



City of Seattle

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

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

Application Number: 3013228
Applicant Name: Bradley Khouri, B9 Architects
Address of Proposal: 122 18th Avenue East

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a three-story, 3-unit townhouse structure. Project includes relocation of existing single family dwelling unit on the site. One existing surface parking space to remain, no additional stalls proposed.

The following Master Use Permit components are required:

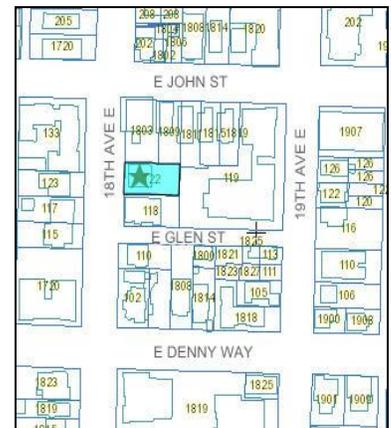
Administrative Design Review – Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.41 with Development Standard Departure:

1. Side setback (SMC 23.45.518.A - Table A)
2. Rear setback (SMC 23.45.518.A- Table A)
3. Separations between multiple structures in required setbacks (SMC 23.45.518.F.1)
4. Projections in required setbacks (SMC 23.45.518.H.5)
5. Façade length (SMC 23.47A.527.B.1)

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)
Nearby Zones: (North) LR3
(South) LR3/NC2-40
(East) LR3
(West) LR3

Current Development: The development site is an interior lot, currently developed with a two-story single family structure with one



accessory surface parking stall between the south property line and south building facade. The house features a prominent porch with stairs leading up to the first floor, approximately 5 feet above sidewalk level. The site and adjacent properties are zoned Multifamily Residential LR3. Three trees are located in the rear behind single family home. On either side of the subject lot, to the north and south are a 3-story and 4-story apartment. The abutting residential development to the east, Garden Cort, is a half block apartment/condo development (constructed in 1999) with its mass oriented towards its 19th Avenue street frontage. Its rear 40 feet, abutting the subject parcel, is dominated by a surface parking area. There is a small sliver of land, approximately 10 feet in width that serves as a landscape (p-patch) buffer between the subject site's east property line and a carport.

Access: Existing vehicular and pedestrian access to this site is from 18th Avenue.

Surrounding Development: The surrounding uses are primarily single family residential and multi-family residential, with commercial development to the south. The buildings are a mix of 3-4 story multi-family and 1-2 story single family structures in a range of ages and styles.

Neighborhood Character: The site is located in the Madison-Miller Residential Urban Village, an area of diverse uses and frequent transit service. The neighborhood includes a mix of residential units, including older single family structures (some converted to apartments), mid-20th century and newer multi-family residential buildings, and 1-2 story commercial structures flanking the nearby arterials. An influence in this neighborhood is Miller Community Center and Playfield, providing a number of recreational outlets for the area just a couple of blocks northeast of this site.

The site is located with a frequent transit service area, with frequent bus service located within short walking distance, three blocks south (E Madison Street) and five blocks to the west (15th Avenue East and East Denny Way).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of a three-story, three unit townhouse structure in the rear half of the development site. The existing two-story single family structure built at the turn of the 20th century (1903) will be relocated towards the 18th Avenue street frontage to accommodate the new development in the rear. No additional parking is proposed at the subject site.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE REPORT: May 31, 2012

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. Two of the options included demolishing the existing single family building to increase residential density.

The first scheme (Option 1) proposes to construct a 4-story apartment building that maximizes allowable FAR and residential density. Under this scheme the roof top would feature a common deck site located on the rear half of the building to take advantage of views to the east and south.

The building would be rectangular in shape with two opposing notches cut out along the east/west axis to provide ground level amenity area. The proposed structure would be in keeping with apartment buildings on either side, to the north and south, one large building mass maximizing the building envelope. Under this scheme the existing residential structure would be demolished.

The second scheme (Option 2) proposes to construct two, three-story townhouse structures with a total of 5-units. A two-unit townhouse structure would be sited in the front near the north property line with the three-unit structure in the rear. The space separating the two structures would be a parking court to allow access to garages within each unit. Vehicle access to the parking court would be provided along the south property line. Private amenity areas would be located at grade between the structure's front and rear property lines. Additional amenity area is proposed on the roof level. This scheme breaks down the proposal into two building masses that would be similar in scale to neighboring structures. Under this scheme the existing residential structure would be demolished.

