



City of Seattle

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**Department of Planning and Development**  
Diane M. Sugimura, Director

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

**Project Number:** 3011964  
**Applicant Name:** Chris Davidson with Studio Meng Strazzara Architecture for  
GRE Greenwood Avenue LLC  
**Address of Proposal:** 8022 15th Avenue NW

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow a four-story structure containing 48 residential units above three live work units. Parking for 34 vehicles to be provided at grade.

The following approvals are required:

**Design Review** - Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 23.41, with Development Standard Departures:

1. Residential Uses at Street Level (SMC 23.47A.005.C.3 and 23.47A.008.A.1)
2. Non-residential Use Depth (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3.a)

**SEPA - Environmental Determination** – SMC Chapter 25.05.

**SEPA DETERMINATION:**       Exempt    DNS    MDNS    EIS  
  
    DNS with conditions  
  
    DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition or  
   involving another agency with jurisdiction.

## **BACKGROUND DATA**

### **Site and Vicinity**

The site is located midblock along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW between NW 80<sup>th</sup> Street and NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The vacant site is approximately 13,574 sq. ft. The site is currently vacant, relatively flat, and mostly grass-covered. Adjacent uses include single family homes across the alley to the east and one and two-story commercial structures to the north and south. The sites to the west, north and south of the project are zoned NC2-40. Across the alley to the east, the zone changes to Single Family 5000.



### **Project Description**

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a four story mixed use building with approximately 48 residential units located above three ground level live/work use. All of the parking (approximately 34 stalls) for the proposed development is to be provided in an at-grade garage that is accessed from the alley.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Approximately six members of the public attended the Early Design Review meeting held on March 14, 2011 and one letter was received. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted that a true live/work unit cannot be reasonably accommodated in the floor plan presented.
- Clarified the proposed building height maximum (44') and ventilation requirements.
- Objected to weight and mass of the 'bookend' features as too heavy. The ends should be a lighter material and wrap around to the north and south walls to help break up the expanse of these walls.
- Encouraged carving out the upper corners to include balconies for those units and help reduce the mass.
- Would like to see canopies over the main entrance extended to the other entries – either as continuous or over the multiple points of entry. Overhead protection would be an important pedestrian amenity.
- Encourages more modulation of the 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade.
- Suggested that the fenestration wrap the corners of the façade that turn into the main entrance to increase visibility.
- Supported more modulation of the alley elevation to respond to the lower density context across the alley (single family neighborhood).
- Would like to see the parking along the alley well-screened.
- Suggested that more horizontal elements should be introduced on the front façade to mimic shelves between the bookends. Also, the vertical piers need to meet the street rather than disappear into the store front.
- Encouraged parapet design that is less flat and provides transition to the sky.

- Supported the following: include modulation along the longer west and east facades and the proposed north and south walls are oppressively detailed should relate more sympathetically to the front and back facades. The live/work storefront is too transparent for this busy arterial. Some of the solid facade materials should occur on this ground level to provide these residents with some more visual/acoustic separation from the very-adjacent high-traffic volume and speeds. The facade transitions at floor level 2. A second EDG should be required because 3 equally developed concepts were not presented at this one. Other-shaped plans would be worthwhile to explore for site-specific opportunities, instead of focusing on their over-developed and under-designed formula-H shaped one.
- Concerned with the expanse of blank wall as viewed from the Single Family zone across the alley to the east.

The applicant applied for a Master Use Permit on April 20, 2011. Notice of Application was published on May 12, 2011 and a 14-day comment period ended on May 24, 2011. No comments were received.

Approximately two members of the public attended the Recommendation meeting held on October 10, 2011. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Would like to see more modulation provided on the east elevation. The level of modulation and visual interest shown on the west elevation should also be applied to the east elevation.
- Concerned that the fencing proposed along the alley will attract graffiti. Would like to have the parking and garage screened, but would prefer a materials that will discourage tagging or other graffiti.
- Did not have a preference between the two designs propose for the blank walls at the north and south property lines.
- Would like to see more depth provided for the live/work units.
- Prefer the more urban alternative for the 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue landscape plan.

### **ANALYSIS — DESIGN REVIEW**

Three alternative design schemes were presented at the early Design Guidance meeting. All of the options include access off the alley.

