



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3025549-LU
Address: 7520 43rd Avenue South
Applicant: Matt Wittman, Wittman Estes Architecture
Date of Meeting: Tuesday, March 13, 2018
Board Members Present: Julian Weber (Chair), Carey Dagliano Holmes, Sharon Khosla, Charles Romero, David Sauvion
Board Members Absent: None.
SDCI Staff Present: Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 2 (LR2)
Nearby Zones: (North) LR2, (South) LR2, (East) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000), (West) LR2
Lot Area: 17,248 square feet (sq. ft.)



Current Development:

The project site contains an existing single family residence.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development includes a mix of single family homes, multifamily residential buildings, institutions and commercial buildings. The site abuts single family residences to the east; a three-story townhouse development to the south; a single family residence, duplex and townhouse development to the north; and an office building and apartment building to the south.

The subject site is located within the Othello Residential Urban Village, two blocks east of M. L. King Jr. Way South. The character of this block along this street is residential and located in the Othello neighborhood which is in transition. Both the Othello Park and the Othello Light Rail Station are within walking distance of the site.

Access:

Vehicular access to the project site is possible from 43rd Avenue South.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) mapped on the site. The existing topography is characterized as sloping gradually from west to east at an average slope of 6%. There are mature trees on the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of three, 3-story townhouse buildings with a total of eleven units. Parking for eleven vehicles will be located within the structures.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, 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

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE March 28, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public attended this Early Design Guidance meeting.

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, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

1. Design Concept and Massing: The design and siting pattern of the new residential development should provide an appropriate transition to the less intensive zone, respond to specific site conditions and respect adjacent properties.

a. The Board voiced unanimous support for the preferred design Scheme 3 (referenced as “Village Three”) and proposed that design Scheme 3 move forward to Master Use Permit (MUP) submittal with the following guidance:

i. The Board stated that the residential entries to the middle and east townhouse buildings’ units were unresolved and needed further study. The Board expects to review further development of the individual entries that are detailed appropriately (signage, hardscape, landscape, etc.) and are oriented to encourage opportunities for resident interaction. (PL3.A.3, PL3.B.2, PL3.B.4)

ii. It is imperative that the design be respectful to adjacent properties and that the future massing provide an appropriate transition to the SF 5000 zoned properties east of the project site. The Board was satisfied with the general massing moves shown for the easternmost townhouse building. However, the Board acknowledged that further refinement of the east building’s east-facing massing was essential. Thus, the Board requested that the applicant apply minor articulation, secondary architectural elements, fenestration and materials with the intent to further reduce the perceived height, bulk and scale of the east building. (CS2.D.5, CS2.II.ii OTHELLO, DC2.A)

b. The Board acknowledged that the existing material and color palette in the Othello neighborhood is eclectic and voiced strong support for high quality and durable materials as illustrated on precedent images in the EDG design packet (pgs. 14 and 33). (DC4.A, DC4.I.i OTHELLO, DC4.I.ii OTHELLO)

2. 43rd Avenue South Frontage:

a. The Board positively responded to the design and siting of the westernmost townhouse structure abutting 43rd Avenue South which included stoops, multiple levels of outdoor space and subterranean floor levels designed to emulate the precedent images of brownstones noted in the EDG design packet (pg. 33) and presented at the EDG meeting. However, the Board felt that, due to the nominal amount of design details provided in the EDG design packet for Scheme 3, achieving the brownstone concept may be challenging. Thus, the Board requested to review detailed building sections and floor plans with focused attention to the ground floor

livability and the second level/terrace connections to the sidewalk. (PL3.A, PL3.B.1, PL3.B.4, PL3.I.i OTHELLO, PL3.I.ii OTHELLO)

- b. The Board encouraged a design that would maintain a safe environment at the street/residential edges and provide security near residential entrances throughout the project site. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board stated that they expect to see an ensemble of elements (lighting, fenestration, landscaping, entries, screening, etc.) that addresses resident safety and security on the property appropriately. (PL2.B, PL2.I OTHELLO, PL3.B.1, PL3.B.2)

