



City of Kirkland
Planning and Building Department
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MEMORANDUM

To: Design Review Board

From: Peter Milliken, Associate Planner

Date: May 23, 2024

File No.: DRV24-00147

Subject: GNI Building Conceptual Design Conference

1. MEETING GOALS

At the June 3rd Design Review Board (DRB) meeting, the DRB should review the concept design for the GNI Building project. At the meeting, the DRB should determine:

- A. How the design guidelines affect or pertain to the proposed development.
- B. Determine which guidelines apply to the proposed development.
- C. Determine what other application materials are needed for the Design Response Conference.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

General

The subject property is located at 11644 NE 80th St, which is within the boundaries of the Station Area Plan (see Attachment 1). The applicant is proposing to construct a three-story, six-dwelling unit development. The applicant proposes surface level parking with vehicular access taken from 116th Ave NE/NE 80th St via an existing curb-cut. The applicant has provided a program description and general project information which includes three building massing options (see Attachment 2). The applicant's preferred building massing option is shown as Massing Option 1.

Station Area Plan

The Station Area Plan encourages an equitable and sustainable transit-oriented community as part of the significant growth expected in Greater Downtown Kirkland. It builds on efforts such as the Kirkland 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the Greater Downtown Kirkland Urban Center proposal, and other city-wide initiatives addressing housing, mobility, and sustainability. It provides a visual and policy framework for future redevelopment and growth within approximately a half-mile of the BRT station at the I-405 and NE 85th Street interchange.

The Station Area takes a form-based approach to design regulations and guidelines, promoting variety in the mixture of uses compared with the approach used in other business districts. The designs of structures within the plan area are determined by the

intended height, the adjacent street type, and the intended frontage type. The form-based approach: provides graphic examples of the type of development anticipated; helps create effective transitions between higher and lower intensity uses within and adjacent to the area; and establishes standards for quality public spaces such as plazas.

Green Innovation District

The Station Area is divided into multiple districts, with the subject property located within the Green Innovation District. This district is intended as a model of innovation and place for the community. Transitions between housing, offices, shops, and mixtures of uses are important here. Connections to public and green spaces through active transportation and walkable designs are important. Buildings should be oriented to the District's internal circulation systems. Thoughtful design transitions are important to ensure integration into the surrounding land use context, particularly from the most intensive development allowances along NE 85th ST to the lower intensity uses along NE 80th ST.

Staff will provide additional background on the Station Area Plan and design district regulations during the presentation at the June 3rd meeting.

3. SITE

The subject property (10,796 square feet) currently contains one wood-frame detached dwelling unit that was converted for office use. The site elevation slopes down from southeast to northwest, from 356 feet to 342 feet. The property has street frontage along 116th Ave NE, which is designated as a collector. It is important to note that the City vacated a portion of what would have been Kirkland Avenue in 1997 but retained an utility easement across the vacated area.

The following list summarizes the zoning designation, uses, and allowed heights of properties adjacent to the subject property:

North: Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU); low-density residential uses; 40 feet, or 75 feet when meeting incentives

South: Low-Density Residential (RS) 7.2; low-density residential uses; 25 feet

East: NMU; medium-density residential uses; 40 feet, or 75 feet when meeting incentives

West: WSDOT right-of-way; I-405 corridor; no zoning designation or standards

Additional photographs prepared by the applicant that show the surrounding properties are contained in Attachment 2.

4. KEY ZONING REGULATIONS

Zoning regulations for uses in the NMU district of the Station Area zone are found in the use-zone chart (see Attachment 3). The following regulations are important to point out as they form the basis of any new development on the site.

- A. Permitted Uses: Permitted uses in this district include, but are not limited to general commercial, institutional, and residential.

Staff Comment: The applicant is proposing residential use, which is permitted in the zone.

- B. Lot Coverage: The maximum allowed lot coverage for the NMU district is 90% of the lot size.

Staff Comment: The applicant should submit lot coverage calculations with the Design Response Conference application.

- C. Required Setbacks: The NMU district requires a 5-foot rear setback. There are no minimum side setbacks. Front setbacks are determined by the frontage type. However, the applicant has not selected a frontage type at this time. The frontage type will also determine other ground floor design regulations as discussed in Subsection G below.

Staff Comment: The applicant's current proposal complies with the proposed rear and side setbacks.

- D. Height and Floor Plate: The NMU district allows a maximum height of 40 feet as measured above the average building elevation (ABE) as defined in KZC chapter 5.10. This may be increased to 75 feet if the applicant chooses to use the incentive zoning options of KZC 57.30.

Staff Comment: The applicant should submit height calculations with the Design Response Conference application. The applicant should show how the proposed building complies with the general regulations associated with height. Staff will review the project for compliance with the City's height regulations during the Design Response phase.

- E. Façade Design: The NMU district establishes a maximum façade width whereafter a minimum break in the façade is required. That maximum façade width is 120 feet. If a façade design exceeds this width, a façade break must be proposed with a minimum width of 10 feet and a minimum depth of 5 feet.

Staff Comment: The subject property's width is 75.05 feet. The maximum façade width is not a design constraint for this project scope.

- F. Upper Story Massing: The NMU district requires upper story street setbacks starting at 75 feet above the ABE, minimum tower separation of 60 feet, and vertical articulation strategies starting at 45 feet above the ABE.

