



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: 3011965
Applicant Name: Tony Fan for HAL Real Estate Investments
Address of Proposal: 1527 15th Avenue

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to revise MUP 2100412 to allow access from Pine Street. Land Use Application to allow a six-story, 56-unit residential building with two live-work units and 2,100 square feet of retail at ground level. Parking for 61 vehicles will be located within the structure. Early Design Guidance and SEPA were reviewed and approved under Project #2100412

The following approvals are required:

Design Review – Chapter 23.41 SMC.

BACKGROUND DATA

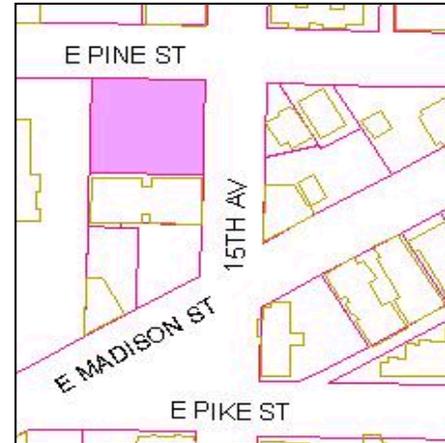
Project Description

Master Use Permit to establish the use for the future construction of a 6 story mixed-use structure containing ground floor retail with 56 dwelling units located above. Parking for 61 vehicles will be located in a partially below grade-parking garage. The property is zoned Neighborhood Commercial with a Pedestrian designation (NC3P-65) and a 65 foot height limit.

Site Description

Located at the southwest corner of 15th Avenue and East Pine Street, the development site, predominately flat along the 15th Ave portion of the site, falls to the west along a gradual slope parallel to the north property line. The site is not located in an Environmentally Critical Area. Approximately 115 feet long on 15th Ave and 121 feet along E. Pine for a total area of approximately 14,186 square feet, the site has principal use parking occupying it. As the project is within the Pike/Pine Neighborhood Planning Area and Urban Village, commercial uses are required along East Pine Street. Development in the vicinity of the proposal site is varied in

architectural character with vintage structures and a variety of current land uses. Development between of East Pine Street and East Pike Street is primarily commercial while the areas north of Pine and east of 15th Avenue E. are primarily residential, with a mix of older single family houses and older and new multi-family buildings. Development north and east of the proposal site is primarily zoned Lowrise 3 (LR-3).



Design Development

DPD approved the project, called the Cameo, in 2002 (MUP issued) as a companion to the Braeburn condominium project directly across E. Pine St. The Master Use Permit remained active due to construction permit activity. In the ten intervening years, the commercial chapter (SMC 23.47A) of the Land Use Code changed restricting access from designated pedestrian streets. Due to E. Pine Street's designation, the Code requires a departure to maintain the previously approved access from E. Pine St. The applicant has revised the base of the structure along E. Pine St. to comply with the 80 percent transparency regulation. The applicant has also requested a departure from sight triangle regulations. Between the Capitol Hill Board's recommended approval in 2001, DPD administratively approved changes to the building's design. With the exception of modifications to the north façade at street front, the DPD approved construction drawings approved by DPD were presented to the current Capitol Hill Board at the April 20, 2011 Recommendation meeting.

MASTER USE PERMIT APPLICATION

The applicant revised the design and applied for a Master Use Permit with a design review component on January 18, 2011.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The Design Review Board conducted a Final Recommendation Meeting on April 20, 2011 to review the applicant's formal project proposal developed in response to the previously identified priorities. At the public meeting, site plans, elevations, floor plans, and computer renderings of the proposed exterior materials were presented for the Board members' consideration.

Public Comments

Three members of the public affixed their names to the sign-in sheet. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Several speakers disagreed with the applicant's characterization of 15th Ave. as a busier pedestrian corridor than Pine St. The speakers stated that Pine St. has much heavier pedestrian traffic.
- Placement of the garage and trash/recycle storage along Pine St. will create noise (garbage trucks) and light impacts. Allowing the departure from the sight triangle will cause the garage to have audible signals and lights warning motorists. These will disturb those who live across from the complex at the Braeburn.

- The bus layover area could potentially be moved elsewhere on 15th Ave. away from the site to allow garage access there. The bus layover area does not appear to impact current access for the parking lot on 15th Ave.
- The commercial space along Pine St. should step down the hillside and have storefront doors.
- Having a well between the glazing and the commercial space is problematic. These can be hellacious, leftover spaces.
- The Pike/Pine corridor needs lots more retail. The speaker recommends discouraging live/work in the area.
- The design of the facades is dated. Reconsider the cladding choices, the pattern of building modulation and the number of materials.
- It is simpler to have the garage access on Pine St. as the grade is lower.
- The approved design is wedding cake pastiche. It is aesthetically chaotic. The design needs to become more elegant.
- The Braeburn along 15th Ave. is not particularly pedestrian friendly.
- Both the Braeburn and the existing site (parking lot) have curb cuts on 15th Ave. It makes sense to continue this pattern rather than add curb cuts to the more pedestrian oriented Pine St. corridor.

DPD received two comment letters. Both letters opposed the plan to place garage access on E. Pine St, citing the applicant's misrepresentation of E. Pine as having fewer pedestrians. With more pedestrians on E. Pine, the safer option for parking garage access would be 15th Ave. One letter's author opposed eliminating the sight triangle. An audible warning system as well as one with flashing lights would disturb nearby residents.

Development Standard Departures

The applicant requested two departures from the following standards of the Land Use Code:

1. Parking location and access. If access is not provided from an alley and the lot abuts two or more streets, access to parking shall be from a street that is not a principal pedestrian street.
2. Sight triangle. For two way driveways, a sight triangle on the side of the driveway used as an exit shall be provided and shall be kept clear of any obstructions for a distance of 10'.

