

Current Development:

The site contains a single family structure. The site is relatively flat.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The site is located in the Alki neighborhood of West Seattle, one block south of Alki Avenue SW.

The immediate context is a mix of single-family structures from the early to mid-1900's and newer townhouse developments and multifamily residential structures. Structures adjacent to the site include a one story duplex to the north, a single family and townhouse development to the south, a three-story apartment building to the east, a three-story condominium and a single family structure to the west across an improved alley.

Alki Avenue SW, located to one block to the north, is a mixed-use commercial corridor connection the local beach neighborhood and the West Seattle Bridge, and is a main corridor for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicular traffic.

Access:

The subject property has vehicular access from 62nd Avenue SW and an improved alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The site is mapped as a Liquefaction Environmentally Critical Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes five townhouse units and 8 parking stalls.

PUBLIC COMMENT

SDCI did not receive any public comments regarding the proposed project.

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.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

1. **Site Planning.** The proposed townhouses are located between a duplex to the north and a single family and townhouse development to the south. Both properties have a substantial front setback along the street.
 - a. Consider connecting the two structures to provide a larger front setback consistent with the existing context on the street (CS2-D-5, PL1-A).
2. **Massing Compatibility.** The proposed development locates the six units in two separate structures.
 - a. Maintain the two-story wooded bay facing the street and along the south property line. The bay window's scale and proportion relates well to the single story structures on either side of the development (CS3-A).
 - b. Break up the mass of the front façade and visually define each townhouse by offsetting the two units along the street, rather than an in-plane material change (CS3-A, DC2-B1).
 - c. Maintain an open railing at the roof deck to reduce the scale of the massing along the street. Consider an open railing for the upper level deck facing the alley (CS2-D).
3. **Further Treatment of Setbacks.** Setbacks provided at the perimeter of the site should provide functional, usable outdoor spaces for residents while also acting as a transition area to adjacent uses.
 - a. Provide a larger front setback more consistent with the setbacks provided on either side of the site. Utilize multilayered sculptural landscaping to differentiate the semi-private front setback from the public sidewalk (CS2-C, PL1-A, DC2-C3, DC3, DC4-D).
 - b. Utilize window location, cut-off lighting and low-level buffer landscaping within each setback to create private, defensible, safe pedestrian spaces. Focused attention should be provided on the entries, common pedestrian pathways and in the rear parking area (DC4-C).
 - c. Provide vertical screening to mitigate privacy impacts between the parking court and the ground level windows of unit 2C (DC1-C2).
 - d. Supply more information showing materials used for paving, landscaping, lighting and fencing in the setbacks and parking court (DC4).
4. **Develop Amenity Space.** The development provides private ground level amenity area adjacent to each unit.
 - a. The ground level amenity spaces provided for the units in Building 2 are unusable as designed. There is no direct access provided between the unit and the amenity space. As discussed in the guidance above, the project would benefit from

combining the two buildings into one building to provide a larger front and rear setback (CS2-D-5, DC3, PL1-A).

- b. Develop the amenity space along the north property line to have direct access from the unit, and include low-maintenance, drought-tolerant plantings of a variety of scales to soften the transition between the proposed development and the single family residence to the north (CS2-D, DC4-D).
5. **Maximize Privacy.** Development must provide privacy for the adjacent structures.
 - a. Locate windows with high use living spaces in areas which obscure direct line of sight into adjacent structures window, private yards and also along common pathways through the site (CS2-D5).
 6. **Identifiable Residential Entries.** Residential entries are an introduction to the site for residents and visitors.
 - a. Consider use of residential entry canopy, lighting and signage as a point of continuity in the overall development (PL3-A).
 - b. Provide more detail on use of lighting, signage, pavers and landscaping to frame and guide residents and visitors from the street to individual units (PL3-A, DC4).
 7. **Develop Architectural Concept and Material Palette.** Choose durable materials to enhance the structure, add variety to the architectural form and knit buildings into the neighborhood context.
 - a. Changes in material color should be accompanied by a plane change along the north, south and east facades (DC2-B1 and DC4).
 - b. Continue the use of the wood material but provide details showing how the wood material will transition to the panel material (DC4).
 - c. Continue use of the dark horizontal band at the roof, canopy and above the bay to provide a secondary level of interest and scale to the material application (DC2-B1 and DC4).
 - d. Clarify the material for the dark horizontal band and deck railing (DC4).
 8. **Placement and Screening of Solid Waste and Recycling.** Provide location of proposed solid waste and recycling storage.
 - a. Locate solid waste and recycling space to minimize visual impacts to existing and proposed residential units. A larger rear setback would provide opportunities to relocate the solid waste so that it is not by the unit's front door (DC1-C).
 - b. Provide more detail on proposed screening for storage space (DC1-C).

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

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

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-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.

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-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-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.

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-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.

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.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

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-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-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.

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-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.

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-C Lighting

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.

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 SDCI 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 Building Permit 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.