units, 2 live/work units, and 2,900 square feet of ground floor retail uses. No vehicle parking is proposed for the project, but a Code-required 23 bicycle spaces will be provided. Included in the Landscape plan are two new street trees to be planted along 68th Street. A planting plan had been provided within the current meeting packet (see pp.16-18). The proposed materials and colors, described as “restrained and sophisticated,” were shown in the packet (see p. 19), as well on a separate materials board prepared for the meeting.

Specifically, the following gestures had been made by the design team in response to the Board’s guidance provided at the earlier Recommendation Meeting on August 1, 2016:

- The portions of the building along the east property line had been pulled back to maintain a 5-foot buffer between the proposed structure and the adjacent properties to the east;
- The CMU wall adjacent the south property line will be painted a lighter color than previously shown in order to match the fiber-cement panel on the wall above, maximizing the potential for reflected light to illumine the area between the existing and proposed structure;
- A planting plan had been provided within the current meeting packet;
- The gray color of the cement panels had been modified and lighter values chosen to provide greater contrast between the panels and the brick sections of cladding;
- The canopies had been reconfigured to provide the “up-down-up” sequencing along the Greenwood Avenue N. façade preferred by the Board;
- The horizontal mullions of the storefront window system had been removed, reducing visual barriers between the outside pedestrian realm and the interior commercial space;
- The proportions and composition of the windows on the south-facing brick mass had been modified to reflect that of other windows and the framing composition found elsewhere;
- Adjustments had been made to the design and size of windows on the east façade;
- The design of the solid waste storage area and its access have been modified and the design coordinated with the Seattle Public Utility Department so that the solid waste contractors will retrieve and return containers without need for staging them in the public right-of-way;
- The clerestory fenestration has been enlarged to relate better to the size and proportion of windows elsewhere on the building, reducing the perceived mass of the clerestories and allowing more light into the related units;
- With SDOT coordination, retail-related bike parking will be provided within the right-of-way adjacent to the building;
- Artwork, consisting of a custom-designed metal panel, will be installed next to the residential entry.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Among the public comments generally related to the design of the building proposed were the following:

- The 5-foot setback along the east property line is appreciated, but more should be done to mitigate against shadow and privacy impacts;
- Concern regarding possible glare from lighting fixtures along east side of the proposed building;
- The south façade of the proposed structure is unseemly;
- The lighter color and visible frame design help to mitigate the blank-wall impact on the south façade;
- Concerned regarding view blockage of the Cascades from condos across the street;
- Make sure all types of solid waste do not block the sidewalk on Greenwood Avenue N;
- The campus dormitory-looking residential entry, with hundreds of people coming and going, should not be located on N. 68th Street, a residential street;
- Loading will be unsafe and will block the sidewalk;
- The lack of air conditioning is a mistake;
- Still concerned about contaminants leeching from the construction site;
- Appreciates the full wrap of brick at the northeast corner;
- The dark brick color is inappropriate and out of keeping with the Greenwood character which has an affinity for red brick;

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

Departure Requests

The applicant is requesting no departures from development standards

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.

Hot Button Issues:

The Board members present indicated that there were no real “hot-button” issues regarding the design or presentation. There was a discussion regarding the question of the color of the brick that had been chosen, and whether it was too dark. But this was briefly dismissed after the Board determined that this was not an issue for them. The Board agreed that color adjustments to the cement board siding which they had requested at the last meeting had provided a satisfying contrast with the brick as proposed. Further, the Board was particularly grateful for the detailing of the brick at street level which had been portrayed in the packets and presentation materials.

In addition, the Board expressed satisfaction and agreed that changes to the window composition within the clerestories and on the east façade had addressed their concerns expressed at the earlier Recommendation Meeting.

The Board liked the direction the design team had embarked on for the art treatment of the residential entry and urged them to pursue it further.

The Board expressed satisfaction with the 5-foot setback along the east property line and the modifications to the fenestration on the east façade. They were also satisfied with the proposed landscape plan, pointing out that establishing the plantings would require an irrigation plan, especially at the second level amenity area where it is critical to establish the landscape to ensure privacy to the units and to their neighbors.

In reference to the public comments, the Board were agreed that the residential entry off 68th Street was the appropriate location, and re-enforced by the location of the entry to a similar residential/ mixed use building directly across the street.

The Board was satisfied with the lighting plan and fixture selection they had been shown.

The Board liked the additional bicycle parking to serve the retail uses, located within the right-of-way, acknowledging that the final determination of location and quantity was under SDOT's jurisdiction.

BOARD DECISION AND DIRECTION

The Board voted 4-0 to approve the project moving forward, with the following *conditions* of their approval:

1. Provide a landscape irrigation plan to ensure that the chosen plantings would survive and thrive, especially at the second level amenity area along the east side of the building.
2. Provide for a solid waste removal arrangement that ensures that service is internal to the building, with no staging in the right-of-way.
3. Provide artwork, similar or exceeding the quality of what was shown at the meeting, executed by a *bonafide* artist to be installed at the residential entry to the building.
4. Provide shielded, down-lighting fixtures at the exterior of the building, except for those under the canopies which can provide both down- and up-lighting, creating a glow but not any glare.

In addition, the Board agreed upon two *recommendations* for the design team's consideration and exploration: 1.) allow the "ganged" doors on the lower units on the east side to be separated, if practicable, in order to provide more privacy to the units, and 2) expand, if possible, interior access and storage space for bicycle parking.