

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
OF
AT-LARGE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

April 18, 2000

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number: **2001140**

Address: **101 20th Avenue East**

Applicant: **Paul Pierce**

Board members present: **Loren Adams**

Paul Crane

Robert Hall

Board members absent: **None**

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

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BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design and construction of a townhouse development consisting of six residential units and six surface parking spaces. The townhome structure is three stories high with units extending across the width of the property. The property is located in an Lowrise 3 (L-3) zone. The site is rectangular, 40 feet wide and 120 feet in length, equaling approximately 4,800 square feet. The subject site is situated on the southeastern corner of a rectangular block which is defined by 19th Avenue East to the west, East Denny Way to the south, East John Street to the north and 20th Avenue East to the east. There is alley access to the project site along the western edge of the property. Five of the six surface parking spaces will be accessed from the alley and the sixth space will be access directly from 20th Avenue East.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ten members of the public were present at the meeting, including nearby property owners. Public comment and clarifying questions focused on the following issues:

- Understanding the required alley improvements associated with the proposed development;
- Modulating the façade to break down the building's scale towards the eastern property edge; and
- Locating the open space in a functional and attractive manner.

Most of the public comment was incorporated in the recommendations of the Board.

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-2 Streetscape Compatibility

Siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

The Board encouraged the building mass to be further shifted to the southern edge of the property, which will provide strong definition to the streetscape. Such a configuration will also reinforce the design of the stoop-like entryways. The Board expressed potential support of a departure which may be required as a result of this building shift.

A-3 Visible Entrances

Provide clearly identifiable entryways.

The Board suggested combining walkways to the entryway stoops and giving the individual units a strong residential character.

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 adjacent residents.

The Board emphasized that this shift of the proposed building to the south will pull the building mass away from the multifamily development to the north and will open up the configuration of the rear yards to accommodate more functional and usable open space. The building to the north, however, does not include any windows on its southern façade, and therefore greatly reduces the issues of

privacy relative to the proposed adjacent residential units.

A-7 Residential Open Space

Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive and well-integrated open space.

The Board encouraged the shifting of the building mass to the south, in order to create larger, more usable rear yards which will have greater privacy. Please see A-5 for further discussion.

A-10 Corner Lots

Builds on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

The Board recommended incorporating a corner accent, different from the rest of the building, to the southeastern corner. This accent might include design treatment, such as landscaping materials or fenestration patterns.

B-1 Height, Bulk & Scale Compatibility

The height, bulk and scale of the proposed building should be compatible with the surrounding area and sensitive to nearby zones.

The Board expressed an interest in integrating additional modulation to the northern façade, which will be highly visible from the more functional and usable rear yards, made larger by the building shift.

C-3 Human Scale

Design of buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a strong human scale.

The use of bay windows, stoop entryways, landscaping and roof forms should serve to reinforce the human scale of the neighborhood.

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 expressed a strong interest in the use of high quality materials in the proposed structure. The selected materials and colors should reflect the neighborhood context.

D-6 Screening Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas

Building sites should locate service elements away from the street and provide screening so that they are not visible from the pedestrian right-of-way.

The Board supports a design which addresses the screening (such as a fence) of those service elements associated with the proposed project and encouraged the siting of the service area near to the alley, rather than 20th Avenue NE. The applicant should consult city Ordinance 119836 which establishes standards for service areas.

D-7 Personal Safety & Security

Design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety.

The Board felt that the entryways and open spaces should reinforce personal security around the building, such as providing lighting, clear view corridors and windows which allow visibility to and from these spaces. The exterior lighting plan should also be cognizant of the glare impacts on adjacent properties.

E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites

Landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

The Board agreed that the landscape design of the subject site should enhance the streetscape. The planting strip and street tree landscape design and maintenance will also be important, especially if the front setback is reduced.

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 expressed a strong interest in the use of high quality vegetation and landscaping materials which will reinforce the pedestrian streetscape and provide a functional and attractive space for building residents. The Board also suggested using vertical trellises and landscaping along the driveway off of 20th Avenue NE, to screen the parking area.

Departure from Development Standards

The following **departures** from standards of the Land Use Code were requested by the applicant at the time of this meeting.

1. *Building Depth — to allow an increase in building depth from the maximum requirement of 65% to 75%:* The Code establishes a maximum building depth of 65% (SMC 23.45.011.A) which equals 78 feet for the project site. The applicant has proposed a building depth of 90 feet, which equals 75%, exceeding the maximum by 12 feet or 10%. If the applicant preferred to develop two separated buildings, rather than a single building, the depth requirements could be satisfied. The Board, however, agreed with the applicant that a single building, which is well modulated and surrounded by a more functional open space plan, would result in a superior proposal as a whole. The Board unanimously supported the departure for the increased building depth.
2. *Setback — to allow a decrease in side setback from the minimum requirement of ten feet to six feet above the ground level:* The Code establishes a minimum setback of ten feet on this reversed corner lot (SMC 23.45.014.3). The applicant has proposed to reduce this setback above the ground floor to six feet in order to accommodate vertical window bays that would run from the second to the third floors. The full setback would be provided at the ground level. The Board unanimously supported the departure for the decreased setback, determining that the window bays would provide appropriate modulation to this façade and contribute to a desirable design as a whole.
3. *Parking Access — to allow an second driveway to the project site:* The Code requires that access to a site, located within a Lowrise zone, be from the alley (SMC 23.45.018.B). The applicant has proposed to include a second driveway from 20th Avenue East, in addition to the alley access, in order to accommodate the sixth parking space. The Board unanimously supported the departure for the secondary access driveway in order to maintain the design of ground-related townhomes that do not have to accommodate garages structures or underground parking, and where access to the units directly meet the street level.
4. *Open Space — to allow less than the required open space requirement of 300 square feet per unit:* The Code establishes an open space requirement of an average of 300 square feet of open space per unit (SMC 23.47.016) which equals 1,800 square feet. The applicant has proposed 1,440 square feet of open space, which equals 240 square feet of open space per unit, a 60 square foot, or 20%, deficiency. Of the 1,440 square feet of open space provided, 900 square feet of open space complies with Code dimensions (requiring a minimum of 10 x 15 square feet) and 540 square feet would not meet these dimensional requirements. All Board members supported the departure request for the decreased

open space, determining that a high quality, well-developed and highly functional landscaping plan would adequately mitigate the impacts of the open space dimensional deficiency. The Board's recommendation to shift the structure to the southern property edge, however, may alleviate this open space and/or dimensional departure, as well as present an additional setback departure, which would be supported by the Board.

Next Steps

- Contact Seatrans at 684-7623 to discuss paving patterns and standards within the right-of-way, driveway grades, curb cuts and traffic issues.
- Consult City Ordinance 119836 which covers development standards for dumpster and service area requirements.
- Develop Landscaping Plan.
- Develop Exterior Lighting Plan.