



City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Nathan Torgelson, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTIONS**

Application Number: 3019613
Applicant Name: Mahlon Clements of VIA architecture
Address of Proposal: 4730 32nd Avenue South

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Land Use Application to allow two, four-story buildings containing a total of 155 apartment units in an environmentally critical area. Parking for 126 vehicles is proposed in a below grade garage.

The following approvals are required:

Design Review with Departures (Seattle Municipal Code 23.41)*

SEPA - Environmental Determination (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05)

** Departures are listed near the end of the Design Review Analysis in this document*

SEPA DETERMINATION:

Determination of Non-significance

- No mitigating conditions of approval are imposed.
- Pursuant to SEPA substantive authority provided in SMC 25.06.660, the proposal has been conditioned to mitigate environmental impacts.

BACKGROUND

The subject project is a second phase of development. The first phase, a 244 unit residential project under project number 3015157, has recently been constructed to the south.

The site was granted Relief on Steep Slope Development by the Seattle DCI Geotechnical Engineer 3/31/2014 under project #3015157:

“SMC 25.09.180 B2c. Results of Request for Relief on Steep Slope Development.”



Based on a review of the submitted information (including a topographic survey and a September 13, 2013 geotechnical engineering study by GeoEngineers, Inc.) along with the City GIS system, Seattle DCI concludes that the steep slope areas in the northeastern region of the site appear to have been created by previous legal grading associated with site development. Consequently, the project qualifies for the limited Steep Slope Exemption Criteria, as described in SMC 25.09.180 B2b. For this reason, an ECA Steep Slope Area Variance is not required for this project. Except as described herein, the ECA General, and Landslide-Hazard Development Standards and criteria still apply.

SITE AND VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

Nearby Zones: North: Single Family (SF 5000)
South: LR3
West: LR3
East: LR3

ECAs: Steep Slope Environmental Critical Area. (ECA)

Site Size: 67,947 sq. ft.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The public comment period ended on October 18, 2015. Comment(s) were received through the Design Review process. No other comments were received in response to this public comment period.

I. ANALYSIS – DESIGN REVIEW

CURRENT AND SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT; NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Current Development:

The site is currently vacant.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The 67,947 sq. ft. site is mid-way between the Columbia City Light Rail station and the main street commercial heart of Columbia City. The vicinity includes a variety of uses from single family residences to commercial. The neighborhood character is largely single family houses, transitioning to multifamily residential structures, three to four stories in height.

The immediate context is a mix of single family structures and newer developments. This project is a second phase of development; a 244 unit residential project, under project number 3015157, is currently under construction to the south. Across 32nd Ave S to the west are predominantly single family houses. Single family houses are also located across the street on S Alaska Street to the north. Current development also includes several townhouse structures, project numbers 3013340, 3014815 and 3014412, east of the site.

The area is well served by transit and higher density multifamily residential structures are being developed. The Columbia City Light Rail station is located one block west of the subject property.

Access:

Existing vehicular access is from 32nd Ave S on the west, and a driveway from S Alaska St to the north. There are no alleys adjacent to the site. Pedestrian access is from the adjacent 32nd Ave S and S Alaska Street sidewalks.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE May 26, 2015

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project numbers (3019613) at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at Seattle DCI:

Mailing **Public Resource Center**
Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The architect presented three massing options, all propose similar square footage and use; a four story structure containing 156 residential units over parking for 145 parking spaces, accessed from 32nd Ave. on the west, and a driveway from S Alaska Street to the north. All options take into account the existing topography, which includes an approximately 18 foot grade difference along S Alaska Street.

Referred to as the code compliant version, massing Option One is influenced by retaining an Exceptional Tree and configured with two south facing courtyards. The architect noted that in order to provide a building plan close to the number of units seen in the other massing concepts, a portion of the massing is shifted to S Alaska St, resulting in a monolithic north facade. Another disadvantage of this option is the significant setback on the west façade disrupts the rowhouse vernacular consistent with the first phase.

Massing Option Two is identifiable by two double loaded buildings separated by an open pedestrian pathway connection. The east structure contains a courtyard facing north toward Alaska St. This concept allows a greater articulation of the rowhouse vernacular along the 32nd Ave S street front.

