

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
OF
SOUTHEAST SEATTLE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

August 24, 1999

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: **9806189**
Address: **2216 East Madison Street**
Applicant: **Sam Cameron/Robert Taylor/Pastor Grey**

Board members present: **Loren Adams**
Michael Dubois Hall
George Nishi
Gary Oppenheimer

Board members absent: **O.L. Mitchell**
Cathy Meisburger

DCLU Staff Present: **Lisa Rutzick, Contract Planner**

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design and construction of mixed use building consisting of seven levels of residential (75-85 units), two levels of parking (125 spaces) and ground-level commercial. The property is located within a NC3-85' zoning district. The lot is triangular except for the southwestern tip which not within the development site. The subject property is approximately 18,896 square feet, with the longest edge along East Madison Street. The two remaining property lines are roughly the same in length, although one edge is bounded by 22nd Avenue East to the west and the other is adjacent to an L-3 zone to the north. A single-family house and a senior housing apartment building are present on the parcels immediately to the north of the subject site. The site is currently undeveloped. Parking within the proposed structure will be accessed through 22nd Avenue East and possibly through East Madison Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Approximately 50 members of the public attended this pre-design review meeting. The following issues and concerns were raised:

- The economic need to include market-rate housing in this neighborhood in an effort to broaden the housing types and economic diversity of the community.
- Blank walls along the northern edge of the property abutting an L-3 zone. The ground floor garage would create a 13-foot concrete wall will need to be addressed, due to visual impacts.
- On-site garbage collection and storage able to accommodate the anticipated number of residential units.
- Traffic concerns addressed pedestrian safety along Madison, the potential for new crosswalks, fear that 22nd Street East will bear all of the traffic behavior associated with the building and sufficient parking provisions.
- Support for the ground floor commercial space which will encourage human activity along Madison Street.
- Bulk and scale concerns with a structure which proposes to build to the maximum dimensional envelope.
- Preservation of the existing vegetation and mature trees along the northern property edge.
- Suggestion to include a children's play area within the building.
- Strong support for this project, the pastor and architects was generally expressed by all who offered comment.

PRIORITIES

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 and identified by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's "*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*" of highest priority to this project:

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics

Building siting which is responsive to the natural conditions.

The Board acknowledged both the constraints and opportunities inherent with this site. The site constraints are related primarily to the triangular shape of the parcel and the heavy traffic activity present on East Madison Street. The southwestern tip of the triangle belongs to a different property owner and will not be developed as part of this site. The shape of the site also creates opportunities. The proposed structure will be highly visible to East Madison Street traffic, as well as the multiple streets which feed into and cross East Madison Street in this vicinity. The downward slope of East Madison offers excellent views towards Lake Washington and the Cascades.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility

Building façades should reinforce the desirable characteristics of the right-of-way.

The Board supported developing a strong pedestrian character reinforced by ground level retail along East Madison Street. This pedestrian scale may be emphasized with the use of awnings, landscaping, as well efforts made to retain retail tenants which will encourage human activity.

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

It was noted that the residential entryways should be distinguishable from the retail entries. This may be achieved using different awning shapes, entry details, building materials, signage, architectural features and lighting. The entry to the proposed garage(s) should be minimized through design elements, such as awnings and decorative grilles.

A-4 Pedestrian Activity
Encourage human activity on street.

Given the high visibility of this site, the Board encouraged the applicant to design a ground floor façade which contributes to a busy and safe streetscape. Programming activity into the design will help to encourage a functional and active streetscape in perpetuity. Design elements should include fenestration patterns which increase transparency between the retail space and the sidewalk, the incorporation of the sidewalk space into the design of the retail space, such as large windows which open outward. These design elements would allow opportunities for café tables, florist shop displays, espresso stands and other business-related activity to spill into public visibility and use.

A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites
Minimize intrusion upon adjacent sites.

The Board strongly encouraged the applicant to be mindful of the ground level blank wall on the northern edge of the project which faces the Lowrise zoning district. The Board strongly encouraged the applicant to provide a landscaping component which mitigates the effects of the blank wall. Breaking down the scale and visual impact of the wall, as well as providing texture, may be achieved using several materials, colors and vegetation.

A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street
Spaces between the building and the sidewalk should provide security for residents and encourage social interaction among neighbors.

The Board suggested that the balconies, the second floor terrace, residential entryways and the parking garage are building components which should be addressed as areas critical to creating a sense of security and encouraging positive interaction among residents and neighbors.

A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access
Automobile impacts on adjacent properties and the pedestrian environment should be minimized.

Please see A-3, A-9 and A-10 for further discussion of garage entryways.

A-9 Parking on Commercial Street Fronts
Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized.

