



FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3020808

Address: 9021 17th Avenue Southwest

Applicant: Matt King, Blue Architecture+ Interiors

Date of Meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2015

Board Members Present: Todd Bronk (Chair)
Don Caffrey
Alexandra Moravec
Matt Zinski

Board Members Absent: T. Frick McNamara

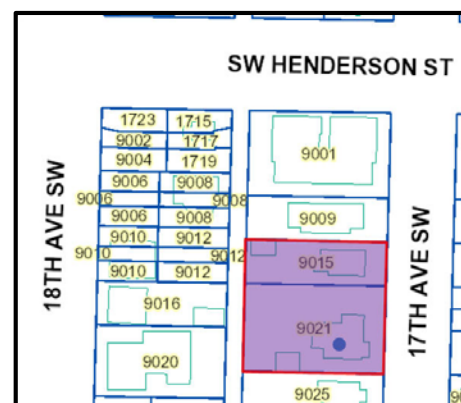
DPD Staff Present: Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

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

Lot Area: 15,819.3 square feet (sq. ft.)



Current Development:

The project site is a consolidation of two mid-block parcels currently addressed as 9015 and 9021 17th Avenue Southwest and contains one single family residence with a detached accessory garage.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development includes single family residences west, east and south of the project site. A mix of small-scale/medium-scale residential uses (townhouses, duplex, triplex, apartments) is west, east and north of the project property.

This mid-block site is located within the Westwood-Highland Park Residential Urban Village, situated on the west side of 17th Avenue Southwest. A mix of multifamily residential and single family residential defines the streetscape character of this block along 17th Avenue Southwest. There are several commercial uses (retail, restaurants, automotive shops, etc.) and institutional uses (churches, community center, etc.) in the immediate vicinity of the project along Delridge Way Southwest and 16th Avenue Southwest, which are one block west and east of the project. The neighborhood is evolving with blocks immediately surrounding the site having seen significant development of apartment and townhomes in the past several years.

Access:

Vehicular access to the subject property is possible from both 17th Avenue Southwest and an existing 16' wide alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The project site's grades are 4' higher than 17th Avenue Southwest, sloping down to be nearly level with the alley. There are no Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) mapped on or near the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a four-story with basement residential structure with approximately 31 residential units. A total parking quantity of 31 stalls is planned within the structure and at grade.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3020808) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design Review Program/Project Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design%20Review%20Program/Project%20Reviews/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

Many members of the public attended this Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Commented that the proposed design options are not “iconic” and absent of personality or character of the neighborhood. Encouraged a design with thoughtful materials, colors and design that would add pride to the neighborhood.
- Suggested that the roof over the exterior parking stalls be designed as a green roof or upper-level decks.
- Appreciated that the project will include an enclosed below-grade parking area.
- Discouraged the placement of cooking (barbecue) areas in the identified amenity spaces which would be within close proximity to the units.
- Voiced concern about the manner in which the design meets the streetscape. Commented that it should be welcoming and more gracious.
- Appreciated the incorporation of shading in the concepts and felt it is a nice gesture to the neighborhood.
- Underscored that the proposal site is not located in “White Center” which is the name of a neighborhood in unincorporated King County.
- Encouraged a design that will set strong precedent for a neighborhood that is in transition. Felt that there wasn’t much differentiation in the massing options offered to the Board.
- Encouraged a design that consolidated all proposed parking within the structure and below-grade. Felt this would enhance the building entries and amenity spaces.
- Supportive of a design that would position the units within closer proximity to the street front. Not supportive of the proposed seating/retaining walls at the street.
- Appreciated the roof forms (roof overhangs) illustrated in Option #1.
- Encouraged the Board to request a design option that has an architectural character and siting compatible with architectural style and siting for new structures in an urban village. Suggested the future design should minimize the impacts of exterior parking and be sited to engage the street in a more meaningful manner-not be setback from the sidewalk by a retaining wall.
- Encouraged a design that accommodated usable ground-level amenity space for possible play area.

- Criticized the existing and proposed retaining wall and voiced that the retaining wall feels “very imposing” to pedestrians.
- Commented that that proposed fencing should be designed to mitigate possible graffiti.
- Strongly appreciated that the proposal included onsite parking.