The third scheme (Option 3), and the applicant preferred option, embraces the existing neighbor fabric by saving the existing single family structure built in 1903. This scheme embraces the code incentive to maintain existing housing. In order to retain the existing structure it must be relocated to the west, approximately 10 feet from the front lot line with a portion of the lower level removed to accommodate separation from the construction of a 3-story, 3-unit townhouse structure in the rear half of the lot. Under this scheme the space between the two structures provides an opportunity to create an area for social interaction, by crafting design elements to encourage pedestrian interaction. The design is informed by three primary concepts; save an existing home, design opportunities for shared community interaction, and manipulation of building mass to create visual interest from within and outside the development site.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately four members of the public responded to the notice of Administrative Design Review. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Supported the proposed project to retain the existing building as discussed in the application packet.
- Taking advantage of green building incentives should not be a license to go big but consideration should be taken to go small with quality products.
- Concerned about adverse impacts of the proposed townhouse structure's proximity to the P-patch abutting the east (rear) property line. P-patches contribute to greening up of urban areas and should be treated with respect.
- Against allowing building setbacks to decrease below 7 feet for required side and rear property lines. While "thoughtful fenestration is appreciated, this technique does not conceal building bulk when it is five feet off the property line."
- Concerned that no parking is required or being provided. The neighborhood's on-street parking capacity, especially at night is a major problem. This project should be required to provide on-site parking to lessen demand on surrounding streets.

- Under the heading of accessory dwelling units, if this falls into that category, the new structure should have a design policy addressing design criteria that make it appear secondary or accessory to the principal use.
- Concerned that no mention of several large trees on-site would be saved or removed.
- The character of the existing single family structure would be significantly altered with the removal of the front steps adjacent to 18th Avenue East.
- Noise related activities during and after construction is disruptive to sensitive neighbors, and stronger standards should be set by the city or county, not something negotiated by neighbors with developers.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT: December 10, 2012

The packet includes materials presented at Recommendation, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp

or contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Address: Public Resource Center
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98124

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

One member of the public submitted comments after formal application was accepted by DPD and prior to publication of the Recommendation Report. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Clarification of whether the existing multistory historic house was being saved or demolished, there was conflicting information from several sources.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the DPD Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. DPD identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

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.**

At Administrative Guidance, DPD noted with the relocation of the existing single family structure's proximity to the front property lot, the proposed structure should seek a synergetic connection to the existing building. It appears the site has territorial views to the east which should be taken into consideration in design and layout of the units.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD supported relocating the existing two-story single family structure towards the front of the site and placing the 3-unit townhouse structure in the rear. This will keep intact the existing architectural integrity of the streetscape with its predominance of older structures. The new structure is designed to take advantage of territorial views to the east and southeast.

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

At Administrative Guidance, DPD wanted greater sensitive to the pedestrian experience along 18th with its rhythm of buildings proximity to the street property line. The design should seek to provide opportunities to engage the public realm where feasible.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD supported the departure allowing the existing single family structure front stoop to project into the setback. This will provide an opportunity engage the pedestrian realm with an intimate space social for social interaction to occur. The setback encroachment would be in keeping with other structures on the block front.

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

At Administrative Guidance, Street facing units should continue to have a strong presence and be easily identified from the street. Landscaping, walkways, doorway design and fenestration should seek to engage with the streetscape. Signage should be provided for the units in the rear of the site.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD supported the townhouse structure flaring out into the (south) side setback to provide greater visibility from the street with large windows, accentuating surface color and address signage. The pedestrian pathway leading to the units in the rear will be differentiated from the abutting grasscrete surfaced driveway.

- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites. Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.**

At Administrative Guidance, DPD noted care should be taken to design fenestration on the north and south façade to minimize views into abutting units. Employ modulation techniques to reduce the appearance of bulk upon the adjacent lot to the south.

At the Final Recommendation, to the east, the spatial separation between the adjacent residential structure and the proposed townhouse sits far enough away as to allow a slight encroachment with minimal bulk impact on the adjacent lot, with the proposed structure's bay features encroaching into its rear setback. DPD is requesting robust landscaping to provide a buffer integrating an informal P-patch to further minimize impacts.

The proposed townhouse flares out at the upper level towards the south property line to give the building additional street presence as viewed from the west. No windows are proposed in this area to maintain privacy of the adjacent apartment building.

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.

At Administrative Guidance, DPD suggested the steps leading to the front porch should be seen as an opportunity to engage pedestrians in the right-of-way. See also A-3.

At the Final Recommendation, See recommendations (A-3 & D-12) for the residential entrance at 18th Avenue East.

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

At Administrative Guidance, DPD acknowledged residential amenity has replaced open space within multifamily development standards. The same care and consideration should be maintained in providing high quality amenity/open spaces at the development site.