The first scheme (Option A) was a doughnut configuration with a central courtyard.

The second scheme (Option B) was an H-shaped configuration with sloped roofs above the two long building sections.

The third scheme (Option C) showed a box shaped with a central recess notch at the north and south ends. This is the applicant's preferred option. In the packet to the Board, another option was shown with a clerestory roof form. The Board liked this roof form and would like to see this alternative further pursued.

At the Final Recommendation meeting, a design concept was presented to the Board which differed dramatically from the preferred option that the Board reviewed at the previous EDG. The Board was not pleased with the significant shift away from the original concept, particularly because the resultant design was overly similar to two other projects recently reviewed. The

Board's frustrations centered on the concern that a design should be site specific and respond directly to the given context and should not be a formula. That said, however, the Board reviewed the proposed design and agreed that in this case, the design concept along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue was reasonable and well-considered. The 15th Avenue façade was more modulated and visually interesting than the alley elevation, which was flatter and less articulated. The alley level fence proposed both for security and screening included solid and grid planes.

Two landscape designs were presented along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Both included dense landscaping of the planting strip with six street trees, shrubs and ground cover. The building face was been set back from the sidewalk by about six feet. The first option included four feet wide charcoal colored concrete paver pathways connecting the sidewalk to each point of entry. The intervening set back areas were densely planted with a combination of trees, shrubs and grasses. The second option included beige contrasting colored concrete pavers both for the pathways as well as the space against the building to create a small patio space in front of each live/work entry. The patio spaces were defined with low barrier elements. The lobby entry would be marked with a charcoal grey paver and a cast-in-place concrete bench was shown in front of the reception area. The remaining set back spaces were densely planted with a combination of trees, shrubs and grasses. Both options had seasonal plantings at the lobby entry.

## **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. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

### **Site Planning**

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

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the importance of overhead weather protection to an active, successful pedestrian environment. The Board recommended that overhead canopies be included over each entryway at a minimum and preferably, in a continuous configuration to provide full protection from the elements.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board expressed concern that the live/work units should feel connected to the streetscape. The Board recommended in favor of the dense landscape plan with widened entry pathways. See discussion under E-1.

The Board was supportive of the proposed overhead steel canopies painted the red accent color over the ground level entries and windows. The residential lobby entrance also has a canopy overhead. The leasing office, however, was defined with a deep landscape bed and no overhead canopy.

**A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that the main entrance should be distinguished from the other live/work entries. See also D-1.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board evaluated this guideline as part of their discussion under E-1.

**A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the storefront system should include more masonry and less glass to create a strong building base and better transition to buffer the area between the live/work units and the sidewalk.

The Board was very concerned that the proposed live/work units will be viably designed to encourage active use at the sidewalk level. The shallow depth shown for these units is problematic as noted by the Board and every effort should be made to design live/work units that can operate successfully as functional live/work units that engage with and activate the street. The Board recommended that these units be deeper to accommodate functional live/work uses.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board was very supportive that the departure request for reduced commercial depth was eliminated and the live/work units provide the requisite depth, with the exception of the middle unit which was expanded to provide an intervening use between the sidewalk and the utility vault room. The expansion of the live/work unit into this space was considered positive both because it screens the vault with a more engaging and activating use, but also because it increases the size of the live/work unit to become more adaptable to a future use. See also D-11.

**B. 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 near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board preferred the massing along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and rooflines presented in Option 3. The modulation of the north and south elevations was also preferred, however, the Board did not care for the bookend approach which created too heavy an appearance and did not integrate well with the front façade, in addition to creating heavy blank walls. The Board did not support the massing shown in Option 3, however, as it lacks response to the single family neighborhood across the alley.

The Board discussed the east side of the proposed building and agreed that it needs to include more modulation to respond to the single family neighborhood across the alley. The west side of the building is more commercial in character and does not require this extra modulation and sensitivity to the smaller scale context to the east.

The Board expressed a preference for the clerestory option shown in the original packet.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board strongly agreed that the east elevation which faces the lower intensity zone across the alley should receive the same level of modulation as the street facing façade. This issue was addressed as part of the architectural concept discussed under C-2.

