City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

DESIGN GUIDANCE
STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

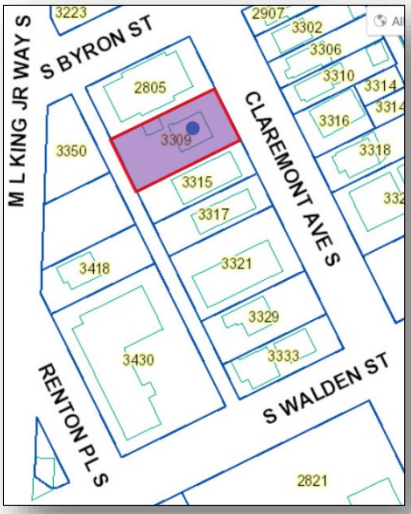
Project Number:	3022859
Address:	3309 Claremont Ave S
Applicant:	Steven Long, Playhouse Design Group
Date of Report:	Wednesday, July 13, 2016
DPD Staff:	Colin R. Vasquez

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise Three (LR3)
North Rainier
Hub Urban Village

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

Lot Area: 7,200 square feet.



Current Development:

The rectangular-shaped project site is on the western block front abutting Claremont Ave S. A single family residence currently occupies the site. The parcel measures 60' wide by 120' deep. The site slopes up from the west to the east, with a grade change of approximately 1'.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Development along the block front is a mix of multifamily residences and single family residences ranging between 1 and 3 stories. Architectural styles and generations, include middle 20th century residential buildings, contemporary style townhouses and single family structures. Recently built projects have been in the modern style.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes the construction of one, three-story townhouse with four units and one, three-story townhouse with three units. No parking is proposed. The existing building will be demolished.

Access:

Pedestrian access is located adjacent to the street and on the north side of the structures. No vehicle parking is proposed on the site. Street and alley access to the site connects to S Byron St and S Walden St.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comment was received during the comment period ending on June 29th 2016:

- Concerned about the lack of parking for the proposal.

PRIORITIES & DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, the Design Review Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines and Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

STREAMLINE DESIGN GUIDANCE:

1. **Site Planning**. The proposed townhouses are located on the western block front of Claremont Ave S. Pedestrian access has been proposed that provides individual residential entries.
   a. The final design should continue to include the setbacks that create pedestrian oriented spaces that enlivens these areas and attracts interest/interaction with the site (PL1-B-1).
   b. The building design should continue to include the color or material changes between the pedestrian pathways and the permeable pavement area to reduce the visual impacts of this area and to clarify the pedestrian circulation routes (DC1-C2, DC2-D1, DC4-D2).

2. **Massing Compatibility.**
   a. The proposed setbacks are positive and should be preserved as shown. These setbacks and modulation will reduce the overall massing of the development (See 1.a. above). The height of the stair penthouses should not exceed the minimum requirements of the building and energy code (CS2-D-5, DC2-A2).

3. **Further Treatment of Setbacks.** Setbacks provided at the perimeter of the site should provide usable pedestrian access for residents while also acting as a transition area to adjacent sites.
   a. Develop landscaping in the front setback that differentiates the resident setback from the public right-of-way (DC4-D).
   b. Utilize low-level landscaping and cut-off lighting within the front setback to create private, defensible and safe pedestrian spaces (DC4-C).
   c. Provide vertical screening along the side property lines to help mitigate privacy impacts at ground level along the pedestrian pathways (DC1-C2).

4. **Maximize Privacy.** The proposed development must provide privacy for the adjacent structures. Locate windows with high use living spaces so they avoid direct line of sight into adjacent structure windows and private yards (CS2-D).

5. **Identifiable Residential Entries.** Residential entries are an important introduction to the site for residents and visitors.
   a. The residential entries for the townhouse units are successful at creating a strong connection to the street and public realm. Additionally, they contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood where older structures include street facing residential entries. These should be maintained for these reasons. (CS2-A-2, CS2-B-2, CS3)
   b. Use residential lighting and signage as a point of continuity in the overall development (PL3-A).
   c. The building permit should provide more detail on the use of lighting, signage, pavers and landscaping to frame and guide residents and visitors from the street to individual units (PL3-A).

6. **Develop Architectural Concept and Material Palette.** Choose durable materials to enhance the structure, add variety to the architectural form and knit the structures into the neighborhood context.
   a. The drawings for the exterior façades note wood cladding, cementitious panels, and cementitious lap siding to break up the façades (pp. 16 and 17). The building permit needs to carry forward this architectural form and materials (DC2-B, DC2-E).
   b. The building permit should carry forward the material patterning; color and size that provide visual interest and break the façades into discrete sections (DC2-B, DC2-C, DC4).
   c. The texture and construction of the exterior materials on the structures should continue to be shown at the building permit phase (DC4-A).

7. **Pavement Area and Service Uses**
   a. The design for the permeable pavement area could serve as a multiple use area that can be used as an outdoor gathering area, sports court, or woonerf type space (PL1-C, DC1-C-3).

b. Supply more information at the building permit stage, showing materials used for pervious paving, landscaping, lighting and fencing (DC4-D).

8. **Placement and Screening of Solid Waste and Recycling.** Provide the location of proposed solid waste and recycling storage. Show how the proposed location for the solid waste and recycling storage is well designed and well screened. These facilities need to demonstrate that they complement the building aesthetics and provide good pedestrian circulation. (DC1-C4).

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-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

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.

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-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

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-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-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

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.

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

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

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.

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

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

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.

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-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.

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-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

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.

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-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.

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-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-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.

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.

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.

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space 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.

DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas: Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

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-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

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.

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.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan

DC4-E-1. Deconstruction: When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

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 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 MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.

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

3. Your building permit application shall include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report. Colored elevations, a colored landscape plan and material details shall also be included in the building permit application.

4. 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