City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning & Development
D.M. Sugimura, Director

CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Application Number: 3005600

Applicant Name: Kenn Rupard for Richard Sanders

Address of Proposal: 416 Harrison Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

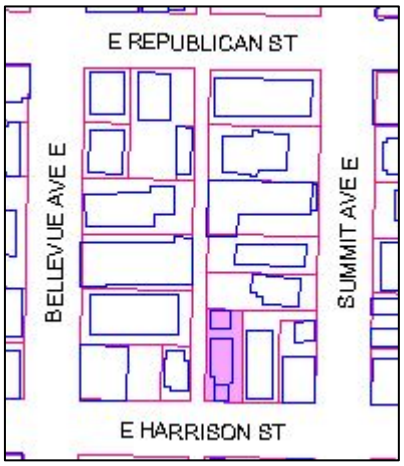
Land Use Application to allow a six story, 12 unit residential structure with parking for 12 vehicles located at grade and accessed from the alley. Two existing single family structures to be demolished.

The following Master Use Permit components are required:

Administrative Design Review - Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Section 23.41

SITE & VICINITY

The subject site is located in the Capitol Hill Neighborhood and is zoned Midrise with a 60-foot height limit (MR). This zoning extends to the east, north and west of the site, as well as across the street to the south. The lot is approximately 4,000 square feet and is a rectangular shape. The site is currently developed with two single family structures.



The subject block is bounded to the west by Bellevue Avenue North, East Republican Street to the north, East Harrison Street to the south and Summit Avenue to the east. An alley abuts the site to the west. The vicinity is developed with a variety of single and multifamily uses building types ranging from older single family houses to traditional brick apartment buildings to more modern multifamily structures.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a residential building with approximately 12 residential units. The parking access (for approximately 12 at grade stalls) is proposed from the alley.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Three alternative design schemes were shown in the submitted materials for the Early Design Guidance application. All of the options include single purpose residential use with parking located at grade and accessed from the alley. The first scheme (Option A) proposes 10 units distributed in two principal towers connected by a ten-foot wide connection, forming an H-shape. No departures would be anticipated for this scheme. The second alternative (Option B) proposes 12 units in a building mass that is stepped back to the north as the structure extends higher and steps back as the structure extends north along the alley, creating a terraced massing configuration. In this scheme, several departures would be required from all setbacks, building width and depth, modulation and open space. The third scheme (Option C) proposes 12 units in a singular building mass that incorporates a pitched roof element. In this scheme, departures would be required from all setbacks, building width and depth, modulation and open space. Option C is the preferred option by the applicant.

At the Recommendation phase, the design has been further developed to respond to the original guidance provided prior to the Master Use Permit submittal.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Six letters have been received during this phase of the Early Design Review, several of which are signed by multiple parties. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Objection to the proposed height given the surrounding context.
- Concerned with the shadows created by the proposed structure on nearby residential units and gardens.
- Oppose the loss of sunlight blocked by the proposed structure on the adjacent site to the east.
- Concerned with the introduction of a newer building onto a block defined by traditional, low-rise classic buildings.
- Concerned with exacerbating already congested parking conditions with the development of additional units.
- Oppose the scale of the proposed structure as entirely incompatible with the neighborhood.
- Interested in whether departures are being sought through this process. [Yes, see end of report].
- Encourage landscaping be integrated into the site design.
- Concerned with the noise and light pollution created by vehicles using the alley on those residential units across from the subject site and facing the alley; encourage access from Harrison Street.
- Encourage locating balconies to respect the privacy of nearby residential units.
- Request that construction activities refrain from blocking the alley and suppress dust particles.
- Encourage preservation of trees located on site.

Two additional letters were received after the Master Use Permit application was submitted with the following comments:

- Request to be a Party of Record.
- Request that the proposed building be 4 stories, rather than 6.
- Request that the birch tree located on the site be preserved.
- Request a 14-day extension of the comment period from May 16, 2007.