## **C. Architectural Elements and Materials**

### **C-1 Architectural Context. New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board was disappointed with the lack of contextual analysis and would like to see at the next meeting more examination of the architectural context of buildings along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and how these building have informed the materials, colors and detailing of the proposed development. The Board did not support the Juliette balconies along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue because it is a loud and busy arterial and such details are out of context.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board did not discuss the inclusion of the guard rail grilles in front of sliding windows proposed for ventilation along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

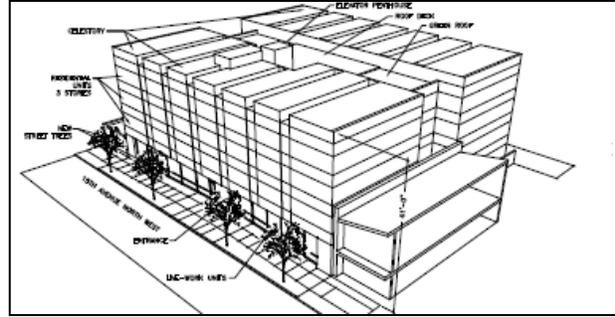
### **C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency. Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that a strong commercial base with less glass is critical. The Board also discussed the detailing and agreed it should include overhead weather protection, punched openings and intentional reveals and joinery to create more texture and less flatness to the facades.

The Board strongly agreed that the storefront system for the live/work units should not be expansive, but rather establish a clear base that relates well to the upper levels. The vertical lines should extend downward to the meet the sidewalk.

See also B-1.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board discussed at length the lack of modulation provided on the east elevation and agreed that the same level of visual interest and articulation of the massing should be provided on the east façade. The Board agreed that the approach to the design of the east elevation should be similar to that of the west elevation in terms of modulation in response to the Single Family zone across the alley. The Board also agreed that the east elevation shown on the EDG packet (page A11) would also be a reasonable approach. The range of design presented by these two design concepts is the direction that the east elevation should strive towards.



The majority of the Board was supportive of the proposed color scheme. The dissenting opinion was that the color scheme be simplified to two colors for a more dramatic presence. The Board was supportive of either direction at the architect's discretion.

**C-3 Human Scale. The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discouraged the bookend approach, encouraged more of a solid base that is well integrated with the upper floors in terms of materials and architectural lines. The Board also encouraged the design of residential units on the upper floors that would allow for individual units to be expressed.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board acknowledged that the design changed considerably away from the original approach and did not closely resemble that building or the direction given based on the EDG designs. The Board did, however, feel that the proposed design manages to express clearer lines that relate the base to the upper floors.

**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 Board looks forward to reviewing a carefully selected material and color palette at the next meeting.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board expressed support for the proposed material palette which included beige panel hardi panel with red accent hardi panel and white ribbed panel. The fence along the alley was a tube steel with inset panels. The Board was concerned with the flat fencing panels being used for graffiti and recommended that the gate and fence structure shown along the alley be re-designed to be a combination of screens (that provide some transparency) and green walls. Irrigation should be also provided directly to the ground where the green walls are planted.

## 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the proposed development should strive to include wider sidewalks, wider planting strips, distinct entrances and continuous overhead protection. See also A-3.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board was supportive of the building setback along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the proposed dense landscaping of the planting strip and between the sidewalk and the building façade. The Board reviewed both ground level design options and settled on a hybrid – see discussion under E-1.

- 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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board indicated that the north and south walls and should be well detailed and include visual interest.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board reviewed two designs for the blank wall condition on the north and south elevations. The Board did not have a strong preference and was supportive of either option and are comfortable leaving the decision to the architect.



- 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 elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that the parking located off the alley should be well screened and would like to see green walls/screen accommodated. The Board suggested allowing for the vertical vegetation to climb over the setback area.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board was pleased that all of the service elements were located within the building and/or screened by the fencing along the alley. The Board, however, did recommend a maneuvering diagram that shows how vehicles will circulate to and from this property, as well as adjacent properties safely, both during garbage collection days and regular days.

**D-7 Personal Safety and Security. Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board noted that appropriate lighting and mirrors should be considered and included in the alley design to allow for safe maneuvering of car to and from the site.

