

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE  
CAPITOL HILL / FIRST HILL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

**November 7, 2001**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Project Number: 2100171  
Address: 1818 E. Madison  
Applicant: Sam Cameron of Streeter Architects for Val Thomas, Inc.  
Board Members Present: Tom Phillips (Chair)  
Merv Gorasht  
Rob Humble  
Greg Wharton

DCLU Staff: Michael Jenkins

**PROPOSAL:**

The applicant is proposing a mixed-use project at the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and E. Madison. The project includes approximately 7, 000 square feet of retail and separate administrative office spaces with 134 apartment units located on five floors above the retail/office area. Partially below grade parking will be accessed from two separate locations, one along Madison and one on 19<sup>th</sup> Ave, and will include approximately 203 spaces. Surface parking will also be provided along the western side of the building fronting Madison and the north side of the building fronting 19<sup>th</sup> Ave, and will be passed through to gain entrance into the enclosed garage space.



**DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS:**

**Early Design Guidance**

On March 21, 2000 the Capitol Hill/First Hill Design Review Board held their Early Design Guidance meeting. After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by proponents and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance, identifying by letter and number those siting

and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's "*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*" that are of the highest priority to this project:

- A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics
- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility
- A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street
- A-4 Human Activity
- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites
- A-7 Residential Open Space
- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access
- A-10 Corner Lots
- B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility
- C-1 Architectural Context
- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency
- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials
- C-5 Structured Parking Entrances
- D-2 Blank Walls
- D-4 Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks
- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures
- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas
- D-7 Personal Safety and Security
- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites

### **Design Departures**

At this first meeting, the applicant requested a Design Departure from SMC 23.47.008B2 requiring 80% of structure's street front façade to be occupied by non-residential uses. The rationale for the request was based upon the applicant's desire to have two curbcuts, one on Madison and another on 19<sup>th</sup> as well as the effect of the grade change rising to the west along Madison limiting the ability to provide street front access to any non-residential uses. The Board indicated that the applicant needed to make their case visually, but were also sympathetic to the request due to the acknowledgement of the difficulties posed by the grade change.

The applicant also indicated that a Design Departure for the width of required curbcut and access to parking areas. SMC 23.54.030D2 establishes standards for widths of mixed use properties. SMC 23.54.030F2 establishes standards for curbcut width in a C1 zone. No specifics about the possible departure were forwarded by the applicant for the Board to develop a position on the request.

### **Design Review Board Recommendation Meeting:**

The Capitol Hill/First Hill Design Review Board held their second meeting on this proposal on November 7, 2001. The applicant brought additional materials, including photographs and renderings, to indicate how the project had developed since the early design guidance meeting. Specifically, the Board had requested further response from the applicant on the following points:

- The development of the design departures and the rationale behind the request
- How the impacts to the adjacent residential properties had been addressed, particularly to the residential units to the north and west
- How the garage entry and detailing had been developed to enhance its appearance and to address the related design departures
- How the corner of the building had been developed
- How the project responded to the slope of the site
- How materials had been used

In their presentation, the applicants provided information on how providing trellising would mitigate the entrance to the parking areas and showed enhancement of proposed retaining walls adjacent to the residential areas through landscaping and other features. The applicant also indicated that additional safety devices including lights and noise devices would be provided to mitigate the loss of one portion of the sight triangle. The applicant presented additional information on the reasoning for the reduced commercial frontage by providing detail about the grade change that limited access to commercial spaces, the dimensions of the ground level commercial access through the building and how residential spaces would be provided and accessed.

