



Staff Report to the Board of Architectural Review Design Review for Bellwether Tukwila Confluence Apartments

Prepared August 12, 2019

Hearing Date	August 22, 2019
File Number	L19-0053 Design Review
Associated Permits	E19-0003 SEPA Decision
Applicant	Diana Keys, Johnson Braund, Inc.
Request	Approval of Design Review application for a 6-story, 103-unit affordable housing apartment building by the Board of Architectural Review.
Location	3703 S. 152 nd Street, Tukwila WA 98188 Parcel #s 0043000116, 0043000108, 0043000112
Comprehensive Plan And Zoning Designation	High Density Residential (HDR)
Environmental Review	Determination of Non-Significance
Public Notice	Notice of Application was posted on site and mailed to surrounding property owners, tenants, and agencies with jurisdiction on June 12, 2019. Notice of BAR public hearing was mailed to property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the property and agencies with jurisdiction on August 5, 2019; published in the Seattle Times on August 8, 2019; and posted on site on August 12, 2019.
Public Comment	Four comments were received by email and are included in Attachment D. Responses are addressed in the staff report.
Recommendation	Staff recommends approval of L19-0053 Design Review with conditions.
Staff Contact	Lynn Miranda, Senior Planner

Attachments

- A. Plan Set dated July 31, 2019
- B. Applicant's response to BAR Design Review criteria, dated May 15, 2019
- C. Arborist Report by American Forest Management, dated December 13, 2019
- D. Public Comments
 - Karen Piazza, WA State Department of Ecology, dated June 26, 2019
 - Chul Kim, email dated June 15, 2019
 - David Puki, email dated June 24, 2019
 - Min Kim, email dated June 30, 2019

FINDINGS

BACKGROUND

Project Description

Bellwether, an affordable housing nonprofit corporation, is proposing to construct a 110,007 square foot, 6-story, 103-unit apartment building on 3 existing parcels with a combined total lot size of 56,341 square feet. The project will consist of 5 floors of housing over a daylighted basement garage with a maximum building height of 55'-6". Residential space within the project consists of a mix of two studio units, 45 one-bedroom units, 26 two-bedroom units, and 16 three-bedroom units. A total of 13,729 square feet of outdoor and indoor recreation space is planned, including separate play areas for younger and older children. The lobby, community, mail rooms, access to the outdoor courtyard and children's play area are located on Level 1. A total of 100 vehicle parking spaces with the majority located in the partially submerged parking structure. The garage also contains rooms for trash and recycling, storage, bicycle storage, electrical, and fire command.

Vehicle access will be limited to one curb cut from 152nd Street that provides access to both surface and garage parking on site. The project includes public frontage improvements including landscaping and street trees, wider sidewalk, and pedestrian amenities. Along the west property line is a 9'-wide paved multi-use path and landscaping within a 20' wide easement intended as a future pedestrian/bicycle connection to the Tukwila International Boulevard (TIBS) light rail station to the south, which is a ½ mile walking distance away.

Project Site & Vicinity



Current Land Use

The site was previously occupied by four one-story single-family homes which have been demolished. The site is bordered to the west by a paved parking lot and 3-story apartment building, to the east by a 2- and 3-story apartment building with parking (The Seasons Apartments), to the south by a paved parking area and two-story apartment building (Ambassador Gardens), and to the north by S. 152nd Street. A mobile home park (Rainbow Haven) is across S. 152nd Street from the proposed development.

There are currently two access points to the project that originally served the four single family homes. There are no sidewalks along the south side of S. 152nd between TIB and 42nd Ave S., but a wide shoulder on the north side of the street is used by pedestrians. There are no bicycle lanes on S. 152nd. Autos have been observed parking on the shoulder of S. 152nd St west of the project. Two buses routes are in the vicinity of the project site with bus stops for King County Metro #124 on TIB and King County Metro #128 on 42nd Ave S. The Tukwila International Boulevard Station (TIBS) is approximately 0.3 miles away from the site, or a 7-minute walk via TIB. Access to Link light rail and Rapid Ride A and F service are available at TIBS.

Site Topography

The overall site slopes down gently from north to south with about 10 feet of elevation change across the length of the site. The Geotechnical Report prepared for the project states that no portion of the site were found to contain Class 2 or greater steep slopes during field exploration and that the consideration of steep slope hazards, setbacks, or buffers is not necessary for design. There are no other environmentally sensitive areas on the site.

Vegetation

There are 28 significant ornamental trees on site (6" or greater diameter at breast height) including Apple, Cherry, Flowering Plum, Holly, Big Leaf Maple, Douglas Fir, Ash, Western Red Cedar, and Scoulers Willow. Four trees on the neighboring site to the west have driplines that extend over the fence line of the project property.

Zoning

The site is zoned High Density Residential (HDR) which is intended to provide a high-density, multiple family district which is also compatible with commercial and office areas. Buildings in this district are limited to a maximum height of 45'. Other development standards for the HDR District are contained in TMC 18.14.

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

RCW 36.80B.180(3)(d) and TMC 18.86.030 authorize the establishment of design standards by a development agreement. TMC 18.86.030 explicitly allows for flexibility in development standards applicable to a property developed under a development agreement to achieve public benefits, respond to changing community needs, or encourage modifications that provide the functional equivalent or adequately achieve the purposes of otherwise applicable City standards.

Bellwether is proposing to develop transit-oriented, affordable housing within ½ mile of the TIB Station in a manner consistent with the adopted vision, goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan

for the Tukwila International Boulevard District. The City entered into a Development Agreement with Bellwether that allowed the modification of a number of standards for development in the High Density Residential (HDR) zone. In exchange for the modified standards, the developer provided the City a 20' easement along the west property line for a future connection to the TIB Station. The Tukwila City Council held a public hearing on the Development Agreement and approved it by ordinance (Ordinance 2563) on December 11, 2017. The Agreement entitles and vests the development, use and mitigation of the project with standards that differ from or supplement the standards in the TMC 18.14. The Development Agreement established the following standards:

- Building height - 70 feet
- Recreation space standards - 15 % of the residential floor area
- Parking supply standards and dimensions - 0.97 spaces per unit (modified by a Minor Amendment to the Development Agreement)
- Lot area per unit – no minimum; density to be determined by the other standards, such as height, parking, landscaping, etc.
- Maximum building length – no maximum; to be established by the Board of Architectural Review
- Development area coverage - 75%
- Setbacks:
 - Front – 6'
 - Side – 25' for 4th floor and higher

The approved modifications of these standards are discussed in more detail in this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

An environmental checklist was submitted for the project. A Determination of Nonsignificance was issued on July 19, 2019.

