



City of Seattle

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

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

**Application Number:** 3009271  
**Applicant Name:** John Kennedy for Jordan Schenk  
**Address of Proposal:** 902 North 72<sup>nd</sup> St

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow a three story, 3-unit townhouse structure. Parking for three vehicles to be provided below grade. Existing multi-family structure to be demolished.

The following approvals are required:

**Administrative Design Review** - Chapter 23.41, (SMC) including departures from development standards: structure width & depth, open space, front & side setbacks, parking & access, and curbcut width.

**SITE AND VICINITY**

The 2,051 sq. ft. corner lot is located on the northeast corner of Linden Avenue North and North 72<sup>nd</sup> Street in Seattle's Green Lake neighborhood. Surrounding landmarks include Aurora Avenue North and Green Lake Park one block east of the subject site. One block north of the site is a five-point intersection known in the Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guidelines as a "Heart Location". This is one of five intersections identified in the neighborhood design guidelines as a center of commercial and social activity.



Figure 1 Aerial Photo of the Subject Site, 2005

The property is zoned Lowrise (L-3) and is within a four to five block cluster of multi-family Lowrise zoning (L-2 and L-3), surrounded by single family zoning (SF 5000). East of the site and along the Aurora Avenue North corridor the zoning changes to neighborhood commercial (NC3-40). Development on-site currently consists of a single story, stucco clad masonry triplex structure, circa 1949. The structure, as with surrounding development, reflects the urban residential character of the neighborhood. The neighborhood is well established and is undergoing infill redevelopment and redevelopment of existing structures. Homes and multifamily structures tend to be oriented towards the rights-of-way, and alleys are prominent in this portion of Seattle though the subject site does not abut an alley.



Figure 2 Vicinity Zoning

Linden Avenue North is a 66 foot wide curvilinear arterial that follows the form of Green Lake from north 71<sup>st</sup> Street to North 74<sup>th</sup> Street. North 72<sup>nd</sup> Street is a residential access street with a roadway width of 25 feet. On-street parking is permitted along both sides of the arterial and only along the south side of the residential street. A Metro bus stop lies immediately north of the subject site along Linden Avenue North.

### **DESIGN PROPOSAL AND PRESENTATION**

The design proposal includes three options two of which, options A and B, include additions and/or modifications of the existing structure and are therefore not viable design options for review under Chapter 23.41 of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC), Design Review. “Design review is optional to any applicant for **new** [emphasis added] multifamily, commercial or Major Institution structures not otherwise subject to this chapter, in the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District and in all multifamily, commercial, or downtown zones (SMC 23.41.004 B).”

Option C, the “Clean Slate”, proposes one solid polygonal building mass that conforms to the shape of the existing parcel. The structure is three stories in height and includes three residential ground-related units plus one below-grade parking space for each unit. Access to off-street parking is proposed from North 72<sup>nd</sup> Street. The existing structure is proposed to be demolished. A variety of open space options are proposed including a roof deck, a deck over Unit C, and landscaping at ground-level.

A total of 12 development standard departures are requested for the design proposal (Table 1), including all setbacks, modulation, open space, curb cut, sight triangle, driveway slope. 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**

Public notice of the project ended July 2, 2008. The Department received four comment letters. Notice of the Master Use Application was published March 26, 2009 and comment period ended April 8, 2009. No new comments were submitted to DPD. Comments focused on the following issues:

- Questions of height, bulk, and scale relative to the requested departures of setback and open space
- Respect for adjacent sites

Comment letters, application documents, and associated materials may be found in the Land Use Application file, which is available for review at DPD's Public Resource Center, 700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000.

## **DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES**

After visiting the site and considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the applicant, the Department has determined the following siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings* and the *Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guidelines* to be of highest priority to this project. The final recommendations and conditions of DPD staff follow in **bold** text.

