



City of Seattle

Department of Construction & Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3023574 and 3024001

Address: 8015 15th Ave NW
8023 15th Ave NW

Applicant: Julian Weber, JWA

Date of Meeting: Monday, May 09, 2016

Board Members Present: Christopher Bell (Chair)
Marc Angelillo
Emily McNichols
Keith Walzak

Board Members Absent: Dale Kutzero

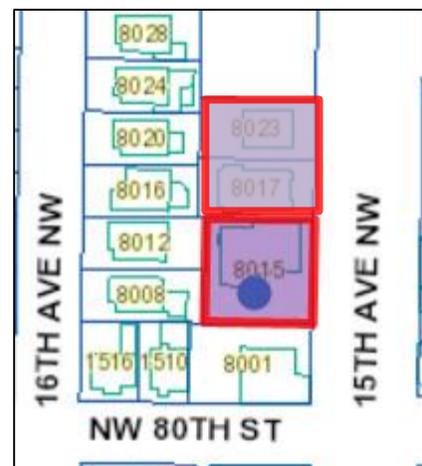
SDCI Staff Present: Crystal Torres, SDCI Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial (NC2-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) Neighborhood Commercial (NC3P-40)
(South) Neighborhood Commercial (NC2-40)
(East) Single Family (SF-5000)
(West) Single Family (SF-5000)

Lot Area: 4,800 sq. ft.



Current Development:

There is currently a single story single structure on each property.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The midblock site is located on the west side of 15th Ave NW north of NW 80th St. in the Crown Hill Residential Urban Village. The midblock site is located on the west side of 15th Ave NW and north of NW 80th St. in the Crown Hill Residential Urban Village. The neighborhood character along the 15th Ave NW commercial corridor is transitioning from small one-story retail establishments to larger contemporary mixed-use development. To the west is an established single family residential neighborhood.

Access:

Two curb cuts are proposed along 15th Ave NW.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

No mapped Environmentally Critical Areas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The application is for 9 townhouse units in three structures and 9 parking spaces on each project site for a total of 18 townhouse units and 18 parking spaces. Existing structures to be demolished.

The design packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3023574 and 3024001) at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCl:

Mailing Public Resource Center
Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Several members of the public were in attendance at this meeting and offered the following comments:

- Concerned with not activating the street.
- Concerned the proposed design does not provide adequate buffering for the ground floor units along 15th Ave NW.
- Concerned with the impacts of the proposed reduced sight triangles on both vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Concerned with the proposed single drive access along 15th Ave NW.
- Concerned with the proposed height and privacy impacts to the west of the project site.
- Concerned with the slope of the property and maintain a retaining wall along the western edge of the property where the site abuts single family.
- Concerned with the lack of guest parking.
- Concerned with the viability of the proposed amenity space located in between the proposed structures.
- Commented that actual retail uses was preferred along the street.
- Suggested exploring a chamfered edge at the first floor to improve the visibility of the access driveways.
- Concerned with the lack of notification of proposed project to the existing tenants of the project site.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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 Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

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The Board discussed the presented options and determined further exploration was necessary to resolve the following:

1. Circulation/Access/Interior Area

- a. The Board echoed the public's concerns regarding the proposed single access driveways and reduced sight triangles. **DC1-B-1**

- b. The Board encouraged further exploration of site plan layouts that would increase sight triangles, improve the parking circulation, and respond better to site constraints. **DC1-B-1, DC2-A**
- c. The Board expressed concerns related to the viability of the proposed interior amenity space located between parking spaces with limited connection to the units. **PL1-C, DC1-A, DC3-A, DC3-B, DC3-C**
- d. The Board discussed the lack of vehicular and pedestrian separation from sidewalks along 15th to the rear units and suggested that this connection be improved to provide a safe and functional pedestrian connection. **DC1-B-1, DC2-A**

2. 15th Avenue and Street Edge

- a. At the next meeting, the Board noted that the intended use along 15th Avenue need to be clarified.
- b. The Board discussed the need to buffer residential units along the ground floor with an appropriate landscaped setback and/or raised ground floor units. **PL3-B-2**
- c. The composition of the street facing façade should reflect the intended use while still providing appropriate buffering and glazing. **PL3-A, DC2-B, DC2-C, DC2-D**
- d. The Board discussed the need to further analyze and explore how the design will create a strong connection to the street and address street activation. **CS2-B-2.**

3. West Residential Edge

- a. The Board supported pulling back the massing along the single family residential edge. **CS2-D**
- b. The Board encouraged further exploration of massing options to reduce the height, bulk, and scale along the west edge. **CS2-D, DC2-A-2, DC2-D**
- c. At the next meeting, provide additional analysis of possible lighting and glare impacts to adjacent residential neighbors. **CS2-D**
- d. At the next meeting, provide additional analysis of possible privacy impacts to adjacent residential neighbors. **CS2-D**

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. 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-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

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-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.

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-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.

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-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-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

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.

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-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

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-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-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.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

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 DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure’s potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board’s recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the **FIRST** Early Design Guidance the following departures were requested:

1. **Sight Triangle Departure (SMC 23.54.030.G.1):** The Code requires for exit-only driveways and easements, and two way driveways and easements less than 22 feet wide, a sight triangle on both sides of the driveway or easement, and shall be kept clear of any obstruction for a distance of 10 feet from the intersection of the driveway or easement with a driveway, easement, sidewalk or curb intersection if there is no sidewalk. The applicant proposes a reduced sight triangle for the driveway on both lots along 15th Ave NW.

The Board indicated they were concerned with the safety impacts of the reduced sight triangle. Further analysis of the potential safety issues and exploration additional design solutions are needed to evaluate the proposed reduction. **DC1-B-1**

2. **Street-Level Development (SMC 23.47A.008.D):** The Code requires the floor of dwelling units along the street-level street-facing façade shall be at least 4 feet above or 4 feet below sidewalk grade or be set back at least 10 feet from the sidewalk. The applicant proposes a reduction in the floor from sidewalk grade to go from 4 feet above to 2 feet above the sidewalk.

The Board indicated further design exploration is needed to evaluate whether the proposed reduction is the best solution in terms of the building meeting and interacting with street level. In addition, clarification of the intended ground floor use was needed to evaluate the proposed reduction and how the uses would activate the street level. **PL3-B-2; CS2-B-2**

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended the project return for another meeting in response to the guidance provided.