City of Seattle

Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW

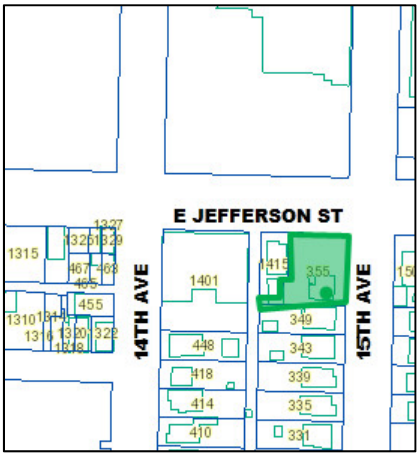
Project Number:	3021558
Address:	355 15th Ave
Applicant:	Robert Humble of HyBrid Architecture and Assembly
Date:	7/15/2016
SDCI Staff:	Magda Hogness

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial (NC1-30)

Nearby Zones: (North) Lowrise (LR3)
(South) Single Family (SF 5000)
(East) SF 5000
(West) Neighborhood Commercial (NC2-40)

Lot Area: 8,100 sf



Current Development:
The site contains a two-story single family residence.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:
The subject site is located in the Squire Park neighborhood. This neighborhood is characterized by a mix of institutional, commercial single family and multifamily residential housing types. Older single family homes are typically wood frame buildings, one to two stories in height. Institutional and commercial development consists of a mix of brick, masonry, and wood structures.

The City has designated E Jefferson Ave as a collector street. The project site lies along this corridor across from two major institutions, Seattle University and Swedish Hospital. Recent proposed development along E Jefferson Ave includes sizeable, midrise multi-family structures.

The site has the potential to serve as a transition from the institutional and commercial uses along Jefferson to the single family zone south of the site. To the south, east and west of the site are single family structures. Intermixed with the single family to the west, is a five-story commercial structure, the Gottman Institute. Small scale retail and commercial businesses line parts of the south side of East Jefferson Street further west.

Access:
The subject property currently has vehicular access from 15th Ave.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a four-story, residential building with 43-44 small efficiency dwelling units. The existing structure is proposed to be demolished.

ADMINISTRATIVE EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 15, 2016

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this 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 SDCI:

Mailing Address: **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT
SDCI received numerous comment letters. The following comments, issues, and concerns were raised:

- Concerned about increased traffic, parking shortage and lack of onsite parking. Would like to see parking incorporated into the project.
- Concerned with the bulk and scale of the project; the project should create a transition for the single family zone.
- Lack of support for the proposed density and unit mix; provided unit mix does not address the housing need for families. Would like to see a reasonable number of units and density proposed.
- Requested a meeting with the community in order to get feedback.
- Noted that there are no plans for the city or county to increase public transit or for any entity to provide additional parking to service or transportation options to the growing population in Squire Park. Adjacent arterials are quickly becoming choked at peak travel times.

- Supported the proposed retail, would like to see great storefronts facing Jefferson of at least 1,000 square feet in this proposed new building.
- Concerned about gentrification and loss of diversity.
- Concerned that this project type has taken advantage of the public process.
- Would like to see the garbage recycle location off the street and addressed.
- Noted that the 355 property does not have access to the alley and the alley stops behind the 448 property.
- Concerned with short term residency and the level of noise that will occur.
- Would like to see additional green space provided; there is little to no outdoor space for the majority of occupants.
- Lack of support for the project, the neighborhood cannot support developments without increasing services that are needed.
- Concerned with proposed west setback adjacent to an existing single family residence and shading impacts. Would like to see a setback similar to the setback proposed at the south location.
- The slope of street is not as shown accurately; photos are altered or misleading.
- Lack of support for Scheme A as it is out of scale.
- Lack of support for large, flat facades with no corner detailing. All 3 schemes show unbroken facades on Jefferson Street which relates more to the Jefferson Professional Center and the Swedish Institutional buildings and garages, rather than relating to the entire surrounding neighborhood. The proposal needs more accents, balconies, etc. to break up large flat areas of siding.
- Would like to see commercial spaces face Jefferson instead of facing onto 15th Ave. 15th Ave is a much more residential street.
- Concerned with the lack of privacy. Consider larger set back or step the building up the hill.
- Lack of support for either departure. Please maintain 1st floor 13' minimum height for non-residential use. The uses and livelihood of the commercial ventures will suffer due to the cramped feel of the spaces.
- Would like to see more consideration to minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on the site. (Guideline Daylight and Shading).
- Would like to see more trees to manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades. (Guideline: Managing Solar Gain)
- Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances. Would like to see the corner detailing or architectural features to make it stand out. (Guideline: Corner Sites)
- Would like to see the massing step up the hill to make it less like a square box and fit in with the context. Many houses on this block were built 1900-1930. Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties. (Guideline: Existing Site Features)
- There is not enough buffer provided for the Zone Transition. Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development. (Guideline: Zone Transitions)
- Would like to see the mass of the building broken up and the building height lowered in order to provide a successful transition between zones (Guideline: Massing Choices)

