



## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3022902

Address: 2429 55<sup>th</sup> Ave SW

Applicant: Yoriko Endo, Caron Architecture

Date of Report: Monday, March 07, 2016

SDCI Staff: BreAnne McConkie, Land Use Planner

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Low Rise 1 (LR1)

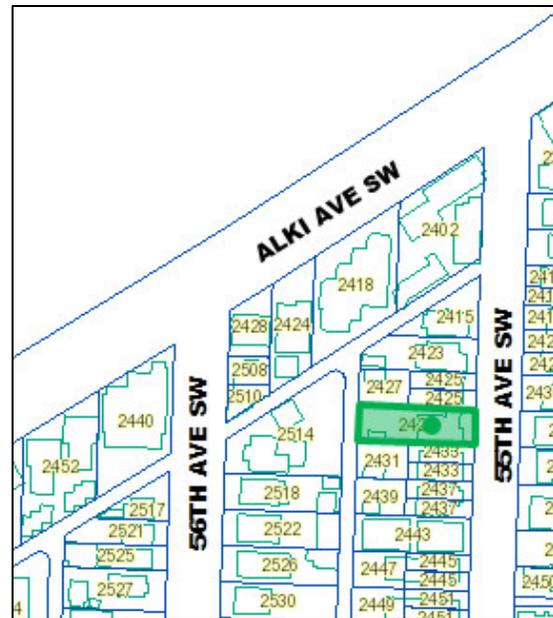
Nearby Zones: (North) LR1  
(South) LR1  
(East) LR1  
(West) Single Family 5000  
(SF5000)

Lot Area: 5,130 sq. ft.

**Current Development:** The site contains a single family residential structure with a detached garage and mature vegetation including two exceptional Deodar Cedars located near the alley.

### Surrounding Development and Neighborhood

**Character:** The site, located one block south of Alki Avenue, fronts 55<sup>th</sup> Ave SW to the east and an alley to the west. The surrounding development consists of a mix of contemporary townhouse development and older single family structures.



**Access:** Existing and proposed vehicular access to the site is from the adjacent alley.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:** The entire site is mapped as an ECA Liquefaction Prone Area.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Streamlined Design Review to allow three new single family dwelling units. Parking for three vehicles will be located on the site. Existing structures to be demolished.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comment period commenced on December 31, 2015. The public comments received are summarized below:

- Desire to maintain existing trees near the alley.
- Two Bald Eagles regularly perch in the trees and other wildlife, including a Great Blue Heron, has been seen there.
- Questioned the setback for the proposed units.
- Desire for alley drainage to be resolved noting it currently lacks proper drainage and contains water for a majority of the year.

## PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

After 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 of highest priority for this project.

### 1. Siting, Bulk, & Scale.

- a. At building permit stage, submit a window and privacy study for the existing development to the north and south to demonstrate that windows have been placed in a way that respects the privacy of the adjacent uses and the requested front setback will not impact the privacy of the adjacent uses and their amenity areas. **(CS2-D-5, PL3-B-1)**
- b. The penthouses should be reduced to the minimum height, bulk, and scale allowable by building code. **(CS2-D-1, DC2-A-1.)**
- c. Staff does not support the proposed 3.5' front setback because it is incompatible with the streetscape and surrounding development, notably closer to the front lot line than any of the newer existing development, and is inconsistent with Design Guidelines CS2-C-2 and CS3-A-3.

Staff would support adjustments to minimize the building separation and at grade amenity space requirements to the maximum extent allowable by code in order to maintain the full required front setback. A 5' average, 5' minimum front setback is the minimum staff would support. **(CS2-C-2, CS3-A-3)**

- d. Explore providing required at-grade amenity space at the rear of the lot in order to minimize building separation and maximize the front setback. **(CS2-C-2, CS3-A-3)**
- 2. Façade Composition & Secondary Architectural Features.**
- a. Strengthen the relationship between the street-facing unit and the street including a direct sidewalk connection, an enhanced transitional front porch space, and additional secondary architectural features including a larger canopy to denote the entry. **(CS2-B-2, PL3-A, PL2-C, DC2-C)**
  - b. Use a lighter material along the north and west elevations to reflect more light. **(CS1-B-2)**
  - c. Include pedestrian scaled, down lighting along the shared pedestrian walkway. **(DC2-D-1, PL2-B-2)**
- 3. Trees, Amenity Spaces, & Parking.**
- a. Incorporate measures such as landscaping and/or low fencing to further delineate and enhance the individual amenity spaces with the intent of making the at grade amenity spaces more usable. **(DC3-B-2, DC3-C)**
  - b. At Design Guidance, staff indicated support for the proposed parking requirement modifications in order to preserve the two Exceptional Trees. Preservation of the trees and the responding site design incorporates on-site natural habitats and landscape elements and provides a desirable buffer to the adjacent single family zone to the west consistent with design guidelines **CS1-D-1, CS2-D-1, and CS2-D-3.**

**DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

<b>CONTEXT &amp; SITE</b>
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**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-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.

**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.

**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-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-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-3. Established Neighborhoods:** In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

**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**

**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-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage:** Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**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.

**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.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

**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-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-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

**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-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-C Design**

**DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space:** Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

**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-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-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 adjustments 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 adjustments.

At the time of Design Guidance, the following adjustments were requested:

- 1. Front Setback (SMC 45.518 Table A):** The Code requires a 7' average, 5' minimum front setback. The applicant proposes a 3.5' minimum, 3.5' average setback, 50% less than the code requirement.

DPD staff was concerned with the proposed 3.5' front setback because of its incompatibility with the existing streetscape and surrounding development, it is notably closer to the front lot line than any of the newer existing development, and is inconsistent with Design

Guidelines CS2-C-2 and CS3-A-3.

Staff indicated support for adjustments to minimize the building separation and at grade amenity space requirements to the maximum extent allowable by code order to maintain the full required front setback and noted a 5' average, 5' minimum front setback is the minimum staff would likely support. (CS2-C-2, CS3-A-3)

- 2. Side Setback (SMC 45.518 Table A):** The Code requires a 5' side setback. The applicant proposes a 4' setback along the southern property line, a 20% reduction from what is required by code.

DPD staff indicated initial support for the requested side setback adjustment noting that it was tied to the preservation of the two existing Exceptional Trees and additional open space and relief was provided at the rear of the lot consistent with Design Guidelines CS1-D-1, CS2-D-1, and CS2-D-3.

## **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. 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. Along with your building permit application, please include information on proposed measures to protect the Exceptional Trees during construction.
5. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.