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. Design Concept, Architectural Context and Massing:** The design and siting of the new residential development should create a sense of place and establish a desirable context in the Westwood neighborhood, and respect adjacent properties. (CS2.A, CS2.D, CS3.A)
 - a. The Board discussed the presented design options (Options 1-preferred, 2 and 3) and debated the merits of requesting additional design schemes (“O-shaped”, “U-shaped”) at an additional EDG meeting. In general, the Board was not against the applicant’s preferred “H-shaped” scheme. However, the Board stated that there was not enough massing variation in the presented design options to offer constructive feedback. Also, the Board stated that certain aspects of the design (massing, site interaction, architectural façade composition, common exterior amenity areas and entries) needed to be resolved. Therefore, the Board directed the applicant to return for a second EDG meeting to present massing options that address the following guidance:
 - i. The Board observed that the presented design schemes illustrated massing setback from the sidewalk and at a higher elevation than the streetscape with grade contained by a 4’ to 6’ tall retaining wall. The Board felt that this design as illustrated did not engage the street well. Therefore, the Board stated that the building design/site should interact better with the public realm. A scheme that lowers the building mass closer to the sidewalk elevation and pushes the parking level entirely below grade was suggested by the Board as a possible design scheme to explore and present to the Board. (CS1.C, CS2.A, CSS.B)
 - ii. The Board’s feedback concerning the presented massing was that the facades were a combination of “multiple boxes” joined together with different façade treatments on each box. The Board advised the applicant to simplify the facades and provide well-proportioned articulation through design techniques (materials, joints, details, etc.). (DC2.A, DC2.B.1)
 - iii. The Board stated that concerns regarding the retaining wall, building entry, screening, and external amenity areas should be addressed in the next design iteration. Board commentary regarding streetscape, landscaping and residential open space are offered below for items #2b and #3b. (PL3.A, DC2.C, DC3.B)

- b. The Board stated that it is important that the building exteriors be constructed of durable, high quality materials that will age well. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board expects to review physical materials and color palette that are in keeping with the Board guidance. (DC4.A)
- c. The Board stated that it is imperative that the design creates a safe environment by providing lines of sight, encouraging natural surveillance (placement of windows, door, etc.) and siting exterior lighting that would sufficiently illuminate the building, the streetscape and the alley. The Board voiced an expectation to review a lighting concept plan and a window study that addresses this concern at the Recommendation meeting. (PL2.B.1, PL2.B.2, PL3.B.1, PL3.B.2, DC4.C)

2. 17th Avenue Southwest Frontage and Streetscape: The Board directed that the design of the building should engage the 17th Avenue Southwest streetscape in a meaningful manner. (PL3.A, PL3.B)

- a. The Board voiced support for the installation of a rain garden in the 17th Avenue Southwest right-of-way. (CS1.D.2, CS1.E.2)
- b. The Board noted that the retaining wall, main residential entry stairs and fencing as presented was not engaging to pedestrians. Additionally, the Board recognized that accessible access to the main residential entry will be necessary and questioned the lack of a ramp (with handrails and landings) on the concept drawings/landscape drawings (pg. 35). The Board believes that the installation a ramp meeting ADA requirements per the accessibility code would significantly alter the street front design and proposed landscaping. At the next EDG meeting, the Board expects to review design concepts that correctly illustrate accessible access and meets the Board guidance regarding enhancement of the streetscape and a welcoming entrance to visitors/residents/pedestrians. (PL2.A, PL3.A, PL3.B, DC2.C, DC2.D)

3. Residential Open Space and Landscaping:

- a. The Board appreciated the applicant's intent to retain some of the onsite existing mature trees. (CS1.D.1, DC4.D.4)
- b. At the EDG meeting, the applicant's materials and presentation identified two ground-level exterior shared amenity spaces and limited ground-level private amenity spaces (patios) adjacent to residential units. The Board voiced concern with the shared amenity areas' minimal size, configuration (narrow width), location (adjacency to private patios) and access. The Board stated the external shared amenity spaces should be sized more appropriately to the amount of residential units it will serve; be landscaped appropriately; meet the needs of the residents; and be accessible. The Board expects to review massing schemes that address this guidance at the next EDG meeting. (DC3.B, DC3.C, DC4.D)

4. Vehicular Parking and Bicycle Storage:

- a. The Board appreciated reviewing design concepts inclusive of onsite vehicular parking that, per the applicant, is not required per the Code. The Board voiced concerns about the location of the external vehicular parking area at either side of the structure and its close proximity to ground-level residential units. The Board felt that the automotive noise/odors and placement of the parking canopy adjacent to

- the ground-level units could negatively impact those future residents' access to light (window location and shading), air (window type) and views. The Board emphasized that this parking facility should be located and designed to reduce possible impacts to the residents and expects to review a design(s) that addresses this concern at the next EDG meeting. (DC1.C, DC2.C)
- b. At the EDG meeting, the Board voiced an expectation to review a design that has internal/external bike facilities and access to bike storage areas that are appropriately integrated into the project at the Recommendation meeting. (PL4.B)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide 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-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.

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-1. On-Site Features: Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

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-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-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

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

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

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.

PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses: In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

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-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.

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-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-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

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.

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

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.

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-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-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

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 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.

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.

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.

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 **FIRST** Early Design Guidance, no departures were requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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.