



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3021767

Address: 13281 Aurora Avenue North

Applicant: Kathryn Jerkovich of BCRA

Date of Meeting: Monday, December 07, 2015

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil (Chair)
Marc Angelilo
Dale Kutzera

Board Members Absent: Christopher Bell
Keith Walzak

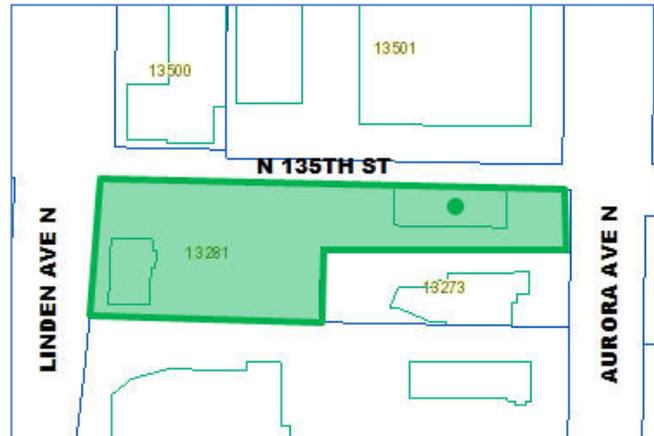
DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial 1 – 65-Foot Height Limit (C2-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-65
(South) C1-65
(East) C1-65
(West) Midrise (MR)

Lot Area: 67,710 square feet



Current Development:

The subject site currently contains a 5,240-square foot commercial structure and surface parking.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The development immediately surrounding the project site generally consists of one-story commercial structures with surface parking, and multiple-family residential to the north. A row of existing trees lines the south property line.

Access:

The preferred design proposes vehicular access via one curb cut on N 135th with a garage entrance on the east façade of the structure. The main residential lobby is proposed at the northwest corner, and the non-residential spaces have direct access to Linden Ave N.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance application proposing a six story structure containing 170 residential units. Parking for 116 vehicles to be provided. Existing building to be removed.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3021767) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/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

The following comments were received:

- Described the neighborhood has having a parking shortage;
- Encouraged sidewalk improvements and lighting along N 135th St.;
- Encouraged effective improvement and design;

- Concerned about large truck turning movements and access to the property to the north (from N 135th);
- Encouraged no parking on N 135th;
- Noted that visibility is constrained at the intersection of N 135th and Linden Ave N, resulting in intrusion into the bike lanes;
- Noted that recent improvements to Linden Ave N created steep grades on the east and west sides;
- Supported sidewalks on N 135th;
- Referenced the Bitter Lake Urban Design Framework currently under development:
 - The framework designated this site as commercial;
 - Property north of N 135th is designed residential;
 - Linden Ave N should be an active street, one that could accommodate parades;
 - Encouraged a mix of housing types;
- Noted the diversity of the neighborhood;
- Supported the conceptual massing and programming of the structure;
- Supportive of affordable housing and noted that the project will provide support services the neighborhood needs; and
- Noted the neighborhood does not yet have a vibrant commercial core, and the neighborhood is in transition.

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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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](#).

1. **Site Planning and Public Realm.** The Board supported the preferred option, Concept 3, with vehicular access at the east portion of the structure and the residential lobby on Linden Ave N.
 - a. The Board noted that this is a neighborhood in transition, and this project will contribute to a positive design context. The project was encouraged to explore ways to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future (CS3-4).
 - b. The Board supported the courtyard on the south of the site, noting this location will allow for increased access to sunlight and use. The Board noted that screening may be necessary to enhance privacy for the residential units. (CS1-B, PL3-A)
 - c. The conceptual floor plan illustrated the main residential lobby at the northwest corner of the site at the intersection of Linden Ave N and N 135th St. The Board

supported this location, noting Linden Ave N is a preferable front to N 135th St. (CS2-C, PL1-B, PL3-A)

- d. The Board recommended clear and efficient design of the northeast corner as it relates to solid waste storage and pick up and vehicular access. The solid waste should not be staged in the street, and should be picked up to the east of the structure (DC1-C)
 - e. The conceptual floor plan illustrated a bike storage room at the northeast corner of the site. The applicant noted opportunity for this room to be accessed directly from N 135th St. The Board supported this direct connection. Detailed building elevations describing this condition should be presented at the Recommendation meeting (PL2-A, DC2-B, DC2-B).
 - f. The Board recommended the placement of bicycle racks along the Linden Ave N frontage. A detailed landscape plan illustrating bike racks should be presented at the Recommendation meeting (PL2-A, PL4-B)
 - g. Non-residential spaces were proposed along Linden Ave N. The Board recommended these spaces be designed with the flexibility to be converted to commercial spaces in the future (DC1-A).
2. **Architectural Concept.**
- a. Overhead weather protection should be provided along Linden Ave N and N 135th St. (PL1-C, PL2-C, PL3-A)
 - b. The N 135th St elevation was identified as important. The Board recommended the use of transparency, materials, and landscaping to create human scale and lessen the perceived height of the structure. Detailed elevations, landscape plan, materials board, and lighting plan should be presented at the Recommendation meeting (DC2-A, DC2-B, PL2-B).

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-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-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-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.

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-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

PL1-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.

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-C Retail Edges

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-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-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

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.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

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-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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

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

BOARD DIRECTION

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