



# City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections  
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN  
REVIEW

## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

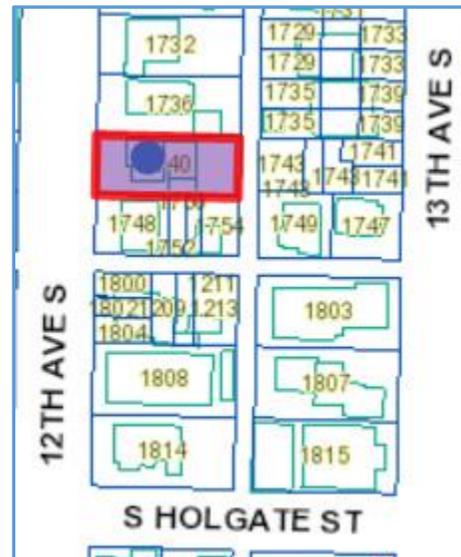
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Project Number: 3024618  
Address: 1740 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Applicant: Greg Squires for Cone Architecture, LLC  
Date of Report: Wednesday, October 12, 2016  
DPD Staff: Holly Godard

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### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)  
Nearby Zones: (North) Lowrise 3 (LR3)  
(South) Lowrise 3 (LR3)  
(East) Lowrise 3 (LR3)  
(West) Lowrise 3 (LR3)  
Lot Area: 5,998 Square feet



### **Current Development:**

The project site is located on 12 Avenue South between South Massachusetts Street and South Grand Street. The site slopes from east to west with a grade change of approximately 17 feet. There is currently a single family residence on the site. There is a grove of trees at the rear of the site which may constitute an exceptional tree grove depending on the number, size, and species. There is a tall row of Arbor vitae trees along the north property line.

### **Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

Area development is a mix of multifamily buildings, townhouses, and single family residences. There is an alley in this block. There are two exceptional trees located on the neighboring property to the north. Tree branches forming the drip line extend approximately 20 feet into the subject property.

### **Access:**

Access to the site is via 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue South or the alley.

### **Environmentally Critical Areas:**

There are no Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) mapped at this site.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposes to build seven (7) townhouses on the site with parking for 5 cars off of the alley.

The design packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/>. The design proposal packet is also available to view in the public file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI at 700 Fifth Ave. Suite 2000, Seattle, WA, [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov).

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

SDCI received many comments on the project proposal. The majority of the comments focused on the amount of parking proposed. The commenters noted that seven townhouses are proposed and the five proposed parking spaces are not enough to fully serve the project. Commenters thought that too many cars would park on the street and thus create more parking pressure on the public street parking in the area.

(Planner note: Additional information regarding The City's parking policies can be found at the following link:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/s051230.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/s051230.pdf))

Other comments focused on protecting the exceptional trees to the north of the site. One commenter pointed out the large dripline area (which is the basic tree protection area), code requirements for building near exceptional trees found in SMC 25.11, tree protection suggestions, and concern over disturbance of the tree limbs and ground plane in the tree protection area where buildings are proposed.

One comment pointed out the value of a tall row of arbor vitae trees as an effective privacy screen at the property line. The commenter pointed out that the trees are located on the subject property and that they should be retained.

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 Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. All guidelines apply. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

### **DESIGN GUIDANCE October 3, 2016**

#### **1. Site Planning and Circulation**

The exceptional trees on the neighboring property are an asset to this project. Retain the nine foot, or more, building setback at the north property line in partial response to public comment. Retain the arbor vitae trees as a privacy screen for the property to the north. Remove site circulation from the exceptional tree driplines to the north of the front building and plant with native understory plants or approved mulch. Provide the planner alternate site plans to review that remove buildings from the tree driplines before applying for the building permit. The current building configuration appears to locate buildings in the tree protection area. Provide a site survey that identifies the tree sizes and species. Provide an arborist's report with items listed in SMC 25.11 050 D. The report should identify the grove of trees near the alley and determine if they constitute an exceptional grove. (CS1D, CS3A, PL1B, DC4D, DC3-C-3)

#### **2. Landscaping**

Provide a full and striving landscape which will grow to fill available landscape areas and which will help give human scale to the project. Introduce landscaping at the rear of the building near the car parking, trash, base of building etc. Specify primarily native plants. Provide an arborist's report to identify the grove of trees near the alley and to determine if they constitute an exceptional grove. (DC4D)

### 3. Façade Development

Introduce secondary architectural features on all facades to visually interrupt the large surfaces and give a more residential scale. Consider a variety of design elements such as material changes, color changes, floor indications, fenestration. The alley façade would especially benefit from additional design elements. (DC2B)

Revisit the first floor window on the front façade. Provide alternative window/façade design at the first floor location to better blend the first floor with the rest of the front façade. Provide alternative window placement for better privacy with the south neighbor, back building. (DC2D)

## 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-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-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-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-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

**PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes:** Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

**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.

**PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses:** In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

**PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity:** Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

### **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-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.

## DESIGN CONCEPT

**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 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.

### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building façades, 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.

### **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.

**DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities**

**DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs:** Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

**DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions:** Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

**DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space:** Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

**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.

**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-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 ADJUSTMENTS**

No development standard adjustments were requested by the applicant.

## **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, nor is it an approval of the proposed design. 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.