RECOMMENDATION OF THE
NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

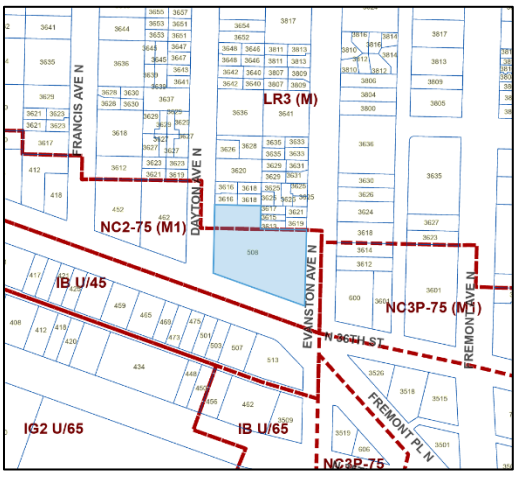
Record Number:	3040426-LU
Address:	508 N. 36th St.
Applicant:	Jodi Patterson-O'Hare, Permit Consultants NW
Date of Meeting:	December 11, 2023
Board Members Present:	Brian Johnson, Chair Penn DiJulio Che Fortaleza (substitute) May So (substitute)
Board Members Absent:	None
SDCI Staff Present:	Theresa Neylon, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a 75 foot height limit (M1) [NR2-75 (M)] & Lowrise 3 (M) [LR3 (M)]

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3 (M)
(East) Neighborhood Commercial 3 with a 75 foot height limit in a Pedestrian zone (M1) [NC3P-75 (M)] & LR3 (M)
(South) Industrial Buffer U/45 [IB U/45]
(West) NC2-75 (M1)

Lot Area: 31,182 sq. ft.



Current Development:
The subject site lies within the Fremont neighborhood at the south end of a block bound by Dayton Ave N to the west, N 36th St to the south, and Evanston Ave N to the east. The subject site comprises two tax parcels developed with a single-family residence, a detached garage, and a mortuary built in 1902. Hedges and mature trees along the property lines offer privacy from neighboring properties and the public right-of-way. Ornamental shrubs and turfgrass lawns create garden areas beside pedestrian and vehicle parking areas. Three Exceptional trees, a Southern magnolia, a European white birch, and a Vine maple, are located near the west, center, and east portions of the site. The site has relatively flat grades

along the south N. 36th St frontage; the grade begins to slope up to the north along both side street frontages.

The site is situated on a zone boundary: most of the site was rezoned from Commercial 1-40 to Neighborhood Commercial 2-75 (M1) on April 19, 2019 and the northwest portion of the site was rezoned from Lowrise 3 to Lowrise 3 (M) on the same date.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:
Adjacent to the site are townhouses to the north; multifamily, single-family, and mixed-use structures to the east; and commercial structures to the south and west. N 36th St is the neighborhood commercial core, lined with small-scale retail and restaurant establishments. N 36th St is a principal arterial providing northwest-southeast circulation through the neighborhood and marks the grid shift from the rectilinear blocks to the north, resulting in irregularly shaped parcels and buildings adjacent to the arterial. A lowrise residential area comprised of multifamily, townhouse, and single-family structures extends in the blocks to the north. The streets south of N 36th St reflect a similar diagonal orientation and transition to include larger-scale industrial and mixed-use structures due to the change in zoning to industrial. The Fremont Cut, bordered by the Burke-Gilman Trail and public green space, marks the south boundary of the Fremont neighborhood.

The Fremont neighborhood consists of an eclectic mix of building typos and forms, ranging from traditional, turn of the century stick and masonry structures to midcentury developments to recent contemporary designs. No architectural style predominates. Siting, setback, and massing patterns reflect building age and type. Older structures are generally smaller in size with narrow street frontage while newer developments rise to four stories in height and have larger footprints. The neighborhood includes an assortment of building materials including brick, lap, shingle, stucco, and fiber cement. Public art displays in the streetscape and on buildings are commonly found . The N 36th S streetscape includes strong street walls and commercial character which in places are disrupted by courtyards, parking lots, and green space. Dayton Ave N and Evanston Ave N possess a residential character despite variation amongst building age and design.

Access:
Existing vehicle access to the site is from Evanston Ave N and Dayton Ave N. Pedestrian access is from N 36th St and Dayton Ave N.

