



City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020236

Address: 4700 Brooklyn Ave NE

Applicant: Andrew Kluess, Caron Architecture

Date of Meeting: Monday, March 14, 2016

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

Board Members Absent: Ivana Begley
Julia Levitt

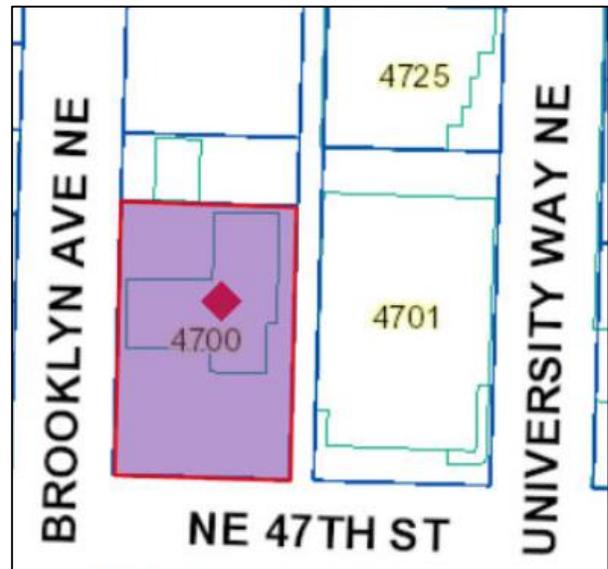
DPD Staff Present: Katy Haima

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC3-65

Nearby Zones: (North) NC3-65
(South) NC3P-65
(East) NC3-65
(West) NC3-65

Lot Area: 16,480 square feet



Current Development:

The site is currently developed with a gas station and surface parking.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Immediately to the north of the site is a Safeway grocery store, one-story commercial building with surface parking. To the east across the alley is a one story commercial building with a one level of partially below grade parking. To the south across NE 47th Street is a religious institution and associated services, housed in a two-story structure and adjoining church. Across Brooklyn Ave NE to the west is a seven story mixed-use structure, currently under development.

The University of Washington campus is located a few blocks to the southeast. The future light rail station (to open in approximately 2020) is located a few blocks to the south. University Way ("The Ave") borders the west side of this site.

The site is located in the University Urban Center, which contains a variety of commercial and residential uses at varying scales. Some parcels are underdeveloped when compared to the zoned heights and intensity of uses. Most of the commercial uses and services are located on the main arterial streets.

The nearby neighborhood is fully developed with sidewalks, but often lacks planting strips and street trees. Transit service is frequent and includes a variety of routes. The future light rail station will further increase the frequency and choice of modes of transit. The nearby streets are heavily used by pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and other vehicles

Access:

Vehicular access is via tow curb cuts on Brooklyn Ave NE, one curb cut on NE 47th Street, and a north-south alley abutting to the east.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a six story structure containing 89 units and 6,200 square feet of commercial space at ground level. Parking for 88 vehicles is to be provided below grade.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE August 10, 2015

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3020236) 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:

- Concerned about the potential general impacts to the University House, located a block west on NE 12th Ave.

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 August 10, 2015

1. **Massing Concept and Courtyard:** The Board preferred the massing with a west-facing second-level courtyard and solid edge at street-level as presented in Option 2. (CS1-B, CS2-A, CS2-D, DC2-A)
 - a. The Board discussed at length the response of the upper massing to the emerging urban context along Brooklyn Ave. The Board noted that locating the courtyard along the alley (Option 3) provided a strong street wall but that the solar access to the courtyard was lacking. The Board felt that the courtyard in Option 2 breaks up the upper massing along Brooklyn Ave, and that a hard street edge at ground level would be adequate to respond to the urban context. (CS1-B, CS2-A, CS2-B, CS3-A, DC2-A)
 - b. The location of the courtyard in Option 2 provides more access to light. The Board noted that a west facing courtyard abutting Brooklyn Ave has a greater potential to support user activity than a courtyard on the alley due to the light access and proximity to the street. (CS1-B, DC3-A)

- c. The size of the courtyard should be large enough to provide usable amenity space. (DC2-A, DC3-A)
- d. The Board discussed the common typology of residential courtyard entries within the University District, and noted that the upper level courtyard provides an opportunity to reinterpret this building typology. The Board encouraged the applicant to consider the opportunity for setting a precedent by creating a typology based on the architectural context. (CS3-A, DC-3)
- e. The Board felt the overall proposed height, bulk and scale of the massing is an appropriate response to the context and neighborhood character. (CS2-D)