DESIGN REVIEW FINDINGS

DESIGN REVIEW & DECISION CRITERIA

The purpose of Design Review is to ensure that public health, safety and welfare is satisfied upon approval of new development and specifically to promote well designed developments that are creative and harmonious with the natural and man-made environments. The City has adopted a policy that all multifamily developments must reflect high design quality regardless of whether the project is oriented toward the low, middle, or high cost housing market.

This project is subject to Board of Architectural Review (BAR) approval under Tukwila Municipal Code (TMC) 18.60.030. The Confluence project shall be reviewed by the BAR using the general design criteria in TMC 18.60.050.C for multifamily development, with guidance from the Multifamily Design Manual. The Design Review Criteria are organized into four sections covering Site Planning, Building Design, Landscape and Site Treatment, and Miscellaneous Structures.

1. Site Planning

- a. Building siting, architecture, and landscaping shall be integrated into and blend harmoniously with the neighborhood building scale, natural environment, and development characteristics as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan. For instance, a multi-family development's design need not be harmoniously integrated with adjacent single-family structures if that existing single-family use is designated as "Commercial" or "High-Density Residential" in the Comprehensive Plan. However, a "Low-Density Residential" (detached single-family) designation would require such harmonious design integration.**

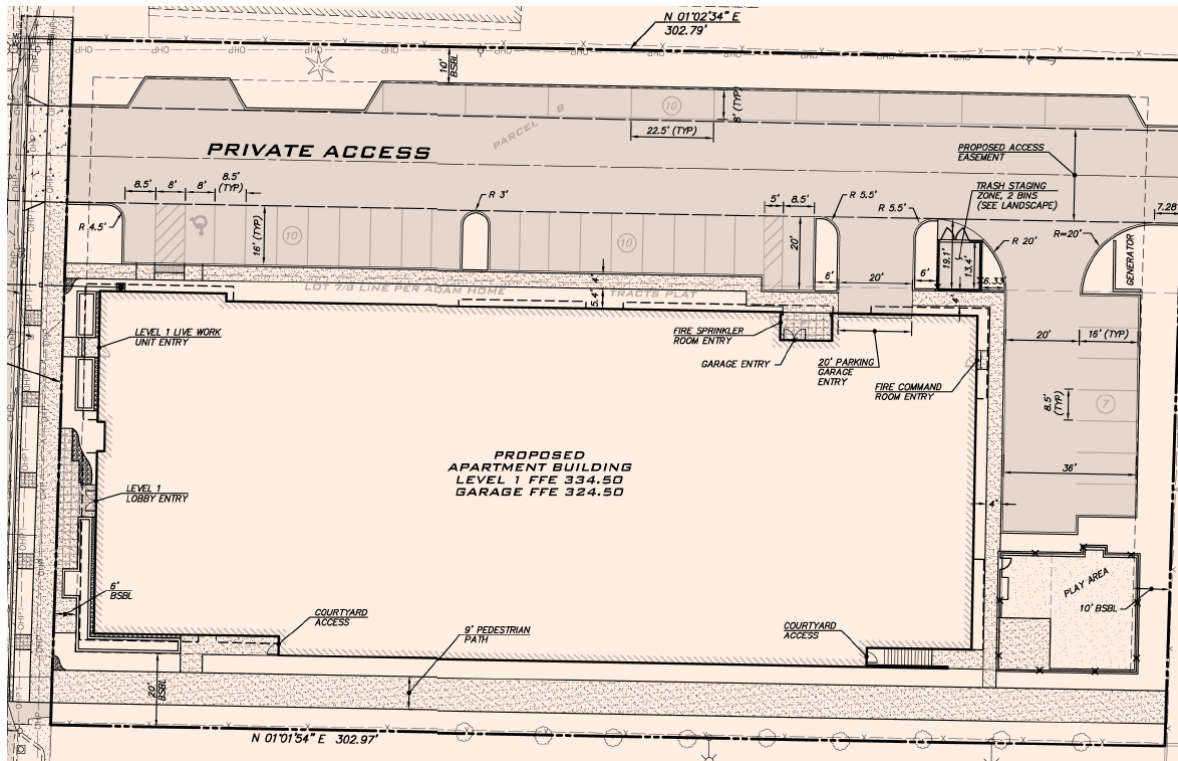
The surrounding developments to the east, west and south were constructed in the 1960's and 1980's, prior to the area's annexation to the City in 1989. These developments are two and three stories in height and more suburban in character than the proposed project. The Rainbow Haven mobile home park is across the street from the proposed project.

The project proposes constructing a well-designed 6-story affordable housing apartment building. The new building will be two to three stories taller than the adjacent properties. The proposed height meets the standards established by the Development Agreement and are consistent with the Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan vision for this area. The proposed site is 185' wide by 302' long and is oriented north/south. This site configuration dictates a long north/south building orientation. The visual impact from S. 152nd St is minimized by a short street facing facade approximately half the width of the street frontage. Large side yard setbacks and landscaping minimize the visual impacts and create more space between the building and properties to the east and west.

The site design creates a variety of spaces with different functions (see Figure below). The building is located on the west portion of the site, set into the northwest corner abutting the public multi-use path running the length of the west property line and connecting to the recreation space in the southwest corner. Gathering and play spaces are distributed around the western and southern side of the building. Included are a mini-soccer area and paved tetherball court on the ground level, and an active play space for children and an outdoor courtyard area for more passive uses on Level 1. The building's semi-private outdoor areas are adequately separated from semi-public spaces with plantings, fences and gates. A gated stair at the southwest corner of the courtyard provides secure access to the courtyard/play area and the building. The tetherball and mini soccer play area are fenced.

Several design features support the concept of Defensible Space to reduce opportunities for crime. Entrances to the building are adequately signed and lighted. Windows are located on all occupied Levels, allowing for casual visual observation and surveillance by residents of the parking areas to the east and south, the street and sidewalk on the north, the active play area to south, and the courtyard/playground, and public multi-use path to the west. Plantings are designed so that surveillance of public and semi-private areas are not blocked. The proposed lighting plan meets or exceeds the Tukwila Police staff's suggested minimum illumination levels for safety.

The Confluence Site Plan



b. Natural features, which contribute to desirable neighborhood character, shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible. Natural features include, but are not limited to, existing significant trees and stands of trees, wetlands, streams, and significant topographic features.