Environmentally Critical Areas:
No mapped environmentally critical areas are located on the subject site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Land use application to allow a 7-story, 169-unit apartment building with retail. Parking for 65 vehicles proposed. Existing buildings to be demolished. Early Design Guidance conducted under 3040442-EG.

Vehicle access is proposed from Dayton Ave N. Pedestrian access is proposed from N 36th St.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the record number at this website:
http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx

Any recording of the Board meeting is available in the project file. This meeting report summarizes the meeting and is not a meeting transcript.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE – MARCH 20, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Expressed strong support for height of building and density achieved.
- Commented that retaining the exceptional magnolia tree (at center of site) could be achieved and balanced with adequate parking.
- Liked the orthogonal layout of Scheme C upper levels but suggested a combination with Scheme A base level to save the exceptional magnolia tree.
- Suggested a base layout that did not encircle the tree with the building but created visual access to the tree from the street.
- Noted that the neighborhood scale is low rise and that a 7-story building is out of character.
- Commented the retention of the exceptional trees did not get a true consideration in the massing options.
- Noted the shadow studies did not show the year-round impacts of the structure that would block sunlight access to the adjacent structures.
- Concerns about impacts of removal of trees on the site.
- Concerned regarding shading on adjacent residential structures for more than half the year.
- Concerned that the building was too tall and should be limited to 5 stories; noted that the character of the building does not fit the neighborhood.

SDCI also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Multiple comments were opposed to the proposed size as it is not in keeping with the lowkey and unique Fremont neighborhood character which is defined by small, charming, and traditional buildings.
- Several comments suggested a more moderately sized four- or five-story building would be more consistent with the surrounding buildings including recent construction.
- Concerned the development would overlook smaller adjacent structures and block windows and sunlight.
- Felt the existing building is a site of historical significance.
- Observed that the site currently provides some of the last green space and trees in central Fremont while the proposal removes all plants and wildlife habitat while providing nothing in return.
- Felt the existing green space is valuable to the quality of life in this neighborhood.
- Favored retaining the street trees and sidewalks.
- Suggested above-grade parking at the north end of the lot so that commercial frontage is still available on 36th St.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning zoning, proposed use, construction impacts, views, infrastructure, traffic, parking quantity, property value, housing demand, transportation, unit count, environmental conditions, and housing affordability. These comments are outside the scope of design review.

The Seattle Department of Transportation offered the following comments:

- The project is required to meet the minimum standards of a 6" curb, 6' sidewalk, and 5.5' planting strip with street trees on the N 36th St, Evanston Ave N, and Dayton Ave N frontages as indicated in the design packet.
- The curb cut on Evanston Ave N should be closed if it is not planned to be in use as indicated in the design packet.
- The existing right-of-way is wider than necessary. SDOT recommends shifting the curb line east to bring it into alignment with the updated curb on adjacent properties to the north.
- The Dayton Ave N curb ramp should be replaced if it is not currently compliant as indicated in the design packet.

Seattle Public Utilities offered the following comments:

- The project must submit the Solid Waste Storage and Access Checklist for Designers and site plans that detail solid waste storage and access.
- SPU supports collection off Dayton Ave N.
- SPU supports roll-off compaction or detached compacted dumpsters for residential recycle and combined garbage.
- Roll-off service requires a 14' overhead clearance with containers stored on a 4' high dock and a 12' wide loading berth per compactor. If detached compacted dumpsters are used, they must be staged on private property for direct truck access on a flat, paved surface with minimum 24' overhead clearance at collection location.
- SPU requires turning studies that demonstrate trucks can collect compactors with adequate clearance to protect private property.
- SPU supports uncompacted 2 cubic yard dumpsters for commercial recycle.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number (3040442-EG): http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD GUIDANCE

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.

1. Architecture: Massing

A. The Board supported the applicant's preferred massing option, Scheme C. They specifically noted the development of a strong commercial expression at the base level, especially with the mid-block 'notch' that provides an exterior space for an adjacent retail/commercial use. They also supported the south-facing modulated configuration of the upper levels, set back from the base level, that will provide some visual relief of the bulk and height of the building along N 36th St. **CS2 Urban Pattern and Form, CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods, CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites**

   i. In agreement with public comment, the Board noted that massing Scheme A, which retained the two exceptional trees on the site, did not appear to explore ways to retain the trees in a positive way within the layout. One Board member noted that the exceptional magnolia tree in the center of the site could be retained while the smaller exceptional vine maple could potentially be relocated to allow a more rational building layout than shown in the Scheme A massing. Ultimately, the Board unanimously agreed

that retaining the trees, given their central locations on the site, may not be viable in relation to creating a coherent building design. **DC2 Architectural Concept**

ii. The Board agreed that the north-facing 'courtyard' configuration of Scheme B appeared to be a backward approach on this site, creating a taller street wall along the main N 36th St frontage and providing a dark north-facing amenity area for the residents. **CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale, DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs**

