City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

DESIGN GUIDANCE
STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number:	3022250
Address:	3717 S Dawson St
Applicant:	Robert Humble of HyBrid Architecture and Assembly
Date of Report:	Monday, April 04, 2016
SDCI Staff:	Magda Hogness

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise (LR2)

Nearby Zones: (North) Commercial (C2-65)
(South) Single Family (SF 5000)
(East) LR2
(West) LR2

Lot Area: 6905 sf

Current Development:

The site is currently occupied by a single family residence and detached garage.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The project sites lies in the Columbia City Residential Urban Village and is within walking distance of the commercial heart of Columbia City and the Columbia City Landmark District. Prevailing attributes of this neighborhood include a diverse mix of uses, with many neighborhood shops, dining and services and turn of the century buildings exhibiting strong pedestrian connections.

Development surrounding the site consists primarily of single and multiple-family residential structures and car oriented commercial development. Across S Dawson St to the north are commercial buildings and surface parking lots. To the west, east and south are single family structures. Hitts Hill Park is adjacent to the south. Recent development includes sizeable multi-family structures with simple geometric shapes, clean lines, and a common material palate of cementitious panels and wood.

Access:
Vehicular access is currently from S Dawson St.

Environmental Critical Area:
The site contains mapped Steep Slope areas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for 4, 3 story townhouses structures and parking for 4 vehicles. The existing structures are proposed to be removed.

BACKGROUND
The subject site was granted Relief From Prohibition On Steep Slope Development by the SDCI Geotechnical Engineer on December 22, 2015 under project number 6505982:
"ECA review is required. Based on a review of the City GIS system and the submitted information, DPD concludes that the garage footprint, which extends into the 15-foot buffer at the toe of the ECA Steep Slope, constitutes an area of existing development. Consequently, the portion of the project proposed to extend into the garage footprint qualifies for the Relief From Prohibition On Steep Slope Development, as described in SMC 25.09.180 B2a. An ECA Steep Slope Area Variance, or an Exception, is not required for this application provided all other development remains outside of the ECA Steep Slope and its buffer. Please note that the topographic contours shown on the uploaded site plan differ from those shown on the topographic survey. Delineation of the ECA Steep Slope and its buffer must be completed based on the topographic survey. Except as described herein, the remaining Environmentally Critical Areas requirements apply"

PUBLIC COMMENT
A number of comments were received related to the steep slope critical area as noted below. Although the site received a limited exemption from the development standards for steep slopes, the property is still subject to all other Environmental Critical Area standards, is regulated as a potential landslide, and is not exempt from SEPA review. SEPA review will occur after the applicant submits for a Master Use Permit. There will be another public comment period for the SEPA review related to the Environmental Critical Area. During the SEPA review, SDCI's geotechnical experts will determine if the impacts to soils can be sufficiently mitigated through the Grading Code and Stormwater Code review by the Geotechnical Engineer during the Building Permit phase of review.

The following public comment was received:

- Concerned with missing or incomplete information on Environmental Critical Area (ECA) issues.
- Noted that the property backs up to a non-natural critical slope, created by excavation, with a known history of slides and damage to uphill property and a history of litigation.
- The steep slope is more than 20-feet vertical rise and less than 30-feet from ECA slopes on adjoining properties both east and west of subject property.
- Retaining walls and/or engineered rockeries should be required to support ECA area.
- Noted that the property backs up to a designated King County Open Space, with protected vegetation. All code requirements for set-backs and steep slopes should be upheld.
- Concerned with stormwater management and street flooding; the current storm drains were designed and installed more than a century ago.
- Street drains, at present, are not adequate due to crowning of street which causes run-off to flow onto road surface and pool at the intersection of 37th S & S Dawson.
- As proposed, the development will result in increased drainage run-off, exacerbate the issue of runoff, and threatens the stability of the ECA hillside.
- Adequate surface water drainage, de-watering, stabilizing the steep slope and other mitigation measures should be required to manage run-off from subject property in the future.
- Would like to see useable and more parking incorporated.

PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and public comment, the Design Review Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project.

1) **Natural Systems and Site Features:** The proposed siting of the townhouse structures allows for the retention of the mature tree canopy and provides large areas for potential onsite stormwater infiltration.
    a. Staff strongly supports the proposed retention of the mature vegetation as it provides visual interest, natural habitat and buffering. Vehicular access to the site is proposed at the existing curb cut location to minimize impacts to the existing street tree canopy. Along with the Master Use Permit, provide more information on efforts to minimize potential impacts to the root zones and canopies. (CS1-D-1, CS2-D-2)
    b. Staff strongly agrees with the public comments regarding responsible stormwater management and encourages the use of onsite stormwater infiltration.

Incorporate project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements and planting. (CS1-E-2)

2) **Massing and Respect for Adjacent Sites:** The massing composition provides a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.
    a. The shifted massing has a strong presence, breaks down the perceived scale and bulk of the entire structure and provides a compelling composition. Each massing shift is further reinforced by material applications and fenestration patterns and should be carried forward in the final design. (DC2-B-1, DC2-C-2, DC2-D-2)
    b. A limited amount of windows are proposed along the east and west facades to minimize privacy impacts on adjacent sites. To demonstrate minimal window overlap, provide window overlay diagrams for the east and west elevations. (CS2-D-5, DC2-B-1)

3) **Walkability and Wayfinding:** Developing the transition from the street to unit entries and site circulation is important to provide opportunities for interaction and improve wayfinding.
    a. Staff strongly supports the direct connection and widened entry sequence for the street facing entries. These design elements should be carried forward in the final design. (PL2-D-1, PL3-A-3, PL3-A-4, PL3-B-4)
    b. All primary entries should be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive. Staff supports the accent color at the entries which clearly identify the entry for each unit. As the design develops, show how addressing will be incorporated. (PL2-D-1, PL3-A)
    c. For the hardscape, thoughtfully design the circulation pathway to avoid conflict with parked and moving vehicles and show how bike parking will be incorporated. Provide greater information on how parking for Unit 4 will be screened from the street. (PL4-A-1, DC1-C, DC3)
    d. Include lighting where appropriate to give a sense of security to walkways, parking areas, and entries without glaring lights. Provide a lighting plan. (PL2-B-2, DC4-C)

4) **Architectural Concept and Materials:** The treatment of the proposed materials further breaks down the perceived bulk and scale and improves the overall composition.
    a. The standing seam metal panel and horizontal lap siding provides scale and texture to the facades and should be maintained. Consider the use of other high-quality and durable materials, in particular for ground level areas adjacent to parking. (DC2-B-1, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)
    b. The soffit of the shifted/cantilevered massing will be highly visible. Consider the material treatment of these surfaces to strengthen the design concept. (DC2-B-1, DC2-C-2, DC2-D-2)
    c. The glass/open railing provides legibility to the shifted massing and should be carried forward in the final design. (DC2-A-2, DC2-B-1, DC2-C-2, DC2-D)
    d. Material joints relate to fenestration patterns and should be maintained. (DC2-A-2, DC2-B-1, DC2-D-2, DC4-A-1)

5) **Open Space Concept:** Add planting to soften the parking/pedestrian walkway area, screen trash areas and provide a pleasant pedestrian experience. Retain as much existing onsite planting as possible for visual interest and buffering. Provide more information on specific planting, fencing and the proposed improvements in the right of way. (CS1-D-1, CS2-D-2, PL1-B, PL1-C, DC3-A-1, DC3-C-2, DC4-D)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

CS1-E Water

CS1-E-2. Adding Interest with Project Drainage: Use project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements.

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-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

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.

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-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-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.

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-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.

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.

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-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-C Design

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

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-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.

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, no adjustments were requested.

STAFF DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the SDCI 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.