



## ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION

Project Number: 3022320 (formally 3016799)

Address: 4320 8<sup>TH</sup> Avenue Northeast

Applicant: Chip Kouba of Ecco Design, Inc.

Date: Wednesday, December 09, 2015

DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

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

Lot Area: 3,569 square feet

### Current Development:

The subject site includes one single-family structure and one accessory structure. Vehicular and pedestrian access is via 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. All existing structures are proposed for demolition.



### Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The surrounding development and neighborhood character consists primarily of multiple-family structures between two- and five-stories. Townhomes, rooming houses, and a few single family structures are found in the area. Commercial uses are located one block north and one block east.

**Access:**

Pedestrian access was proposed from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. No vehicular access was proposed.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposed one four-story residential structure containing 20 units. No on-site vehicular parking was proposed. Covered bicycle parking was proposed on the south portion of the site.

<b>EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 28, 2014</b>
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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3022320 (formally 3016799)) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](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](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

**DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The architect presented three design concepts. All schemes proposed a four-story residential structure containing studio and one-bedroom units with no on-site vehicular parking.

Option 1, the preferred option, proposed two masses connected in the middle by a shared stair and courtyard. An additional courtyard was proposed at the rear (east) of the structure. Two residential units face and are accessed directly from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. The shared central stair and courtyard was accessed via a pedestrian walkway from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast along the north property line. Two departure requests were included with this option, and were related to side setbacks and facade length.

Option 2 is described as a code compliant option. This option proposed one mass with variation in form along the west, south, and east facades. One shared residential entrance was proposed at the north portion of the site, connecting to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast along the north property line. Ground level shared amenities areas were proposed at the west and east portions of the site. No on-site vehicular parking was proposed.

Option 3 further modulated the form, and moved the main residential entry to the west façade facing the street. The shared entrance leads to the interior circulation which wrapped the structure along the north façade. Stairs were proposed at the west and east, and lead to the upper floors. Ground level amenity area was proposed to the east of the structure. No on-site vehicular parking was proposed.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following comments were expressed at the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Supported the amenity area/open space at the street;
- Encouraged no fencing around the street facing amenity areas to encourage street level interaction;
- Concerned about blank walls, and encouraged windows as a solution; and
- Concerned about loading.

## **RECOMMENDATION December 9, 2015**

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3022320 (formally 3016799)) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

## **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

This application (3016799) was submitted on June 12, 2014 as a full design review application. The proposal was reviewed for Early Design Guidance by the Northeast Board on July 28, 2014. Guidance from the Board is included above. New legislation regarding Small Efficiency Dwelling Units was passed in October 2014. In response to this new legislation, the applicant requested to pursue the design as a Streamlined Design Review (SDR) proposal. A new application, with new number (3020823), was submitted on June 11, 2015. During review of SDR, the need for a departure was identified. Departure requests require Administrative Design Review. The scope and design of the proposal did not substantially change from the proposal reviewed by the Board during EDG; therefore, it was agreed that the work completed for 3016799 thus far, could be used, and the application reinstated.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment describing concerns about parking was received.

## **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.

## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 28, 2014

The Citywide and Neighborhood specific 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-C Topography**

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the existing retaining wall and change in topography between the subject site and the property to the east. The Board supported the common area patio at this location next to the retaining wall, and requested renderings, sections, and/or other graphics to further illustrate the functionality of this area relative to the retaining wall.

**In the Recommendation packet, the retaining wall was described relative to existing and finished grade and the project. The retaining wall is screened with landscaping. The project has considered the site topography when locating the open space. The proposal meets Guideline CS1-C**

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the position of the proposed structure relative to the adjacent residential structures to the north and to the south. The Board supported the proposed building mass relationship to the context as it allows for greater square footage for the open common patio at the rear of the site (to the east). The Board agreed that Option 1 demonstrates the best option for respect for adjacent sites by orienting units to place eyes on the street and on the courtyard.

**In the Recommendation packet, the common patio has retained its location, and units are oriented to place eyes on the street. The proposal meets Guidelines CS2-C and CS2-D.**

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**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-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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the contemporary nature of the existing architectural context provides cues to inform the design of the proposal in this evolving neighborhood. A materials board should be included in the Recommendation Meeting packet.