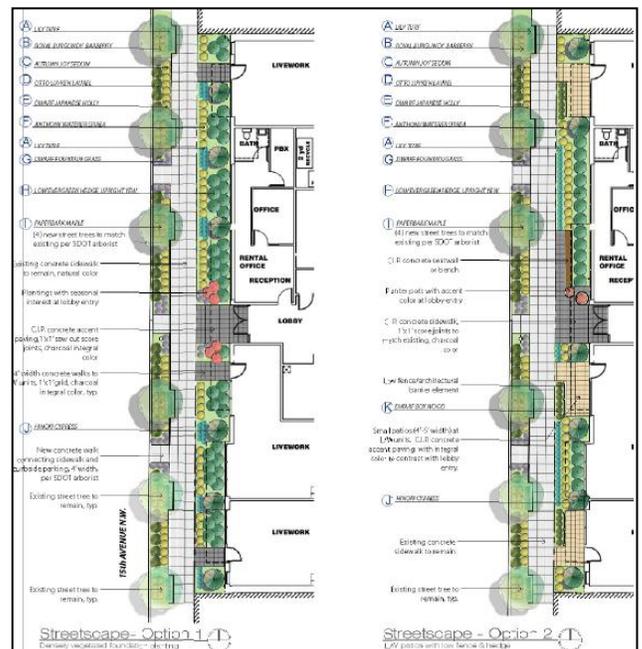
At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board was supportive of the exterior lighting plans which illuminate the ground areas of the building along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as well as along the alley. The recommendations regarding the gate and fence design should also discourage graffiti from occurring at the alley.

**D-8 Treatment of Alleys. The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.**

See discussion of screening in D-6.

**D-11 Commercial Transparency. Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board agreed that less transparency than shown would be appropriate for the live/work units along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The design presented included a large glassy storefront system that would not provide enough of a transition buffer needed for a comfortable live/work use. If the ground level use was true commercial, then such a design would be more suitable.



At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board recommended that proposed the rental office should contain transparent walls within the office interior to maintain views from the sidewalk to the office spaces. This recommendation is tied to the departure request.

## **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.**

At the Early Design Guidance Meeting, the Board discussed the benefit of a wider, densely vegetated planting strip that will serve as a buffer for pedestrians from the fast moving traffic of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Additional vegetation along the building front was also proposed and would help with the transition between the live/work units and the sidewalk, but should be viable with the overhead canopies.

At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board reviewed both options for the landscaping and hardscape design for 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and recommended a hybrid which keeps the entry designs of Option 2 (at the lobby and live/work units) with the benches and landscaping and combines that with the simple, wider pathways leading to the individual entries shown in Option 1.

The Board was satisfied with the proposed six foot tall fence at the alley. The Board agreed that the addition of green walls and screens along the alley fence would help provide visual relief and softening of proposed development in relation to the lower density zone.

## **DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

Two departures from the development standards were proposed at this phase. The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

- 1. Residential Uses at Street Level (SMC 23.47A.005.C.3 and 23.47A.008.A.1):** The Code requires that residential uses located at street level are limited to 20%. The applicant proposes to have 40% residential uses located at street level. The applicant proposes to use transparency and human activity generated by the proposed leasing and rental office at the street level in order to accomplish the intent of commercial uses at street level, consistent with Guidelines A-2, A-4, and D-11.

The Board unanimously recommended that DPD grant the departure for the residential use at street level, subject to the conditions listed below for interior transparency to the leasing office and reception area.

- 2. Non-residential Use Depth (SMC 23.47A.008.B.3.a):** The Code requires non-residential uses shall extend an average of at least 30 feet and a minimum of 15 feet in depth from the street level street facing facade. The applicant proposes to provide a depth of 8 feet for a portion of one live/work unit.

The Board unanimously recommended in favor of the proposed departure given that it provided an intervening and more active use between the sidewalk and the utility vaults. The Board agreed that the longer street frontage and expanded live/work unit will allow further flexibility and activation of this unit to encourage a more commercial use consistent with Guidelines A-2, A-3 and A-4.