The Arborist Report for the project identified 28 significant trees (6" or greater diameter at breast height) on the site, 18 of which will be removed due to poor condition or conflicts with proposed building and site construction requirements since the site will be completely redeveloped. There are also four trees on neighboring properties with critical root zones that extend on to the site that will be removed. A large Douglas Fir tree on the east property line will be retained as a focal point for the site, and nine Red Maples along the west property line will be preserved to help create a buffer to the neighboring property to the west.

The plan set indicates location of a 6' high tree protection fence, but it does not surround the critical root zone of the trees in compliance with TMC 18.54.070. This will need to be revised and included in the building permit plan set.

c. The site plan shall use landscaping and building shapes to form an aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian scale streetscape. This shall include, but not be limited to facilitating pedestrian travel along the street, using architecture and landscaping to provide a desirable transition from streetscape to the building, and providing an integrated linkage from pedestrian and vehicular facilities to building entries.

- d. Pedestrian and vehicular entries shall provide a high-quality visual focus using building siting, shapes and landscaping. Such a feature establishes a physical transition between the project and public areas, and establishes the initial sense of high quality development.***
- e. Vehicular circulation design shall minimize driveway intersections with the street.***

The area or “streetscape” between S. 152nd St and the building’s front entry will be a focal point for the site. Locating the driveway and surface parking to the side of the building, adding public frontage improvements such as a wide sidewalk with street trees and amenities, and bringing the building up to the back of the sidewalk creates a safe, pleasing and pedestrian scale streetscape on S. 152nd St where none currently exists.

Casual seating is proposed in front of the building - a bench and landscape rocks will be placed in front of decorative concrete block raised planter/seating walls approximately 18” high located east and west of the front door. The planter is key in creating a well-designed transition from the street to the building entry by providing a quality architectural element with landscape elements; a transitional step up in elevation from the flat sidewalk zone to the building; and a greater sense of enclosure around the building entry. The jogged boundary of the raised planter wall adds to pedestrian orientation by creating seating nooks and provides variation in the width of the planter to facilitate plantings of varying heights and a small ornamental tree. To the east of the entry, the planting/focal point is brought closer to the entry for a greater sense of enclosure around the front door space. The project proposes to use patterned pavement to indicate a transition from the public sidewalk to the main entrance, as well as to visually indicate the location of the entrance.

The front façade of the building has a material change at Level 1/Level 2 that creates a vertical visual break in the façade, large windows allowing views into and out of the building, and an overhead canopy for protection from the weather, adding to the sense of place for the pedestrian. A bicycle rack is located at the corner of the building near the front entrance for short term parking.

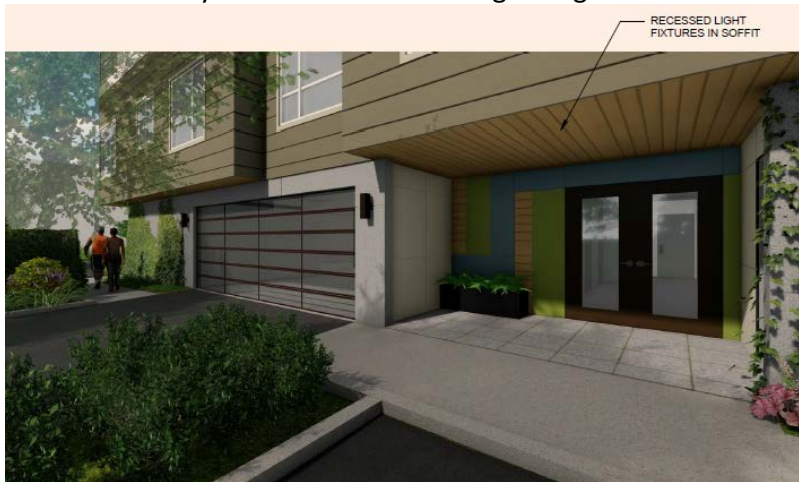
Front Entrance



A secondary building entrance on the southeast side of the building gives residents an alternative, more direct access to the building from the surface parking area on the south. To highlight this area from the rest of the east façade, doors with glazing are recessed and different wall materials/color,

plantings, and lighting are added to the space. There is one loading zone/parking space identified near this entrance.

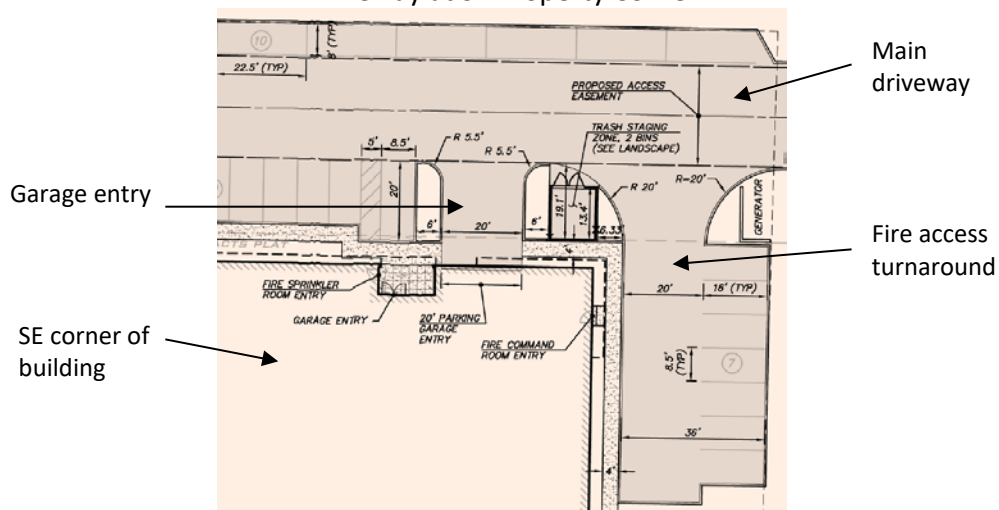
Secondary Pedestrian and Parking Garage Entrances



Vehicular access to the site is limited to one driveway off S. 152nd St. The 2-way driveway serves 30 surface parking stalls; parallel parking on the east side of the main driveway and perpendicular parking to the west. The main driveway connects to the parking garage at the southeast corner of the building. Per discussion with the applicant, there will be a marked crosswalk added at the garage driveway crossing to increase pedestrian safety. This will need to be added to the building plan set submittal.

South of the building the driveway bends to the west, functioning as a hammerhead turnaround for fire vehicles and serving 7 perpendicular parking spots. There is a reciprocal fire access easement shared with the multifamily property to the south.