PRIORITIES

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the DPD staff provided the following siting and design guidance and identified by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *"Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings"* of highest priority to this project. The final recommendations and conditions of DPD staff follow in bold text.

Site Planning

A-3 ENTRANCES VISIBLE FROM THE STREET
Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

A-5 RESPECT FOR ADJACENT SITES
Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.

A-7 RESIDENTIAL OPEN SPACE
Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.

A prominent residential entry should be easily identifiable from Harrison Street and reinforced by the architecture. The application materials indicate that the residential entrance would be from the alley; this is not an appropriate location for a principal entrance that should endeavor to engage with the street. Therefore, in order to provide presence on the street and create a sense of interaction with the streetscape, the entrance should be from Harrison Street.

Of the three options presented, Option B is the most sympathetic to the neighboring uses by stepping back the building mass towards the north, allowing additional light to the adjacent structures and minimizing the massing against the street front.

Attention to the design quality of the west and south elevations will be critical considerations as departure requests are reviewed. Particular focus on the pedestrian environment at the sidewalk will be looked upon favorably should a departure from setbacks be pursued.

Providing solar access to the open spaces is important and should be contemplated as the open space is designed. Given the view opportunities and solar access that will remain unaffected by potential future development to the west, locating some common open space at the rooftop is encouraged. All decks and balconies should be located so as to minimize disruption of neighbor's privacy. Landscaping should be well-utilized throughout the site to soften and buffer the building mass.

At the Recommendation phase, the revised design relocated the residential entrance to Harrison Street, as well as provided an individual entry to the closest unit facing the street via steps in front of the building. The wall will be architectural concrete with reveal lines that correspond to the floor and window modulation breaks. The area between the sidewalk and the property line is densely planted with ground cover (beach strawberry), low shrubs (mock orange and red twig dogwood) and two street trees against the building. The planting strip is also proposed to be planted with rockrose and ground cover rose. DPD is satisfied with the design and treatment of this south elevation. DPD is also satisfied that the open spaces at the roof and central courtyard will enjoy solar exposure.

The common residential entrance is marked by a gate structure that leads to a covered pathway along the east side of the property. The details of the structure are unknown and the pitched roof appears disjointed with the building design.

The following condition is required:
The design details of entry gate structure must be provided to DPD, reviewed and approved by the Land Use Planner prior to issuance of the MUP. Specifically, the pitched roof line should be re-considered to be either flat or angled.

Height, Bulk, and Scale

B-1 HEIGHT, BULK, AND SCALE COMPATIBILITY

Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to nearby, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between the anticipated development potential on the adjacent zones.

Much of the development in the vicinity of the subject site has not been built to the allowable zoning envelope. As such, the proposed development should strive to respect and respond to the lower scale of the surrounding context. The massing offered in options A and C are the least sensitive to the neighborhood, while Option B has the greatest potential to minimize the bulk and scale by terracing the building back at the upper floors. For these reasons, as well as the questionable compatibility of a pitched roof on a six-story multi-family building, the pitched roof concept for Option C is unsuitable and is not be looked upon favorably.

At the Recommendation phase, DPD is pleased with the development of the massing shown in Option A. The break between the two buildings creates an internal courtyard space and minimizes the continuous wall along the alley and as viewed from the west. DPD is also satisfied that the roof forms has been revised from the previously shown pitched roof lines to a flat roof more appropriate for the scale and architectural aesthetic of the building.

No further recommendations or conditions are needed.

Architectural Elements

C-1 ARCHITECURAL CONTEXT

New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character or siting pattern of neighboring buildings.

C-2 ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT AND CONSISTENCY

Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building.

C-3 HUMAN SCALE

The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.

C-4 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.

The application materials suggest that the architectural concept will complement the diverse pattern of the neighborhood; however information regarding such a concept has not yet been presented.

DPD encourages a design that uses simple massing and a façade design that establishes a strong street wall is encouraged. Given the narrow site, the emphasis should be on using high quality materials, rather than on over-modulating the building form.