The design review process prescribed in Section 23.41.014.F of the Seattle Municipal Code describing the content of the DPD Director's decision reads in part as follows:

*The Director's decision shall consider the recommendation of the Design Review Board, provided that, if four (4) members of the Design Review Board are in agreement in their recommendation to the Director, the Director shall issue a decision which incorporates the full substance of the recommendation of the Design Review Board, unless the Director concludes the Design Review Board:*

- a. Reflects inconsistent application of the design review guidelines; or*
- b. Exceeds the authority of the Design Review Board; or*
- c. Conflicts with SEPA conditions or other regulatory requirements applicable to the site; or*
- d. Conflicts with the requirements of state or federal law.*

Subject to the recommended conditions below, the design of the proposed project was found by the Design Review Board to adequately conform to the applicable Design Guidelines.

### **BOARD DIRECTION**

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated October 10, 2011, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the October 10, 2011 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and initial recommendation conditions, and reviewing the plans and renderings, three of the five Board members recommended approval of the project with the following conditions. One Board member abstained and one opposed to the project moving forward.

1. The approach to the design of the east elevation should be similar to that of the west elevation in terms of modulation in response to the Single Family zone across the alley. The Board also agreed that the east elevation shown on the EDG packet (page A11) would also be a reasonable approach. The range of design presented by these two design concepts is the direction that the east elevation should strive towards. (B-1, C-2)

2. The gate and fence structure shown along the alley should be re-designed to be a combination of screens (that provide some transparency) and green walls. Irrigation should be provided directly to the ground where the green walls are planted. (C-4, D-7, E-1)
3. A maneuvering diagram that shows how vehicles will circulate to and from this property, as well as adjacent properties safely both during garbage collection days and regular days. (D-6)
4. The landscaping and hardscape design along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be a hybrid which keeps the entry design of Option 2 with the benches and landscaping and combines that with the simple, wider pathways leading to the individual entries shown in Option 1. (A-2, A-3, A-4 and E-1).
5. The proposed ground level rental office should contain transparent walls within the office interior to maintain views from the sidewalk to the office spaces. (A-4, D-11)

## **ANALYSIS & DECISION – DESIGN REVIEW**

### **Director’s Analysis**

All five members of the Northwest Area Design Review Board were in attendance and provided recommendations (listed above) to the Director and identified elements of the Design Guidelines which are critical to the project’s overall success. The Director must provide additional analysis of the Board’s recommendations and then accept, deny or revise the Board’s recommendations (SMC 23.41.014.F3). The Director agrees with and accepts the conditions recommended by the Board that further augment the selected Guidelines.

Following the Recommendation meeting, DPD staff worked with the applicant to update the submitted plans to include the recommendations of the Design Review Board. The Director of DPD has reviewed the decision and recommendations of the Design Review Board made by the five members present at the decision meeting and finds that they are consistent with the City of Seattle Design Review Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings. The Director agrees with the Design Review Board’s conclusion that the proposed project and conditions imposed result in a design that best meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines and accepts the recommendations noted by the Board. The Director is satisfied that all of the recommendations imposed by the Design Review Board have been met.

### **Director’s Decision**

The design review process is prescribed in Section 23.41.014 of the Seattle Municipal Code. Subject to the above-proposed conditions, the design of the proposed project was found by the Design Review Board to adequately conform to the applicable Design Guidelines. The Director of DPD has reviewed the decision and recommendations of the Design Review Board made by the five members present at the decision meeting (although only three recommended approval) provided additional review and finds that they are consistent with the City of Seattle Design Review Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings. The Design Review Board

agreed that the proposed design, along with the conditions listed, meets each of the Design Guideline Priorities as previously identified. Therefore, the Director accepts the Design Review Board's recommendations and **CONDITIONALLY APPROVES** the proposed design and the requested departures with the conditions summarized at the end of this Decision.

### **ANALYSIS—SEPA**

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the Seattle State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05) because the proposed project is located in a commercial zone and exceeds four dwelling units.

The applicant provided the initial disclosure of this development's potential impacts in an environmental checklist dated April 12, 2011. The Department of Planning and Development has analyzed the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant, reviewed the project plans, considered pertinent public comment; and forms the basis of this analysis and decision based on its experience as lead agency with review of similar projects.