Referred to as the preferred scheme, massing Option Three is similar to massing Option Two. For this scheme, the east structure's courtyard is rotated to face south. The applicant explained the south courtyard increases access to daylight, privacy and reduces audible street noise for future residents. This scheme also refined the approach to hold the existing topography along S Alaska St, with the proposed individual ground floor unit terraces. For this option, the lobby entries are located inside the open pedestrian pathway connection, directly opposite each other. The entry plaza is intended to be welcoming from the sidewalk, providing a meandering walk with views across the site.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were offered at the EDG meeting:

- Would like to see the Alaska street frontage be more active.
- Preferred the open pedestrian pathway off of Alaska towards the light rail.
- Appreciated the landscape berm treatment of the driveway.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION January 26, 2016

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3019613) at this website:

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

During the presentation, the applicant described the changes since the EDG meeting including refinements to the corner massing and further design development of the building frontages and streetscape.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comment was offered at the Recommendation meeting:

- Supported the project but had concerns with the lack of outdoor space for pets and would like to see more lawn space.

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.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE May 26, 2014

- 1) **Massing & Relationship to Context:** The Board deliberated the merits of the first massing option, which preserves the Exceptional Tree, and the third massing option. The Board agreed that preservation of the Exceptional Tree results in adjusted massing that would eliminate the transition stoops and the consistent treatment of the street edge along 32nd Ave S. Ultimately the Board preferred massing Option Three, as the break in the north façade and open pedestrian pathway connection is more successful in creating a pedestrian oriented streetscape. (Guidelines CS2-A-1, CS2-B-2, CS2-C-1, DC2-A-1)
 - a. The Board acknowledged that S Alaska St is in many ways the front door to both phases of the development. The massing and ground level treatment along 32nd Ave S seems successful in creating a pedestrian oriented street edge. The Board would like to see the S Alaska St frontage developed as well to respond to the streetscape. (Guidelines CS2-B-2, DC2-A-1)
 - b. The Board noted that this development will be the first major development between the light rail station and the commercial heart of Columbia City, and directed to applicant to refine the northwest corner massing. Develop the corner

massing and treatment to serve as a gateway to Columbia City. (Guidelines CS2-A-1, CS2-C-1, DC2-A-1)

- 2) **Street Level Uses & Entries:** The Board gave direction regarding the street level uses and entries.
 - a. The Board discussed the lobby entry locations and ultimately preferred the locations shown in the preferred scheme. In developing the design for the entries, focus on the connection to the street and create clear lines of sight. (Guidelines PL2-A-1, PL2-B-3, PL2-D-1, PL3-A-1, PL3-A-2)
 - b. The Board was concerned with the lack of active uses at the northwest corner and noted that a physical and/or visual connection with active uses is critical to making the streetscape successful. Explore and refine the northwest corner; show the floor plate level with the streetscape. (Guidelines CS2-B-2, CS2-C-1, PL2-B-3)
 - c. The Board was also concerned with the character of the elevated terraces facing Alaska and urged the applicant to develop the scale and transition of these private spaces well. Consider repeating the townhouse vernacular along S Alaska St. (Guidelines CS2-B-2, PL2-B-1, PL3-B-1, PL3-B-4)

- 3) **Adjacent Sites and Open Spaces:** Recognizing that the relationship between the different phases is especially important, the Board directed the applicant to develop an open space concept showing the relationship between both phases. (Guidelines CS2-B-3, PL1, DC3)
 - a. The Board would like to see more information on the entire development's site circulation and open spaces. Explore opportunities to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby open space where appropriate. (Guidelines CS2-B-3, PL1-A-1, PL1-B, PL1-C, DC3-B-3)
 - b. The south side of the building and courtyard space abut surface parking. Concerned with this condition, the Board directed the applicant to thoughtfully refine the design; ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other. (Guidelines CS2-D-5, DC1-C-2, DC3-A-1)
 - c. In developing the courtyard space, the Board noted that the proposed courtyard width is narrow and recommended looking at the proportions of the courtyard space to create access to light and air. The Board would like to see solar studies of the courtyard and detailed studies of the window locations. The Board also strongly suggested the applicant consider creating two story units at the ground level, to better connect to the open space and provide privacy for the future residents. (Guidelines CS2-D-5, PL3-B-1, PL3-B-4, DC1-C-2, DC3-A-1)

- 4) **Plants and Habitat:** The Board discussed the massing options and ultimately agreed the Exceptional Tree retention scheme would compromise the consistent treatment of the street edge along 32nd Ave S and had too many significant guideline impacts. (Guidelines CS2-A-1, CS2-B-2, CS2-C-1, DC2-A-1) Aside from the Exceptional Tree, the Board observed mature planting onsite and directed the applicant to study if any of mature trees could be retained. (Guideline CS1-D-1)