### **Design Departure**

Since the early design guidance meeting, the applicants revised their requested departures as follows:

Development Standard	Proposed	Justification	Action
80% of a structure street front facade in non-residential uses (SMC 23.47.008B)	78%	Grade change prohibits maintaining appropriate height; focusing commercial on 19 <sup>th</sup> provides larger spaces that are more versatile	Unanimous support
22 foot minimum required driveway for residential and nonresidential uses (SMC 23.54.030D2)	12 feet	Reduces predominance of curbcut and driveway on sidewalks	Unanimous support
22 foot minimum required	12 feet	Reduces predominance of	Unanimous

Development Standard	Proposed	Justification	Action
curbcut (SMC23.54.030F2)		curbcut and driveway on sidewalks	support
Reduced sight triangle along the proposed 19 <sup>th</sup> Ave garage access (SMC 23.54.030G1)	10 foot triangle on one side only	Moving structural support to have full sight triangle at street will create incomplete design statement at corner of building; some sight triangle will be provided approximately 8 feet back from property line.	Unanimous support

### Public Comment

10 people from the neighborhood attended the public meeting and made the following questions and comments, including their overall support of the project:

- The appropriateness of using of yellow colored materials on the north façade
- How the southwest terrace closest to the residential uses would be viewed from adjacent properties
- The color of glazing on all windows
- The distance between the building and the residences to the north
- The height of the rear terrace in relation to neighboring homes
- The type of lighting on the north elevation

### Board Comment and Questions

- How many parking stalls will serviced at each entrance
- Design details about the primary residential entrance
- If the project will be an apartment or condominium
- The ceiling height of both the commercial and residential spaces
- The details on the rooftop terrace, including the proposed trellis work along the edge of the roofline, the type of materials and use for the rooftop
- The location and access to the surface level commercial parking stalls
- Additional information on the 19<sup>th</sup> Ave elevation including the commercial spaces and how they had been enhanced with pedestrian details
- The materials used for both commercial and residential awnings
- Type of street lighting affixed to the building
- The type of materials used for balconies on corner and on 19<sup>th</sup>
- The location and access to residential units from Madison

In their deliberation and discussion on the project, the Board indicated that they were generally pleased with the development of the design, including the rationale and the development of the features related to the Design Departures. The Board did express 4 design-related concerns about the overall project. These concerns are detailed below:

#### Location of residential units adjacent to the street

Board members expressed concern about the development of the portion of the building along Madison, specifically the location of the residential units closest to Madison. Due to the grade change and the location of residential units almost at street level along Madison, the Board recommended that additional design development be undertaken to ensure that this portion of the building be further designed to better meet the following guidelines:

- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility – The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way
- A-4 Human Activity - New Development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.
- D-7 Personal Safety and Security - Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

#### The Building corner

The design of the building includes a predominately-rounded corner at the 19<sup>th</sup> and Madison intersection. This portion of the building rises the entire height of the building and is marked by a curve with applied glazing and balconies. The Board expressed concern about the development of the corner portion of the building. Due to the prominence of the corner, both in the design of the building and in relation to the 19<sup>th</sup> and Madison corner, the Board recommended that additional design detail should be provided to enhance this portion of the building in order that the project better meet the following design guidelines:

- 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 features.
- A-10 Corner Lots - Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.
- D-7 Personal Safety and Security - Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

#### Lighting for façade

Due to the length of commercial frontage along 19<sup>th</sup>, the Madison Ave facade and the relationship of the project to adjacent residential uses, the Board was concerned about the use of lighting on all facades. The Board recommended that a lighting plan be developed to ensure that lighting appropriately enhanced the facades and did not result in off site impacts.

### Signage

The Board noted their concern about the development of a signage program that was appropriate for this development. While acknowledging that the developer may have an individual sign program for potential tenants, the Board was concerned that signage be appropriate and not include back lighted signage.

### **SUMMARY OF DECISION**

After considering the proposed design and the project context, hearing public comment, and reconsidering the previously stated design priorities, the Design Review Board members felt that all of the guidance they had given in their previous meetings had been addressed by the applicant. As indicated above, the Board made the following 4 recommendation in support of their review of the project:

1. Further design development of the residential SW corner of the project along Madison
2. Further design development of the corner of the building at 19<sup>th</sup> and Madison
3. Development of a lighting plan for the building
4. Development of a signage plan to ensure that no backlit signs would be used

The Board did not develop specific conditions based on the 4 design-related issues listed above, but did direct staff to work with the applicant to ensure that the general design quality for the issues raised above were addressed. In addition, all of the board members in attendance supported the Departure requests with no further modifications.