Driveway at SE Property Corner



f. Site perimeter design (i.e., landscaping, structures, and horizontal width) shall be coordinated with site development to ensure a harmonious transition between adjacent projects.

The project, with modified standards for front and side setbacks through the Development Agreement, meets the design criteria (see criteria *i* below). The project is consistent with the front, side and rear yard setback and landscaping requirements. Per the Development Agreement, the developer is constructing a 9'-wide paved multi-use path within a 20'-wide easement adjacent to the west property line. A 6-9'-wide planting strip with a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs, and ground covers on both sides of the path that includes the existing nine Red Maples, as well as several existing large trees on the adjacent property, provides an adequate buffer for the adjacent apartment.

On the east side of the site the neighboring building sits closer to the property line. To reduce the impact of the project, the proposed building is set back 70' and the orientation of the parallel parking stalls and lighting are designed to reduce glare on the adjacent property.

g. Varying degrees of privacy for the individual residents shall be provided, increasing from the public right-of-way, to common areas, to individual residences. This can be accomplished through the use of symbolic and actual physical barriers to define the degrees of privacy appropriate to specific site area functions.

Most Level 1 residential units are vertically grade separated from parking and service areas to maintain privacy and minimize noise. One live/work studio is on ground level, facing S 152nd St. To maintain privacy, this unit is grade separated from sidewalk activity and public space by a stoop. Raised planter beds and landscaping on the courtyard and playground abutting the building provide buffering between these more semi-public spaces and adjoining residential units.

h. Parking and service areas shall be located, designed and screened to interrupt and reduce the visual impact of large paved areas.

Parking space requirements and standards were modified through the Development Agreement:

- The required parking standard was 1 stall per unit. A subsequent Minor Amendment to the Development Agreement modified the Parking Supply standard by reducing the requirement to 0.97 parking space per unit. The proposed project meets the requirement and provides 100 stalls. The maximum number of compact stalls was allowed to increase from 30% to 50%; 44 compact stalls are proposed, the majority of which are located in the parking garage.

The TMC does not have parking dimension standards for a parking garage. The applicant has proposed a parking garage layout based on their research of other more urban areas. The applicant has stated that the proposed circulation and stall sizes meets the needs of their tenants.

The potential visual impact of large areas of surface parking is minimized by distributing parking around the site, with the majority of vehicle parking (63 stalls) located out of view in the daylighted basement parking garage beneath the building. A bicycle storage area (34 spaces) is also provided in the parking garage. Perimeter landscaping reduces the visual impact of surface parking areas from adjacent properties.

Each residential floor will have access to a trash/recycling room with chutes leading to a trash/recycling room located in the parking garage. On the scheduled pickup day by service providers, trash/recycling is transferred to a solid waste staging area at the southwest corner of the building, which is gated and screened with opaque fencing and plantings in an area grade separated from residences. A generator for the project located away from the building on the south property line is similarly screened with opaque fencing and landscaping.

i. The height, bulk, footprint and scale of each building shall be in harmony with its site and adjacent long-term structures.

The project, with the modification of standards approved in the Development Agreement, meets the design criteria. The height, bulk and scale of this project are larger than those on adjacent properties. The Development Agreement approved by the City modified a number of HDR zone development standards in TMC 18.14.70 regarding site layout, building footprint, and building scale to be able to construct the project, as the proposal conforms with Comprehensive Plan goals and vision for the TIB District calling for more intensive development within ½ mile of the TIB Station. The standards established by the Development Agreement include the following:

- The maximum height of structures is 70'. The project proposes a maximum height of 55' 6" from the average grade plan to the midpoint of the roof.
- The minimum front yard setback is 6'. The project proposes a 9' 6" to 11' front yard depth across the building frontage with 15' provided at the parking lot frontage.
- The minimum side yard setback required for the 4th floor is 25'; the project proposes 25' 3" from the west property line. The project meets the other minimum side and rear yard setbacks required for the underlying zoning.
- The maximum development area coverage allowed is 75%. The proposed development area coverage is 69.8%, comprised of surface parking, sidewalks and paths, building footprint, and recreation areas.
- There is no minimum lot area per unit requirement, allowing the density to be determined by the other standards, such as height, parking, and landscaping.
- Recreation Space requirements established by the Development Agreement were 15% of residential area as recreation space, with requirements for separate play areas for both small and older children. The project exceeds the requirement with 16.15% of residential area, or 10,385 sf, provided as recreation space; 87% of which is provided outdoors. The project also exceeds the 25% of recreation space required for children 5-7 years old by providing 37.4% or 12,123 sf. Outdoor spaces include a semi-public space near the front entry, a courtyard with adjoining play area for younger children, and an active play area for older children including tetherball and mini-soccer facilities. These recreation spaces are described in more detail later in this staff report. Interior spaces include a community room with kitchen and a media room.

2. Building Design

- a. Architectural style is not restricted; evaluation of a project shall be based on the quality of its design and its ability to harmonize building texture, shape, lines and mass with the surrounding neighborhood.***

The architectural style of the building as proposed is modern with a flat roof and clean angles. The color palate used on the walls of the building is primarily white on Levels 2-5, with stained brown “wood” siding and blue, warm gray, and green accent panels. Brown/bronze color is used on Level 1 to ground the building at the pedestrian level. The building has a high level of design quality and is appropriate for structures and uses within an area zoned for transit oriented, high density residential uses. The architectural style of the building is more representative of the style of buildings today – more modern than those in the surrounding neighborhood which were constructed in the 1980’s.

b. Buildings shall be of appropriate height, scale, and design/shape to be in harmony with those existing permanent neighboring developments that are consistent with, or envisioned in, the Comprehensive Plan. This will be especially important for perimeter structures. Adjacent structures that are not in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan should be considered to be transitional. The degree of architectural harmony required should be consistent with the nonconforming structure's anticipated permanence.

The height, bulk and scale of this project are all larger than adjacent properties which were built prior to annexation of the City in 1989 and are more suburban in character.

Comprehensive Plan policies designate this site for more intensive development with a mix of uses including affordable multifamily residential with structured parking that builds on the neighborhood’s proximity to the TIBS. Modifications to the HDR development standards were allowed through the Development Agreement between the City and the developer to allow the project to be designed to the more urban standards required for transit-oriented development.

- Per the development agreement, the maximum allowable height of the building is 70’. The height of the proposed building is lower at approximately 56’ from the average grade plane. The proposed building is 2 to 3 stories taller than the low-rise multifamily buildings on adjacent properties.

