City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

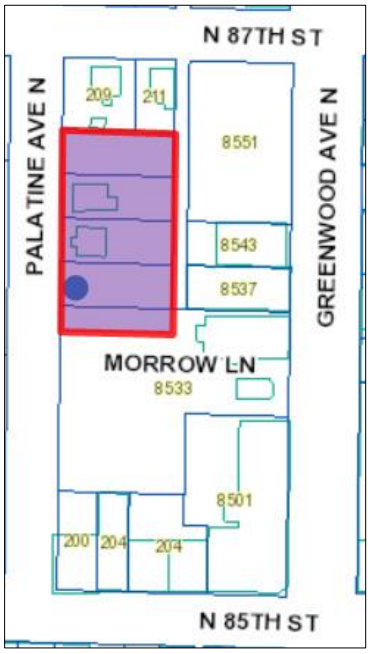
Project Number:	3026306
Address:	8612 Palatine Avenue North
Applicant:	Baylis Architects
Date of Meeting:	Monday, April 03, 2017
Board Members Present:	Christopher Bell, Chair Mark Angelillo Emily McNichols Keith Walzak
Board Members Absent:	Dale Kutzera
SDCI Staff Present:	Crystal Torres Allison Whitworth

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a 65-foot structure height limit (NC2-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC2-65
(South) NC2-65
(East) NC2P-65
(West) NC2-65

Lot Area: 28,904 square feet (sf)



Current Development:
The project site is currently a vacant lot with several mature trees, none of which qualify as Exceptional. The site generally slopes down approximately four feet from south to north.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:
Single family homes are located north of the project site, with the northwest corner parcel proposed to be redeveloped as a six-story apartment building (project #3026717). Across Morrow Lane to the south is a surface parking lot. A mixed-use structure and vacant lot are located to the west across Palatine Avenue N. Located to the east across the alley is a six-story mixed-use structure and smaller one- and two-story commercial buildings.

The site is located within the Greenwood-Phinney Ridge Residential Urban Village and the Greenwood Town Center identified in the Greenwood/Phinney Design Guidelines. Primarily smaller scale commercial structures are located along Greenwood Avenue N, transitioning to a mix of larger multi-family and commercial structures to the west.

Access:
Vehicular access to the site is available from the adjacent improved dead-end alley along the east property line. There are currently no curb cuts on Palatine Avenue N or Morrow Lane. Pedestrian access to the site is via the adjacent sidewalks on Palatine Avenue N and Morrow Lane. Morrow Lane is a one-way private through-block connection.

Environmentally Critical Areas:
The site is located within a mapped Peat Settlement Prone environmentally critical area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance application proposing a seven-story, 145-unit apartment building above retail. Parking for 100 vehicles to be provided.

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 SDCI:

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

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Would like to see vehicle access from Palatine Avenue due to congestion and safety concerns in the alley.
- Would like the structure to be set back from the east property line and adjacent residential building across the alley.
- Requested more attention be given to the alley façade.
- Concerned light, privacy and shadow impacts to the building to the east have not been adequately analyzed and considered.
- Expressed preference for massing Option A and the treatment of Morrow Lane frontage.
- Does not support the location of garage access at the northern property line.
- Expressed concern for the livability of alley units.

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.

1. **Massing & Form:** The Board discussed the three massing alternatives proposed, noting the merits of Options A and C. The Board supported a hybrid massing option of both and provided the following guidance:
    a. The Board agreed with public comment and preferred the south façade of Option A, including the vertical modulation and parapet height which respects the datum line of the adjacent smaller scale commercial building context. (DC2-A-1 Site Characteristics and Uses, DC2-A-2 Reducing Perceived Mass)
    b. The Board supported the west facing courtyard, deep upper level setback and vertical modulation of the Palatine Avenue facade of Option C. The Board suggested exploring increasing the height of the townhomes to reduce the perceived bulk of the tower massing. (DC2-A-1 Site Characteristics and Uses, DC2-A-2 Reducing Perceived Mass)
    c. Agreeing with public comment, the Board stated that significant tower level setbacks are needed on the east elevation, respecting adjacent residential development across the alley. The Board suggested exploration of an H-massing at the upper stories. (CS2-D-1 Existing Development and Zoning, CS1-B-2 Daylight and Shading,)
    d. The Board expressed concern regarding the large scale of the structure in relationship to the surrounding context, particularly as viewed from Greenwood Avenue, and agreed the perceived bulk of the upper levels should be minimized. The Board noted that other Piper Village projects successfully mitigated long facades by breaking the massing. (CS2-D-1 Existing Development and Zoning, DC2-A-1 Site Characteristics and Uses, CS2-VII Mass and Scale)

e. The Board was amenable to a massing option which held the southwest corner . (CS2-C-1 Corner Sites)
f. In response to public comment, the Board requested analysis of impacts to access to light and air, privacy and shading of adjacent properties. At the Recommendation phase, a window overlay diagram should be provided. (CS1-B-2 Daylight and Shading)
g. At the Recommendation phase, the Board would like to see cross-section drawings at different locations depicting the grade changes and the relationship of the building to the alley and adjacent development. (CS2-D-1 Existing Development and Zoning, DC2-A-1 Site Characteristics and Uses)

