



FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020289

Address: 13524 Linden Ave N

Applicant: Man-foon Chu, Innova Architects

Date of Meeting: Monday, August 31, 2015

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil (Chair)
Dale Kutzera
Christopher Bell
Keith Walzak

Board Members Absent: Marc Angelillo

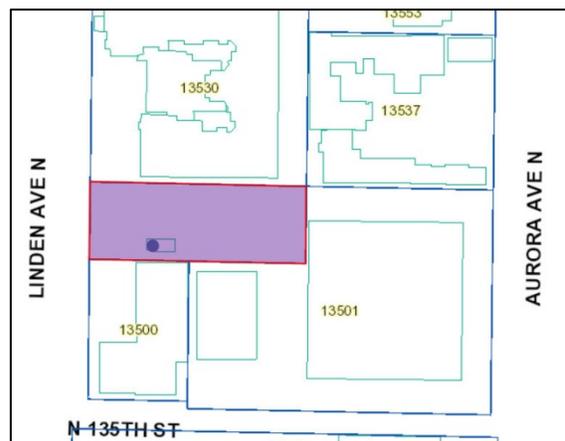
DPD Staff Present: BreAnne McConkie, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial 1 with a 65' height limit (C1-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-65
(South) C1-65
(East) C1-65
(West) Low Rise 3 (LR3)

Lot Area: 30,000 square feet (sq. ft.)



Current Development: The site is currently vacant.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character: The project site is located in the Bitter-Lake Urban Village and fronts Linden Ave N. The immediate neighborhood context consists of larger, multifamily residential complexes and some low-rise warehouse commercial uses. Aurora Ave N is located less than a block to the east of the site. West of site, the uses within the neighborhood transition into primarily residential, with Lowrise 3 zoning across Linden Ave N, and Single Family 7,200 moving west. Much of the immediate development is contemporary and was built between 1960 and the mid-90s.

Access: Vehicle and pedestrian access to the site is from Linden Ave N.

Environmentally Critical Areas: The site contains a mapped Environmentally Critical Area – Steep Slope. The applicant applied for and received a steep slope exemption under permit #6486124 as follows:

“Based on a review of the submitted information and the City GIS system, DPD concludes that the project appears to quality for the criteria established in the Critical Areas Regulations, SMC 25.09.180.B2b. Specifically, the City GIS system and the submitted information for the steep slope developmental allowance application demonstrated that steep slopes at and adjacent to the site appeared to have been created by previous legal grading activities associated with site development and street improvement. For this reason, DPD will waive the required ECA Steep Slope Variance associated with DPD Application No. 6486124. This approval is conditioned upon the approval of a subsequent building permit application for a design that demonstrates that the proposed development will be completely stabilized in accordance with provisions of the ECA Code and Grading Code. All other ECA Submittal, General, and Landslide-Hazard, and development standards still apply for this development.”

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Applicant is proposing to build a 6-story structure containing 100 assisted living units. Parking for 44 vehicles is to be provided at and below grade.

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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 Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Stated that if an alley was adjacent to the site, access and services should be located on the alley. Noted that without an alley, the project had limited options for access and services.
- Stated that lobbies and pick-up/drop-off for these types of uses are very active and expressed general support for the short term parking in the front setback.
- Expressed support for the applicant's preferred option because it maximizes light by orienting amenity spaces and additional setbacks along the south of the building.

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, Siting (Exceptional Tree), & Light and Air:

- a. At the first EDG meeting, the Board expressed general support for Option Two because the north and south upper-level setbacks provided more light and air and better addressed potential privacy conflicts with adjacent uses. For the next meeting, the applicant should modify the massing to maximize light and air to the greatest number of units, including to the adjacent properties. **(CS1-B-1, CS1-B-2, DC2-A-1)**
- b. The Board discussed the siting of the massing and access and the removal of the Exceptional Tree (30" Pacific Madrone) on-site. At EDG, the Board was open to the possibility of removing the tree but stated that the onus was on the applicant to provide a compelling reason for removal of the tree that would result in a better building design and would better meet the Design Guidelines. **(DC2-A-1)**
- c. The Board expressed concern with the flat facades and lack of modulation on the north and east facades. The Board directed the applicant to incorporate additional modulation and interest along all facades. **(DC2-A-1, CS1-B-2)**
- d. The design should incorporate ways to minimize potential privacy conflicts with existing and future uses to the north and south. **(DC2-A-1)**
- e. The Board noted that a strong indoor/outdoor amenity space relationship would be critical for the amenity spaces to be successful and directed the applicant to further develop the design so that the greatest number of users could benefit from outdoor