Recommendations

A 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.**

See recommendation A-2

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

The Board recommends a condition to step the floor of the commercial space along E. Pine St. to keep the interior floor as close as possible to the exterior sidewalk as it descends to the west. Doors to the commercial space should open up onto Pine St. The redesign of the storefront space should not have a well or depression as shown in the drawings presented at the Recommendation meeting.

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

Reiterating what it stated for A-2, the Board conditioned the project to have storefronts at grade with entrances onto E. Pine St.

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

A portion of the discussion focused on pedestrian activity on the two adjacent streets. Both facades should be designed to engage activity at the storefronts.

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

Pike/Pine Urban Center Village specific supplemental guidance:

Locating a significant amount of open space on rooftops is discouraged. Open space at street level and features that provide visual relief on building facades, such as balconies, are encouraged.

The applicant stated that assigning parking access to 15th Ave. would jeopardize the open space along the south portion of the project and require a significant redesign of the proposal.

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.

The Board recommended approval of the departure request for parking access on E. Pine St. The Board members conditioned the project to have an inaudible pedestrian warning system at the juncture of the garage and the sidewalk.

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.

The Pike/Pine “vernacular” architecture is characterized by the historic auto-row and warehouse industrial features of high ground floor ceilings and display windows, detailed cornice and frieze work, and trim detailing. New buildings should echo the scale and modulation of adjacent buildings in order to preserve both the pedestrian orientation and consistency with the architecture of nearby buildings. Architectural styles and materials that reflect the light-industrial history of the neighborhood are encouraged.

The evolution of the building's design appears to have evolved away from being a stylistic companion to the Braeburn. The Board noted its unhappiness with how the building's design seemed to change for the worse based on administrative allowances during the review of construction drawings.

The Board asked the applicant to consider redesigning the building to better relate to the Braeburn or to the newer more contemporary structures in the neighborhood.

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.

Changes made by the former applicant and architect after Board approval in 2001 varied considerably in concept and consistency. The Board encouraged the applicant to reconsider the building's design.

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

Pike/Pine Urban Center Village specific supplemental guidance:

In order to achieve good human scale, the existing neighborhood context encourages building entrances in proportion with neighboring storefront developments. In addition to the Citywide Design Guidelines, developments should successfully contribute to the vitality of the street level and pedestrian scale relationships to the right-of-way. Thus, the design of the ground floor of new developments should include:

- Pedestrian-oriented architectural elements.

- A rhythm of building modulation comparable or complimentary to adjacent buildings
- Transparent, rather than reflective, windows facing the street.

This is important throughout the neighborhood. It is preferred that ground floor development echoes the patterns established by adjacent buildings in this area, including high bays and glazing along the ground floor. To this regard, cues can be taken from the Oddfellows and Elliott Bay Bookstore buildings on 10th Avenue E. between Pike and Pine and from the buildings on the south side of Pike Street between Boylston and Harvard Avenues.

Stepping the floor of the commercial storefronts along E. Pine would improve the scale of the storefront in relationship to the sidewalk.

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.

Pike/Pine Urban Center Village specific supplemental guidance.

New development should complement the neighborhood's light-industrial vernacular through type and arrangement of exterior building materials. Preferred materials and approaches include:

- Brick, masonry, textured or patterned concrete, true stucco (Dryvit is discouraged), with wood and metal as secondary or accent materials.
- Other high quality materials that work well with the historic materials and style of neighboring buildings
- Limited number of exterior finish materials per building
- High quality glazing and trim as a vital component of exterior finish.

See recommendations for C-1 and C-2.

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.

No discussion focused on the appearance of the garage entrance.

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.

The Board conditioned the proposed design to have storefront openings onto E. Pine St.

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

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.

As discussed earlier, the Board agreed with the amount of transparency shown at the Recommendation meeting. Openings into the storefronts will need to occur along E. Pine St. in order to satisfy the conditions.

E. Landscaping

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the 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 Board did not discuss landscaping design at the Recommendation meeting.

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the April 20, 2011 meeting. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented in the plans and other drawings available at the April 20, 2011 public meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). The Board recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Parking location & access. SMC 23.47A.032A.2.a	If access is not provided from an alley and the lot abuts two or more streets, access to parking shall be from a street that is not a principal pedestrian street.	Provide garage parking access from E. Pine St. rather than 15 th Ave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vehicular entry on 15th would eliminate open space previously designed. (D-1) 	Approved
2. Sight Triangle. SMC 23.54.030G.	For two way driveways, a sight triangle on the side of the drive way used as an exit shall be provided and shall be kept clear of any obstructions for a distance of 10’.	Eliminate sight triangle and use other vehicular warning systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with the sight triangle regulation would reduce the amount of available commercial frontage on E. Pine St. D-11 	Approved

The Board recommended the following **CONDITIONS** for the project. (Authority referenced in the letter and number in parenthesis):

- 1) Commercial storefronts should step down E. Pine St. in concert with the street as the grade descends to the west. (A-2, C-3)
- 2) Place doors into the commercial storefronts along E. Pine St. rather than at the corner or on 15th Avenue. (A-2, A-3)
- 3) Use an inaudible vehicular/pedestrian warning system at the garage exit. (A-8, D-7))

DIRECTOR’S ANALYSIS - DESIGN REVIEW

The Director finds no conflicts with SEPA requirements or state or federal laws, and has reviewed the City-wide Design Guidelines and finds that the Board neither exceeded its authority nor applied the guidelines inconsistently in the approval of this design. The Director agrees with the conditions recommended by the four Board members and the recommendation to approve the design, as stated above.

DECISION - DESIGN REVIEW

The proposed design is **CONDITIONALLY GRANTED**.

