



# City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections  
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN  
REVIEW

## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3023693

Address: 5940 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue South

Applicant: Moon Zhang of Playhouse Design Group

Date of Report: Wednesday, April 13, 2016

DPD Staff Present: Carly Guillory

### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

Nearby Zones: (North) Commercial 1 – 65-foot height limit (C1-65)  
(South) C1-65  
(East) C1-65  
(West) C1-65

Lot Area: 6,993 square feet

### Current Development:

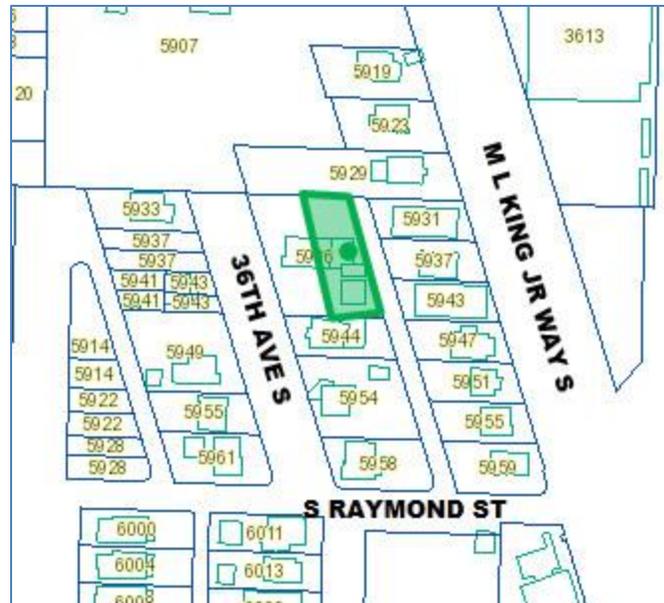
The subject site currently contains a single-family structure.

### Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development consists of a variety of residential and commercial development including residential and commercial uses. Residential development fronts 36<sup>th</sup> Ave S while commercial development can be found one block east on Martin Luther King, Jr Way S.

**Access:** Vehicular access to the site is proposed via the abutting alley to the east.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:** None.



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Land Use Application for Streamlined Design Review to allow one, 3-story, 7 unit townhouse structure. Parking for 11 vehicles to be provided. Existing structure to be demolished.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comment period ended March 30, 2016. Comments received expressed concern about construction impacts.

## 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.**
  - a. Lighting is proposed along the pathways and at unit entries to provide wayfinding and safety and security. Include in the plan set a lighting plan and ensure exterior lighting is screened from adjacent development (PL2-B, DC4-C).
  - b. The shared pathway leading to each unit entry is separated from the entries with a landscape buffer. Include a detailed landscaping plan with robust landscaping between the shared walkway and unit entries to ensure privacy and an appropriate transition from this shared to private space (PL3-A).
  - c. The solid waste and recycle storage area is proposed at the southeast corner of the site near the alley. This storage area is proposed to be screened with vinyl fencing. Submit details describing the screening of this storage area. Use durable materials (DC1-B).
  - d. Private amenity area is proposed along the north property line, and common amenity area is proposed along the south property line. Ensure adequate amenity area is designed consistent with the architectural concept. Include in the plan set a detailed landscape plan and amenity area diagram (PL1-C, DC3-B).
  - e. Landscaping is proposed between the surface parking and the south property line, with the solid waste and recycle storage area against the south property line. Further develop this area to ensure adequate screening and mitigation of odor impacts to residents and adjacent development (DC1-C, DC3-A).
2. **Architectural Concept.**
  - a. Materials and colors include light grey, yellow, dark grey, and brown hardie panel siding and vinyl windows. Include color elevations detailing the panel joints (DC4-A).

- b. The ground level is treated with light grey and warm yellow hardie panel siding, while the upper levels are treated with dark grey and brown hardie panel siding, respectively. The use of dark grey and brown siding on the upper levels is difficult to differentiate. Further refine the color application on the upper two levels to further differentiate each unit and more clearly articulate the verticality of the structure, thereby reducing perceived bulk (DC2-B, DC4-A).

## 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-A Location in the City and Neighborhood**

**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-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.

### **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-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-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.

**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.

**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.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

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

**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-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-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.

**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-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 adjustment was 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.

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

1. **Front Setback (SMC 23.45.518.A.):** The Code requires a front setback of 5-foot minimum, 7-foot average. The applicant proposes a 50% decrease in the average setback to 3-foot, 6-inches.

DPD staff indicated support of the adjustment. The subject site does not have street frontage; therefore, the alley lot line is considered the front lot line for purposes of setbacks. The proposed reduction in this front setback, along the alley lot line, results in the largest allowable setback from the west lot line, thereby resulting in a greater separation from future development of that abutting lot. This site placement respects adjacent properties by minimizing the disruption of privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings. The adjustment request results in a proposal that better meets the intent of the design guidelines (CS2-D *Respect for Adjacent Site*).

2. **Amenity Area (SMC 23.45.522):** The Code requires 25% of the lot area to be amenity area. The applicant proposes a 6% reduction in the total amenity area to 1,588 square feet.

DPD staff indicated support of the adjustment contingent upon the design and treatment of the amenity area. As conceptually proposed, a majority of the common amenity area is located at the southeast portion of the site. This area should include layered landscaping, clear connectivity, and amenities for residents. Ensure adequate screening of the trash and recycle storage area. Include in the plan set a detailed landscape plan. An integrated amenity area with pedestrian amenities to create opportunity for lively, pedestrian oriented open space will better meet the intent of the

design guidelines. Examples of pedestrian amenities include seating, lighting, year-round landscaping, and seasonal plantings (PL1-B *Pedestrian Amenities*).

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