As indicated in this analysis, this action may result in adverse impacts to the environment. However, due to their temporary nature and limited effects, the impacts are not expected to be significant.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, and certain neighborhood plans and other policies explicitly referenced, may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states, in part, "*Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation*" subject to some limitations. Adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposal. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate and is noted below.

#### **Short-Term Impacts**

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected; decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from demolition and building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code regulates site excavation for foundation purposes and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code provides for construction measures in general. Finally, the Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the City.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675B) allow the reviewing agency to mitigate impacts associated with construction activities. Most short-term impacts are expected to be minor. Compliance with the above applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. However, impacts associated with air quality, noise, and construction traffic warrant further discussion.

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from construction activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust caused by drying mud tracked onto streets during construction activities; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction materials hauling, equipment and personnel; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts:

- The applicant estimates approximately 370 cubic yards of excavation for construction. Excess material to be disposed of must be deposited in an approved site.
- The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code regulates site excavation for foundation purposes and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction.
- The Street Use Ordinance requires watering streets to suppress dust, on-site washing of truck tires, removal of debris, and regulates obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way.
- Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code provides for construction measures in general.
- Finally, the Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the city.

Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most short-term impacts to the environment. However, given the amount of building activity to be undertaken in association with the proposed project, additional analysis of drainage, grading, noise, greenhouse gases, and traffic impacts is warranted.

Soil disturbing activities during site excavation for foundation purposes could result in erosion and transport of sediment. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code provides for extensive review and conditioning of the project prior to issuance of building permits. Therefore, no further conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

#### Earth - Grading

The construction plans will be reviewed by DPD. Any additional information showing conformance with applicable ordinances and codes will be required prior to issuance of building permits. Applicable codes and ordinances provide extensive conditioning authority and prescriptive construction methodology to assure safe construction techniques are used; therefore, no additional conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code requires preparation of a soils report to evaluate the site conditions and provide recommendations for safe construction on sites where grading will involve cuts or fills of greater than three feet in height or grading greater than 100 cubic yards of material. The current proposal involves excavation of approximately 370 cubic yards of material. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code provides extensive conditioning authority and prescriptive construction methodology to assure safe construction techniques are used, therefore, no additional conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

### Traffic, Circulation and Parking

Construction activities are expected to affect the surrounding area. Impacts to traffic and roads are expected from truck trips during excavation and construction activities. The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675B) allows the reviewing agency to mitigate impacts associated with transportation during construction. The construction activities will require the removal of material from site and can be expected to generate truck trips to and from the site. In addition, delivery of concrete and other materials to the site will generate truck trips. As a result of these truck trips, an adverse impact to existing traffic will be introduced to the surrounding street system, which is unmitigated by existing codes and regulations.

During construction, existing City code (SMC 11.62) requires truck activities to use arterial streets to the greatest extent possible. This immediate area is subject to traffic congestion during the PM peak hour, and large construction trucks would further exacerbate the flow of traffic. Pursuant to SMC 25.05.675(B) (Construction Impacts Policy) and SMC 25.05.675(R) (Traffic and Transportation), additional mitigation is warranted.

For the removal and disposal of the spoil materials, the Code (SMC 11.74) provides that material hauled in trucks not be spilled during transport. The City requires that a minimum of one foot of “freeboard” (area from level of material to the top of the truck container) be provided in loaded uncovered trucks which minimize the amount of spilled material and dust from the truck bed en route to or from a site.

For the duration of the construction activity, the applicant/responsible party shall cause construction truck trips to cease during the hours between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. This condition will assure that construction truck trips do not interfere with daily PM peak traffic in the vicinity. As conditioned, this impact is sufficiently mitigated in conjunction with enforcement of the provisions of existing City Code (SMC 11.62).

The Street Use Ordinance requires sweeping or watering streets to suppress dust, on-site washing of truck tires, removal of debris, and regulates obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way. This ordinance provides adequate mitigation for these construction transportation impacts; therefore, no additional conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

### Noise

All construction activities are subject to the limitations of the Noise Ordinance. Construction activities (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7am to 6pm. Interior work that involves mechanical equipment, including compressors and generators, may be allowed on Saturdays

between 9am and 6pm once the shell of the structure is completely enclosed, provided windows and doors remain closed. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, weather protection shall not be limited by this condition.