- The proposal does not minimize disrupting the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings. (Guideline: Respect for Adjacent Sites)
- Lack of support for the departures as they appear in the current proposal; without requiring strong visible facade breaks in form or material. Would like to see the building weave into the neighborhood and create a more interesting corridor along Jefferson Street.
- Noted that this project will set the tone for what occurs in the future all the way up to 23rd Avenue.
- Would like to see more opportunities for street level interaction in the proposed commercial space at 15th and Jefferson as well as in the residences. Setbacks, courtyards, decks and/or a highly usable rooftop space for the residents should be emphasized to provide eyes on the Street as well as social benefit.
- Supported the proposed material, which emphasize organic and natural finishes.
- Requested a change in the daily start time of construction to an 8am start time.
- Apartments on the ground level facing 15th, should be appropriately 'residential' with doors and patios facing the street to promote tenant interaction with single family residents and improve upon civic life.
- The project and its analysis demonstrate an interest in creating a handsome and articulate design for our neighborhood.
- Strongly supported Scheme "A" identified as the Donut scheme, for its multi-use entry off of Jefferson Street, no need of design departures, excellent quantity/quality of commercial space and internal courtyard.
- Would like to see a garbage room located toward the west and with alley access. A secondary entry within the 5' setback along the west property line for access to the basement would also be useful as indicated in Scheme "C".
- Concerned with the preferred scheme's opaque alcoves. Public safety is key and transparency/visibility is a very important concern.
- Scheme "B" is a good alternative with adequate commercial space in the planned Pedestrian zone on Jefferson, but the residential facing 15th Avenue is foreign to the charming porched entries of the single family residences all along 15th.
- Scheme "C" is the development team's preference but the modulation is ineffective on Jefferson and the residential facing Jefferson at 5'-7" above grade may as well be a blank façade. If this scheme moves forward, it should introduce commercial throughout with glass and visibility everywhere on the ground floor.

PRIORITIES & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and public comment, Staff provided the following siting and design guidance.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE

1) **Massing and Response to Context:** Staff supports the arrangement of uses shown in Massing Scheme 2 and the deep setbacks which provide distinct volumes shown in Scheme 3. Staff prefers a combined massing option which incorporates arrangement of

uses shown in Scheme 2 with Scheme 3, as the modified design has the best potential to create architectural presence, address the corner and respond to the streetscape and directs the applicant to proceed with this modified preferred option. Staff also agrees with the public comments regarding the importance of setbacks with relation to the single family zone. Therefore, the setbacks shown in scheme 3 provided a more sensitive transition to the neighbors. (CS2-C-1, DC2)

a. Staff indicated that they would not be supportive of the departures as shown in the EDG packet, but could support a departure for the required street level uses along 15th Ave if the frontage was creatively designed, integrated with the residential character of the neighborhood. (DC2-A-1, DC2-B-1, DC2-C3)
b. Staff acknowledges the site slopes down 13 feet from the northeast to southwest and agrees with public comments that transitioning with topography should be explored to respond to the adjacent single family zone. Staff recommends stepping the two bar masses and contrasting the materiality to read as two distinct volumes and break down the scale of the proposal. (CS2-C-2, CS2-D-3, DC2-A-1, DC2-B-1)
c. While refining the upper massing to address the change of topography, Staff also recommends studying the relationship to grade around the entire site. Provide at grade retail entries along Jefferson and develop the lower level units and the design of the window wells to create access to views, light and air and respect the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings. (CS1-B-2, CS2-C-2, Cs2-D-5)

2) **Façade Composition and Materials:** Staff strongly supports the proposed quality materials, recessed windows and façade detailing which add visual interest and movement to the façade. (DC2-A-1, DC2-C, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)
   a. Staff supports the fenestration pattern concept, which suggests movement along the facades and adds visual interest. To relate to the adjacent residential character, Staff recommends expanding window depth and façade articulation. (Guidelines CS2-D-3, DC2-A, DC2-B-1, DC2-C-2, DC4-A-1)
   b. Acknowledging public comment, related to the corner and the commercial frontage along Jefferson, Staff strongly supports the composition of the highly transparent base with setbacks that wrap into the courtyard and address the corner, as shown on page 29. Extend this language down Jefferson to provide a well-proportioned street wall. (CS2-B-2, PL1-B-3, Pl2-B-3, PL3-C-1)