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS (JANUARY 26, 2016)

- 1) **Massing & Relationship to Context.** The Board commended the applicant for the responsive development and design studies. For the northwest corner massing, the Board approved of the proposed rust red color and window proportions shown in the preferred alternate, which pronounced the perceived gateway and conveyed a lantern like expression. The Board also supported the pedestrian gathering space shown near this intersection. (Guidelines CS2, DC2, DC4-A)
- 2) **Building Frontages and Entries.** The Board supported the design approach along each frontage including the detailing of the walkups, patios, retaining walls and landscape. (Guidelines PL1-A-2, PL1-C, PL3-B-4, DC4)
 - a. The Board discussed the alternates shown for the S Alaskan St frontage and supported the preferred treatment which showed terraced retaining walls and lush planting. (Guidelines PL1-A, DC2-D, DC3-C, DC4)
 - b. The Board approved of the visual connection between the street and the lobby entrances and the developed signage. (Guidelines PL1-A, PL1-C, DC4-B)
- 3) **Materials.** The Board approved of the proposed materials and strongly supported the design concept showing a formal composition on the street-facing facades and a more playful expression along the interior of the west courtyard. (Guidelines DC2-D, DC4-A)
- 4) **Open Spaces:** The Board supported the refined massing around the east courtyard and acknowledged that the light material palette at this location will help reflect ambient light. (Guidelines CS1, DC3, DC4-A)
- 5) **Plants and Habitat:** Reviewing the Exceptional Tree retention scheme, the Board agreed the scheme would disrupt the street wall along 32nd Ave S and discussed the Exceptional Tree and replacement canopy. The Board unanimously supported the location of the proposed four large deciduous trees, shown near the corner of 32nd Avenue S and S Alaska S along the perimeter of the pedestrian gathering space. (Guidelines CS2-A-1, CS2-B-2, CS2-C-1, DC2-A-1)

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-1. On-Site Features: Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes: Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses: In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin Boards, cafes, or street vending.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

PL2-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

PL2-D Wayfinding

PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding: Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships

PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

PL4-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

DC1-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation: Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-1. Below-Grade Parking: Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children's play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building façades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all façades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage façades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. 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.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DC4-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan

DC4-E-1. Deconstruction: When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

EXCEPTIONAL TREE DISCUSSION:

At the Early Design Guidance and Recommendation meetings, the Board reviewed the applicant's analysis of the existing exceptional tree, a 14" Strawberry Tree, *Arbutus Unedo*, on the property near the 32nd Ave S property line, and had the following discussion:

The applicants presented information from an ISA Certified Arborist; the tree has a wide spreading and low crown and the lower trunks contain some decay. Massing Option One shows that preservation of the tree and its feeder root radius results in adjusted massing that would eliminate the transition stoops and the consistent treatment of the street edge.

The Board indicated support, agreeing the tree-retention scheme had too many significant guideline impacts. The Board unanimously supported the location of the replacement canopy, four large deciduous trees, shown near the corner of 32nd Avenue S and S Alaska S. (Guidelines CS2-A-1, CS2-B-2, CS2-C-1, DC2-A-1)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation was 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.

1. **Rear Yard Setback (SMC 23.45.518.A):** The Code requires a 15' - 0" minimum setback without an alley. The applicant proposes propose a rear yard setback of 12'-3".

The Board unanimously supported the departure, based on the proposed massing response to the site configuration and the location of the bike room. Though not an alley, the space is intended to function like an alley and includes a bike room as a more active program element. This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guideline CS2 by strengthening the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets and blocks in the surrounding area.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated January 26, 2016 and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the January 26, 2016 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design with no conditions.

ANALYSIS & DECISION – DESIGN REVIEW

Director's Analysis

The design review process prescribed in Section 23.41.014.F of the Seattle Municipal Code describing the content of the Seattle DCI 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, the design of the proposed project was found by the Design Review Board to adequately conform to the applicable Design Guidelines.

At the conclusion of the Recommendation meeting held on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, the Board recommended approval of the project with no conditions described in the summary of the Recommendation meeting above.

Four members of six Design Review Board were in attendance and provided recommendations to the Director and identified elements of the Design Guidelines which are critical to the project's overall success. The Director agrees with the Design Review Board's conclusion that the proposed project result in a design that best meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines.

DIRECTOR'S DECISION

The Director accepts the Design Review Board's recommendations and **CONDITIONALLY APPROVES** the proposed design and the requested departure with the conditions summarized at the end of this Decision.