Staff Comment: Since the applicant is proposing a building height at or below 40 feet above ABE, the upper story massing requirements of the NMU district do not apply to the current proposal.

- G. Frontage Type: The Station Area Plan designates both 116th Ave NE and NE 80th St as Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) Streets. NMU streets are characterized by rights-of-way (ROWs) divided into travel zones (60%) and pedestrian zones (40%). Developments that front NMU Streets may utilize any of the following five (5) frontage types: Urban Street Edge, Retail & Active Uses, Residential Stoop/Porch, Plaza/Public Space, or Private Yard. The frontage type must create a cohesive transition between the public right-of-way and the private frontage. Each frontage type determines the: front setback from the sidewalk; corner design requirements at intersections; entrance locations, spacing, and transparency along the sidewalk; façade transparency along the sidewalk; street level façade widths; overhead weather protection; and street-level floor story height.

Staff Comments: The applicant has not identified the frontage type for their design proposal. The applicant should select the most appropriate frontage type for the development proposal. The chosen frontage type will influence the ground floor design. Also, as noted above, a utility easement creates conflicts between the possible frontage options and the maximum setbacks allowed. The applicant should provide rationale to support a design departure from the frontage setback maximums with their application for the design response conference, as allowed per KZC 57.05.050 and KZC 142.37.

H. Parking: The project is required to comply with the following parking standards:

- Vehicular
 - i. Residential
 - 0 stalls per affordable studio unit or residential suite
 - 0 stalls per affordable one-bedroom unit
 - 0.75 stalls per studio unit or residential suite
 - 1 stall per one-bedroom unit
 - 1.25 stalls per two-bedroom unit
 - 1.5 stalls per three- or more bedroom unit
 - Guest Parking: A minimum 10% of the total number of required parking spaces shall be provided for guest parking and located in a common area accessible by guests. If the required number of guest parking spaces results in a fraction, the applicant shall provide the number of spaces equal to the next higher whole number.
- Bicycle
 - 0.05 stalls per suite or unit for short-term bicycle parking
 - 1 stall per suite or unit for long-term bicycle parking

Staff Comment: The applicant will be required to demonstrate compliance with applicable City parking requirements. With (5) two-bedroom units and (1) one-bedroom unit in the preferred concept, the applicant should provide 9 vehicular parking stalls (8 for the residents, 1 for guests). With the same number of units, the applicant should provide 2 short-term bicycle stalls and 6 long-term bicycle stalls.

5. **STATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES**

In addition to the standard guidelines contained in the *Station Area Design Guidelines*, the list in Attachment 4 highlights some of the key guidelines and special considerations that apply specifically to the project or project area. The following is a list of key design issues and/or design techniques that should be addressed with this project.

- a. Streetscape and Orientation to the Street
- b. Public Spaces: Plazas, Courtyards, Terraces, and Gardens
- c. Pedestrian Connections and Wayfinding
- d. Lighting
- e. Parking Garages and Screening of Trash and Service Areas
- f. Signs
- g. Landscaping
- h. Massing/Articulation
- i. Blank Wall Treatments

See adopted Design Guidelines for Station Area Plan for complete text and explanations.

<https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/4/planning-amp-building/o-4785-design-guidelines-pedestrian-oriented-business-districts.pdf>

6. CONTEXT

The context or setting in which the proposed development will be located is important in determining the appropriate design regulations that would apply. The following are several questions that are geared towards identifying the physical environment around and on the subject property. These questions will help supplement the discussion on the key design guidelines appropriate for the proposed project.

A. How does the site relate to its surroundings?

The applicant and Design Review Board should discuss the physical and built environment on and around the subject property. Topics include height of neighboring structures, topography, proximity to I-405, pedestrian connections, and landscaping.

B. What are the Opportunities and Constraints of the Site and Vicinity given the following topics?

- Streetscape
- Urban Form
- Activities and Uses in the area
- Pedestrian Patterns and Environment
- Character of Adjacent Buildings
- Landscaping/Open Space

7. DISCUSSION ISSUES

The role of the DRB at the Conceptual Design Conference is to help determine how the design guidelines found in the Station Area Guidelines apply to the proposed development. The following sections and questions below are representative of the City's design guidelines. These questions are to be used as a tool to help identify how design guidelines would apply to the proposed project.

A. Scale

1. What are the key vantages of the project?
2. Identify appropriate mitigation techniques for building massing of the proposed buildings. Possible techniques include vertical and horizontal modulation, corner treatment, and roof forms. The applicant has provided several massing schemes including a preferred option (Concept 1) for the DRB's review and comment (see Attachment 2).

B. Pedestrian Access

1. How does the proposed massing and location of structures relate or respond to the pedestrian environment?
2. What are opportunities for pedestrian oriented spaces at the street level (e.g. plazas)?
3. What are the key pedestrian connections?
4. How would the project engage pedestrians?

C. Open Space and Landscaping

What are opportunities for landscaping and/or open space on the subject property?

8. ITEMS REQUIRED FOR DESIGN RESPONSE CONFERENCE

The Design Review Board shall determine what models, drawings, perspectives, 3-D SketchUp model, or other application materials the applicant will need to submit with the design review application.

9. ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. CDC Plan Submittal
3. Use Zone Chart
4. Design Guidelines - Special Considerations for the Green Innovation District