The site’s configuration is shorter along the street face and deeper in depth along the length of the parcel, limiting building form and placement and requiring a modification to the maximum building length standard through the Development Agreement with the City:

- Maximum building length standard was waived. As part of the development agreement, building length is to be determined during design review by the BAR. The length of the proposed building is currently 241’-6 ½”. Given the fact that the facades are horizontally and vertically modulated, with varying materials and colors used to break up the mass, staff recommends BAR approval of building’s length. See more detailed discussion below.

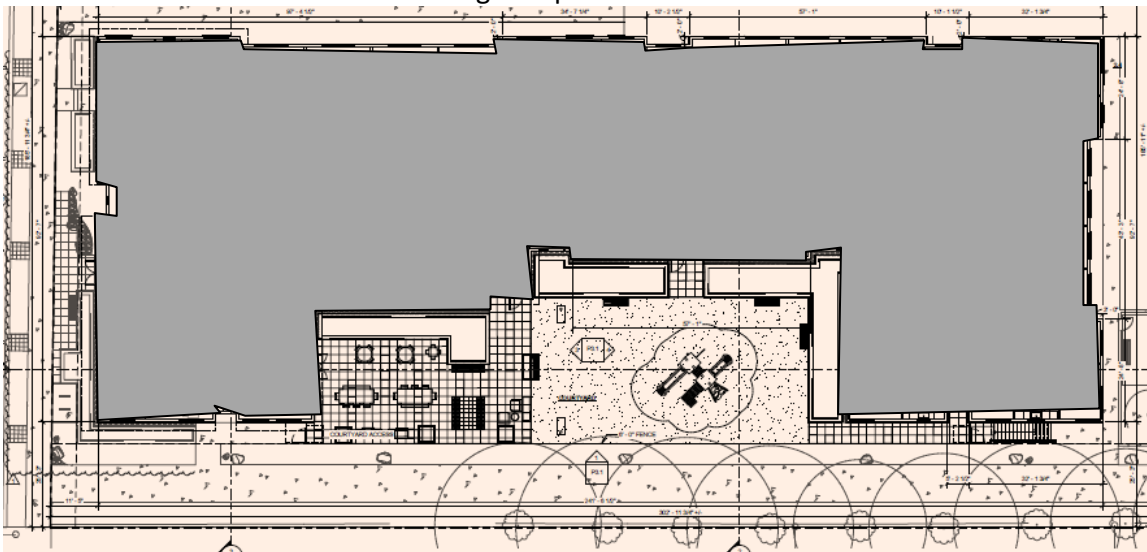
To help minimize the impact of the proposed building’s height and scale on existing apartment buildings to the east, the proposed building is setback approximately 70 feet from the east property line. A modulating roofline, projecting roofline at major building corners, building overhangs, some vertical modulation (2’ offsets), and changes in color and materials are used to break up the overall bulk of the building facades. The longest unbroken wall length is 63’ which exceeds the length recommended in the Multifamily Design Manual by 3’.

East & South Side Building Modulation & Wrapping Windows as Major Corners



In addition to the architectural methods described above, significant modulation of the building façade is used on the west side. The building is shaped in a “C” which opens to and is oriented around the Level 1 courtyard and playground amenity (see Figures below).

Building Footprint – Plan View



Building Elevation – West Side



- c. Building components, such as windows, doors, eaves, parapets, stairs and decks shall be integrated into the overall building design. Particular emphasis shall be given to harmonious proportions of these components with those of adjacent developments. Building components and ancillary parts shall be consistent with the anticipated life of the structure.***

The arrangement of windows, modulation of the façade, and the arrangement of different siding materials, patterns and colors used in the design express the individuality of the building. The windows are proportionally sized for the building façade - large with multi-panes to provide each unit with natural light, except where needed for privacy or at the end of common hallways. Windows “wrap” the four major corners of the building on Levels 2-5 and are bordered with colored panels that accentuate the building design concept and form. Details such as trim bands, parapets and roof overhangs are used consistently for similar design elements and help tie the building together.

Design guidelines encourage the use of deciduous trees to provide summer shade. This is not an appropriate solution for this project due to the building’s height. The applicant has indicated that Bellwether will provide quality interior blinds to allow residents to shade their units.

- d. The overall color scheme shall work to reduce building prominence and shall blend in with the natural environment.***

The colors blend well with the existing natural environment and new landscaping. The apartment building’s name, “The Confluence” was inspired by the confluence of rivers in Tukwila. The building is designed to represent two elements of the Pacific Northwest’s natural environment - trees and rivers – by creating two separate building schemes that meld into one at the architectural feature wall along the north façade, creating an abstract meandering river and forest. The “tree” scheme features vertical green HardiePanel and vertical WoodTone lap siding design elements. The “water” feature is created using horizontal blue HardiPanel and grey HardiPanel to represent stones in the “river”.

North Facing Facade



Exterior Finish Materials Board



- e. ***Monotony of design in single or multiple building projects shall be avoided. Variety of detail, form, and siting shall be used to provide visual interest. Otherwise monotonous flat walls and uniform vertical planes of individual buildings shall be broken up with building modulation, stairs, decks, railings, and focal entries. Multiple building developments shall use siting and additional architectural variety to avoid inappropriate repetition of building designs and appearance to surrounding properties.***

The project uses façade patterning, modulation, and building shape to avoid monotony of design. Vertical and horizontal material and color changes and abstract patterning create interesting façade features, break up flat walls, and continue visual interest along the length of each façade.

3. Landscape and Site Treatment

a. Existing natural topographic patterns and significant vegetation shall be reflected in project design when they contribute to the natural beauty of the area or are important to defining neighborhood identity or a sense of place.

The existing site topography gently slopes from north to south and west to east with an overall drop of 10' in elevation. The project proposes preserving a row of nine mature Red Maple trees along the west property line and one significant (36" DBH) mature Douglas Fir located in the east perimeter landscape buffer. Other existing trees on site will be removed as the property is being completely redeveloped and little vegetation can be retained.

b. Landscape treatment shall enhance existing natural and architectural features, help separate public from private spaces, strengthen vistas and important views, provide shade to moderate the effects of large paved areas, and break up visual mass.

A mix of native and adaptive ornamental plants that are appropriate are proposed for the site. A varying landscaping palette and design are used to highlight different functional areas of the site.

The landscape plan for the streetscape on S. 152nd Street includes six flowering dogwoods complemented with shrubs and ground cover in the 4' 6"-wide planting strips that are separated by curbside pavers allowing passengers to easily access the sidewalk from their parallel parked cars on the street. Between the public sidewalk and building is a paved entry area with raised planter beds containing a decorative design of trees, shrubs and ground cover.