Use of high quality, long lasting materials that wrap the building corners from the south elevation around to the sides is desired. It is critical that these elevations are clad with high quality materials that have a warm character (most likely not metal). The application materials suggest that the materials selected will represent that residential building type found in the neighborhood. The images included in the packet suggest use of brick, punched windows with sills, detailed entryways and dense landscape buffers as suitable and consistent with the neighborhood character.

Option B best preserves solar exposure and views to and from the site. This site configuration maximizes light to the proposed units and open spaces.

At the Recommendation phase, DPD approves the proposed material palette that includes a concrete base with hardy panel siding and vertical metal siding on the upper floors. The windows details are not known at this time.

The following condition is required:
The details and specifications of the windows shall be provided to DPD, reviewed and approved by the Land Use Planner prior to issuance of the Master Use Permit.

DPD has reviewed several color palettes proposed for the building and recommended a rich, warm tone for the hardy panels and metal siding. The proposed grey hardy panel and dark brown metal siding do not satisfy this guidance. The grey tone is bland, featureless, lacks texture and will show dirt easily, rendering it undesirable for long term maintenance. It was also suggested that color be used that lends drama to the building forms.

The following condition is required:
The color palette of the hardy panel material shall be revised to include a warm, rich red color.

Pedestrian Environment

D-2 BLANK WALLS
Buildings should avoid large blank walls. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

D-5 VISUAL IMPACTS OF PARKING STRUCTURES
The visibility of all at-grade parking structures should be minimized. The parking portion of the structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape.

D-6 SCREENING OF DUMPSTERS, UTILITIES AND SERVICE AREAS Building sites should locate service elements, like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front, where possible. When such elements cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view.

There should be no blank walls at ground level along the street. A residential lobby with fenestration should occupy the street level area facing south. If multiple garage doors are proposed along the alley facing façade, these doors should be well detailed and well-integrated into the overall building design.

All garbage and service areas should be located within the proposed structure and accessed from the alley.

At the Recommendation phase, DPD is pleased that all of the service elements are included within the structure. DPD is also satisfied with the design of the garage level abutting the length of the alley has the appearance of continuous garage doors separated only by four column elements that anchor the corners of the two buildings. The garage doors shown along the alley are an aluminum system with horizontal panels of alternating aluminum panels and glazing.

The following condition is required:
The details and specifications of the garage doors shall be included in the plans prior to issuance of the Master Use Permit.

See discussion under A-3 regarding the treatment of the blank wall on the sidewalk.

Landscaping

E-2 LANDSCAPING TO ENHANCE BUILDING AND/OR SITE
Landscaping including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

The open spaces throughout the project should provide visual relief for the building residents and pedestrians with landscaping and seasonal color. The landscaping of the right-of-way along the sidewalk should also offer interest and softening of the pedestrian environment. See also discussion regarding residential open space design under Guideline A-7.

At the Recommendation phase, DPD is satisfied with the proposed landscape plan that shows dense planting along the right-of-way on Harrison Street on either side of the sidewalk. Plantings of different heights screen the blank concrete wall of the ground floor facing the sidewalk. Along the residential entry path is a landscaped border of Maple trees, creeping lily turf, heavenly bamboo and sweet box. The central court includes a raised planter with two camellia trees, boxwood and lily turf. The common roof deck also has a raised central planter as well as a raised border planter that contains herbal species including rosemary, thyme, lavender and honeysuckle. Perimeter fencing and pavers are also included on the roof in addition to outdoor furnishings.

DPD would like to see lighting plans for the building exterior, specifically at the entry, along the steps to unit #101, along the residential pathway along the east property line, highlighting the landscaping, along the alley and at the central courtyard.

The following condition is required:
The details and location of exterior lighting at the entry, along the steps to unit #101, along the residential pathway along the east property line, highlighting the landscaping, along the alley and at the central courtyard shall be provided to DPD for review and approval prior to MUP issuance.