Construction activities outside the above-stated restrictions may be authorized upon approval of a Construction Noise Management Plan to address mitigation of noise impacts resulting from all construction activities. The Plan shall include a discussion on management of construction related noise, efforts to mitigate noise impacts and community outreach efforts to allow people within the immediate area of the project to have opportunities to contact the site to express concern about noise. Elements of noise mitigation may be incorporated into any Construction Management Plans required to mitigate any short-term transportation impacts that result from the project.

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities including construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacture of the construction materials themselves result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant.

### Long-Term Impacts

Potential long-term or use impacts anticipated by the proposal include: increased height, bulk and scale of building in some areas of the site; increased light and glare from exterior lighting, increased noise due to increased human activity; increased demand on public services; increased traffic on adjacent streets; increased on-street parking, and increased energy consumption. These long-term impacts are not considered significant because they are minor in scope, but some warrant further discussion (noted below).

The likely long-term impacts are typical of this scale of mixed use development, and DPD expects them to be mitigated by the City's adopted codes and/or ordinances (together with fulfillment of Seattle Department of Transportation requirements). Specifically these are: the Land Use Code (aesthetic impacts, height, setbacks, parking) the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption), and the street use ordinance. However, more detailed discussion of some of these impacts is appropriate.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: the ECA Ordinance, the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code which requires provisions for controlled tightline release to an approved outlet and may require additional design elements to prevent isolated flooding. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of most long-term impacts and no further conditioning is warranted by SEPA policies.

### Parking

A Traffic Impact Analysis was prepared by Gibson Traffic Consultant dated September 2011 for the proposed development. A total of 34 parking spaces are proposed for the project. The 2000 Census data for Census Tract 30, which includes the subject site documents average car ownership for apartments at .88 per unit. Based on 51 units, there could be a generated demand

for 45 vehicles. The parking analysis indicates that the project is likely to have a spillover of about 11 vehicles during peak times (typically overnight hours for residential projects). As the project is within an Urban Village within 1,320' of frequent transit service, DPD does not have SEPA authority to mitigate this impact; however, the impacts are not anticipated to be substantial. Therefore, no mitigation of parking impacts under SEPA is warranted or required according to SMC 25.05.675.M.

### Traffic and Transportation

Traffic will increase over existing conditions due to the addition of approximately 51 new units to the project site. It is estimated that 359 new daily trips will be generated with 27 AM peak hour trips and 34 PM peak hour trips. As stated, two bus routes are within a quarter mile of the project site and the nearest transit stop is within a tenth of a mile. Therefore, the project's traffic generation may be slightly less than normal.

Left-turns to and from the alley at its intersection with NW 80<sup>th</sup> Street frequently will be blocked by queues of westbound traffic on 80<sup>th</sup>, particularly during peak times. To reduce delays and not impact traffic safety, the project shall be required to install a c-curb in the median of NW 80<sup>th</sup> Street to prohibit left-turns to and from the alley; the c-curb should be designed and installed to SDOT specifications.

### Height, Bulk, and Scale

SMC 25.05.675.G.2.c states, "*The Citywide Design Guidelines (and any Council-approved, neighborhood design guidelines) are intended to mitigate the same adverse height, bulk, and scale impacts addressed in these policies. A project that is approved pursuant to the Design Review Process shall be presumed to comply with these Height, Bulk, and Scale policies. This presumption may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence that height, bulk and scale impacts documented through environmental review have not been adequately mitigated. Any additional mitigation imposed by the decision maker pursuant to these height, bulk, and scale policies on projects that have undergone Design Review shall comply with design guidelines applicable to the project.*"

The site abuts a single family zone to the east. The Design Review Board considered the issue of appropriate transitions, and mitigation of height, bulk, and scale impacts to the single family zone. The single family zone is across the alley, which is 16 feet wide. The parking area of the proposed structure will be delineated with screens and green walls. The upper floors are modulated with slight recessed areas and material patterns to break up the massing. The project itself has set back seven feet from the property line; a typical single family home is at least 20 feet from a rear property line, allowing at least a 43-foot separation between the building and its single family neighbor to the east. The project includes an additional one foot setback along the portion of the building façade closest to the single family residence in order to further modulate the façade and reduce height bulk and scale impacts. The Design Review Board unanimously recommended approval of the project design. DPD finds that any height bulk and scale impacts have been adequately mitigated by the project, and comply with the applicable design review guidelines. The proposed structure is located on a NC2-40 zoned site, and the structure conforms to zoning requirements, including height, bulk, and setbacks. No additional height, bulk, or scale SEPA mitigation is warranted pursuant to the SEPA height, bulk and scale policy.