2. Street Level Uses and Entries:

a. The Board strongly supported commercial uses along Morrow Lane and at the southwest corner. (DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses)
b. The Board discussed the proposed vehicular access via Palatine versus the alley indicating they would be favorable for a departure to locate access off Palatine as the Board was concerned with vehicular conflicts due to the dead end alley. (DC1-B-1 Access Location and Design)
c. The Board acknowledged the public's concerns regarding the location of the parking garage entry at the northern property line and discussed possible alternate locations further south along Palatine. However, the Board commented that the current location offered a rather successful sequence of uses from commercial to the residential lobby and then townhomes. (DC1-B-1 Access Location and Design)
d. The Board requested further analysis of Palatine Avenue and the surrounding context, including the driveway access across the street, to determine the arrangement of ground level uses which best creates an active street edge, reduces impacts of the driveway, creates entry hierarchy and supports wayfinding. (DC1-B-1 Access Location and Design, DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses)
e. The Board agreed services uses should be internal to the building and accessed from the alley, regardless of where the parking garage entry is located. (DC1-C-4 Service Uses)

3. Neighborhood Compatibility

a. As the massing is refined, the Board stated the importance of compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. The development should respect the smaller storefront scale, datum lines, modulation and materials found in adjacent structures. (CS3-A-3 Established Neighborhoods, CS3-I Architectural Concept and Consistency, CS2-3-II Compatibility)

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 Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departure was requested:

1. **Parking Access Location (23.47A.032.A.1a):** The Code requires parking access be provided from the alley if the lot abuts an alley improved to the standards of subsection 23.53.030.C, or if the Director determines that alley access is feasible and desirable to mitigate parking access impacts. The subject property abuts an improved alley. The applicant proposes parking access from Palatine Avenue.

   The Board indicated favorability towards the departure request as the traffic and circulation analysis supported access from Palatine Avenue as the safest option. The Board requested further analysis and design of the Palatine Avenue access to determine the most appropriate location for garage access which minimizes impacts of the driveway and conflicts with pedestrians. (DC1-B-1 Access Location and Design)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

CONTEXT & SITE

Greenwood/Phinney Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I Streetscape Compatibility

CS2-I-i. Reinforcement of Commercial and Residential Development Patterns:

a. Build commercial development up to the sidewalk where possible. Along North/Northwest 85th Street, new commercial buildings should be set back sufficiently to provide 12-foot minimum sidewalks (including street trees and other plantings). Commercial buildings may be setback off the street if pedestrian-oriented space is provided that is enhanced with humanizing components such as trees and other plants, site furnishings and high-quality, well detailed pavements between the sidewalk and the building.

b. Residential buildings (on Greenwood Avenue North and North/Northwest 85th Street) should be setback where possible five to 15 feet from the sidewalk to provide extensive landscaping in the front yard. When possible, first floor residential units facing Greenwood Avenue North or North/Northwest 85th Street should be located at least three feet above the sidewalk level to provide a sense of privacy and surveillance over the street.

CS2-I-ii. Treatment of Side Streets: Some treatment of side-streets off of Greenwood Avenue North and 85th Street is important to create an effective transition to residential neighborhoods. Some options to consider include:

a. setbacks with view-framing landscaping (see CS1)

b. arbors with hanging plants

c. small outdoor spaces with trees and landscaping.

CS2-II Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

CS2-II-i. Impact of New Buildings on the Street: Consider the setback of upper stories of new mixed-use development on Greenwood Avenue North and North/Northwest 85th Street to reduce the dominance of new buildings on the street. Also, new commercial development should respect the small-scale historical pattern of storefronts on Greenwood Avenue North. Typically, the older storefronts are about 50 feet in width and feature brick, stone or other masonry units. Some also feature architectural details that provide interest and a human scale to the buildings.

CS2-III Architectural Context/Building Entrances

CS2-III-i. Entrances: Even when the principal off-street parking areas are located on the side of the building, a primary building entrance should be located at the corner. This concept is consistent with traditional neighborhood commercial designs and important in facilitating pedestrian activity at the street corners.

CS2-VII Mass and Scale

CS2-VII-i. Reducing Visual Mass: Consider reducing the impact or perceived mass and scale of large structures by modulating upper floors; varying roof forms and cornice lines; varying materials, colors and textures; and providing vertical articulation of building facades in proportions that are similar to surrounding plat patterns.

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.

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

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.

Greenwood/Phinney Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-II Compatibility

CS3-II-i. Existing Pattern: Consider using the human-scale historical pattern of storefronts on Greenwood Avenue North as a guide in developing new structures abutting TownCenter streets. New development should respond to Greenwood's existing context by matching window and opening proportions, entryway patterns, scale and location of building cornices, proportion and degree of trim work and other decorative details, and employing a variety of appropriate finish materials.

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.

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.

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-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

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.

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-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

Greenwood/Phinney Supplemental Guidance:

DC2-III Mass and Scale

DC2-III-i. Perceived Mass: Consider reducing the impact or perceived mass and scale of large structures by modulating upper floors; varying roof forms and cornice lines; varying materials, colors and textures; and providing vertical articulation of building facades in proportions that are similar to surrounding plat patterns.

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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.