



## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3020749

Address: 1814 E John Street

Applicant: Jeff Wegener, Build Urban

Date of Report: Monday, November 23, 2015

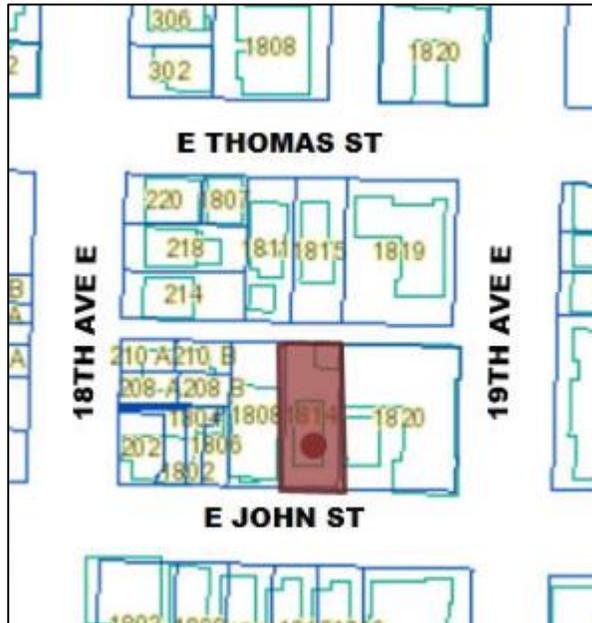
DPD Staff Present: Katy Haima

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3  
(South) LR3  
(East) LR3  
(West) LR3

Lot Area: 4,779 sq. ft.



**Current Development:**

The site is currently occupied with a two story single-family residence.

**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

Surrounding development is a mix of traditional craftsman single-family residences from the early 1900’s and multi-family developments of various ages. The site is within the Madison Miller Residential Urban Village.

Immediately to the north of the site is a three-story multi-family structure built in 1911, featuring a brick base and shingle siding on the upper floors. To the south of the site is a traditional two-story residential structure.

**Access:**

Access is via an east-west alley abutting the site to the north.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:**

None.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposal is for a four-story structure containing 27 units. No parking is proposed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comment was received:

- Concerned about the increase in density.
- Concerned about the lack of parking.
- Felt the character of the development, as well as the height, bulk and scale, is not compatible with the existing context.

<b>PRIORITIES &amp; STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
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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.

- 1. Entry Sequence and Connection to the Street.** Primary entries should be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and visually connected to the street. The entry sequence should be secure and welcoming, and relate to the established streetscape and contribute to the character of the neighborhood. (CS2-B, CS3-A, PL2-B, PL2-D, PL3-A, PL3-B)
  - a. The established context features street-facing entries at or above the sidewalk grade, with semi-private transitional spaces. Modify the design to emphasize the entry above grade as the primary entry. This entry should be easily visible, appear inviting, and establish a strong connection to the street. This could be done by widening the main entry sequence or flaring the stairs, and removing or further minimizing the presence of the sunken (secondary) entry.
  - b. The entry should read as the focal point of the façade to provide exterior wayfinding. Continue to explore how materiality and composition can reinforce the prominence of the entry and provide a welcoming entry sequence. Include additional color, materials, elements, or other design solutions to further demarcate the primary residential entry. See item 2.a, below, for more guidance on composition.
  - c. The below grade entry is disconnected from the public realm, and does not create an inviting transitional space. In addition, access to the project should be designed so that it is fully integrated into the overall project design to accommodate all residents and visitors. It is unclear as to why the project could not be designed to accommodate all access on floor 1, through the main entry. Ideally, the main entry would accommodate all access and eliminate the need for the sunken entry. If removing the entry is not possible, explore strategies to create a welcoming entry at the lower level while not detracting from the prominence of the primary entry.
  - d. The entry sequence to both the primary and secondary entries should provide inviting, secure, transitional spaces that help announce the entry and provide a permeable buffer from the street. Incorporate seating, lighting and landscaping, to create welcoming spaces that announce the entry.
  - e. Design features such as gates, fences, or awnings 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.
  
- 2. Architectural Composition & Response to Context.** Strategies should be used to reduce the perceived mass, relate to the established context, and reflect a residential character. Consider responding to datum lines, grade change, materials, and architectural composition. (CS2-B, CS2-C, CS2-D, CS3-A, PL3-A, DC1-A, PL2-A, DC2-A, DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D, DC4-A)
  - a. Revise the architectural composition of the south façade to incorporate cues from the established context and grade change to break down the perceived height, bulk and scale. Strategies could include material changes that differentiate the base from the upper massing; reducing the front protruding mass by one story and incorporating a roof or framing element; incorporating decks; relating to the datum lines on the adjacent buildings; or eliminating the sub-grade entry. The

concept of the grey notches could be developed to further break down the perceived scale and bulk and improve the overall composition.