Light and Glare

The checklist discusses the project's likely light and glare effects on the surrounding area. The proposed project includes downshielded outdoor lighting and landscaping that will help buffer light and glare impacts from neighboring properties. Lighting will be downshielded but will provide enough light in the evening to provide a safe environment. DPD therefore determines that light and glare impacts are not likely to be substantial and warrant no further mitigation per SMC 25.05.675.K.

Greenhouse Gas

Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project and the projects' energy consumption, are expected to result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant.

**DECISION - SEPA**

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

[X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

**CONDITIONS – SEPA**

The following condition(s) to be enforced during demolition/construction shall be posted at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way. If more than one street abuts the site, conditions shall be posted at each street. The conditions will be affixed to placards prepared by DPD. The placards will be issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other waterproofing material and shall remain posted on-site for the duration of the construction.

During Construction

1. The hours of construction activity shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays (except that grading, delivery and pouring of cement and similar noisy activities shall be prohibited on Saturdays). This condition may be modified by DPD to allow work of an emergency nature. This condition may also be modified to permit low noise exterior work (e.g., installation of landscaping) after approval from DPD.

*Construction activities outside the above-stated restriction may be authorized by DPD when necessitated by unforeseen construction, safety, or street-use related situations. Requests for extended construction hours are weekend days must be submitted to **Noise Abatement Coordinators** — David George (206) 684-7843 or Jeff Stalter (206) 615-1760 — at least **three (3) days in advance of the requested dates** in order to allow DPD to evaluate the request.*

2. For the duration of the construction activity, the applicant/responsible party shall cause construction truck trips to cease during the hours between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays.

## **CONDITIONS – DESIGN REVIEW**

### *Prior to MUP Issuance*

The applicant shall satisfy the following design review conditions recommended by the Design Review Board:

3. The approach to the design of the east elevation should be similar to that of the west elevation in terms of modulation in response to the Single Family zone across the alley. The Board also agreed that the east elevation shown on the EDG packet (page A11) would also be a reasonable approach. The range of design presented by these two design concepts is the direction that the east elevation should strive towards. (B-1, C-2)
4. The gate and fence structure shown along the alley should be re-designed to be a combination of screens (that provide some transparency) and green walls. Irrigation should be provided directly to the ground where the green walls are planted. (C-4, D-7, E-1)
5. A maneuvering diagram that shows how vehicles will circulate to and from this property, as well as adjacent properties safely both during garbage collection days and regular days. (D-6)
6. The landscaping and hardscape design along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be a hybrid which keeps the entry design of Option 2 with the benches and landscaping and combines that with the simple, wider pathways leading to the individual entries shown in Option 1. (A-2, A-3, A-4 and E-1).
7. The proposed ground level rental office should contain transparent walls within the office interior to maintain views from the sidewalk to the office spaces. (A-4, D-11)

### *Prior to Issuance of any Certificate of Occupancy*

8. The project shall install a c-curb in the median of NW 80<sup>th</sup> Street to prohibit left-turns to and from the alley; the c-curb should be designed and installed to SDOT specifications.
9. The applicants shall arrange for an inspection with the Land Use Planner to verify that the construction of the buildings with siting, materials, and architectural details is substantially the same as those documented in the approved plans dated November 3, 2011.

Prior to Building Permit Issuance

10. Any proposed changes to the exterior of the building must be submitted to DPD for review and approval of the Senior Land Use Planner (Lisa Rutzick, 206-386-9049). 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.
11. 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.

For the Life of the Project

12. The applicant must retain the fenestration, architectural features and elements, and arrangement of finish materials and colors presented to the Design Review Board on September 26, 2011, and as modified in updated plans, following the Board's recommendation meeting.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature on file)  
Lisa Rutzick, Senior Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

Date: January 26, 2012