A pair of Katsura Trees mark the entry to the driveway and continue down the west side of the driveway in landscape beds every 10 parking stalls. The applicant has shown that the landscape plan meets the minimum 100 square foot area and 6' width required for parking lot landscape islands.

Vine Maples and Hogan Western Red Cedars are planted in the required 10' perimeter landscaping along the east and south property lines. Along the west property line there is a 20' wide easement that includes the nine Red Maple trees in a 6' planting strip abutting the property line, with significant overhang into the site from a number of large trees on the adjacent property. On the east side of the multi-use path is a 5' wide planting strip abutting the building that softens and screens the concrete wall of the parking garage. Landscaping there includes a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs and groundcover.

Where exposed as the site slopes to the south, the concrete walls of the submerged parking garage at ground level are blank without openings or patterning. The project proposes using foundation plantings including shrubs, vines, and groundcover to visually screen the blank concrete walls on the east and south walls. Building overhangs along the portions of the east side leave only 5' of horizontal clearance between the building and sidewalk, which is insufficient for trees. Where the building does not overhang there is only approximately 5.5' of planting width which the applicant considers too

narrow for trees given maintenance issues. On the south side, building overhangs leave no horizontal clearance, which precludes trees. Where adequate space is available, a second row of staggered shrubs was added. Where planting space was limited, larger evergreen shrubs were proposed with enough ground cover to ensure 90% coverage in 3 years.

The courtyard and children's play area on Level 1 are buffered from the adjacent building's private internal spaces by raised planters with decorative plantings including evergreens, ornamental deciduous trees, shrubs and grasses. The project also proposes adding pots with ornamental trees for visual interest and shade in the courtyard area.

The landscape plan references but does not include a detail for structural soils which are required for trees planted in sidewalks, parking lots, and areas of limited soil per TMC 18.28.240.B.3. This will need be included in the building permit plan set. Landscape and utility plans do not show location of permanent automatic irrigation which is required for all landscaping by TMC 18.28.240.B.4. The applicant will need to submit specific irrigation plans in the building permit plan set.

- c. Walkways, parking spaces, terraces, and other paved areas shall promote safety and provide an inviting and stable appearance. Direct pedestrian linkages to the public street, TITLE 18 – ZONING Produced by the City of Tukwila, City Clerk's Office Page 18–201 to on-site recreation areas, and to adjacent public recreation areas shall be provided.***

The site is designed to be walkable. The site's common recreation spaces for gathering and playing are well connected with a 4'-wide sidewalk that circumnavigates the entire building. The sidewalk is uninterrupted except by the vehicle entrance to the parking garage. The sidewalk also connects to the 9'-wide multi-use path on a 20'-wide easement on the west side of the site that is intended to provide a more direct pedestrian connection between S. 152nd St and the TIB Station in the future. Prior to that, the path will connect to the active play area at the southwest corner of the building and dead end at the south property line.

Multi-Use Path on West Side of Building



The active play area with tetherball and mini soccer field at the southwest corner of the site is enclosed with an attractive gated wire fence and bounded by plantings on three sides. The courtyard and active play area for children are co-located on Level 1. The courtyard and children’s play area is grade separated from the public multi-use path and bounded by an attractive metal picket fencing on one side with direct access to the community room/kitchen, laundry room, and on-site child care area.

d. Appropriate landscape transition to adjoining properties shall be provided.

The project’s landscaping is consistent with the side and rear perimeter landscape requirements in TMC 18.52.030.

4. Miscellaneous Structures and Street Furniture

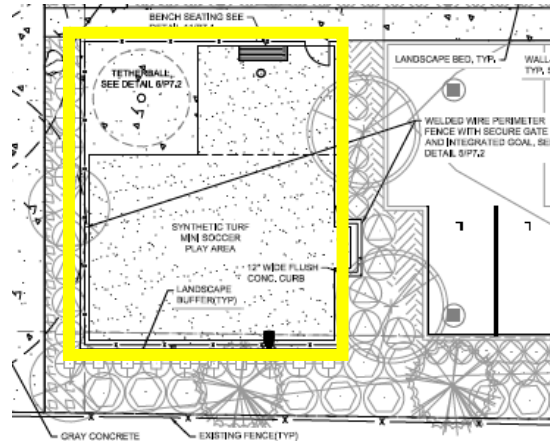
- a. **Miscellaneous structures shall be designed as an integral part of the architectural concept and landscape. Materials shall be compatible with buildings, scale shall be appropriate, colors shall be in harmony with buildings and surroundings, and structure proportions shall be to scale.**

The project’s materials and furnishings in the outdoor activity spaces are of the type and quality that are safe and promote social interaction for all age groups in the residential community. The front entrance has landscaping, stamped paving, and seating consisting of landscape rocks, a bench, and a decorative raised planter approximately 18” high. The Level 1 courtyard creates a usable space for adults and families by including storage benches, casual seating, a BBQ area, outdoor dining tables and chairs, and a playful large-scale chess board. The adjacent children’s play area includes a climbing structure over a rubber safety surface and a synthetic turf play area.



The play area in the southwest corner of the site will have a tetherball court and a mini-soccer area with synthetic turf.

Active Play Area on Southwest Corner of Building



Project signage includes a building mounted sign near the main entry on the north side of the building. Material will be out of reach of pedestrians but will still be durable and resistant to vandalism and theft.

- b. The use of walls, fencing, planting, berms, or combinations of these shall accomplish screening of service yards and other places that tend to be unsightly. Screening shall be effective in winter and summer.***
- c. Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware on roof, ground or buildings shall be screened from view. Screening shall be designed as an integral part of the architecture (i.e., raised parapets and fully enclosed under roof) and landscaping.***

The project proposes locating an array of solar panels on the south end of the building's rooftop. The other rooftop mechanical equipment, garage exhaust and trash chute exhaust are located away from building edges, often near elevator and stair penthouses. Corridor supply and exhaust equipment located near corridor ends can be screened from view. The corners of the building have a 36" high parapet, and the middle section have a 15" high parapet which will conceal the mechanical and utility hardware. Storage and utilities rooms are in the parking garage. Electrical will be provided through an underground vault.

The enclosed staging area for the covered trash and recycling bins will be enclosed by a minimum 6' tall decorative split face CMU block wall with opaque gate. The generator will be screened by a 5' tall CMU block wall. The intent is to have consistent materials and detailing for both enclosures. The landscaping surrounding both will include a tall evergreen hedge and vines to soften and screen the enclosures.