At the Final Recommendation, the townhouse units will each have roof top decks taking advantage of territorial views to the east and south. At ground level, the space between the existing single family structure and proposed townhouse units will provide opportunities for social mingling to encourage a sense of community within the site. DPD supports the direction the applicant has taken to provide passive and active open space areas.

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 Administrative Guidance, DPD noted shifting the existing structure towards the front lot line to make room for the proposed townhouse in the rear will take a deft hand to break down the bulk and scale of the development and provide a sensitive transition to the neighboring buildings. Incorporate setbacks between lot lines and facing facades, and modulation to help scale down the building.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD favors saving the existing two-story structure and placing the three-story townhouse structure in the rear half of the lot, scaled to the abutting structures to the north and south.

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. 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 Administrative Guidance, DPD suggested the strong architectural concept should continue to include extensive fenestration, contemporary design, dramatic roof forms and design, and employment of color palette.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD expressed its overall satisfaction with the proposed building's design compatibility and sensitivity to the existing structures.

- 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.**

At Administrative Guidance, DPD emphasized the proposed materials should continue to be high quality and durable as shown in the packet, including hardipanel and natural cedar using a simple and elegant color palette with an accent color at the doorways.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD acknowledges the proposal has achieved the desired outcome of utilizing quality materials and attractive detailing to augment the existing structure.

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 Administrative Guidance, the pedestrian path to the back unit should be clearly readable in the design of surface level features. See A-3 and A-6.

At the Final Recommendation, See guidance for A-3, Entrances Visible from the Street.

- 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 Administrative Guidance, DPD instructed that the garbage and recycling area should be screened in the area shown adjacent to the shared amenity area. The current location appears problematic as it is sandwich between the north property line and residential amenity area. Relocating the garage and recycling area could be more desirable. Details of the screening should be provided.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD noted the need to relocate garbage and recycling area. The appearance of the solid waste area was visible from the street. DPD would like greater care in camouflaging the solid waste area with screening.

- D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions. For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.**

At Administrative Guidance, exterior lighting plans and details should be provided. Clear sight lines should be considered in the development of the landscaping plan. See A-3 and A-6.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD encourages the removal or opening up of the side walls on the front steps to invoke the presence of a stoop, which are visible from either direction along the sidewalk and establishes areas to provide opportunities for neighbors to socially interact. Retaining the existing house with its porch and front steps is a highly value component of the development proposal which benefits the neighborhood's existing character.

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 Administrative Guidance, landscaping, walkways, doorway design and fenestration should seek to engage with the streetscape. Signage should be provided for the two units in the rear of the site.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD supported the proposed landscaping design.

- 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.**

At Administrative Guidance, DPD noted consideration should be directed towards framing the proposed structure from the sidewalk creating subtle landscaping flourishes to make entries readable and by establishing attractive edges. Native plantings and drought tolerant species are encouraged.

At the Final Recommendation, DPD supported the proposed landscaping design.

Development Standard Departures

Five departures from the development standards were proposed. DPD’s recommendation on the requested departure(s) was based upon the departure’s potential to help the project better meet the design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	PROPOSED	JUSTIFICATION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Side Setback. 23.45.518.A	For façades 40 feet or less for townhouse uses, the side setback shall be 5 feet.	3’-2” for a distance of 2 inches increasing to 5 feet along a distance of 22’-3” along the south side at the second floor and partially at the third floor.	The street facing façade of the proposed structure is 55.75 feet from the street property line. The reduction of the south side setback for less than half the depth of the proposed structure improves its street-facing presence by providing a larger wall to the street with a large transparent opening. Because the existing house is located nearly 14 feet from the south property line it creates a larger perceived average setback for the development site. When calculated together, the average side setback for both structures is 9’-1” far in excess of the required average setback of 7 feet. The setback reduction is requested at the second level of the proposed three-story structure where. This pronounced architectural feature as viewed from 18 th Avenue enhances the building form and draws attention the entry at the lower level while minimizing bulk impact upon the adjacent building. A-3, A-, A-4, A-5, and C-2.	Approved
2. Rear setback. 23.45.518.A	7-foot average, 5-foot minimum	6’-2” average at each floor with a minimum of 5’-2”	Setbacks vary from floor to floor to provide a more visually pleasing wall that is less impactful than a code compliant wall as demonstrated in the sun studies (Sheets A3.14-A3.17). A-1, A-2, and C-3.	Approved
3. Front setback 23.45.518.H5	Unenclosed porches and steps no more than 4 feet in height may extend to within 4 feet of the street lot line, except that portions of stoops not more than 2.5 feet in height may extend to a street lot line.	Unenclosed porch for the existing single-family structure built at 4.5 feet in height is to remain is being moved to within 5 feet of the street lot line. The existing stoop will extend to the street lot line.	The steps will be designed to create a stoop that engages with the pedestrian environment of 18 th Ave E, open from both sides, with open railings. The apartment building to the north is located right at its property line and the apartment building abutting the site immediately to the south has a similar but covered front porch condition that comes to the property line. The porch retains the minimum of 1:1 ration of height to	Approved