B. The Board appreciated the description of the architectural concept of Scheme C given by the applicant in the meeting, noting that the angled base level responded to the N 36th St commercial zone and the orthogonal orientation of the upper levels responded to the residential street layout to the north. They noted, however, that there was a disconnect between the design of the base and design of the upper levels. They commented that the design connection between the base and upper levels needs to be more fully developed and described at the Recommendation meeting so that a cohesive design approach is evident. **CS2 Urban Pattern and Form, DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**

i. The Board remarked that the design concept appeared to be especially disjointed at the southeast corner of Scheme C. They noted that the void at the ground level, where the recessed residential entry is located, did not relate the upper levels of the building to the protruding base in the rest of the building. They also noted the scale and design at the top of this corner mass seemed unresolved in relation to the overall massing concept. Along with resolving the layout and bulk/scale/design concept issues noted separately (see 2.B. and 1.C.i.), the integration of the most visible and prominent corner into the overall architectural concept needs to be more fully clarified at the Recommendation phase. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, CS2-A-1. Sense of Place**

C. Several public comments noted concerns about the height differential of this building with the surrounding neighborhood. The Board noted two specific areas of concern where the height and bulk of Scheme C needs further study: **CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

i. The Board noted concerns regarding the upper level at the southeast corner of Scheme C. Although they supported a common amenity room with an exterior deck, they noted the roof over the deck seemed to add bulk and visual weight at this focal corner. They requested studies be presented at the Recommendation phase to show how the intentional modification of the roofline, including pulling the roof back or other stepping strategies, could contribute to reducing the bulk and mass visible along the street edge. **DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass, CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence**

ii. The Board voiced concerns about how the zone transition from NC2-75 to LR2 was being addressed in the building massing and detailing along the northeast edge of the building. They noted a variation in the materiality, as shown in the EDG packet, was one way to visually reduce bulk but asked for a more thorough study of ways to revise massing (stepping at upper levels, stepping at lower levels, and/or other strategies) to aid in breaking down the perceived mass. They noted that this development could also be a better neighbor to the adjacent residential structures by studying how to reduce other impacts, like shading concerns raised in public comments, along the north property line. They requested the studies in the Recommendation packet include site sections showing proposed design responses along this edge condition. **CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions, CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites, DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass**

D. The Board noted that the façade along Evanston Ave N should be studied for ways to visually break down the scale along this street frontage as the zone transitions from commercial to low rise. (Staff Note: Staff notes that the Recommendation package should include renderings of both the Evanston Ave N and Dayton Ave N facades to show how the architectural concept

wraps the building. To help the Board efficiently review the design, please show how development of these façade scale relationships relates to the contextual study shown on page 36 of the EDG packet.) **CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes, CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning**

2. Architecture: Street Level

A. The Board supported the strong commercial edge of the Scheme C along the main N 36th St frontage. They noted the consistency of the retail frontage should continue to be refined as the design progresses in the Recommendation phase. (Staff Note: Staff suggests updating the scale diagram shown on page 36 of the EDG packet to reflect actual neighborhood commercial unit scale and using this contextual diagram as reference for refining the commercial frontage definition.) **CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites, PL3-C Retail Edges**

   i. The Board specifically supported the notched setback shown mid-block along the main commercial frontage in Scheme C that provides exterior space for use by adjacent retail/commercial units. They appreciated the rendering, as shown on page 2 of the 'additional views' document, that showed scale and detailing proposed to activate this street edge amenity and noted the potential to establish unique and activated placemaking along the public realm. **PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities, DC4-D-4. Place Making**

   ii. The Board supported the concept of heavily planting the roof of the first floor along the main commercial frontage to provide a lush edge to the public realm, as shown in renderings on page 87 of the EDG packet and pages 1 and 2 of the 'additional views' document. The Board noted the level of planting indicated an impression of green space along the street that could aid in 'giving back' a sense of open space, reminiscent of the scale of current site conditions. (Staff Note: further detailing of how the planters will be incorporated into the architecture, as well as the proposed planting strategy, should be provided at the Recommendation phase so the Board can assess how this vegetated edge will be achieved.) **PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements, DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features, DC4-D-4. Place Making**

   iii. Along with the discussion regarding the residential entry (see 2.B.), the Board discussed how the southeast corner best contributed to the overall streetscape design on N 36th St. Although there was no specific design direction given, the Board suggested that the design of the ground level corner be studied to provide a better anchor to the commercial frontage. **CS2-C-1. Corner Sites, PL3-C Retail Edges**