The proposal included vehicular access to the building through a garage entry off of 22nd Avenue East. While the Board understands the heavy traffic and busy nature of East Madison Street, they encourage the applicant to investigate possible entrances off of Madison which would help to deflect the full impact from 22nd Avenue.

A-10 Corner Lots
Orient building to corner and public street fronts while keeping automobile access away from the corner.

The Board identified that the project's southwestern corner will be critical to establishing a strong presence in the area. This corner element should be designed in a manner which establishes a powerful presence in the community. It was noted that the history of the site and of the community might be integrated into the design efforts. The Board also supported the notion that this corner site could help define the upper Madison neighborhood and trigger further urban design connections between lower and upper Madison. It was further noted that attracting and maintaining successful retail tenants is often contingent on the availability of usable space and this condition will in-turn affect the level of pedestrian activity; therefore, efforts to encourage the economic viability, flexibility and usability of the retail spaces should be made.

B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale
Provide sensitive transition to nearby, less intensive zones.

The Board encouraged using design elements which will help to break down the large bulk and scale of the proposed building in a neighborhood which has few existing structures of comparable heights. Design features such as fenestration patterns and building materials which emphasize the horizontal dimensions rather than the vertical, façade modulations, varied roof lines and architectural details will help the proposed building to be integrated into the existing built environment. The Board also specified that the ground floors should be visually differentiated from the upper floors using different materials and features.

C-1 Complement positive architectural character and/or respond to nearby historic structures through architectural elements and materials.

The Board suggested using a combination of high-quality materials such as masonry, metals, hardplanks and trellis work not only to reflect the existing character of the neighborhood, but also to introduce innovative designs into a neighborhood containing an aging building stock.

C- 2 Unified architectural concept.

The Board suggested that the building uses be reflected in the design of the project on both the Madison and 22nd Avenue façades. The retail and residential levels ought to be distinguishable. Respecting the adjacent properties, the northern façade might take on a slightly less imposing character. Please see sections B-1, C-1 and C-3 for further discussion.

C- 3 Encourage human scale and human activity.

The Board specified that awnings should be installed above the retail level which will offer protection from the weather. Weaving architectural details and features into this ground floor façade would also contribute to a more comfortable and enjoyable pedestrian environment. Please see A-4 for further discussion.

C-4 Exterior Finish Materials

Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

The Board encouraged the creative use of materials and detailing in the proposed project which will help define the neighborhood character. Please see C-1 for further discussion of the architectural design of this project.

C-5 Structured Parking Entrances

Parking garage entries should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

The applicant had not yet decided on the exact location of the garage entryway(s). One will likely be located off of 22nd Avenue East towards the northern edge of the property. If a secondary garage entry were pursued, it would likely be accessed from East Madison Street. The Board felt that such an entryway ought to be sited in a manner which is not disruptive to the design and function of the building façade. Please see A-3 for further discussion.

D-1 Provide convenient, attractive and protected pedestrian entry.

The Board identified the need for security features which will protect both residents and pedestrians. Such features may include street lighting and the maintenance of clear sight lines. Also reference sections A-3 and A-6 for further discussion related to pedestrian entryways.

D-2 Blank Walls

Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

The Board expressed concern regarding the northern wall fronting onto the Texaco filling station which would be completely exposed to traffic from the north. The Board noted that the resulting blank wall would be out of scale and unfriendly to the pedestrian environment. It was suggested that the use of landscaping elements, as well as the use of materials and architectural details would be desirable and would help break up the visual impact of the wall.
See A-5.

D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures

Please see C-5.

D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas

The Board specified that the applicant investigate issues of garbage collection and storage in an effort to accommodate the necessary equipment and space for dumpsters.

D-7 Personal Safety

Please see A-4, A-6 and D-1.

**E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites
Where possible, special consideration should be given to abutting streetscape and neighboring properties.**

The Board strongly supported landscaping which would screen the garage wall to the north. Please see A-5.

**E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site
Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.**

The Board felt that landscaping features, such as trellises, planter boxes, deck furniture and climbing plant materials would encourage comfortable and attractive open spaces on this site. In particular, the rooftop terrace, second floor deck, northern garage wall and public right-of-way along the ground level would all benefit from such landscaping plans.

**E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions
Landscape design should consider special on-site conditions such slopes and view corridors.**

Façade landscaping along the proposed building, in addition to ground level, second-story and roof terrace landscaping, would enhance the visibility of this site, as well as break down the large scale of the structure, adding texture, variety and color to the building.

Departure from Development Standards

The following departure from development standards was discussed:

1. Departure from Setback Requirements (SMC 23.47.014.4c)

The applicant requested that the Board consider a departure to reduce the five-foot rear setback requirements for structures of this height. The Board indicated that it would not support such a departure as the proposed building will abut residential structures to the north, which are significantly smaller in scale and would potentially experience a loss of light and air and increased shadows.