



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3021006

Address: 7730 15th Avenue NW

Applicant: Megan McKay, Johnston Architects for Lake Union Partners

Date of Meeting: Monday, November 02, 2015

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil (Chair)
Keith Walzak
Dale Kutzera
Marc Angelillo
Chris Bell

Board Members Absent: None

DPD Staff Present: BreAnne McConkie, Land Use Planner
Crystal Torres, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

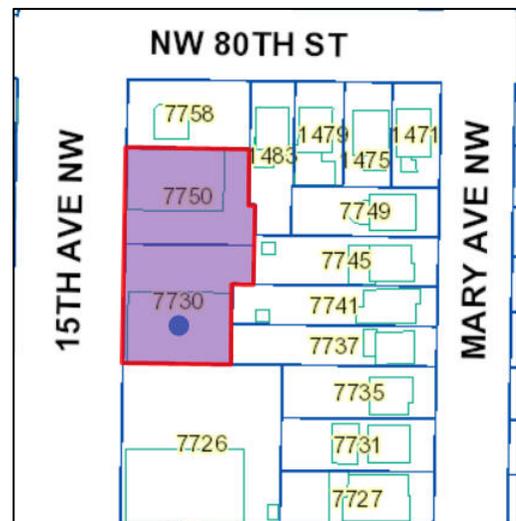
Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2,
Pedestrian Designation 40' height limit
(NC2P-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2P-40
(South) NC2-40
(East) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)
(West) NC2P-40

Lot Area: 17, 045 square feet (sq. ft.)

Current Development:

The site contains two one-story masonry buildings with surface parking.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character: The site is located midblock along 15th Ave NW within the Ballard neighborhood and has a Neighborhood Commercial Pedestrian zoning designation. Surrounding development includes commercial to the north, south, and west with single family residential abutting the property to the east. The neighborhood character along the 15th Ave NW commercial corridor is transitioning from small one-story retail establishments to larger contemporary mixed-use development. To the east is an established single family residential neighborhood.

Access: Pedestrian and vehicle access is proposed from 15th Ave NW.

Environmentally Critical Areas: There are no mapped Environmentally Critical Areas onsite.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a 4-story structure containing 54 residential units above retail space located at ground level. Parking for 27 vehicles to be provided within the structure. Existing structures to be demolished.

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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

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

At the Early Design Guidance meeting, the applicant provided 3 schemes for the public and Board's discussion. All three options presented a similar programming model with 4-stories of residential units of varying sizes above the ground floor with the lobby, retail spaces, and vehicular access located at grade along 15th Ave NW. All options include 57 residential units, 29 parking spaces, and retail space. Amenity space was proposed on the roof along with a terrace space on the east side of the building above the 2nd floor with a planted perimeter for screening. In addition, all three options are setback at the 4th floor along 15th Ave NW due to required setback from existing powerlines and setback 15 feet (above the first 13 feet in height) on the east

façade adjacent to residential zoning. The north and south facades have a setback of zero. All three options presented were code compliant.

Option One proposed the maximum zoning envelope with zero setback along the north and south façades, zero setback for floors one through three along 15th Ave NW and a setback at the fourth floor as described above to accommodate powerlines. The east façade is setback, as required adjacent to residential zoning, above the first 13 feet. Uses along the street facing façade (west façade) include the parking entry at the end, retail spaces along the middle, and a residential lobby at the southern-most portion of the building. This option includes 3,000 square feet of retail space.

Option Two proposed two vertical breaks in the façade to create a three-part composition along 15th Ave NW. The two notches emphasized the two main entry points and articulation of the façade. Similar to Option One, Option Two has the same programming along the street with parking at northern portion of the façade, followed by retail spaces, and residential lobby at the southern-most portion of the façade. This option includes 3,000 square feet of retail space.

Option Three was the applicant's preferred option. This Option sets back the first floor along 15th Ave NW to create a wider sidewalk and enhanced pedestrian experience, while also providing more opportunity for the retail to open up to the sidewalk. The second and third stories are built to the property line with three recessed areas creating modulation along the street facing façade. Option Three also includes the most retail space with 3,500 square feet compared to 3,000 square feet as provided in Options One and Two.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At EDG, members of the public provided the following comments

Design

- Expressed support for the design, noting it was beautiful and designed for safety.
- Supported the 15th Ave frontage and façade of the preferred option.
- Concerned with the height and blank facades, especially on the north side because the small size of the site and lack of potential redevelopment.
- Liked Options One and Two more because the driveway was located on the north.

