



City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN
REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: **3024606**

Address: **5952 California Ave. SW**

Applicant: **Robert Humble, Hybrid Architecture**

Date: **December 8, 2016**

SDCI Staff: **David L. Landry, AICP, Land Use Planner**

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise-3 Residential/Commercial LR-3RC

Nearby Zones: (North) LR-3RC
(South) LR-3RC
(East) SF 5000
(West) LR-3RC

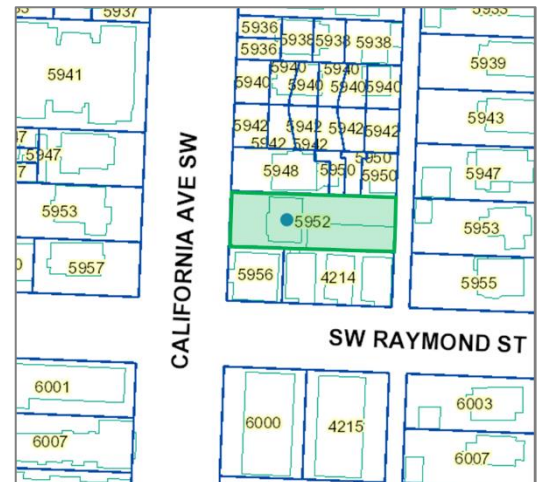
Total Lot Area: 9,179 Square Feet (Sq. Ft.)

Overlay District: Morgan Junction (HUB Urban Village)

Current Development:

The proposal site consists of a rectangular shaped parcel located at 5952 California Ave SW. The property is currently occupied by a one-story multi-family residence (residence and an apartment) built in 1925 which fronts California Avenue and a automotive garage accessed from the alley to the rear or east of the residence.

The proposal site is 7,500 square feet in area and is currently zoned multi-family Low Rise 3 – Residential Commercial (LR3-RC). Properties located to the north and east are zoned LR3-RC with properties located on the east side of the alley zoned SF-5000 while properties located on the south side of S.W. Raymond zoned NC2-30.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The proposal site is located on the east side of California Ave S.W. just to the north of S.W. Raymond St., within the Fairmont Park neighborhood District.

Properties located on the east side of California, to the north of the project site consist of a mixture of single-family residences fronting California Street with apartment units to the rear and accessed from the from the alley, a mixture of townhouses moving north, a single-family residential structure being used as an office to the north of there an apartment and a condominium complex north of there with neighborhood commercial establishments at the south east corner of California and SW Juneau St. Properties located on the east side of California between SW Raymond to the south and Juneau to the north are dominated by multi-story apartment buildings with neighborhood commercial establishments on south west corner of California and Juneau.

Access:

Current access to the site is either east off of California Ave SW or north off of SW Raymond along an alley and then west into the property.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no Environmentally Critical Areas onsite.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing to construct a 5 story multi-residential structure with 37 small efficiency dwelling units, four efficiency dwelling units, five parking spaces, and amenity space. Existing structures to be demolished.

The design packet includes materials presented to Staff, and is available online by entering the project number 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

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant has provided three massing schemes for SDCI consideration. All three options identified as the Option 1 'Puzzle Piece', Option 2 'Trident' and Option 3 'Saw tooth' (hereinafter referred to as Options 1, 2 or 3). All three options have been designed as five story structures with the ground floor level designed to accommodate the lobby, bike storage, and mechanical room. Trash collection for all three options has been placed to the rear at the northeast corner of the structure in Option 1 and 2 and at the southeast corner in Option 3. Options 1 and 3 are have been designed to accommodate five parking spaces to the rear or east side of the structure, while Option 2 will have no parking.

The Option 1 requires a departure for a reduction in Amenity Area while the Option 2 requires a departure to increase the façade length of the structure. Option 3 currently requires no departures. It should be noted that the provision of parking is not required for this project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

SDCI received numerous comment letters. The following comments, issues, and concerns were raised:

- Concerned that the number of parking spaces is inadequate for this size of project.
- Concerned that the new project will block sunlight and reduce privacy to the adjacent neighbor.
- Concerned about possible soil contamination and exposure to the public from years of auto mechanic repair in the shop located to the rear or east side of the residential unit.
- Concerned that there will no yard space or trees.
- Concerned the building height is too tall.
- Suggested efficiency units should be changed to apartments or townhomes, and incorporate a more 'sympathetic design' for livability.
- Concerned that local businesses will be impacted due to the loss of parking for patrons.
- Concerned that the removal of the 'professional' garage business will impact its employees.
- Concerned that there will be an increase in the amount of noise and foot traffic that will impact families living in the neighborhood'.
- Concerned that cars backing out of the rear parking lot and into the alley will encroach into the adjacent neighbor's rear yard and garden.
- Concerned that the road surface of the will alley will experience increased traffic volume eased traffic flow which is not designed for high volumes of traffic is becoming a thoroughfare.
- Felt that this project needs underground parking as their residence located along California has underground parking.
- Concerned adjacent properties will be impacted due to excavation.
- Concerned that there is no loading zone for tenants moving in.
- Concerned about increased storm water runoff.