B. In Scheme C, the residential entry is located on the southeast corner in a very prominent location on N 36th St, an important commercial corridor. The Board discussed the location at length, both in terms of the best location for the residential entry as well as the impacts on the commercial frontage. They ultimately requested that studies be provided at the Recommendation phase to show options for developing the southeast corner at the street level that can better anchor the building at this very prominent location. These studies should include alternate locations for the residential entrance, including options for moving the entrance to the Evanston Ave N frontage, as well as options for strengthening the commercial frontage along N 36th St. They noted that any open space associated with the residential entry needs to be easily distinguishable from the commercial open spaces, such as the 'notch'. **PL3-A Entries, DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**

C. The Board unanimously supported removal of the exceptional trees on the site. Although they noted the applicant could have provided more creative studies for retaining the trees, they agreed that removal of the trees allowed for the creation of a more cohesive commercial street

frontage that will enhance the street level uses. Staff notes that tree replacement for removal of the exceptional trees should be indicated in the MUP set and Recommendation packet to ensure adequate space for long term viability of new trees, as well as canopy replacement, is provided in a way that enhances the design and ensures the replacement trees will thrive. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning**

3. Architecture: Materials

A. Although proposed materiality was not fully detailed in the EDG packet, the Board noted that the renderings gave an impression of the use of warm, high-quality materials, which they supported. They suggested refining the materials palette with a holistic approach to both the base and upper levels that could bring an elegance to the overall composition. **DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition, DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials, DC2-D Scale and Texture**
    a. The Board noted that secondary elements, like the balconies, should be integrated into the overall materials palette so they appear part of the architectural composition. **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features, DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

RECOMMENDATION – DECEMBER 11, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Did not support the Fremont community getting walled off by large buildings; encouraged enhancing public spaces and public views.
- Suggested focusing on the Design Guideline that emphasizes development at street corners, noting that is where art and whimsy, as well as the lively character of the neighborhood could be enhanced in the design; requested areas for colorful art or murals; noted the southeast corner plaza was cramped, that the landscape planters cut up space and suggested adding seating; noted that the location for the replacement tree was not appropriate.
- No support for clear cutting of trees on the site, noting that any replacement tree plantings would not replace the removed tree canopies; noted that soil volumes must be confirmed to allow trees to grow; and suggested modifying the building to make space for on-site tree replacement.
- Retain the exceptional trees. Speaker also noted the new building proposed was out scale with the neighborhood and would diminish the liability of the neighborhood by shading adjacent residences.
- The project will exacerbate heat island effect; advocated for sufficient soil volumes for new trees planted; supported comprehensive plan directive that minimizes clearcutting trees; suggested the building be modified to allow space for trees on the site.
- Support for the massing at the corners of the site; noted the light-colored brick looked too institutional and suggested change to red brick; supported inclusion of balconies as amenity for residents and suggested that hose bibbs be included; supported larger planting strip for tree plantings if parking is removed.
- Concern that driveway and curb cuts on Dayton Ave will reduce parking spaces.
- Noted this project is more than twice as tall as surrounding buildings and will dominate views; suggested installing a living roof to counterbalance tree removal.
- Questioned removal of street parking spaces.