Zone Transition (adjacent residential)

- Expressed concern with the impacts to the single family residential adjacent to the rear of the project site. Concerns included blocking potential solar energy opportunities, light and glare, privacy and sightlines, and screening/treatment of the façade.
- Would rather see a concrete wall with ivy over bright lights.
- Difficult to understand the setbacks from the retaining walls.

Parking Related

- Concerned with lack of parking for retail.
- Stated that 15th had sufficient parking, with the exception of 4-6pm.
- Supported the small retail spots oriented to neighborhood.
- Concerned with the traffic on 15th.

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.** The Board expressed general support for Option 3, the Applicant's Preferred Option, but stated that all options presented were very similar and the proposal was overall lacking in three distinct options. The Board also recognized that the options were limited because the site was a mid-block, infill development site and noted that small gestures were the primary difference.
 - a. The Board stated they were open to other possible schemes and encouraged the applicant to seek departures if they would result in a better relationship to the neighbors to the east and/or result in less blank facades with additional fenestration or modulation along the north and south facades. **(DC2-B-2; DC2-C-1; DC2-C-3)**
 - b. The Board expressed support for the longer façade with higher quality materials because it was true to form and supported the setback at the upper level to break down the mass. **(CS2-A-2; CS2-C-2)**
 - c. The Board generally supported the location of parking access away from the intersection of 15th Ave NW and NW 80th St. in Option 3 (toward the southern end of the site). **(DC1-1; DC1-C-4)**
 - d. The Board supported the ground level setback along 15th Ave because it allowed for wider sidewalks and an enhanced pedestrian experience at the street level. **(CS2-B-2; PL1-B-2&3)**
 - e. The Board supported the idea of reducing the podium height and encouraged the applicant to work with the neighbors on the podium wall treatment and possibility for landscaping. **(CS2-D-5)**
 - f. The Board discussed the eastern setback and commented that two additional feet may not be large enough to make a meaningful difference. **(DC2-C-3; DC2-A-2)**
2. **Zone Transition**
 - a. The Board expressed the most concern with the set back at the north east because of the close proximity to the neighbor. The Board requested additional detail on the relationship to the existing single family structures (specifically the house located adjacent to the northeast corner of the proposal). For the next meeting, the applicant should provide information on the setbacks, property lines, existing conditions, and cross section. **(DC2-C-3; DC2-A-2; CS2-D)**
 - b. The Board noted fenestration and amenity space should be mindful of privacy of neighboring property. The applicant should provide a privacy window study to the east and northeast. **(CS2-D-3,4,&5; DC4-C-2)**
 - c. For the next meeting, the applicant should further develop the proposed planter on the podium and landscaping/screening along the east and provide additional landscape details. **(CS2-D-3&5; DC4-D)**

3. Entries & Street Relationship

- a. The Board was generally supportive of the entry locations and streetscape relationship in the Applicant's preferred Option. **(PL3-1,2,3)**
- b. The Board noted that the entries should be easily identifiable and directed the Applicant to provide additional information on the residential entry and secondary architectural elements that reinforce the entry design. **(PL3-1,2,3; DC2-1,2,3)**
- c. The Board discussed treatment of the driveway/curb cut and directed the applicant to minimize impacts to the pedestrian realm and disruption of active spaces along 15th. **(DC1-B-1; PL4-A-1)**

4. Architectural Concept, Façade Composition, & Blank Walls

- a. The Board expressed concern with the blank wall condition of the north and south facades and indicated preliminary support for departures if they improved the relationship to the neighbors and better resolved the blank wall conditions. For the next meeting, additional detail on the treatment of all facades, including detail on the proposed blank wall treatment. **(DC2-A-2; DC2-B-1,2; DC4-1)**
- b. The Board noted that the east façade should blend into the background from the neighboring back yards and gardens. The Board noted that the east facade could have a different architectural character than the other facades in order to better blend into the residential edge to the east. **(CS2-D-3; DC4-C-2)**

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

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-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-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-B Walkways and Connections

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-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.

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-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.

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.

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-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-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.

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-C Lighting

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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no departures were requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.