### Site Planning

**A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. *The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.***

*Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guideline (A-1):  
Responding to Site Characteristics.*

- *Views of the Lake: Consider siting the building to take advantage of these views and to enhance views from the public right-of-way. Methods to accomplish this include setting the building back from lake views, placing landscape elements and street trees to frame views rather than block them, and providing pedestrian spaces with views of the lake.*
- *Curved and Discontinuous Streets: New development can take advantage of such [curved] street patterns by providing special features that complement these unique spaces (see also A-2, C-2, and E-2).*

**A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. *The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.***

*Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guideline (A-2):  
Streetscape Compatibility.*

- *Multifamily Residential Areas: Landscaping in the required front setbacks of new multifamily development is an important siting and design consideration to help reinforce desirable streetscape continuity.*

**A-6 Transition between Residence and Street. For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.**

*Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guideline (A-6):  
Transition Between Residence and Street.*

- *Residential Buildings. Residences on the ground floor should be raised for residents' privacy, if allowed by site conditions. Well-landscaped, shallow front yard setbacks are also typical and appropriate.*

**A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.**

**A-10 Corner Lots. Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.**

The prominence of the corner suggests that the form of the structure should reflect the form of the site and the adjacent curvilinear street. DPD staff suggests incorporating curvilinear architectural elements into the design that would soften the edge of the corner mass and reflect the broader context and form of Green Lake.

Special features should be incorporated in the design of the streetscape along Linden Avenue North that further enhance and improve the pedestrian experience and add value to the public realm. Departure requests will be carefully considered in relation to attention given to the design quality of the west and south elevations, and subsequent connection with the streetscape.

Interruptions in foot travel along the streetscape and conflicts in pedestrian and vehicular travel should be minimized. This is of high priority given the site is adjacent to a Metro bus stop, the site rests at an intersection along a curvilinear street, and the property to the immediate east includes a curb cut in excess of 30 feet in width. Project proponents should strive to reduce any proposed driveway widths and curb cuts along North 72<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Residential entries should be distinctive and readily visible from the street, and should be well integrated with proposed architectural and landscape designs. At the MUP and recommendation stage of design DPD staff anticipates viewing a lighting plan that reflects well lit and respectful entries and driveway area.

**At the recommendation phase of design, the form of the preferred design remains unchanged; however the corner design now includes a “see through” corner window at the intersection of Linden Ave N and N 72<sup>nd</sup> that extends from grade level to just below the roof line. The design also includes a down light affixed to the corner “point” for night lighting.**

**In the area between the sidewalks and property lines, particularly along the west and south elevations, the design proposes to densely plant trees, shrubs, and ground cover, all of which positively enhance the pedestrian experience along both roadways while protecting the privacy of site users. As a public amenity and benefit, a large roughhewn stone block bench is proposed in the right-of-way adjacent to Linden Ave N (Unit C) for use by transit riders waiting at the Metro bus stop 15' north of the site. Similar stone blocks are proposed to be included along the N 72<sup>nd</sup> Street frontage, as are stone pavers to match the stone blocks.**

*The following condition is required:*

- *Specific building colors (Benjamin Moore, or similar, paint chips) shall be provided to DPD, reviewed and approved by the Land Use Planner prior to issuance of the Master Use Permit.*

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

- 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.*

*Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guideline (C-1):*

*Architectural Context.*

- *Façade Articulation – Multifamily Residential Structures: The façade articulation of new multifamily residential buildings (notably in Lowrise zones) should be compatible with the surrounding single-family architectural contexts.*

- C-5 Structured Parking Entrances.** *The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.*

DPD staff views the design proposal as a well composed modernist expression. The proposed strong street walls along the west and south elevations, and solid solar exposure along the south elevation should contribute positively to the surrounding environment.

DPD staff wants the applicant to present studies of the street level design along North 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, with the goal of reducing the presence of the garage along the street frontage.