3) **Entries and Frontages:** Staff provides the following direction on the proposal's corners, edges and transitions.
   a. Acknowledging the adjacent single family zone transition and public concerns, Staff requests further development and additional information on how the south facade compliments the character of residential neighborhood. Provide enlarged elevations and a layered landscape planted buffer demonstrating a thoughtful treatment and privacy for the adjacent single family structure. (CS2-C-2, CS2-D-3, CS2-D-5, PL3-B-1)

b. Staff agrees with the public comments relating to the commercial character at ground level and on Jefferson and strongly supports the proposed commercial transparency, differentiated ground level treatment and encourages pedestrian site furniture amenities to engage and interact with the streetscape. (Guidelines PL1-B-3, PL2-B-3, PL3-C-2)
a. Developing a sensitive treatment between the west façade and the adjacent single family structure is needed along the corridor. Resolve the lower blank wall condition shown on the west facade with texture and material treatment. (DC2-B, DC2-C)
c. Staff supports secondary entry pathway along the west property line for access to the basement. With the design of the entries, consider access and internal connections for bicyclists. Staff also recommends locating the trash room toward the west and encourages trash removal from the alley (PL4-B-2, DC1-C-4)
d. For the design of the corridor itself, Staff recommends developing the design to provide clear lines of sight and defensible space. Explore providing windows from the commercial space to visually connect this area. Consider other elements such as wayfinding signage and compelling lighting. (PL2-B, PL3-A-1, PL3-C, DC4-C-1)
e. Include lighting to give a sense of security to the courtyard walkways and entries without glaring lights. Provide a lighting plan. (PL2-B-2, DC4-C)

4) **Landscape and Open Space:** Staff recognizes the courtyards could be a great amenity for residents and commercial space uses. (PL3, DC3-A-1)
   a. To enhance connectivity with the adjacent commercial space Staff recommends revising the linear planting at the courtyard and considering spaces for site furniture and small sculptural trees. Develop the design of the courtyard space with perspective sketches. (PL3-C-2, DC3-A-1, DC4-D)
   b. Add layered planting along portions of the façade residential use to provide a pleasant pedestrian experience, soften and provide a buffer. Provide more information on specific planting, fencing and the proposed improvements in the right of way. (PL3-B-2, DC3-A-1, DC4-D)

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-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-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-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

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

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-B Walkways and Connections

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-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.

PL2-C Weather Protection

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-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-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.

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-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-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 Secondary Architectural Features

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-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.

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-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

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-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 DEPARTURES

Staff'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). Staff's recommendation will be reserved until the final review.

At the time of Early Design Guidance, the following departures were requested:

1. **Street Level Uses (23.47A.005):** The Code allows a maximum of 20% of residential uses along a street facing façade. For the preferred scheme, the applicant proposes 50% residential uses along Jefferson and 60% along 15th Ave.

   Staff indicated a lack of support for the departure as shown in the EDG packet, but could consider supporting a departure along 15th Ave if the frontage was creatively designed, and integrated with the character of the neighborhood. (DC2-A-1, DC2-B-1, DC2-C3)

2. **Street Level Development Standards (23.47A.008):** The Code requires residential units located along the street level to be at least 4 feet above or below sidewalk grade or be set back at least 10 feet. For the preferred scheme, the applicant proposes residential units at a minimum height of 2' above grade and 3' to the sill heights.

   Staff support for departure associated with the preferred scheme along 15th Ave, provided that defensible space for the residential units is created and the window sill height is raised, similar to what the Code requires. Staff would like to see more information including an enlarged elevation with specific dimensions and proposed planting landscaping. (PL3-B-2, DC3-A-1, DC4-D)

3. **Street Level Development Standards (23.47A.008):** The Code requires non-residential uses to be at least 13' floor to floor height. The applicant proposes an 11'-3" floor to floor height.

   Staff agrees with public comment is not supportive of the proposed departure and directs the applicant to develop the design with a code compliant 13' floor to floor height. While refining the design, thoughtfully develop the transition to grade, similar to the courtyard/ retail entry shown in the preferred developed scheme. For each commercial space, explore if a direct, at grade entry is possible from Jefferson. (CS2-B-2, PL1-B-3, PL2-B-3, PL3-C-1)

STAFF DIRECTION

At the conclusion of ADMINISTRATIVE EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE, Staff recommended moving forward to MUP application.