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 & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, Staff provided the following siting and design guidance.

- 1. Massing:** Staff recognizes individual merits of all three massing options presented in the EDG packet but supports Option 3 as the better approach to a very narrow infill lot. This option provides opportunities for a better entry transition and connection to the street. Conversely the location of the lobby in relationship to the front entry depicted in Massing Option 1 provides a transition that is dominated by a very large street facing open stairway which does little to provide an identifiable and distinctive entryway into the building. Further the entry transition and lobby in Option 2 are located down a narrow corridor; a potential ambush point that is not well defined nor celebrated as a building entry point nor does it have much of a connection to the street.
 - a. Staff directs the applicant to proceed with Massing Option 3 to further develop façade articulation and detailing designed to create a residential scaled building.
 - b. The applicant shall provide additional information; i.e., color elevations depicting the entry transition, and associated landscaping, seating, lighting and other detailing. **(CS2-A, CS2-DC1)**
 - c. Staff recommends the use of high quality materials, architectural screens, emphasis to entrances, and fenestration to be used to create perceived modulation and movement along the facades. **(CS2-D-3; DC2-A, DC2-B, DC4-A-1)**
 - d. The applicant shall demonstrate how the exterior façade appear looking from the alley and how the entryways work from the parking area.
- 2. Entries and Street Frontage:** Staff provides the following direction on the proposal's entry transition and street frontage.
 - a. It is still unclear how the transition from the public realm to the private realm works. Reiterating public comment, staff requests additional information and further development on how street level entries compliment the character of the residential neighborhood. At the Recommendation phase, the design packet should also provide enlarged elevations, landscape plans and detailed sections demonstrating how frontage treatment and privacy for the residential units has been achieved. **(PL3-A-4, PL3-B-2, PL3-B-3)**
 - b. Develop a strategy for managing security, that includes establishing clear sight lines and eliminating ambush points while creating an inviting entry space that will draw people into the building. **(PL2-B-1,2,&3, PL2-I-i, PL3-I)**
 - c. Echoing public comments, demonstrate where and how tenants will move in and out of the living units. The applicant shall provide additional information on how the access to the bike storage area will work. **(PL4.B.1, PL4.B.2)**

- d. Staff is unclear as to how the solid walls along the sidewalk in front of the lobby area in the preferred option work and suggests that the design team develop a series of perspective sketches which show the relationship between the public realm and the bus stop and the private realm.

3. Pedestrian Realm, Streetscape & Uses. Staff is concerned that none of the three options appears to respond well to the pedestrian realm and streetscape. The front entryway in all three options appears not to have been completely designed. The front entry should be more to be more of an architectural statement with greater visual cues, not hidden away.. **(CS2-C, PL2-A&B, PL3-A, PL4-A, PL3-I)**

4. Architectural Character.

- a. The design imagery as depicted in the packet has not yet been completely translated into a unifying design approach. Further develop the architectural concept for the next updated recommendation packet. **(DC4-A-1, DC4-A-2, DC2-D-1, DC2-D-2)**
- b. Materials and façade treatments will be critical to the success of the massing and as such the applicant should explore texture and variety in the materials to create interest. For the next packet submission, the applicant should include conceptual sketches of material character and application, showing how the façade will be treated. **(DC4-A-1, DC4-C, DC4-D.2)**

5. Amenity Space. Staff supports the general arrangement of uses and locations of the ground floor amenity spaces in the preferred option, including the lobby and amenity location. Staff is concerned about the placement of the 957 square feet of amenity space located on the south side of the property and the possibility that this area will become unused dead space and request that further detail and study be presented in the next packet. **(CS2-B-2; CS1-D-1; DC1-A; & DC3-A-1)**

The priority Citywide and guidelines identified by the City Staff 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 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-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

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-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-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-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-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-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

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-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-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

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.

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-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

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

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

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-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-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-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-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-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, there were no departures requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff Direction

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE review, Staff recommends moving forward to MUP application.