- b. Reinforce the prominence of the vertical mass above the entry to provide exterior wayfinding and improve the overall composition. This could be achieved by lowering the white protruding mass by one story and carrying the line of the canopy into a framing element for the corner mass.
  - c. The southern portion of the west façade, visible from the street, features large, blank portions at street-level. Rearrange the interior uses to locate those most used at the street front, and include additional transparency, or at minimum, spandrel glass to continue the fenestration pattern.
  - d. Continue the concrete base and hand rail on the south façade to the east edge of the protruding mass to provide a strong base and unite the front façade.
  - e. The row of cedars is proposed to be removed, impacting privacy of the adjacent units to the west. Care should be taken to design the east and west facades to minimize views into abutting residential uses. Clarify the size, location, and type of windows shown. Obscured glazing, landscaping, and fencing ought to be used to mitigate privacy impacts to neighbors. (CS2-D)
  - f. Consider increasing the presence of the grey notching in the façade composition to strengthen the design concept and to break down the height, bulk and scale.
  - g. Clarify proposed colors and materials, and demonstrate a thoughtful application of materials as they relate to the overall massing and architectural composition, and help the development relate to the established context. Materials should relate to the residential neighborhood, and reflect a fine-grained level of detail and articulation. Joints should relate to fenestration patterns and be considered as part of the overall composition.
  - h. Revise the materials and composition of the west and east elevations to demonstrate a coherent design composition that breaks down the bulk and scale of the façade and relates changes in plane to the material application and overall design concept.
- 3. Rooflines.** The pitches of the roof are proposed to respond to the residential character of the street. However, these pitches are only visible from the east elevation. In addition, the size and distribution of the roof elements could be improved to enhance the compatibility of the project with the existing architectural context from the street. (CS2-B, CS2-D, CS3-A, DC2-B)
- a. Include roof elements on the south elevation that relate to and reference the established architectural context, or lower the protruding mass to reveal the roofline on the mass behind it.
  - b. The proposed rooflines appear haphazard and do not relate to the overall architectural composition or an organizing concept. Simplify the rooflines to respond to context, and demonstrate how each relates to the modulation of the massing.
- 4. Open Space & Landscaping.**
- a. Provide a landscape plan that reflects the continuity of the lush, layered landscaping found on the rest of the streetscape and frames the primary entry.

Revise the location of the side entry path to preserve the existing tree at the southwest corner of the site, or to create room for a replacement to provide screening from the adjacent structure. (CS2-B, CS3-A, PL3-A, DC4-D)

- b. The rear patio should provide a welcoming, usable space for the residents. As proposed, the patio is sunken, and is largely consumed by circulation to the bike room and entry. Incorporate seating, planting, and lighting to make welcoming and secure. Consider a material change at the base to reflect the change in plane and relate to the outdoor use. In addition, consider the use of the trellis, and if this may make the space feel too confined. (PL2-B, DC3-A, DC3-C)

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. 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-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-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-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-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.

**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.

## PUBLIC LIFE

**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.

### 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-D Wayfinding

**PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding:** Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

**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-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy:** Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

**PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential:** Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

**PL3-B-4. Interaction:** Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

### **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-1. Visibility:** Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

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

**DC1-A-3. Flexibility:** Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

**DC1-A-4. Views and Connections:** Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

#### **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-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.

#### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

**DC2-D-2. Texture:** Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

**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-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.

**DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas:** Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

**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-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-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.

**DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan**

**DC4-E-1. Deconstruction:** When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS**

Design Review Staff’s recommendation on the requested adjustment(s) will be based upon the adjustment’s potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the adjustment(s).

At the time of Design Guidance, the following adjustments were requested:

- 1. Façade Length. (SMC 23.45.527.B):** The Code requires that the maximum combined length of all portions of facades within 15 feet of a lot line that is neither a rear lot line nor a street or alley lot line shall not exceed 65 percent of the length of that lot line. The applicant proposes an increase of the allowed façade length by approximately 3 feet, or 4 percent.

DPD staff indicated preliminary support for the adjustment, finding that it better meets the intent of the design guidelines. The north edge of the east façade at the basement level would extend 3 feet beyond the stories above it, allowing for secured indoor bicycle parking to be provided at a convenient location off the alley. The stepping of this facade reduces the massing abutting the rear patio, reducing the scale of the building. The open space and adjacent façade should be designed to incorporate additional features and details that are of human scale and create a welcoming space. See guidance under item 4. (PL4-B, DC2-A, DC2-D).

- 2. Side Setback (SMC 23.45.518 Table A):** The Code requires a side setback of 5 feet minimum and 7 feet average for apartments over 40 feet in length. The applicant proposes a minimum setback of 4'-2".

DPD staff indicated that the departure would not be supported, as it is unclear how the departure better meets the intent of the design guidelines. The entry stairs that are projecting into the setback appear to be a result of the sunken entry, which is discussed in item 1 above. A stronger connection to the street could be achieved if the stairs were shifted to align with the primary entry and reducing the impact of the sunken entry along the street. (CS2-B, CS3-A, PL2-B, PL2-D, PL3-A, PL3-B)

## **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.