2. Alley Safety and Security.

- a. Provide elevations, perspectives, and diagrams that demonstrate the response to security concerns in the alley. The Board suggested lighting and avoiding any recesses in the building façade at the ground level. (PL2-B)
- b. The ground floor uses along the alley, specifically the pool area, are not likely to have a high level of transparency. The Board suggested high windows along the pool area to create the perception of eyes on the alley. (PL2-B)

3. Street-level Uses and the Pedestrian Realm.

- a. The Board discussed the relationship of residential entry to traffic from light rail station, and supported the proposed location at the north end of the west façade as it allows for continuous commercial spaces to wrap the corner and provide an anchor. (PL1-B, PL3-C)
- b. The Board noted the narrow sidewalks along this portion of Brooklyn and the potential for increased pedestrian traffic, and encouraged pulling the ground floor back 3-4 feet to provide additional room for traffic and ancillary uses at the sidewalk. The Board noted that this provides the opportunity to connect to the streetscape and establish a precedent along Brooklyn Ave, as well as provide overhead weather protection. Consider areas for outdoor seating or temporary bike parking. (CS2-B, PL3-B, PL3-C, PL3-II)
- c. The Board noted they would be open to a departure for commercial space depth (if needed) to pull the ground floor façade back to create more space at the sidewalk for ancillary activities and pedestrian circulation. (PL2-C, PL3-C, DC3-A)
- d. The Board supported the proposed tree wells, as opposed to a landscape buffer, as it responds to the emerging urban context along Brooklyn Ave. (DC4-D)
- e. The Board supported the continuous commercial space that wraps the corner. The Board felt that locating commercial uses on NE 47th Street would help provide continuity from the commercial uses on University Way NE.

4. Architectural Concept.

- a. The overall architectural concept, including the materials and color, should create a dialogue with the project (currently under development) across Brooklyn Ave. The Board encouraged a playful relationship between the design concepts. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C, DC4-I)

- b. The Board felt that the break in massing at the courtyard could be an opportunity to make a unique statement with the massing and/or overhead weather protection, but expressed concern that a dramatic interruption may indicate wayfinding where it does not exist. (DC2-A, PL3-B, PL2-C)
- c. The design of the street-level should relate to the programmatic uses. (PL3-C)
- d. The two upper level masses need not be matching in size or architectural concept. (DC2-A, DC2-B)
- e. The Board discussed the corner treatment, and felt that while the corner should be emphasized, the massing and design language need not be a dramatic response to the corner location. (CS2-D, CS2-II, DC2-A, DC2-B)
- f. The alley façade should be well-composed, but is of a lesser priority than the south, west, and north facades. (CS2-D, DC2-B, DC2-C)

RECOMMENDATION March 14, 2016

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PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Supported the clean and simple aesthetic of the design.
- Noted security concerns in the neighborhood, and suggested keeping a subdued entry.
- Concerned about the degraded condition of the alley, noting that previous construction has made the alley difficult to navigate.
- Noted that the noise generated on University Way can be audible from Brooklyn Ave, especially where large flat facades bounce noise upward late at night.
- Supported the concept of the clean lines, and neutral color palette.
- Supported courtyard as a break in the massing and for providing relief as viewed from street.
- Noted that canopies should be considered to protect pedestrians from balconies above.

- Noted that the design of the sidewalks and tree wells/landscaping should be designed to not impede pedestrian travel.
- Supported the neutral color palette, noting that there are many abrupt and colorful facades in the neighborhood.
- Supported a mix of unit sizes.
- Supported a mix of short- and long-term bicycle parking, and direct access bike parking room next to lobby.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The Design Review Board members provided the following design guidance.

