

DATE: March 23, 2016
BY: Chris Davidson, Studio Meng Strazzara

We believe the following record to be an accurate summary of decisions and related discussions.
We would appreciate notification of exceptions to this record within five (5) days of its receipt.

PRESENT

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CITY OF SEATTLE LAND USE PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project site is located at 2939 East Madison at the north-west end of the NC2P-40 zone. According to DCI's GIS map, the property is ~~not~~ within a "Pedestrian Area" ^{and has} ~~but it does have~~ "P" designated zoning. The applicant is proposing an approximately 25,000 square foot, specialty grocery store and 75 apartments at the site.

The applicant's position is that access to site parking should be from Madison Street pursuant to SMC 23.47A.032.A.b because access cannot be provided from an alley, and while the rear of the property technically abuts Dewey Pl., access from Dewey Pl. is infeasible for reasons of site typography, traffic safety, and operations. ~~Therefore, Madison should be treated as the only abutting street and a single curb cut should be allowed there. The applicant also notes that DCI's publication, Seattle's Commercial Zones, p.2 (January 2016), indicates that a single two way curb cut is allowed on a principal pedestrian street if parking access from a side street is infeasible.~~

Access to parking in NC zones is regulated under 23.47A.032 (A.1 and A.2 are relevant, as the site is in a P zone). Applicant can apply for a Type I decision based on the criteria listed in this section, and/or request a departure. (kh)

Topographic Constraints

The attached DCI GIS map evidences that the project site is located on a plateau that is level with, and abuts, Madison. There is a dramatic, 30-foot, elevation change running from east to west across the property, with a vegetated, 20-foot precipitous drop from the back of the property down to level of the Dewey Pl. right-of-way. ~~This site topography precludes use of Dewey Pl. for the customer and commercial vehicle access.~~ This site feature should be included in the documentation for requesting a Type I decision for access. (kh)

Traffic Safety Constraints

Dewey Pl. is a local residential (non-arterial) U-shaped street, with approximately 18 feet of pavement width. It has intermittent sidewalks. There are no planter strips. In several places, the sidewalk is in poor shape where the curb is almost nonexistent. There are retaining block walls on the west side of Dewey Pl., immediately behind the sidewalk, that limit the sight distance for any driveways entering the roadway. Currently, Dewey Pl. serves only residential uses and there are several residential driveways on the east side of Dewey. Additionally, there are a significant number of parked vehicles on the west side of Dewey, which narrows the effective pavement width to approximately 12 feet in places. E. Republican, which would also be implicated in making a connection from Dewey Pl., is also a local residential street. Because there is parking on both sides of the E. Republican, there is only 12 feet of effective pavement width, ~~which precludes unrestricted two-way traffic flow.~~

Although the applicant's traffic study has not been completed, preliminary indications are that neither Dewey Pl. nor Republican can safely accommodate the project's projected traffic volume. The project's anticipated traffic is appropriate for the arterial, Madison. Additionally, many of the Madison trips would be pass-by or considered existing from the existing commercial use to be removed, whereas access from E. Republican/Dewey Pl. would result in all new traffic and a significant increase in trip volume on what are currently low volume residential streets. Finally, Dewey Pl. is not a standard grid system type road—it is an effective dead end with a loop road that would create confusion for the anticipated retail traffic.

Currently, Madison is an arterial with sufficient capacity and with 44 feet of pavement width that allows for a 30-foot travel lane, even with parked cars both sides. There are several commercial driveways located on both sides of Madison, and there are wide sidewalks with clear sight lines. An access to Dewey would introduce a significant increase of daily trips onto a residential roadway while an access to Madison would result in adding less daily trips to an existing arterial because of pass-by and existing use credits.

Based on these constraints, the applicant's position is that side-street project access is infeasible, thus allowing a two-way curb cut on the principal pedestrian street, Madison, that has the width, lane capacity, sidewalks and sight-lines to safely accommodate the project traffic.