- d. Exterior lighting standards and fixtures shall be of a design and size consistent with safety, building architecture and adjacent area. Lighting shall be shielded and restrained in design***

with no off-site glare spill-over. Excessive brightness and brilliant colors shall not be used unless clearly demonstrated to be integral to building architecture.

Lighting fixtures are of a modern style appropriate for the architectural design of the building. Light poles on the east and south perimeters of the parking lot are 15' in height. Light poles in the parking lot and on the west side of the multi-use path are 12' tall. All light poles will include off-site glare cut-off features to prevent glare impacts to adjacent properties. The project proposes using bollard lights at 3.5' height for pedestrians along the east side of the multi-use path and the sidewalk on the east side of the building. Using a shorter light source will help to avoid glare into apartment unit windows. Building mounted sconces are proposed by all building entries and near the mini soccer field/tetherball area. Recessed lighting is used above the side entrance to the building.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A Notice of Application for SEPA and Design Review was distributed by mail on June 12, 2019 to owners and tenants of properties within 500 feet of the project site, as well as agencies that may have an interest in the project. The Notice of Application was also posted on the project site. Public comments were received during the Notice of Application period from the following:

Ms. Katelynn Piazza with the WA State Department of Ecology noted the proposed project is in an area that may have been contaminated with heavy metals due to the air emissions originating from the old Asarco smelter in north Tacoma. Her comments were included and addressed as part of the SEPA DNS.

Mr. Chul Kim and Mr. Min Kim are owners of The Seasons Apartments property to the east of the project. They wanted to know what percent of the project is affordable and at what level of affordability. They are concerned with the effect the affordable housing property could have on their apartments. They are also interested in finding out how the project plans to separate the two properties, and if the play area will be restricted to only the tenants at Bellwether or to others in the area.

Applicant's response: The project is 100% affordable per the Development Agreement with the City of Tukwila, with rents restricted to 50% and 60% AMI (Area Median Income). 78 of the units will be affordable to residents with 50% AMI, and 25 for residents at 60% AMI. The proposed development is not a permanently supportive housing project. Our residents must be able to live independently, most pay their rent from employment, and we require that our tenants have a positive, contemporary rental history and income that is 2.5 times their scheduled rent. Some residents do come with their own portable vouchers, and in Washington State, it is illegal to for any landlord to discriminate based on a household's source of income. Most people would not recognize any of our projects as anything as besides a normal market rate building except that the rents are restricted based on income. Please note that our population will most likely reflect the tenant population in a typical older apartment building in this location, with the exception that our tenants will have an assurance of affordability for the long-term.

Bellwether is not currently planning to replace the fencing between the two properties. Existing fences may be replaced as needed for construction. There will be a 10' landscape buffer between

the proposed project and The Seasons Apartment building. The two play areas on site will be restricted only for tenant use.

Staff response: There were also concerns about the project impacting the residents' views at The Seasons. This was addressed as part of the SEPA determination. The significant views potentially enjoyed by the Kim's apartments are to the east, looking over the valley and towards the Cascades. The proposed project would not affect these views as it is located uphill on the west side of the Kim's apartments and set back 70' from the property line. Prior to the project's construction, the view looking west from The Seasons Apartment includes single family homes, apartment buildings, and some trees. This view would be replaced by the proposed apartment building, associated parking, and landscaping.

Mr. David Puki, a Tukwila resident, submitted a comment letter voicing concerns about the Development Agreement process and the standards that were modified. He voiced opposition to the project due to its size and scale relative to neighboring properties. Of particular concern were the modification of the size and scale of the building and the limited amount and size of parking stalls.

Staff response: The standards referred to by Mr. Puki were modified through the Development Agreement and cannot be revised as part of the design review process. Any changes to these standards would require an amendment to the Development Agreement.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Site Planning (a-i)

The proposed project exceeds the development standards related to height, bulk and scale for the High Density Residential (HDR) District zone which are intended for multifamily development more suburban in form and character. The proposed building is larger and 2 to 3 stories taller than buildings on neighboring properties which were constructed in the 1980s, prior to annexation by the City. However, Comprehensive Plan vision, goals and policies for the TIB District designate this area for more intensive development with a mix of uses including affordable multifamily residential with structured parking that builds on the neighborhood's proximity (1/2 mile walking distance) to high capacity transit service at the Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) Station. Since the proposal is consistent with and would implement the Comprehensive Plan, modifications of key development standards was allowed through a Development Agreement between the City and the developer to allow the project to be permitted. These modified standards include building height, recreation space standards, parking supply requirements and dimensions, lot area per unit, maximum building length, development area coverage, and front and side setbacks. In exchange for these modifications, the developer is providing a 9' multi-use path within a 20' easement along the west property line for a future connection to the TIB Station.

The arrangement of the building, recreation areas, and surface parking are organized to minimize potential visual impacts from a larger building that may be experienced by adjacent residents. The proposed building is set back 70' from the existing building that sits close to the east property line. To the west, the neighboring building is set further away. On this side the 9'-wide multi-use path, landscaping on either side of the path and a row of nine mature Red Maples proposed as part of the project serve to minimize visual impacts. Ten mature trees on site will be retained.

Vehicular access to the property is limited to one driveway off S. 152nd St. which serves both surface parking spaces to the east and south of the building and an entry to a partially submerged parking garage. Per discussion with the applicant, there will be a marked crosswalk added at the garage driveway crossing to increase pedestrian safety. This will need to be added to the building plan set submittal.

Through the Development Agreement, the applicant will provide a public multi-use path running north/south along the west property line in a 20'-wide easement. Over the short term it will connect S. 152nd St to an activity area for older children in the southwest corner of the site, and dead end at the property boundary. Long term, as the area continues to redevelop, the path will be extended southward to provide a more direct path to the TIB Station for the neighborhood.

With the modified standards through the Developer Agreement, the project meets the front, side, and rear yard setback and landscaping requirements. Landscaping and raised planter beds, grade separations, and siting of service areas away from the building or within the garage ensure privacy for residents. Outdoor activity areas for the residents are bounded with decorative fencing to separate and distinguish them from public spaces. Several design features support the concept of Defensible Space to reduce opportunities for crime. These include adequate lighting of the building and activity areas, providing windows at all levels for casual surveillance of all parts of the property, and ensuring plantings are designed so that surveillance of public and semi-public places is not blocked.