RECOMMENDATION March 14, 2016

1. Residential Entry and Streetscape Design.

- a. The Board discussed the design of the residential entry, noting the lack of a canopy and design elements that would typically contribute to a more prominent and inviting entry. After considering public comment regarding security concerns and site context, the Board supported the design of the entry. The Board noted that the change in material at the entry and lack of canopy provided an appropriate yet subdued interruption to enhance wayfinding. (PL2-B, PL3-A, PL3-I)
 - b. The Board supported the retail transparency wrapping the corner into the alley, as it enhances security by providing views into the alley. The Board noted that bollards or other measures should be considered to minimize potential damage from vehicular traffic on the alley. (PL2-B, PL3-C)
 - c. The Board supported the setback at the ground level, as it provides overhead weather protection, space for ancillary activities, and a more gracious pedestrian realm. (CS2-B, CS3-A, PL1-B, PL2-C, PL3-C)
- 2. Courtyard Design.** The Board discussed the use of wood on the guardrail, noting that the application appeared inconsistent with the established design language of the vertical wood elements, and conditioned that the wood composite accent from the guardrail be replaced with glass to be consistent with the building design. (DC2-B, DC2-C, DC4-I)
- 3. Overhead Weather Protection.** The Board supported the materiality and detailing of the canopies. The Board discussed the depth of the canopies, noting that while the depth appears to be adequate for coverage from rain events and from matter released from the decklets above, water from rain events would create a dripline down the center of the sidewalk. The Board recommended a condition that the canopies drain towards the building to minimize the impact on the pedestrian realm. (DC2-C, DC4-I)

- 4. Materiality, Detailing, and Architectural Composition.** The Board supported the simple joints and proportions and the austerity of the architectural expression. The Board felt the neutral color palette of the white Hardie Reveal 2.0 with wood composite accents reinforced the clean lines of the massing, and encouraged retaining and refining the details and composition to strengthen the architectural expression.
- a. The Board supported Option 1 on p.20, which features vertical wood accents to delineate residential uses. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-I)
 - b. The Board expressed concern over the white cementitious panels getting dirty, noting that this would detract from the clean lines and achieving the desired architectural concept, and encouraged maintenance as necessary to retain the cleanliness of the materials. (DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-I)
 - c. The Board noted that use of concealed fasteners for the cementitious panels supported the austere expression. The Board recommended a condition that the reveals be painted white to reinforce the design concept. (DC2-A, DC2-B, 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

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-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-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.

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.

University Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-III Corner Lots

CS2-III-i. Special Site Features: For new buildings located on a corner, including, but not limited to the corner locations identified in Map 3 of the full Guidelines, consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building such as a tower, corner articulation or bay windows. Consider a special site feature such as diagonal orientation and entry, a sculpture, a courtyard, or other device. Corner entries should be set back to allow pedestrian flow and good visibility at the intersection.

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.

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.

PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes: Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: 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.

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.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

PL2-C Weather Protection

PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage: Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

PL2-C-2. Design Integration: Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces: Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

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-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-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.

University Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-I Entrances Visible from the Street

PL3-I-i. Entrance Orientation: On Mixed Use Corridors, primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street. Secondary and service entries should be located off the alley, side street or parking lots.

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.

PL3-I-iii. Courtyard Entries: When a courtyard is proposed for a residential project, the courtyard should have at least one entry from the street. Units facing the courtyard should have a porch, stoop, deck or seating area associated with the dwelling unit.

PL3-I-iv. Fences: In residential projects, front yard fences over 4 feet in height that reduce visual access and security should be avoided.

PL3-II Human Activity

PL3-II-i. Recessed Entries: On Mixed Use Corridors, where narrow sidewalks exist (less than 15' wide), consider recessing entries to provide small open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, or other pedestrian activities. Recessed entries should promote pedestrian movement and avoid blind corners.

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-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.

University Supplemental Guidance:

DC2-I Architectural Elements and Materials

DC2-I-i. Modulate Façade Widths: On Mixed Use Corridors, consider breaking up the façade into modules of not more than 50 feet (measured horizontally parallel to the street) on University Way and 100 feet on other corridors, corresponding to traditional platting and building construction. (Note: This should not be interpreted as a prescriptive requirement. Larger parcels may characterize some areas of the University Community, such as lower Roosevelt.)

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

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

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.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

University 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 Recommendation meeting, no departures were requested.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the RECOMMENDATION meeting, the Board recommended approval of the project with conditions:

1. Replace the wood composite panel from the guardrail at the balcony glass to be consistent with the building design.
2. Revise the design of the overhead weather protection to drain towards the building.
3. The reveals within the cementitious panel system shall be painted white.