II. 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 (SMC) Chapter 25.05).

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated 8/12/2015. The Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) has annotated the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; reviewed the project plans and any additional information in the project file submitted by the applicant or agents; and any pertinent comments which may have been received regarding this proposed action have been considered. The information in the checklist, the supplemental information, and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

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. Under such limitations/circumstances, mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

Short Term Impacts

Construction activities could result in the following adverse impacts: construction dust and storm water runoff, erosion, emissions from construction machinery and vehicles, increased particulate levels, increased noise levels, occasional disruption of adjacent vehicular and pedestrian traffic, a small increase in traffic and parking impacts due to construction related vehicles, and increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Several construction-related impacts are mitigated by existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project such as: the Stormwater Code (SMC 22.800-808), the Grading Code (SMC 22.170), the Street Use Ordinance (SMC Title 15), the Seattle Building Code, and the Noise Control Ordinance (SMC 25.08). Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The following analyzes greenhouse gas emissions, construction traffic and parking impacts, construction-related noise, earth/soils, as well as mitigation.

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. Therefore no further mitigation is warranted pursuant to SMC 25.05.675.F.

Construction Impacts - Parking and Traffic

Increased trip generation is expected during the proposed demolition, grading, and construction activity. The area is subject to significant traffic congestion during peak travel times on nearby arterials. Large trucks turning onto arterial streets would be expected to further exacerbate the flow of traffic.

The area includes limited and timed or metered on-street parking. Additional parking demand from construction vehicles would be expected to further exacerbate the supply of on-street parking. It is the City's policy to minimize temporary adverse impacts associated with construction activities.

Pursuant to SMC 25.05.675.B (Construction Impacts Policy), additional mitigation is warranted and a Construction Management Plan is required, which will be reviewed by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). The requirements for a Construction Management Plan include a Haul Route and a Construction Parking Plan. The submittal information and review process for Construction Management Plans are described on the SDOT website at: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/cmp.htm>.

Construction Impacts - Noise

The project is expected to generate loud noise during demolition, grading and construction. The Seattle Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08.425) permits increases in permissible sound levels associated with private development construction and equipment between the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM on weekdays and 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM on weekends and legal holidays in Lowrise zones.

If extended construction hours are desired, the applicant may seek approval from Seattle DCI through a Noise Variance request. The applicant's environmental checklist does not indicate that extended hours are anticipated.

A Construction Management Plan will be required prior to issuance of the first building permit, including contact information in the event of complaints about construction noise, and measures to reduce or prevent noise impacts. The submittal information and review process for Construction Management Plans are described on the SDOT website at: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/cmp.htm>. The limitations stipulated in the Noise Ordinance and the CMP are sufficient to mitigate noise impacts; therefore no additional SEPA conditioning is necessary to mitigation noise impacts per SMC 25.05.675.B.

Earth / Soils

The ECA Ordinance and Director's Rule (DR) 18-2011 require submission of a soils report to evaluate the site conditions and provide recommendations for safe construction in landslide prone areas. Pursuant to this requirement the applicant submitted a geotechnical engineering study (Soils Report, September 13, 2013, Geotechnical Engineering Services) under project # 3015157. The study has been reviewed and approved by Seattle DCI's geotechnical experts, who will require what is needed for the proposed work to proceed without undue risk to the property or to adjacent properties. The existing Grading and Stormwater Codes will sufficiently mitigate adverse impacts to the ECAs. No additional conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies (SMC 25.05.675.D).

Long Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of approval of this proposal including: greenhouse gas emissions; parking; potential blockage of designated sites from the Scenic Routes nearby; possible increased traffic in the area. Compliance with applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of most long-term impacts and no further conditioning is warranted by SEPA policies. However greenhouse gas emissions, height bulk and scale, parking, plants and animals, public views, and traffic warrant further analysis.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project construction and the project's 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, therefore, no further mitigation is warranted pursuant to SMC 25.05.675.F

Height, Bulk, and Scale

The proposal has gone through the design review process described in SMC 23.41. Design review considers mitigation for height, bulk and scale through modulation, articulation, landscaping, and façade treatment.

Section 25.05.675.G.2.c of the Seattle SEPA Ordinance provides the following: "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 height, bulk and scale of the proposed development and relationship to nearby context have been addressed during the Design Review process for any new project proposed on the site. Per the Overview policies in SMC 25.05.665.D, the existing City Codes and regulations to mitigate impacts to historic resources are presumed to be sufficient, and additional mitigation is not warranted under SMC 25.05.675.G.