The project enhances the streetscape along S. 152nd street with trees in landscaped planting beds, and pedestrian amenities. The pedestrian environment is improved by placing the building at the back of sidewalk and locating driveways and parking to the side of the building. A project focal point is created by enhancing the building's main entrance with casual and informal seating, raised planter beds, stamped concrete, and glazing to provide views in and out of the building. A change in façade color and material, as well as overhead weather protection, adds to the sense of place. Two other focal points for the site are proposed – one at the side entrance to the building's southeast corner; the other on the west side where the building is oriented around a courtyard and younger child's play area.

As this project is intended to be transit-supportive and is located within easy walking distance of light rail and bus service, 100 parking spaces are provided with compact stalls comprising 50%, meeting the standards stipulated by the Development Agreement. The majority of the stalls are located in the partially submerged parking garage; the remainder distributed around the building to minimize the visual impact of large paved surfaces. Service and utility areas are adequately located, screened and landscaped to minimize impacts to residents. The TMC does not have parking dimension standards for a parking garage. The applicant has proposed a parking garage layout based on their research of other more urban areas. The applicant has stated that the proposed circulation and stall sizes meets the needs of their tenants.

The proposed building is in harmony with its site and, to a limited extent, with adjacent structure. Side yard setbacks and landscape buffers minimize the visual impact on adjacent older, more suburban types of development. With the modification in recreation space requirements, activity

areas are more in line with an urban versus suburban multifamily project. 10,385 sf of recreation space is provided – exceeding the modified standard of 15% of residential area as recreation space. On Level 1, the project provides an outdoor courtyard for adult and family use and an adjacent younger child’s play area. In the southwest corner of the site is fenced activity area for older children containing a tetherball and mini-soccer court. A 4’-wide sidewalk encircles the entire building and connects these areas, as well as providing connections to the multi-use path.

2. Building Design (a-e)

The architectural style of the building is modern with a flat roof and clean lines and will add architectural interest to the neighborhood. The building is very different in scale, height, and character from the older, adjacent development. However, the building design is appropriate for structures and uses within an area zoned for high density residential development, and is consistent with and implements the type of high density, transit oriented development envisioned in the TIB Element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

The apartment building’s name, “The Confluence” was inspired by the confluence of rivers in Tukwila. Building materials, color, design pattern, and architecture is meant to represent an abstract meandering river and forest. The size and arrangement of windows and modulation of the façades adds to the individuality of the building’s design. Building details, such as trim bands, parapets and roof overhangs are used consistently for similar design elements and help tie the building together.

Maximum building length standard was waived. As part of the development agreement, building length is to be determined during design review by the BAR. The length of the proposed building is currently 241’-6 ½”. Given the fact that the facades are horizontally and vertically modulated, with varying materials and colors used to break up the mass, staff recommends BAR approval of building’s length. Vertical and horizontal modulation, changes in color, materials and architectural patterns are used to break up the large scale, bulk and length of the building. Significant building modulation is employed on the west side of the structure, with the building shaped as a “C” and oriented around the outdoor activity areas. Less modulation is used on the east, north and south facades. The partially submerged concrete wall of the parking garage is blank and without openings where the walls are exposed as the site slopes to the south at ground level. The project proposes using shrubs, vines and ground covers to visually screen the walls. Due to building overhangs, there is insufficient vertical clearance and/or width to plant trees along the walls. Where space is available, a double row of staggered shrubs is used.

3. Landscaping (a-d)

The project’s landscaping is consistent with the City’s landscape requirements. Nine Red Maples will be retained. The plan set indicates location of a 6’ high tree protection fence, but it does not surround the critical root zone of the trees in compliance with TMC 18.54.070. This will need to be revised and included in the building permit plan set to ensure these trees, and those close to the property line on adjacent property, will be adequately protected prior to and during construction.

The landscape plan references but does not include a detail for structural soils which are required for trees planted in sidewalks, parking lots, and areas of limited soil per TMC 18.28.240.B.3. This will need to be included in the building permit plan set. Landscape and utility plans do not show location of

permanent automatic irrigation which is required for all landscaping by TMC 18.28.240.B.4. The applicant will need to submit specific irrigation plans in the building permit plan set.

The recreation spaces are designed to be attractive and appropriate for residents. All recreation spaces are gated and fenced for privacy and security and connected via the 4'-wide sidewalk circumnavigating the building. The courtyard and young children's play area on Level 1 of the project have direct connections to the building through the community room/kitchen, laundry room, and on-site childcare area.

4. *Miscellaneous Structures and Street Furniture (a-d)*

The materials and furnishings in the outdoor activity spaces are of the type and quality that are safe and promote social interaction for all age groups. Outdoor furniture, play structures over a rubber safety surface, a BBQ, storage benches, large landscape rocks for casual seating, tetherball court and mini-soccer field with synthetic turf add to the overall quality of the usable spaces.

A number of different types of fences and walls are proposed, including a high quality black metal picket fence bordering the outdoor activity areas on Level 1, black wire fencing around the tetherball and soccer area to keep balls from escaping, and decorative split face CMU comprising the raised planter beds by the front entry and screening the trash/recycling staging area and generator.

Exterior lighting fixtures are of a modern style appropriate for the architectural design of the building. Taller light poles (15' in height) will be installed on the east and south perimeter; 12' tall poles in the parking lot and on the west side of the multi-use path. All light poles will include off-site glare cut-off features. Bollard lights (3.5' in height) will be installed in pedestrian areas along the east side of the multi-use path and the sidewalk along the east side of the building. Building mounted sconce lighting is installed at all building entries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of the Design Review application, with the following conditions:

1. The following shall be shown on revised plans submitted and reviewed administratively as part of the building permit application submittal:
 - a. Add a marked crosswalk at the garage driveway crossing for pedestrian safety on the site plan.
 - b. Add a detail illustrating tree protection measures around the Critical Root Zone and indicate location on landscape and construction plans.
 - c. Add a structural soils detail to the landscape plan set. Per 18.52.070.B., for landscaping in sidewalks and parking lots, or in limited areas of soil volume, structural soils (Cornell University product or similar) must be used to a preferred depth of 36 inches to promote tree root growth and provide structural support to the paved area. Minimum soil volumes for tree roots shall be 750 cubic feet per tree.

- d. Add a sheet to the plan set showing location and type of landscape irrigation. Per 18.52.070.B.2, all landscaped areas must be served by a permanent automatic irrigation system.

INFORMATIONAL

1. All wall signage will require a separate sign permit and will be reviewed at that time for compliance with the Tukwila sign code (Title 19).
2. Lot consolidation must occur before building permit approval.