3. Landscaping, Hardscape and Residential Open Space:

- a. The Board found the applicant's presentation describing the project site's history (family-owned farm and orchard) and commitment to continue the history of plant life and abundant outdoor space for the development compelling. However, the Board felt that the conceptual landscape design described in the applicant's materials did not reference the site's historical landscape character well and needed further study/development. At the Recommendation meeting, the Board expects to review a robust detailed landscape design that is aligned with the design concept. (DC4.D)
- b. The Board observed that the supported design Scheme 3 did not include any opportunities for resident community gathering and stated that this was a concern that should be addressed in the next design iteration. The Board encouraged the applicant to incorporate common open spaces that reference the history of the site (i.e. garden, community tool shed, etc.); are accessible by all; and programed to encourage resident interaction. (DC3.B, DC4.D)
- c. The Board voiced concern that the hardscape seemed dedicated to mainly vehicular access and felt that should be also be designed to encourage recreational uses (play space, etc.) and social interaction. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.3, DC4.D)
- d. Staff Note: The unauthorized removal of an Exceptional Tree on site just prior to the EDG meeting should be noted. Thus, the Board's guidance regarding the open space and landscaping design and resultant design will be of critical importance to SDCI as the project moves forward.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION March 13, 2018

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public attended this Early Design Guidance meeting, and no design related comments were received leading up to the meeting date.

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 recommendations.

1. Design Concept and Massing: At the Early Design Guidance meeting, the design and siting pattern of the new residential development should provide an appropriate transition to the less intensive zone, respond to specific site conditions and respect adjacent properties.

- a. The Board reviewed the final building design and agreed that the evolution of the favored design option (Scheme 3 referenced as “Village Three”) was successful in addressing the Board’s past concerns pertaining to residential entries for the middle and east townhouse buildings (buildings #2 and #3) and the massing for east building (building #3). There was dissention amongst the Board pertaining to the west townhouse building’s entry sequencing (building #1) and the practical implementation of the design team’s initial design concept presented to the Board at EDG. Consequently, the Board voted 3-2 to recommend approval of the presented design to SDCI. Additional Board discussion/guidance concerning entry sequencing and design concept are offered in items #2.a and #3.b. (CS2.D.5, CS2.II.ii OTHELLO, PL3.A.3, PL3.B.2, PL3.B.4, DC2.A)
- b. The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed materials and color palette identified on both the supplementary material and on the physical material/color samples board offered to the Board at the Recommendation meeting. The Board strongly supported the applicant’s commitment to incorporate high-quality, durable and textured materials (brick, corrugated metal, fiber cement board/panels, concrete, and cedar) on each building’s exteriors. The Board initially questioned if the primarily dark color palette was complementary to the design concept and the context of the neighborhood. Ultimately, the Board consensus was that the dark rich color palette would positively contribute to the urban fabric of the neighborhood and would create an appropriate backdrop that would further complement the presented vibrant landscape palette. (DC4.A, DC4.D, DC4.I.i OTHELLO, DC4.I.ii OTHELLO)

2. 43rd Avenue South Frontage:

- a. The Board had a detailed discussion concerning the orientation of the townhouse entry stairs and gated ground-level courtyard/entry of the townhouse units in the westernmost building abutting 43rd Avenue South, questioning if the design discouraged human interaction at the street. Ultimately, the Board majority agreed that the presented entry sequence inclusive of the gated entry and courtyard areas for the specified townhouse units had been designed well; appropriately addressed the sidewalk edge; visually differentiated between public and private areas; provided security; and encouraged opportunity for positive engagement with pedestrians and neighbors. (PL2.B, PL2.I OTHELLO, PL3.A, PL3.B.1, PL3.B.2, PL3.B.4, PL3.I.i OTHELLO, PL3.I.ii OTHELLO)

3. Landscaping, Hardscape and Residential Open Space:

- a. The Board communicated that past concerns regarding the residential development’s hardscape design-particularly the vehicular access and site circulation-had been resolved in the current design iteration. (DC1.B.1, DC1.C.3, DC4.D.2)