Development Standard Departures

Several departures have been requested, including reductions to the front, side and rear setbacks, increased structure depth, parking stall size and structural building overhang.

Code	Requirement	Proposal	Justification	DPD Decision
Structural Building Overhang SMC 23.53.035	30-degree angled corners, 26' vertical clearance.	90-degree angled corners for 3' projection over west and south property lines (2' bays at 25' above grade and 1' deep bolt- on metal balconies.	The breaking of the building mass into two structures (rather than one) allows for a central open space and provides visual interest, massing relief, as well as greater light and air to the residential neighbors to the west. The overhangs are limited to 3' over the alley side and 3' over the south property line and will provide façade modulation and interest along these elevations. The wider than typical ROW between the property line and the curb along Harrison Street and the alley to west minimize the effect of such overhangs. The shape of the projections is consistent with the architectural forms of the building. The narrow site size presents constraints for accommodating the required number of parking stalls at the required sizes.	Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below.
Structure Depth SMC 23.45.052	65% of lot depth = 65'	96% = 96'		
Front Setback SMC 23.45.056	5'	0'		
Side Setback (alley) SMC 23.45.056	8'	0'		
Side Setback (east) SMC 23.45.056	8'	5'		
Interior Setback SMC 23.45.056	15'	14'4"		
Rear Setback SMC 23.45.056	15' average	4' minimum		
Parking – Stall size SMC 23.54.030	60% (5 stalls) must be medium stalls.	11 small size parking stalls.		

CONDITIONS – DESIGN REVIEW

Prior to MUP Issuance (non-appealable)

All revisions shall be submitted to DPD for review and approval prior to MUP issuance.

1. The color palette of the hardy panel material shall be revised to include a warm, rich red color. The plan specifications shall correspond to the agreed color samples.

2. The details and specifications of the garage doors shall be included in the plans.

3. The details and location of exterior lighting at the entry, along the steps to unit #101, along the residential pathway along the east property line, highlighting the landscaping, along the alley and at the central courtyard shall be provided to DPD.

NON-APPEALABLE CONDITIONS – DESIGN REVIEW

4. Prior to Issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy, compliance with conditions #1-5 must be verified and approved by the Land Use Planner prior to the final building inspection. The applicant/responsible party is responsible for arranging an appointment with the Land Use Planner at least three (3) working days prior to the required inspection.

5. Any proposed changes to the exterior of the building or the site or must be submitted to DPD for review and approval by the Land Use Planner (Lisa Rutzick, 386-9049), or by the Design Review Manager (Vince Lyons, 233-3823). Any proposed changes to the improvements in the public right-of-way must be submitted to DPD and SDOT for review and for final approval by SDOT.

6. Compliance with all images and text on the MUP drawings, design review meeting guidelines and approved design features and elements (including exterior materials, landscaping and ROW improvements) shall be verified by the DPD Land Use Planner assigned to this project or by the Design Review Manager. An appointment with the assigned Land Use Planner must be made at least three (3) working days in advance of field inspection. The Land Use Planner will determine whether submission of revised plans is required to ensure that compliance has been achieved.

7. Embed all of the conditions listed at the end of this decision in the cover sheet for the MUP permit and for all subsequent permits including updated MUP plans, and all building permit drawings.

8. Embed the 11 x 17 colored elevation drawings from the DR Recommendation meeting and as updated, into the MUP plans prior to issuance, and also embed these colored elevation drawings into the Building Permit Plan set in order to facilitate subsequent review of compliance with Design Review.

Compliance with all applicable conditions must be verified and approved by the Land Use Planner, Lisa Rutzick, (206-386-9049) at the specified development stage, as required by the Director's decision. The Land Use Planner shall determine whether the condition requires submission of additional documentation or field verification to assure that compliance has been achieved. **Prior to any alteration of the approved plan set on file at DPD, the specific revisions shall be subject to review and approval by the Land Use Planner.**

Signature: (signature on file) Date: August 14, 2008
Lisa Rutzick, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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