City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

DESIGN GUIDANCE
STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

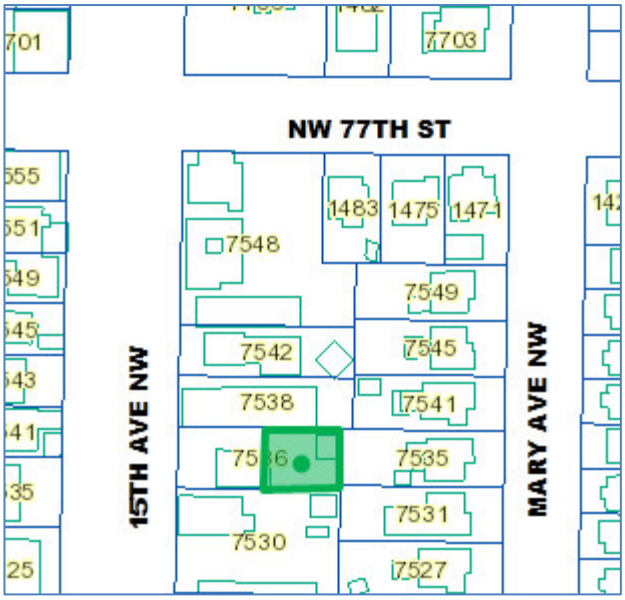
Project Number:	3022783
Address:	7534 15th Avenue Northwest
Applicant:	Ray Gontarz, Playhouse Design Group
Date of Report:	Monday, February 22, 2016
DPD Staff Present:	Carly Guillory, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2-40 Foot Height Limit (NC2-40) and Single Family 5000 Minimum Lot Size (SF5000)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2-40
(South) NC2P-40
(East) SF5000
(West) NC2-40

Lot Area: 3,330 square feet



Current Development:

The subject site is currently occupied by a single-family structure and detached garage.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development consists of residential and commercial uses. Adjacent to the south is a project currently undergoing review for 53 live/work and townhouse units. Development along 15th Ave NW consist of one- and two-story commercial structures, while development to the east consists of one- and two-story single family residential structures.

Access:

Vehicular access is proposed via a shared access easement with a curb cut at 15th Ave NW. Pedestrian access is proposed along the north property line.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Streamlined Design Review application proposing a 3-story structure containing 3 townhouse units. Surface parking for 3 vehicles. Existing structure to be removed. Adjacent the site to the west is a site containing two live-work units. This site provides access from 15th Ave NW to project via a shared driveway.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was received expressing concern that the project may be encroaching on adjacent property to the east.

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 Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

1. **Site Planning and Public Realm**.
    a. The design guidelines response on page 20 of the packet describes the location of garbage and recycling as located in the first floor of each unit; however, it is not clear from the site and/or floor plans where this storage is located or how it meets the requirements of the Code. Include in the building plan details the location of the garbage and recycle storage area and how it complies with the requirements of the Land Use Code (DC1-B).
    b. Three vehicular surface parking spaces are proposed in the central courtyard, abutting the south property line. Ensure adequate screening at the property line

is provided to mitigate light and glare impacts on the property to the south (CS2-D, DC1-C).

c. A pedestrian walkway is proposed along the north property line, providing access to the units from 15th Ave NW. Consider relocating this walkway to the south property line to coincide with the pedestrian walkway proposed on the property to the south (PL1-B).

d. Ensure visible, adequate address signage is demarcated at the street for the three townhouse units (DC4-B).

2. **Design Concept**. The design of the new residential building should provide an appropriate transition to the single-family zone to the east, be respectful of adjacent properties, and establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future (CS2-D, CS3-A).

a. The stair penthouses extend the width of each townhouse, creating a four-story height as viewed from the east. This increase in height, bulk, and scale creates a less sympathetic transition to the SF5000 development to the east. The height of the stair penthouses should not exceed the minimum requirement of the building and energy codes (DC2-A, CS2-D).

b. Care should be taken to design the east facade to minimize views into abutting residential uses. A diagram overlaying the glazing of the two facing elevations should be provided to verify that privacy is maintained (CS2-D).

c. The three townhouse units face and receive access from the shared vehicular court. Design entry sequences to clearly articulate each unit and create separation from semi-public to private space (PL-A, PL-B).

d. Locate windows with high use living spaces in areas that obscure direct line of site into adjacent structure windows, private yards, and along common pathways within the site. Obscured glazing, landscaping, and fencing may be used to mitigate adverse privacy impacts to neighbors (CS2-D).

e. Minimal façade modulation is proposed, with large volumes expressed using changes in color. The internal circulation is expressed with gray hardie panel siding while the second and third living areas are expressed with dark brown hardie panels. It is not clear how the transition from gray hardie panel to brown hardie panel will be treated. Include careful detailing at these locations to ensure an intentional façade composition (DC2-B, DC2-C).

f. It appears the end units have a framing element that results in slight modulation from the center unit creating a slight recess. Create a greater articulation of this framing element to further differentiate the units and add visual depth and interest to the façade (DC2-C).

g. Wood cladding is proposed at the entries to each unit, providing texture and warmth to the entry sequence. Maintain the wood cladding at these locations (DC2-A).

h. The south façade abuts the south property line; therefore, contains no openings. Further develop the treatment of this south elevation to avoid a large visible blank wall and provide texture and interest of a human scale. Consider ways in

which the façade could relate to the pedestrian walkway that is proposed on the property abutting to the south (DC2-B).

i. Choose durable materials to enhance the structure, add variety to the architectural form, and establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future (CS3-A, DC2-A).
j. Exterior lighting should be used to increase safety in areas used by pedestrians. Include in the plan set a conceptual lighting plan illustrating lighting along the pedestrian walkways and at the main entry (PL2-B, DC4-C).
k. Provide information describing the hardscape materials proposed for the pedestrian walkways and main entry. Differentiate these shared on-site circulation areas from the public sidewalk (PL1-B).

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-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

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-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.

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.

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-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.

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-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.

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.

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-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-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-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-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.

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-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

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-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-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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS

Design Review Staff's recommendation on requested adjustments is to 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 adjustments.

At the time of Design Guidance, no adjustments were requested.

STAFF DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the DPD 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 building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.

2. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report.

3. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.