**In the Recommendation packet a materials board was presented. Materials include cementitious panels, wood veneer, structural concrete, stained wood, steel, and aluminum. The proposed palette responds to nearby contemporary context and meets Guideline CS3-A.**

**PUBLIC LIFE**

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

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL1-I Residential Open Space**

**PL1-I-i. Active, Ground-Level Open Space:** The ground-level open space should be designed as a plaza, courtyard, play area, mini-park, pedestrian open space, garden, or similar occupiable site feature. The quantity of open space is less important than the provision of functional and visual ground-level open space. Successfully designed ground level open space should meet these objectives:

- a. Reinforces positive streetscape qualities by providing a landscaped front yard, adhering to common setback dimensions of neighboring properties, and providing a transition between public and private realms.
- b. Provides for the comfort, health, and recreation of residents.
- c. Increases privacy and reduce visual impacts to all neighboring properties.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the front setback and opportunity for landscape along the street. Fencing should not be proposed around the open space at this location. Additionally, the Board supported the location of the common area patio at the rear of the site. The Board requested the following information be provided at the Recommendation meeting: a landscape plan, and perspective drawings, sections, renderings, etc. illustrating the relationship of the open common patio and the building, pedestrian path, and existing retaining wall.

In the Recommendation packet, a landscape plan, perspective drawings, sections and renderings have been included to describe the relationship of the open common patio and the building, path, and retaining wall. The front setback is landscaped with trees and shrubs to provide screening and human scale at the sidewalk. The common patio is treated with pervious paving and a landscape buffer adjacent the retaining wall on the east property line. Maintain landscaping along the retaining wall at the east property line. Such a condition is included herein.

**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-D Wayfinding**

**PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding:** Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that Option 1 provides the best response to safety and security by providing opportunity for eyes on the street and eyes on the open space patio. The Board recommended the use of signage and lighting to clearly identify the path to the main entrance and open space patio. The Board requested that, at the Recommendation meeting, perspectives, diagrams, and/or renderings be presented to illustrate the open space patio relative to these guidelines.

In the Recommendation packet, lighting is illustrated along the shared pedestrian path, at the main entrance, and in the common patio area. Lighting should be provided at sufficient lumen intensities and scales to provide lighting for safety. Include in the MUP plan set a lighting plan. Such a condition is included herein.

**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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that the entries are of chief concern. The Board agreed that the residential entries at the street façade may be confusing and reading not as individual unit entries, but as a main common entry. The Board recommended consideration of additional stoops or moving the location of the entries.

The common building entry is proposed on the north façade and accessed via a pedestrian path along the north property line. The Board recommended the use of architectural elements, landscaping, signage, lighting, etc. to create an entry that is obvious, identifiable, and distinctive.

The basement units include light wells at ground level, resulting in windows extending approximately two feet above the ground. The Board noted potential security and privacy concerns at these light wells, and recommended measures to promote security, such as the use of bars, screens, and/or landscaping. The Board requested that additional information be presented at the Recommendation meeting that further describes the treatment of these light wells and how they function. Perspectives from the street and on-site public realm were requested.

**In the Recommendation packet, the main residential entry is shown to have responded to the guidance from the Board. The main entry is now located on the north façade, accessed via a shared walkway along the north property line. The entry is distinct and identifiable through the use of lighting, signage, and landscaping. The design of this entry at this location is critical to the design approval. To address the Board’s concerns of privacy and security for the basement units and light wells, the proposal includes decorative security grills and landscaping between the structure and the street.**

### ***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL3-I-iv. Fences:** In residential projects, front yard fences over 4 feet in height that reduce visual access and security should be avoided.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the landscaping at the street level, and directed the applicant to avoid fencing at this location. The Board requested a landscape plan be presented at the Recommendation meeting.

**In the Recommendation packet, the landscape illustrates a variety of trees and shrubs between the street and the structure. Unit entries have been removed, and fencing is not proposed. The proposal meets Guidelines PL3-A, PL3-B, and PL3-I-iv.**

**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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board supported the location of the bicycle parking. The Board requested that additional information be presented at the Recommendation meeting that clearly illustrates how this space is designed, and how it will work. Additional information should be in the form of perspectives, renderings, sections, etc.

**In the Recommendation packet, the site plan illustrates that the bicycle parking is the location supported by the Board. An entry gate and fence provide security from the street, and the bicycle racks are covered. The proposal meets Guideline PL4-B.**

**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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the potential functionality of the trash/recycling relative to the bicycle parking and other circulation in this area. The Board requested that additional information be presented at the Recommendation meeting that clearly describes how this space will work and what it will look like. Additional information should be in the form of perspectives, renderings, sections, etc.