SDCI also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- A 4- or 5-story building height would be more compatible with the existing neighborhood context.
- Retain a green strip of trees between the back of the new building and the existing townhouses to the north.
- Concerned about disruptions to sunlight and open air.
- Concerned about the feasibility of locating the garage access on Dayton Ave.
- Multiple commented stressed the importance of the existing trees to the neighborhood and advocated maintaining the level of tree canopy that is currently present.
- Asked for green space along the sidewalk.
- Felt the design does not contribute to the neighborhood character.
- Noted that the site's shape allows for design departures along the street frontages to retain and embellish tree canopy. The move to provide planting within the facade set back is encouraging, as long as the depth of the planting structure is adequate and accessible.
- Supported an active ground-floor use.
- Strong recommended only native vegetation be used for the proposed landscaping to enhance native avian life and native pollinators.
- Disliked the massive concrete brick materials.
- Disliked that the planned green spaces are not publicly accessible.
- Observed that the renderings do not depict the surrounding context.
- Requested bicycle storage and public outdoor seating.
- Agreed with the Board's concerns that the treatment of the southeast corner has not been addressed. The Boards' comments indicate that "[t]he massing has not changed since EDG and the residential entry door remains difficult to clearly see behind large columns..."
- Stressed that as the southeast corner will be a prime area of pedestrian and community interaction, a grander engagement with the public realm should be made there. Suggested reducing the massing, increasing the height of the patio space by at least another floor or two, introducing artwork befitting the historical nature of Fremont, incorporating color, increasing the volume of the open space to promote pedestrian circulation, pushing the 2nd floor unit further back or eliminating it, reducing the size of the exterior commercial tenant space and lobby, and minimizing the impact of the columns.
- Proposed shifting the tree planter nearest the corner and the bike racks further away to allow space for art and public benches, and to remain consistent with adjacent corner plazas. The landscape planters are acting as barriers to public access and creative uses.
- Encouraged applying design guidelines which encourage a design to better reflect the character of the surrounding community.
- Stated that while the proposed green spaces and setbacks along Leary are favorable, they would be more beneficial if combined and placed toward the southeast rather than scattered along Leary where fewer people walk.
- Advocated retaining the existing trees along the north side.
- Opined the mass and scale are disproportional with the rest of the neighborhood.
- Reminded that this neighborhood and this particular block have potential to activate the street level with vibrant art, design flow to the neighbors to the north, and visual appeal that should be unique to this particular place.

SSCI received several comments after the Recommendation meeting:

- Noted that this location is a cornerstone of the community and suggested the proposal could be better integrated with the scale and the architecture of the neighborhood.
- Suggested integrating seating, trees and green space, perhaps by setting the building back from the front property line.
- Noted bike parking should be convenient for residents to be able to access local bike paths.
- Commented that the balconies looked too small to be usable and suggested designing to allow more usable space and more integrated with the architecture.
- Opposed to the lack of setback along the north property line and suggested introducing a setback at the third level to match the surrounding buildings.
- Noted the large size differential between the existing townhomes and the allowed height of this building.
- Suggested lowering the building to three stories, providing more trees and opens space on the site.
- Commented that the size of the project will dwarf other development in the Fremont neighborhood and suggested capping the height at five stories.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning parking quantity, traffic congestion, affordability, vacancies, upkeep of the existing lot, noise, density, roadway design, views, unit size, construction impacts, archeological review, housing demand, pollution, allowed uses of the retail spaces, and business impacts. These comments are outside the scope of design review.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number (3040426-LU): 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 recommendations.

1. Massing

a. The Board noted that the updates since EDG generally adhered to the guidance provided. The Board reiterated the importance of the development of the prominent southeast corner, and they recommended approval of the revisions to the upper level of the southeast corner volume that visually reduces the bulk. They also recommended approval of the vertical relationship of the upper volumes to the neighborhood context grid shown in the package. **CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

   i. The Board recommended approval of the pattern of balconies that respond to the power line setback. **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

b. The Board discussed the response to the concerns about the development response at the zone transition along the northeastern portion of the building. They recommended approval of the varied locations of the material transition of the light to dark façade materials to visually reduce scale along the north façade. They also noted it was appropriate to not have balconies along the

north property line to reduce privacy impacts and that the ground level patios helped to create transitional space. **CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions**

2. Materials

a. The Board recommended approval for the consistent use of high-quality brick on the majority of the façades, especially along the street frontages. In response to public comment that noted the building did not fit into the neighborhood, they discussed the variety of brick patterning shown; they also discussed the use of beige-colored brick, noting it had an institutional feel that did not reflect the contextual use of red brick in the neighborhood. The Board discussed having the applicant work with the planner to refine the brick volumes by studying color of the brick, simplifying patterning, etc. The Board did not make this a condition of approval. **CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes, DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials**
   i. The Board note that the soldier course of dark brick that runs along the bottom edge of the beige brick was an important detail to clarify. They specifically recommended approval of a break in plane between the soldier course and the brick above to highlight the change in material. **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

b. The Board noted the material transitions are subtle and but recommended approval of the changes in depth between materials shown in the Recommendation packet. **DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest**

c. The Board recommended a condition to match material selection and detailing at the inset façade on N 36th St frontage to the vertical scale and the warm tone/color, as shown in the renderings, as a contrast to the dark brick of the ground level. The Board noted that the wood material should visually tie into the wood material at the entry canopies. **DC2-B-1. Façade Composition**

