



City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3023181

Address: 9039 Greenwood Ave N.

Applicant: Encore Architects for Pastakia & Associates

Date of Meeting: Monday, May 02, 2016

Board Members Present: Dale Kutzera, Chair
Christopher Bell
Emily McNichols
Keith Walzak

Board Members Absent: Marc Angelillo

SDCI Staff Present: Josh Johnson

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial One with a 40' Height Limit (C1-40)

Nearby Zones/Uses:(North) C1-40, Four-story mixed use building

(South) C1-40, Five-story multi-family building

(East) C1-40, Three and four-story multi-family buildings and a single-story commercial building

(West) Single-family (SF 5,000), Single and two story single-family residences

Lot Area: 22,261 sq. ft.



Current Development:

The two subject properties are occupied by a non-profit social work organization. Each space appears to be office/storage uses. There is an unimproved alley to the west of the site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The immediate area is defined by a core of mixed-use and multi-family development centered on Greenwood Ave. Most buildings on the block are older with a new mixed-use structure located to the northeast. As properties radiate out from Greenwood, a transition from commercial to single-family uses occurs. Neighborhood amenities include Sandel and Greenwood Parks. To the west is an undeveloped alley with trees then single-family homes. Most multi-family buildings along Greenwood tend to be 4-5 stories in height. Sidewalks at this section of Greenwood have recently been improved.

Access:

Pedestrian access is provided by existing sidewalks. Each site has a curb cut for vehicular access.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

A Steep Slope critical area is present on the site. SDCI's mapping software shows a Wetland bordering the site on the southwest corner and the Peat Settlement ECA is located to the south and west of the subject property.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is for a four-story residential building with 80 units and 50 underground parking stalls.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When alley right-of-way is present, the ordinance requires a project use it for vehicular access. There is an undeveloped alley located to the west of the subject property. The applicant is seeking an alley exemption to take access from Greenwood Ave. Their justification is based upon the grade change from the subject property to the unimproved alley.

The design packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number 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 SDCl:

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

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Prior to the EDG meeting, a member of the public raised concerns about the presence of a wetland near the southwest corner of the property and the possibility of unstable soils.

No members of the public attended the EDG meeting.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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.

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1. Massing:

- a. The Board favored Option C. Members decided, through setbacks, terracing, and modulation, it responded most sensitively to the residences across the alley. (DC2-A1&2),
- b. Option C also showed potential to provide interest along the street through a well-defined entrance and vertically articulated bays. (DC2-B1)
- c. The Board liked the possibilities offered by balconies located inside extruded bays. (DC2-C1)

2. Internal Layout

- a. As the design evolves, consideration of access to light and air for units facing north, south, and the alley should be taken into account. (CS1-B2)
- b. Bicycle parking should be conveniently located for residents. (PL4-B2)
- c. Consider locating two-story alley facing units, labeled L3 on pg. 29, at ground level just above the parking level. (DC1-A4)

3. Context

- a. The Board favored the U-Shaped Terrace as presented in Option C. It removes mass from the structure as it addresses and responds to the smaller residential uses to the west. (CS2-D1)
- b. Any seating areas or active uses should be setback from the edge of the roof. (CS2-D3)
- c. The trees in the unimproved alley form a natural visual buffer. If alley improvements are required, a landscape buffer should be included along the western property line. (CS1-D1&2)
- d. The recommendation packet should include window studies to the north, south, and west to adequately inform the Board of possible privacy impacts. (CS2-D5)

4. Exterior Elements

- a. Live/work units entries should be distinct and properly relate to the sidewalk through landscaping and material changes. (PL3-A3 & PL3-B3)
- b. Since the property to the south is unlikely to redevelop in the near future, the design should avoid large sections of blank façade as it will be highly visible from Greenwood. (GF-DC1-I & DC2-B2)
- c. The Board favored a simple material palette comprised of high-quality materials. Precedent image from the EDG packet pg. 45 show brick facades framing regularized window patterns. (DC4-A)

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-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on 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.

CS1-D-2. Off-Site Features: Provide opportunities through design to connect to off-site habitats such as riparian corridors or existing urban forest corridors. Promote continuous habitat, where possible, and increase interconnected corridors of urban forest and habitat where possible.

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

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

PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses: Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

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

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.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

Greenwood/Phinney Supplemental Guidance:

DC1-I Blank Walls

DC1-I-i. Storefronts: Storefronts are encouraged to be located at the sidewalk edge, particularly in neighborhood commercial districts, and should be continuous, minimizing blank walls. Where unavoidable consider treating blank walls with one or more of the methods suggested in the Seattle Design Guidelines, including:

1. installing vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant material;
2. employing small setbacks;
3. employing different texture, colors, or materials;
4. providing art or murals.

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 Façade 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 façades 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).

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.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Recommendation meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance, no departures were requested.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.