**At the recommendation stage of design, DPD feels that the overall concept of the design is successful and presents a balanced and coherent design. The glazing has been updated and nicely placed in terms of respecting the privacy of on and off-site users. Open space areas are varied and present creative and appropriate options for each unit, such as the deck option for Unit C, and the right-of-way planting area for Unit B.**

**A deck rests atop the garage area along N 72<sup>nd</sup> Street; a trellis extends along the deck railing and is proposed to host a Clematis Montana vine. The Clematis vine will also extend along the east property line. The vegetation will minimize the scale of the garage doors, as will the individual and independent garage openings rather than one continuous garage door entrance. While the Department appreciates the color accent on the residential entries and garage doors as interesting and dynamic, specific colors proposed should be submitted to DPD (see above).**

D. Pedestrian Environment

- D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.** *Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.*

*Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guideline (D-1):*

*Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.*

- *New developments are encouraged to work with [DPD] and interested citizens to provide features that enhance the public realm. [DPD] would be willing to consider a departure in open space requirements if the project proponent provides an acceptable plan for:*
  - *Street furniture*

**D-2 Blank Walls.** *Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. 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 or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.*

Residential entrances should be integrated into architectural and landscape design features to the fullest extent possible, and should be recessed or shielded from inclement weather. The applicant should explore slightly different combinations of horizontal and vertical windows to minimize large voids in west and south elevations, and to protect the privacy of individuals north of the subject site, as well as the privacy of Units B and C facing north.

**Each residential entry has been clearly called out, overhead weather protection is proposed above each entry, and ample steps and overhead lighting is proposed. Blank walls have been softened with well proportioned glazing and landscaping at the street level. The rhythm of the façade along the west elevation has been rearranged to decrease the length of the blank wall.**

**The visual impacts of the parking structure have been minimized by the variation in paving treatment in the driveway, by the dense and draping plantings, and with garage doors that are separated into three independent openings that will operate electronically independently of one another.**

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E. Landscaping

**E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites.** *Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.*

**E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.** *Landscaping including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen wall, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.*

*Green Lake Neighborhood Design Guideline (E-3):*

*Landscape Design to Address special Site Conditions.*

- *Celebrate the Olmstead Heritage: Green Lake Park, Ravenna Boulevard and Lower Woodland Park are visible and accessible examples of the Olmsted brother's design. New development should build on this character by employing informal groupings of large and small trees and shrubs. A mix of deciduous, evergreen, and ornamental plant materials is appropriate. Continuous rows of street trees contrasting with the informal, asymmetric landscaping of open spaces are also typical.*

The forthcoming landscape plan is highly anticipated by DPD staff and will be viewed as a vital component towards the success of the overall design proposal. The landscape plan should replicate and build upon the level of existing landscape along both rights-of-way (verdant, mature, and including a variety of sizes and shapes), should soften the bulk and mass of the structure, and should minimize proposed hardscape.

As a departure request, the applicant has proposed to landscape a portion of the existing planting strip south of Unit B, closest to the intersection; DPD staff would like to see the entire length of the planting strip along this site landscaped. Plantings should be predominantly drought tolerant, native species.

**The design includes a strong, variable, and durable landscape plan, reflecting collaboration with the City Arborist to identify plantings suitable for the public realm. Many of the plantings are native to the Seattle environment or are listed plants on SDOT's Recommended Streetside Plant List. Examples of trees include a Vine Maple in the northeast corner of the site, and a Japanese Hornbeam in the planting strip on N 72<sup>nd</sup> Street. Clematis trellis' line most of the east property line above a fence, and extend above the garage area along the south elevation. The plant management plan includes a drip system to manage irrigation, as well as regular maintenance of site vegetation.**

**DPD is pleased with the design's incorporation of a variety of features into the project design; features such as street furniture, pavers, and the semi-permeable and distinctive pavement in the garage access area. Combined, these elements significantly improve the overall design, beautify the corner, and contribute positively to the Green Lake community.**

**SDOT's Urban Forester has reviewed the landscape plans and has approved the tree location and species of plantings in the right-of-way on N 72<sup>nd</sup> Street. The applicant will need to acquire an annual use permit for the proposed stone bench on Linden Ave N. Additionally, the landscape plan will need to be updated to reflect further comments by the Urban Forester: (1) No plants can be planted within 2-feet of a street tree, and (2) the Dwarf Escallonia can be no nearer than 2-feet to the edge of the sidewalk and curb. Additionally, landscaping in the public realm should not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic along either roadway.**