3. Site

a. The Board noted that the visual compression at the ground level of the southeast corner was still evident. The Board discussed the exterior plaza at the southeast corner noting that the design needed updates to make the area more inviting and to encourage activation. They suggested adding benches to create opportunities to occupy the space. The Board also hey discussed whether the height and location of planters could be modified to visually open up the space more; they also suggested integrating artwork appropriate for the Fremont neighborhood, in support of public comments. The Board recommended a condition for the applicant to work with the planner to study the design of the corner spaces to emphasize the sense of place and enhance positive neighborhood attributes. **CS2-A-1. Sense of Place, PL1-A Network of Open Spaces**
   i. The Board recommended approval of the addition of storefront windows at the eastern commercial unit to increase activation in the southeastern plaza area. **PL3-C Retail Edges**

b. The Board questioned the visibility of the plantings at level 2. The Board recommended a condition to show how the plantings will be visible from street level to ensure the year-round vegetated look along the building edge, as illustrated and supported at the EDG, will be achieved. **DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departures was based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departures.

At the time of the Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Reduction in Transparency along the Dayton Ave N facade (23.47A.008.B.2.a.):** The Code requires sixty percent of the street-facing facade between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk shall be transparent. The applicant proposes forty-eight percent transparency.

   The Board indicated that transparency at the retail unit helped to anchor and activate the corner and the non-transparent service uses were set back from the sidewalk edge. They also noted that they supported a change to a translucent, not transparent, door at the solid waste storage room. (Staff notes this will further reduce the percentage of transparency).

   The Board recommended approval of the departure because the resulting design better meets the intent of Design Guidelines **CS2.C.3 Full Block Sites** and **DC1.B Vehicular Access and Circulation.**

2. **Reduction in Transparency along the Evanston Ave N facade (23.47A.008.B.2.a.):** The Code requires sixty percent of the street-facing facade between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk shall be transparent. The applicant proposes forty-seven percent transparency.

   The Board indicated that updates to enhance the southeast corner exterior plaza, as noted in a condition of approval, will help to activate this edge. They noted approval of the departure also relied on retaining the high quality materials and detailing at the northeast building edge and the planting bed where the sidewalk connects back to existing to enhance the transition to the lower density zone.

   The Board recommended approval of the departure because the resulting design better meets the intent of Design Guidelines **CS2.B.1 Site Characteristics**.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. 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-A Energy Use

CS1-A-1. Energy Choices: At the earliest phase of project development, examine how energy choices may influence building form, siting, and orientation, and factor in the findings when making siting and design decisions.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

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-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

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.

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.

CS1-E Water

CS1-E-1. Natural Water Features: If the site includes any natural water features, consider ways to incorporate them into project design, where feasible

CS1-E-2. Adding Interest with Project Drainage: Use project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements.

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-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites: Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

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.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References: Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

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-C Weather Protection

PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage: Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

PL2-C-2. Design Integration: Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces: Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

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-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.

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

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

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-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

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.

PL4-C Planning Ahead For Transit

PL4-C-1. Influence on Project Design: Identify how a transit stop (planned or built) adjacent to or near the site may influence project design, provide opportunities for placemaking.

PL4-C-2. On-site Transit Stops: If a transit stop is located onsite, design project-related pedestrian improvements and amenities so that they complement any amenities provided for transit riders.

PL4-C-3. Transit Connections: Where no transit stops are on or adjacent to the site, identify where the nearest transit stops and pedestrian routes are and include design features and connections within the project design as appropriate.

DESIGN CONCEPT

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

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

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

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 facades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades 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 facades 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-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

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.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

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.

DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas: Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

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.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations summarized above were based on the design review packet dated December 11, 2023, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the December 11, 2023, Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with the following conditions.

1. At the inset façade on N 36th St frontage, match the material selection and detailing to the vertical scale and the warm tone/color shown in the renderings with the wood material visually tied into the wood soffits at the entry canopies. **DC2-B-1.**
2. Work with the planner to study the design of the southeast corner plaza spaces to emphasize the sense of place and enhance positive neighborhood attributes. **CS2-A-1., PL1-A**
3. Show how the plantings at Level 2 along N 36th St will be visible from street level to ensure the year-round vegetated look along the building edge, as illustrated and supported at the EDG, will be achieved. **DC4-D**

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