This information should be included in the submittal for a Type I decision or Design Review Departure. No determination can be made at this time. (kh)

SEATTLE CITY LIGHT DEPARTMENT

1. SCL suggested that design team setup separate meeting with SCL staff as soon as possible to discuss vault sizing, best location for power access and service size for project.
2. AH reviewed current options for access to power. There is overhead 3-phase high voltage lines along the north side of E Madison St., along Dewey Pl there is overhead single-phase high voltage lines, and along the (unopened) E Mercer St there are overhead 3-phase high

voltage lines. The Dewey Pl option would be most economical solution to provide power access for the project but service would need to be upgraded to 3-phase power.

3. RR and AH recommended providing 14'-0" horizontal clearance from all of the high-voltage lines. AH was specifically concerned about the north property line along the (unopened) E Mercer St ROW.
4. RR stated that a single power connection will be allowed for the entire site, inclusive of grocery store, retail, and residential apartments.
5. RR closed SCL comments by suggesting to project team to submit SCL application early.

STREET IMPROVEMENT

1. EE stated that a SIP is required for street frontage along Dewey Pl. This work will require a 5'-0" ROW dedication. Due to existing condition of sidewalk adjacent to street along Dewey Pl, SDOT will accept locating planting strip adjacent to building.
2. EE stated that project fronts along three ROW E Madison St, Dewey Pl and E Mercer St. E Mercer St is an unopened ROW.
3. Project team will need to file a Right-of-Way Improvement Exception Request Form for E Mercer St. CD noted that per CAM 205 project meets many of the allowed exceptions. EE noted exception would still be required and that SDOT would most likely not require street improvement but would instead require a stair climb with pedestrian lighting.

ZONING

1. AP had no comments regarding zoning of project.

LAND USE DEPARTMENT

1. KH questioned the location of vehicular access off of E Madison due to Pedestrian designation. CD stated that E Madison is not labeled a Pedestrian street via GIS mapping. KH to look into it. KH has determined that the area within a P zone, though E Madison is not as a designated Principal Pedestrian street. (kh)
2. KH stated that locating vehicular access off of E Madison instead of Dewey Pl would require a departure. or a Type I determination per the criteria in SMC 23.47A.032. SDCL EE said that the curb cut location decision is ~~DPD~~'s call and not SDOT's. Both acknowledged ~~understood~~ the reasoning behind not locating vehicular access off of a non-through street that serves single family residential. GD questioned whether we could get a preliminary read on the feasibility of locating the curb cut off E Madison. KH said we could submit a Type I request to SDCL but the final determination will not be made until the Decision is published. In addition, the DRB can weigh in on the location of parking access as it relates to the design guidelines. ~~present our case to DPD staff, but the board could over rule the decision.~~ Design team questioned whether locating curb cut off E Madison would require a departure since previous projects have moved vehicular access to arterial from side streets without a departure as mandated by the community and the DRB. If the SDCL determines that the criteria in SCM 23.47A.032 are not met for an exception, then a departure would be required.
3. KH stated an Arborist Report should be prepared prior to EDG meeting.
4. KH stated that a traffic report is required with MUP submittal ~~and is recommended to be complete before EDG.~~
5. KH recommends applying for steep slope exception ~~prior to MUP submittal.~~ ASAP

6. KH stated it is required to provide (3) separate options for the EDG packet draft, of the three options (1) should be a code compliant option. All concepts should be ~~comparable in terms of how many units, how much parking, quantity of retail office, etc.~~ ^{viable options and should be developed to a comparable level of detail for a meaningful comparison.}
7. KH requests that design team ~~emphasize~~ ^{carefully consider and adequately explain} project design where adjacent to residential neighborhoods, this will be a point of emphasis for DPD and the DRB.
8. Preliminary landscape design should be provided for the preferred scheme, inclusive of ROW plantings, rooftop deck, podium level and buffers along single family adjacency. KH recommended paying particular attention to buffers with neighboring single family homes.
9. Provide character delineation of preferred scheme with architectural sketches and diagrams. ~~KH requested design team not provide too much information so as not present a complete design.~~ CS stated that in his experience the boards appreciate the additional information and has seen many projects have to come back due to a “lack of a complete design”. Design team will provide a thorough and well considered design with EDG package.

END OF MEETING MINUTES

^{KH reminded applicant that all schemes should be developed to a comparable level of detail, and that showing the general design intent or character is recommended--this should include materials, precedent studies, or early design concepts to explain how the materials will relate to the massing, and how the massing will be further broken down.}