*DPD recommends approval of the ROW landscaping design subject to the following conditions:*

- *A copy of the annual street use permit for the stone bench on Linden Ave N must be provided to the project Land Use Planner.*
- *The landscape plan shall reflect the above-mentioned SDOT landscape requirements, items 1 and 2 (above).*
- *Documentation that demonstrates that SDOT approves the semi-permeable driveway conditions of the driveway in the public right-of-way shall be submitted to the project Land Use Planner.*

**DEPARTURES FROM DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

Land Use Code Standard	Proposal	Rationale for Request	DPD Guidance
<p><b>Front Setback (Linden Avenue)</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.014.A</b>  Average of the setbacks of the first principal structures on either side (in no case less than 5'). <b>5'9" required.</b></p>	<p>Proposed: 2'</p>	<p>The design will be consistent with street front facades along Linden Ave N.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-6, E-2)</p>
<p><b>Setback Requirements Lowrise Zones Reverse Corner Lots</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.014</b>  The side street setback of a reversed corner lot shall be <b>10'</b>.</p>	<p>Proposed: 7'6", 4'9" at garage/decks</p>	<p>The design will be consistent with structure to the east.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-1, A-5)</p>
<p><b>Side Setbacks</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.014.C</b>  <b>6'.0" required.</b></p>	<p>Proposed: 3'.9" at first floor only.</p>	<p>Only occurring with first floor, upper stories are code compliant.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-1)</p>
<p><b>Lot Coverage</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.014</b>  L-3 townhouses: <b>50%, 2,051 x 50% = 1,025 sq. ft.</b></p>	<p>Proposed: 63% at 1,222 sq. ft</p>	<p>Applicant intends to maintain sq. ft. of existing structure, but reorganize footprint to better meet site characteristics.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-1, A-10)</p>
<p><b>Screening and Landscaping</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.015</b>  Landscape area 3x186' total = <b>558 sq. ft. required.</b>  Landscape strip min. of 3' wide at street property lines.</p>	<p>Proposed: 400 sq.ft. landscape at-grade, 2' wide property line strip along Linden Ave., with 165 sq. ft. landscape area in N 72<sup>nd</sup> ST right-of-way. Total landscape area 565 sq. ft.</p>	<p>Small site does not allow additional landscaping. Proposal includes as much landscaping as possible at-grade.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (E-1, E-3)</p>
<p><b>Open Space</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.016</b>  Ground level open space of 300 sq.ft. average per unit, 200 min. sq.ft. per unit, <b>900 sq. ft. required.</b></p>	<p>Proposed: Unit A: 60 sq. ft. w/dimensions &lt;10';  Unit B: 135 Sq. ft. w/dimensions &lt;10' and 150 sq. ft. roof deck;  Unit C: 40 sq. ft. w/dimensions &lt;10'</p>	<p>Small site. Presents a unified landscape design along both street fronts.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-7, A-1)</p>
<p><b>Modulation: Side Corner Lot</b>  <b>SMC 23.45.012</b>  Modulation is required for facades greater than 40' in width. <b>Min. width 5', min. depth 4'.</b></p>	<p>Proposed: Depth of 2'6" with balconies and roofline allowed within.</p>	<p>Narrow unit floor plan widths and consistency with modern design aesthetic which meet the intent of the modulation standard. Proposed balconies in modulation provide human activity on site.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (C-2)</p>

