



## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3020424

Address: 6528 Phinney Avenue North

Applicant: Ryan Champagne

Date of Report: Thursday, October 01, 2015

DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise-3 Retail Commercial (LR2 RC)

Nearby Zones: (North) Single Family (SF) 5000  
(South) LR2 RC  
(East) SF 5000  
(West) LR2 RC

Lot Area: 3,452 square feet



### Current Development:

The subject site currently contains a commercial structure containing a construction company. Surface parking is provided at the rear (east) of the site, accessed via the alley.

### Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Development along this block of Phinney Avenue North consists primarily of multi-family structures. The Phinney Neighborhood Center abuts to the north.

**Access:**

Pedestrian access is proposed via Phinney Avenue North. No on-site parking is proposed.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:**

None.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Land Use application for Streamline Design Review to allow an 4-story structure containing 8 small efficient dwelling unit and 2 apartment units (10 units total), and approximately 670 square feet commercial. No parking proposed. Existing structure to be demolished.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following design comments were received:

- Encourages design of the entries to result in those that are obvious and identifiable.
- Commented that the west elevation appears more like a side façade, not a street-facing façade.
- Concerned about the feasibility of the amenities adjacent to the sidewalk. Concerned there is not enough room for the landscaping proposed.
- Concerned the material and color palette, largely grey, will not add interest or appeal to the streetscape.
- Encouraged one (or more) on-site parking space per residential unit.
- Encouraged a ground level outdoor area for residents to gather.
- Supported the overall design of the building finding it fits in nicely with the community.
- Concerned about potential shadow impacts to the children's playground to the north.
- Concerned that increased traffic at nearby intersections will negatively impact pedestrians including children.
- Concerned about increased traffic in the alley.
- Encouraged an increase in unit size.
- The design lacks architectural character indicative of the neighborhood and an urban village corridor.
- Building lacks windows of a similar, vertical proportion that add interest at human scale at street level.
- Concerned about impacts from blank walls.
- The location of main entry, accessed via a shared walkway along the north property line creates concerns about safety and security.
- Recommended adding landscaping along the north portion of the site and right-of-way.

- Recommended the integration of bicycle racks and fixtures into the architectural concept.

## 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 Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

### DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

1. **Site Planning.**
  - a. The open space concept for the front setback includes a horizontal steel screen and a walkway to the main residential entryway. Ensure the design of these elements results in a strong connection to the street and public realm, and provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation (CS2-B, PL1-B, PL1-I, PL2-B, DC2-B, DC2-C).
  - b. The first floor is approximately 2.5-feet below the grade of the sidewalk, disconnecting the public realm and neighborhood. Modify this condition such that the two street facing units have direct access to the street. This could be done by adjusting floor heights, or by adding stairways from the unit doors to the street. (CS2-C, CS3-A, PL3-A)
  - c. Add lighting along the pedestrian walkways to provide convenient and attractive access to the building entry. Provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution. (PL1-B, PL2-B, PL2-II, DC4-C)
  - d. Shared pedestrian walkways are proposed along the north and south property lines. The walkway along the north property line passes by windows into living space. Demonstrate how privacy impacts to these units and abutting development will be mitigated (CS2-D, CS3-A, PL1-B, PL2-A, PL2-B, PL3-B).
  - e. Commercial space occupies the basement floor level, and is accessed via the shared walkway along the south property line. Maintain this pedestrian connection to the commercial space, then on to the alley to the east. (PL1-B, PL2-A, PL2-B, PL3-B).
2. **Architectural concept.** The design proposes materials such as wood and steel, in colors such as white, deep browns, and cedar. Bays and window patterns are arranged to create symmetry within each building façade.
  - a. The west elevation is clad in wood and includes glazing, balconies, and base. The elevation lacks a human scale, and appears as a side elevation, rather than a front façade. There is an opportunity with this façade to create a strong base, middle, and top composition, thereby reducing perceived height, bulk, and scale. Add cladding, horizontal elements, or other design solution to reduced perceived

height, bulk, and scale, respond to the existing context, and further refine the architectural concept (CS2-D, CS3-A, CS2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D).

- b. Integrate overhead weather protection into the design of the west façade (over the two entrances on the west elevation) to create distinctive and identifiable entrances and encourage human interaction and activity at the street level (see 1.b. above) (PL3-A).
- c. The pitches roof with eave and rake overhangs are proposed to respond to the residential character of older houses on Phinney and the adjacent community center. Include detailed brackets or fascia to further respond to the neighborhood context (CS2-D, CS3-A, CS2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D).
- d. The primary entry is located on the north façade, identifiable by a canopy with green roof, and accessible via a shared walkway along the north property line. Primary entries should be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and visually connected to the street. Include additional color, materials, elements, or other design solutions to the north elevation to further demarcate the shared residential entry. Also include cues, such as change in pavement, along the pedestrian walkway to identify this path to the entry. (PL3-A)
- e. Provide visible signage identifying building address along the right-of-way, designed to be a functional complement to the architectural concept (PL2-II).
- f. The north and south elevations demonstrate a four-story height and large perceived mass. Use horizontal elements, changes in color and/or material, or other architectural solution to more compatible composition and reduce perceived height, bulk, and scale (CS2-D, CS3-A, CS2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D).
- g. The staircase is located in the middle of the structure, and is set back from the north and south property lines by approximately 15-feet. The staircase is currently clad in the same wood material as the remaining north and south facades. Revise this material selection to a one of a lighter color to reduce perceived bulk and increase light, particularly for the entrance at the north. (DC4-A)
- h. Design features such as the gate and awning are used as a means of wayfinding to the main entry. These elements should be detailed, customized, and/or personalized. Include in the plan set information describing the awnings, canopies, fence, gate, and lighting (PL1-B, PL2-A, PL2-B, PL2-C, PL2-D, PL4-A, PL3-B).
- i. Care should be taken to design the north and south facades to minimize views into abutting residential uses. Clarify the size, location, and type of windows shown. Obscuring glazing, landscaping, and fencing ought to be used to mitigate adverse privacy impacts to neighbors (CS2-D).
- j. Clarify proposed colors and materials (DC4-A).

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

**CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites:** Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

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

**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.

## 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.

**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-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-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.

**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-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists**

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

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

**DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-2. Gathering Places:** Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

**DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**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-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-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.

**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-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.

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

**DC4-A Building Materials**

**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-B Signage**

**DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design:** Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

**DC4-C Lighting**

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare:** Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

## **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.

## **DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS**

At the time of Design Guidance, the following adjustment was requested:

- 1. Landscaping, Green Factor (SMC 23.45.524):** The Code requires landscaping that achieves a Green Factor score of 0.6 or greater. The applicant proposes a 25% reduction to the amount to 0.52. The reduced Green Factor score allows for the paved, accessible walkway along the north property line, leading to the main entrance.

DPD staff indicated preliminary support for the request, finding it better meets the intent of the design guidelines and neighborhood context by creating a stronger street edge, consistent with abutting development.

## **STAFF DIRECTION**

**At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the DPD Staff recommended the project should move forward to building permit application in response to the Design Guidance provided.**

1. Please be aware that this report is an assessment on how the project is meeting the intent of the Design Guidelines. This review does not include a full zoning review. Zoning review will occur when the MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.
2. If applicable, please prepare your Master Use Permit for SEPA review with a thorough zoning analysis listing the 23.45 and SMC 23.54 code section criteria, showing both required and proposed information (include page number where you graphically show compliance). You may want to review Tip 201 (<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/cams/CamList.aspx>) and may also want to review the MUP information here: <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/mupoverview/default.htm>
3. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report.
4. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.