



DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3022961

Address: 8532 Midvale Ave N

Applicant: Dennis Christianson, Rolluda Architects

Date of Report: Friday, February 14, 2014

SDCI Staff: BreAnne McConkie, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 2 (LR2)

Nearby Zones: (North) LR2
(South) LR2
(East) LR2
(West) LR3

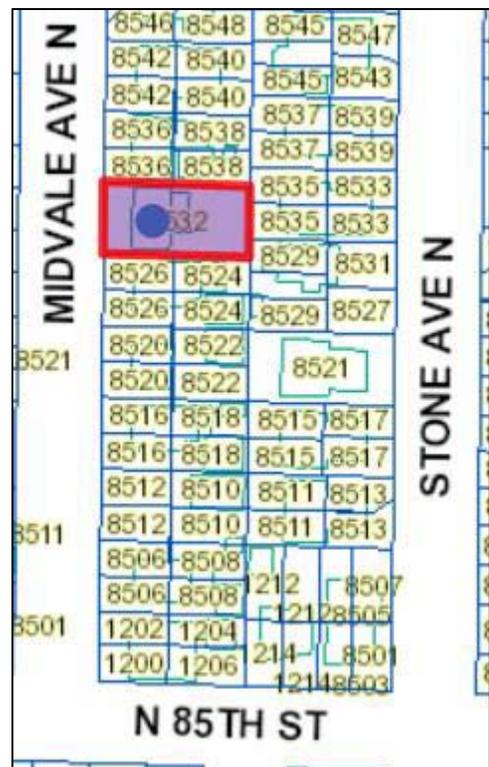
Lot Area: 5,125 square feet (sq. ft.)

Current Development:

The site contains a single family structure, three Exceptional Trees including an Atlas Cedar, Pine, and Sitka Spruce, as well as two additional mature non-exceptional trees.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The project site, located in the Aurora-Licton Springs Residential Urban Village Area, fronts Midvale Ave N and is surrounded primarily by townhomes built in the early 2000's.



Access:

Current and proposed vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is from Midvale Ave N. There is no alley access.

Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs):

There are no ECAs onsite.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Streamlined Design Review to allow removal of five significant trees (three of which are Exceptional) and for 3 new single family dwelling units with attached single car garages. Existing structure to be demolished.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comment period ended on May 25, 2016. Several comments were received regarding preservation of existing mature trees onsite and protecting privacy with neighboring units.

PRIORITIES & BOARD 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 & Exceptional Trees

- a. For the building permit, all trees must be accurately identified on the site plan and tree protection areas for exceptional trees must be identified on the site plan.
- b. Staff supports the general alternative siting shown on page 21 of the SDR packet and does not support the applicant's preferred option shown on page 20. The alternative site configuration maximizes tree retention and provides more generous setbacks and at grade open space. The applicant should move forward with the alternative site plan with the guidance outlined in this report. Staff would support adjustments in order to maximize tree retention. (CS1-D, DC3-C)
- c. Based on the alternative site plan shown on page 21, it appears the Exceptional Tree has been incorrectly identified. The Atlas Cedar and Douglas Fir located in the center/southwest portion of the front yard should remain. (CS1-D, DC3-C)
- d. The generous at-grade amenity space located at the southeast portion of the site is desirable and should be included in the final design. (CS1-D, DC3-C)

2. Entries & Orientation

- a. Staff supports the inclusion of pavers along the driveway space because it provides pedestrian scale and texture and reinforces the entries. (DC4-D, PL3-A)
- b. The applicant should explore flipping the layout of each of the duplexes to provide habitable space along the street (western unit) and adjacent to the at grade amenity space (middle unit) as well as additional opportunities for windows and natural light into the living spaces located on the ground floor. (PL2-B, PL3-A, DC1-A, DC2-B,C)
- c. The entry should be located on the street facing façade and additional transparency at grade should be included. (DC2-B&C, DC2-B, PL3-A)
- d. Explore ways to strengthen the relationship to the street by including transitional elements such as a front porch or stoop and/or direct pedestrian walkway from the street to the front unit. (PL3-A, CS2-B)

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.

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-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.

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.

PUBLIC LIFE

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

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

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-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

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

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

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-B Architectural and Façade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building façades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all façades 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 façades 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 façades 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.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-C Design

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-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.

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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS

At the time of Design Guidance, the no adjustments were requested. Staff would support adjustments in order to maximize tree retention onsite.

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. All trees must be accurately identified on the site plan and tree protection areas for exceptional trees must be identified on the site plan. The tree protection area may be reduced if approved by the Director according to a plan prepared by a tree care professional. Such reduction shall be limited to one-third of the area within the outer half of the area within the drip line. In no case shall the reduction occur within the inner root zone. In addition, the Director may establish conditions for protecting the tree during construction within the feeder root zone.
4. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report.
5. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.