			front setback, 4'-6" in height with a 5-foot setback. A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, and A-6.	
4. Separation between structures 23.45.518.F	Required minimum separation between principal structures at any two points on different interior façades is 10 feet	Varies from 10 feet to 15.5 feet at the first floor; varies from 8.4 feet to 11.5 feet at the second floor; varies from 11.3 feet to 12.4 feet at third floor. Proposed 8.4 feet.	The existing single family structure will modulate approximately 1 foot 8 inches directly impacting separation between structures. The proposal varies the required 10 foot separation in order to create a dense interior courtyard characterized by intrigue and light. Similar to the design of the east wall of the townhome structure, the design creates an interesting, active, modulated wall instead of a monolithic façade that complies with the 10-foot separation. A-2, A-6, A-7, and C-3.	Approved
5. Façade Length 23.45.527.B	The maximum combined length of all portions of facades within 15 feet of a lot line that is neither a rear lot line nor a street or alley lot line shall not exceed 65 percent of the length of that lot line.	Varies from 67.5 feet at the first floor, 67.5% to 76.9 feet at the second floor. Proposed 76.9 feet along north façade and 75.9 feet along south facade.	The massing along the north and south façades is highly modulated to reduce the scale and presence of the wall. In addition, there will be material changes and glazing where appropriate to reduce the mass further. Further reducing the impact is the nearly 14-foot south side setback of the existing house. A-1, A-2, A-3, A-6, and C-3.	Approved

Recommendation

The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted to DPD. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented with minor zoning updates in the plans and other drawings as of December 10th, 2012. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Planner recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). DPD recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

- 1) The pedestrian pathway leading to the three townhouse units in the rear shall be differentiated from the grasscrete surfaced driveway. (A-3)
- 2) Provide greater camouflaging of the solid waste area with screening devices as viewed from the 18th Ave East street frontage. (D-6)
- 3) Add robust landscaping buffer along the east property line to better integrate the proposed structure's east facade abutting an informal P-patch. (A-5)

- 4) Either remove or open up of the side walls on the front steps to invoke East Coast stoops which are visible from either direction along the sidewalk and allow waylay areas to provide opportunities for neighbors to socially interact. (D-7)
- 5) Provide signage at the residential entrance along 18th Ave East. (D-12)

The design review process prescribed in Section 23.41.016.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 be made by the Director as part of the overall Master Use Permit decision for the project. The Director's decision shall be based on the extent to which the proposed project meets applicable design guidelines and in consideration of public comments on the proposed project. Projects subject to administrative design review must meet all codes and regulatory requirements applicable to the subject site, except as provided for in SMC Section 23.41.012.

Subject to the above-proposed conditions, the design of the proposed project was found by the Director of DPD to adequately conform to the applicable Design Guidelines.

ANALYSIS & DECISION – DESIGN REVIEW

Director's Decision

The design review process is prescribed in Section 23.41.016 of the Seattle Municipal Code. Subject to the above-proposed conditions, the design of the proposed project was found by the Director to adequately conform to the applicable Design Guidelines. The Director of DPD has reviewed and analyzed submitted materials and public comments and finds that the proposal is consistent with the City of Seattle Design Review Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings. The Director has agreed that the proposed design, along with the conditions listed, meets each of the Design Guideline Priorities as previously identified. Therefore, the Director **CONDITIONALLY APPROVES** the proposed design and the requested departures with the condition summarized at the end of this Decision.

CONDITIONS DESIGN REVIEW

Prior to MUP Issuance or Building Permit Issuance

- 1) The pedestrian pathway leading to the three townhouse units in the rear shall be differentiated from the grasscrete surfaced driveway.
- 2) Provide greater camouflaging of the solid waste area with screening devices as viewed from the 18th Ave East street frontage.
- 3) Add robust landscaping buffer along the east property line to better integrate the proposed structure's east facade abutting an informal P-patch.

- 4) Either remove or open up the side walls on the front steps to invoke East Coast stoops which are visible from either direction along the sidewalk and allow waylay areas to provide opportunities for neighbors to socially interact.
- 5) Provide signage at the residential entrance along 18th Ave East.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) _____ Date: January 3, 2013
Bradley Wilburn, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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