<p><b>Curb Cut</b> <b>SMC 23.54.030</b> Allowed: (1) 10' wide curb cut on non-principal arterial.</p>	<p>Proposed: (1) 24' 6" wide curb cut along N 72<sup>nd</sup> ST.</p>	<p>Given site geometry, topography, size (3) back-out parking spaces on N 72<sup>nd</sup> ST make the most sense. Applicant wishes to take advantage of Code allowance of including frontage along Linden in curb cut calculations.</p>	<p>Meets the intent of SMC 23.45.018C4b to allow variations in curbcut standards for small lots. Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-8)</p>
<p><b>Sight Triangle</b> <b>SMC 23.54.030</b> 10' sight triangle required.</p>	<p>Proposed: 7' sight triangle.</p>	<p>Allows feasible vehicle access to small site. Parking spaces do not serve the general public.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-8)</p>
<p><b>Driveways</b> <b>SMC 23.54.030</b> The slope of the driveway may not exceed 10 % in the first 20' from the property line.</p>	<p>Proposal: 7 deg, 18 min at crest; 5 deg, 45 min at sag at west and middle driveway; east driveway is compliant.</p>	<p>Helps tuck garages under the project. Worst case is at west edge of the driveway. Manageable by most cars.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-8)</p>
<p><b>Side Entry Setback</b> <b>SMC23.45.014C2</b> Side entries alongside façades shall be recessed 3'</p>	<p>Proposed recess of 2'; Screen fencing to be provided.</p>	<p>2' relates better to small scale of the lot and project.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-1)</p>
<p><b>Structure Depth</b> <b>SMC23.45.011</b> 65% of lot depth allowed or 33'9"</p>	<p>Proposed structure depth 50'9" at longest point.</p>	<p>Corner lot has 2 side yards and is not square. Lot depth is met on N-S axis.</p>	<p>Approved based on proposed design and conditions listed below. (A-1)</p>

**Recommendation:**

After considering the proposed design and the project context, hearing public comment, and reconsidering the previously stated design priorities, DPD feels that all of the guidance the architect received has been successfully addressed. After much scrutiny of the site, the neighborhood context, proposed architectural massing and facades, open space and materials the Department supports the departures and recommends **approval** of the design. The issued building permit shall be revised to reflect changes in site design.

**DIRECTOR'S DECISION: DESIGN REVIEW**

The Director of DPD has reviewed the design and finds that it is consistent with the City of Seattle Design Review *Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings*. The recommendations summarized above were based on the application submitted to DPD on August 5, 2008. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to be reflected in all future plans submitted to DPD. The MUP plans have been updated to comply with all recommendations which are reflected in the approved plans.

After considering the site and context, public comments, the response to the design guideline priorities and reviewing the plans, the Director approves the subject design, as well as the requested departures with conditions listed below.

**CONDITIONS – Design Review**

*Prior to Issuance of the Building Permit*

1. Include the color drawings of elevations and landscape plan from MUP plans as part of the building permit sets (1 and 2) of record.

*Prior to Certificate of Occupancy*

2. Compliance with the approved design features and elements, including exterior materials, finishing details, roof amenities, colors, landscaping and R.O.W. improvements, shall be verified by the DPD Planner assigned to this project. Inspection appointments with the Planner (Marti Stave 206 684-0239) must be made at least three working days in advance of the inspection.

*During Construction*

3. All changes to the exterior facades of the building and landscaping on site and in the R.O.W. must be submitted as a revision to the building permit and reviewed by a Land Use Planner prior to proceeding with any proposed changes.

*For the Life of the Project*

4. 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 (Marti Stave 206-684-0239). 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.
5. Compliance with all images and text on the MUP drawings, design review guidelines and approved design features and elements (including exterior materials, landscaping and ROW improvements) shall be verified by the DPD planner assigned to this project (Marti Stave 206-684-0239), or by the Design Review Manager. An appointment with the assigned Land Use Planner must be made at least three 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.
6. Embed all of these conditions in the cover sheet for the MUP permit and for all subsequent permits including updated MUP plans, and all building permit drawings and embed the colored MUP recommendation drawings in the building permit plan sets.
7. Add the departure matrix shown on page 8 of this document to the coversheets of the MUP and Building Permit Plans to be microfilmed.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature on file) Date: February 25, 2010  
Marti Stave, Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development