amenity spaces. The massing and configuration should prioritize ways to connect to the outdoors, including views from individual units and views and access from amenity spaces. **(PL1-A-2, PL1-C-1, DC3-A-1, DC3-B-1,2,&4, DC3-C-2)**

- f. For the next meeting, the applicant should provide a larger, dimensioned site plan that includes setbacks and neighboring building and larger, dimensioned floor plans for all levels that clearly identifies internal uses. Additionally, the applicant should provide north/south and east/west cross-sections that include portions of the right of way and neighboring buildings and provide larger plans and all floor plans.

The applicant should also provide additional information on the circulation, programing, and function of the proposed use.

2. **Street/Building Relationship & Parking:** The Board was concerned with the surface parking separation between the proposed use and the outdoor amenity space located in the front setback and did not feel strongly that a setback was justified based on the existing context. However, the Board did note that a drop-off and short term parking for this type of use (assisted living facility) was logical.
 - a. The Board noted that the primary entry to the site should be easily identifiable and significant. The primary entry should be integrated into the larger architectural concept and secondary architectural features and materials should be used to further emphasize the entry. **(PL3-A-1, PL3-A-2, PL3-A-4)**
 - b. Accessibility and the pedestrian experience should be a priority. If parking is to be located between the entry and the front setback amenity space, a direct pedestrian-oriented path between the sidewalk, front setback amenity space and building/primary entry, should be included. **(PL4-A-1, PL4-A-2, DC1-B-1, PL2-A-1, PL2-A-2)**
 - c. For the next meeting, the applicant should demonstrate alternative options for resident pick-up/drop-off and short term parking that would not require surface parking in the front setback.

The Board noted that the design needs to create a strong relationship between the building, the outdoor amenity space, and street, while minimizing the negative impacts of the vehicle drop off, emergency vehicle access, and surface parking (if included). This design may include drop-off adjacent to the driveway/entry with vehicle turnaround and short-term parking internal to the site, a porte cochère drop-off with uses such as outdoor amenity space above, a woonerf treatment of the surface parking lot, pedestrian oriented details such as high quality surface treatment, a raised “cross-walk”, roundabout, and/or landscaped bulb-outs. **(CS2-B-2, CS2-B-3, PL1-C-1, PL4-A-1, DC1-B-1)**

- d. For the next meeting the applicant should include a cross-sections showing the right-of-way, front-yard setback/amenity space, surface parking (if included), entry, and building. Additionally, the applicant should include a conceptual landscape plan.

3. Service Uses & Emergency Vehicles:

- a. The Board was concerned with the logistics and impacts of solid waste servicing and pick-up and directed the applicant to further develop and provide additional details

on how solid waste pick-up would function. The applicant must demonstrate how the negative visual and physical impacts of the service uses and service pick up on the street frontage, entry, and amenity spaces, would be minimized to the greatest extent possible. **(DC1-C-4)**

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-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

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-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the 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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

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.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

PL2-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

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.

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-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.

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.

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-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

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.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

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 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. The Board’s recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the **FIRST** Early Design Guidance the following departure was requested:

1. **23.47A.032.B.3 (Location of parking):** The Code states that off-street parking in commercial zones shall not be located between a structure and a street lot line if the structure contains a residential uses in a Commercial zone and/or the structures in the Commercial zone are across the street from residential zones. The applicant proposes to locate surface parking between the structure and the street lot line.

The Board was concerned with the surface parking separation between the proposed use and the street and outdoor amenity space and did not fully agree that a setback was justified based on the Design Guidelines for street activation and response to a positive design context. However, the Board did note that a drop-off and short term parking or loading/unloading may be necessary for this type of use (assisted living facility), and directed the applicant to design this area as described in the Guidance item 2.c. in this report.

BOARD DIRECTION

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.