**In the Recommendation packet, the trash/recycling storage area and bicycle parking area are separated from the sidewalk by grade, fencing, and a gate. Both areas are sheltered by the building and accessed via a shared walkway along the south property line. This area should be screened and incorporated into the structure's architectural concept. Ensure the screening and location reduces possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation. Such a condition is contained herein.**

**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-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-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.

**DC2-E Form and Function**

**DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility:** Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the legibility of the design relative to the two private residential entrances facing the street, and recommended that the façade composition and architectural expression clearly express the private entries as different from the common entry. The Board requested that a materials board be presented in the packet at the Recommendation meeting, and that the applicant further develop the two private residential entries.

**In the Recommendation packet, the two individual entries are shown to have been removed. One shared entry is located on the north façade, and landscaping is provided between the street and the structure. The ground level street facing façade is adorned with wood veneer and large unit windows. The design changes respond to the EDG and meet Guidelines DC2-B, DC2-D, DC2-E.**

**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-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.

**DC3-C Design**

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board supported the location of the common area patio since it provides opportunity for social interaction. The Board requested additional

renderings, sections, perspectives, etc. be presented at the Recommendation meeting to further describe the aesthetics and functionality of this space.

**In the Recommendation packet, renderings and graphics are included to describe the common area patio. The area is treated with pervious paving and landscape buffer along the east property line. Lighting is proposed for safety and visual interest, and seating will be provided. The design changes respond to the EDG and meet Guidelines DC3-B and DC3-C.**

**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-2. Coordination with Project Design:** Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

**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.

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the use of exterior finish materials, signage, lighting, and/or landscaping and hardscaping should be used to identify key elements of the project, such as entries, services, and open spaces. The Board requested that the Recommendation meeting packet include information describing proposed materials, signage, lighting, and landscaping. Information shall be provided in the form of plans, sections, perspectives, renderings, etc.

In the Recommendation packet, plans, sections, perspectives, and renderings are provided to describe proposed materials, signage, lighting, and landscaping. Materials include cementitious panels, wood veneer, structural concrete, stained wood, steel, and aluminum. The proposed finish materials identify key elements of the project and meet Guidelines DC4-A through DC4-D.

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Recommendation review, the following departures were requested:

1. **Side Setbacks (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires side setbacks for facades greater than 40-feet in length to be seven feet average, five feet minimum. Forms of weather protection may project into the required setback a maximum of four-feet if no closer than three-feet to any lot line. The applicant proposes translucent canopies over the main building entry at the north façade and the bicycle parking area at the south facade. The canopies project into the required average setback, but do not project into the minimum setback.

The Board indicated preliminary support for this departure, at the EDG meeting, assuming it provides a design that better meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines.

**At the Recommendation review, staff recommended granting the departure. The project of the translucent canopies into the required average setback results in a better scaled project response to existing adjacent development, provides for a generous building entry, and covered and secure bicycle parking (CS1-B, CS2-D, DC2-A).**

2. **Maximum Façade Length (SMC 23.45.527.B.):** The Code allows a maximum combined length of all portions of facades within 15-feet of a lot line that is neither a rear lot line nor street or alley lot line to be 65 percent of the length of that lot line. The applicant proposes an increase in façade length to 78% to allow for the extension of the stairwell to the basement units, this will allow additional ground level exterior open space.

The Board indicated preliminary support for this departure, at the EDG meeting, assuming it provides a design that better meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines.

**At the Recommendation review, staff recommended granting the departure. The increased façade length is mitigated with the use of translucent canopies and glazing. The departure provides a design that better meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines. (CS1-B, CS2-D, PL3-A, DC2-A).**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Wednesday, June 03, 2015. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, staff recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with the following condition.

1. The solid waste and recycle area is located along the south elevation, covered by the building overhang. Ensure this area is screened and incorporated into the structure's architectural concept. Ensure the screening and location reduces possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation. (DC1-C)
2. Modify the MUP plan set to show sufficient pedestrian level lighting for safety (PL2-B, PL2-D).
3. Screen the solid waste area at the south façade to relate to the proposed design concept and minimize impacts to pedestrian circulation (DC1-C).