- b. The Board offered the following feedback regarding the project’s community residential amenity area and landscaping design:
 - i. The Board’s opinions varied as to whether or not the site’s organization encouraged opportunities for resident community gathering areas that reference the history of the site (family-owned farm and orchard). The Board consensus was that the common amenity area inclusive of a garden shed, patio and green space met the intent of prior Board guidance at EDG. (DC3.B, DC4.D)
 - ii. The Board strongly appreciated the landscape design concept which included varied robust plantings (trees, shrubs, vines, flowers, etc.) and acknowledged its importance to the overall aesthetic design. However, the Board debated if the landscape design appropriately referenced the site’s historical landscape character (agricultural) and questioned if the landscaping would positively contribute to the site as intended. The Board also voiced concerns about the viability and maintenance of the proposed landscaping. Ultimately, the Board encouraged the design team to further evaluate the proposed landscape design in consideration of maintenance and viability to ensure that selected plants upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, species and shape that reinforces the overall architectural design as illustrated in the presented renderings. The Board declined to recommend this guidance as a condition. (DC4.D.1, DC4.D.3)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the **FINAL** Recommendation meeting, no code departures were requested.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines recognized 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

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-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.

Othello Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I Streetscape Compatibility

CS2-I-ii. Shallow setbacks: Encouraged between the first floor and the sidewalk where residential uses occupy the ground floor; this will promote privacy and also accommodate entry porches and stoops.

CS2-II Respect for Adjacent Sites

CS2-II-ii. Zone Buffer: buffering single family areas from the undesirable impacts of commercial related service facilities; use landscaping or cohesive architectural treatment to screen service areas and facilities.

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.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

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.

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.

Othello Supplemental Guidance:

PL2-I Personal Safety and Security

PL2-I-i. Zone of Defense: Consider the type of “zone of defense” most appropriate for specific spaces and entries included in the development proposal. Private open spaces and entrances should include physical barriers, such as fencing, some forms of landscaping and locked doors. Symbolic barriers are appropriate for semi-private spaces, and require only a visual perception that a transition has occurred. Nearly anything could serve as a symbolic barrier, and examples include: bollards, flower beds, changes in sidewalk patterns or materials, and signs.

PL2-I-ii. Lighting: New developments are encouraged to provide lighting on buildings and in open spaces. This includes: exterior lighting fixtures above entries; lighting in parking areas and open spaces; and pedestrian street lights near sidewalks. To the degree possible, a constant level of light providing reasonably good visibility should be maintained at night. Bright spots and shadows should be avoided.

PL2-I-iii. Landscaping: As a symbolic barrier, landscaping can mark the transition between zones. Consider employing features such as decorative fencing, flower beds, ground cover, and varied patterns in cement work to clearly show separation between zones. If more substantial barriers are needed, shrubbery such as evergreen hedges can be used to create more formidable edges.

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-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.

Othello Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-I Human Activity

PL3-I-i. Main Street Feel: Recessed building or individual shop entrances to help create a traditional “main street” feel; ii. Stoops or landscaping to help provide privacy for residential use at street level;

PL3-I-ii. Residential Privacy: Stoops or landscaping to help provide privacy for residential use at street level;

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

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-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children’s play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

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.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

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.

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-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.

Othello Supplemental Guidance:

DC4-I Exterior Finish Materials

DC4-I-i. Encourage High-Quality Construction: All new buildings are encouraged to be constructed as long-term additions to the urban fabric.

DC4-I-ii. Residential Development:

a. Use exterior building materials that are typically residential in character. The most commonly-found traditional cladding material in the Othello Neighborhood is wood: shingle, horizontal or vertical. Stone, or other masonry with human-scale texture, is also encouraged— particularly as accent materials.

b. Creative combinations of the above are encouraged; other materials can also be considered, such as stucco and vinyl shaped to reflect natural textures, so long as they meet the overall objective of conveying a sense of permanence, human scale and proportion.

RECOMMENDATIONS - BOARD DIRECTION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Tuesday, March 13, 2018, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, March 13, 2018 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, three of the Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with no conditions.