Parking

The proposed development includes 155 residential units with 126 off-street vehicular parking spaces. The traffic and parking analysis (Transportation Impact Analysis, October 2015, Transpo Group) indicates a peak demand for approximately 123 parking spaces from the proposed development. Peak residential demand typically occurs overnight.

The traffic and parking analysis noted that the peak parking demand for this development is 123 vehicles. The number of proposed parking spaces accommodates all of the anticipated parking demand, and no additional mitigation is warranted per SMC 25.05.675.M.

Plants and Animals

Mature vegetation is located on the site, including one Exceptional Tree. The tree is located on the property near the 32nd Ave S property line and is described on page 13 of the Design Review section of this document. The applicant submitted an arborist report (September 30, 2013, Urban Forestry Services, Inc.) and identified the exceptional tree 14” Strawberry Tree, *Arbutus Unedo* on the MUP plan set. SDCI’s Arborist has reviewed the information.

Removal of the tree as related to the proposed design is discussed in the Design Review section earlier in this decision. The Design Review Board recommended that the proposed building and landscape design meets the Design Review Guidelines better than a design that retains the existing exceptional tree.

Seattle DCI has reviewed the proposal and determined that the landscape plan proposes new trees that will replace and exceed the canopy of the existing tree at maturity. No mitigation beyond the Code-required landscaping is warranted under SMC 25.05.675.N.

Public Views

SMC 25.05.675.P provides policies to minimize impacts to designated public views listed in this section. S Alaska St is a SEPA Scenic Route. The applicant provided view studies showing the

proposed development in relation to the designated public views in SMC 25.05.675.P. The proposed development is located in a manner that maintains a view of mountains along S Alaska St. Mitigation is therefore not warranted under SMC 25.05.675.P.

Transportation

The Traffic Impact Analysis (Transportation Impact Analysis, October 2015, Transpo Group) indicated that the project is expected to generate a net total of 750 daily vehicle trips, with 72 net new PM Peak Hour trips.

The additional trips would have minimal impact on levels of service at nearby intersections and on the overall transportation system. Concurrency analysis was conducted for nearby identified areas. That analysis showed that the project is expected to be well within the adopted standards for the identified areas. The proximity of the light rail station one block to the west will also likely reduce the number of vehicle trips from future residents. The Seattle DCI Transportation Planner reviewed the information and determined that while these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant; therefore, no further mitigation is warranted per SMC 25.05.675.R.

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 requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- 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 43.21.030(2) (c).

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355 and Early review DNS process in SMC 25.05.355. There is no further comment period on the DNS.

CONDITIONS – DESIGN REVIEW

For the Life of the Project

1. The building and landscape design shall be substantially consistent with the materials represented at the Recommendation meeting and in the materials submitted after the Recommendation meeting, before the MUP issuance. Any change to the proposed design, including materials or colors, shall require prior approval by the Land Use Planner (Magda Hogness at magdahogness@seattle.gov or 206-727-8736).

CONDITIONS – SEPA

Prior to Issuance of Demolition, Excavation/Shoring, or Construction Permit

2. Provide a Construction Management Plan that has been approved by SDOT. The submittal information and review process for Construction Management Plans are described on the SDOT website at: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/cmp.htm>.

Magda Hogness, Land Use Planner _____ Date: May 19, 2016
Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

MH:bg

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ISSUANCE OF YOUR MASTER USE PERMIT

Master Use Permit Expiration and Issuance

The appealable land use decision on your Master Use Permit (MUP) application has now been published. At the conclusion of the appeal period, your permit will be considered “approved for issuance”. (If your decision is appealed, your permit will be considered “approved for issuance” on the fourth day following the City Hearing Examiner’s decision.) Projects requiring a Council land use action shall be considered “approved for issuance” following the Council’s decision.

The “approved for issuance” date marks the beginning of the **three year life** of the MUP approval, whether or not there are outstanding corrections to be made or pre-issuance conditions to be met. The permit must be issued by Seattle DCI within that three years or it will expire and be cancelled. (SMC 23-76-028) (Projects with a shoreline component have a **two year life**. Additional information regarding the effective date of shoreline permits may be found at 23.60.074.)

All outstanding corrections must be made, any pre-issuance conditions met and all outstanding fees paid before the permit is issued. You will be notified when your permit has issued.

Questions regarding the issuance and expiration of your permit may be addressed to the Public Resource Center at prc@seattle.gov or to our message line at 206-684-8467.