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ARCHITECTURE, PROGRAMMING, ACCESSIBLE DESIGN, INTERIOR DESIGN

May 16, 2024

**Project Name:** 2900 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE Apartments

**Project Address:** 2900 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040

**Parcel #:** 531510-1219

To Whom It May Concern,

The project at 2900 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE proposes to demolish existing structures, uses, and improvements, and construct a new 4 story multi-family building with private garage parking. The proposal intends to conform to Town Center Development and Design standards, while taking advantage of the maximum height and story increase by providing community benefits as outlined within chapter 19.11. The site fronts the intersection of 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE and SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street, with vehicular access coming from 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE.

The attached plans address code compliance items for review and discussion.

- The proposed development provides public open space facing 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, and utilizes the existing easement for uncovered surface parking, solid waste enclosure and loading zone.
- The proposed development provides stacked multi-family residences with primary pedestrian and vehicular access from 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE.
- The proposed development conforms to the 2021 IBC for R2 residences.

In the TC-4 zone, this project is proposing to utilize the maximum allowed height of 51' and the maximum allowed stories of 4. In order to achieve this requirement the proposed development is proposing these additional features:

- Per MICC 19.11.040(B) – At least ten percent of the total units must be affordable, so one of the (10) proposed units will be designated for affordable housing.
- Per MICC 19.11.060(B) – Any major new construction exceeding three stories shall include at least one major site feature. Due to the small lot size, this project is proposing to incorporate a public open space that meets the requirements of MICC 19.11.040(D).

The proposed public open space is 665 SF which is 4.5% of the proposed GFA, and is 20' in width which extends from the north property line to the driveway. Because of the existing at-grade PSE easement in the NW corner of the site, a walkway and planter strip connect the public open space to the public ROW before opening up to the remainder of the space. This public open space shall be at the same level as the public sidewalk and as the building wraps around it, it helps to create a focal point at this intersection. While the proposed public open space is limited, it still incorporates design elements such as (12) linear feet of bench, 179 SF (26.9% of the open space) of landscaping, two green walls with an integrated water feature that is part of the proposed minor site features. The surface of the public open space will feature stamped concrete paving that distinguishes it from the public sidewalk. Due to the limited frontage and the desire to create a cohesive design, the area between the driveway and loading zone features the same design elements and is connected visually to create a larger space.

As required for any new construction project, the site will feature a minimum of (3) minor site features. As mentioned above, a water feature will be incorporated in green wall adjacent to the garage entry that turns into an urban create that terminates behind the proposed landscaping prior to reaching the public sidewalk. Per the proposed plans, a staggered custom stamped concrete design will be used to create mini pockets within the landscape with floating benches that appear to



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pop out of the surface. In addition, living walls with a variety of plantings used in an artistic formation will be utilized along the length of main public open space as well as around the vertical portion of the water feature.

Aside from typical building lighting, the public open space will feature a variety of accent lighting to help create an experience and accentuate the features of the public open space. This includes modern path lighting along the edge of the stagger concrete path, underneath the floating benches, and down lights directed on the green walls. The cantilever over the driveway will have staggered linear lighting recessed in the Resysta soffit and underwater lighting to highlight the urban creek.

The proposed building is designed to maximize the small site by stacking three floors of units above an open parking garage that's entrance is centered at the intersection. The parking garage allows for a total of 10 parking stalls for the site, which includes one ADA van stall. Utilizing that number of stalls, the development is able to incorporate (10) units with floors 1 and 2 being identical floor plans with (4) unit each, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor having (2) larger units. To provide adequate sizing of these units, the floor plates are cantilevered above the driveway entry and are supported by the PT slab as well as angled concrete column wrapped in powder coated aluminum that create visual interest.

The push and pull of the building masses along with the articulation of the balconies help create modulation that is highly visible from the street while the change in materials help to accentuate those forms. The main form of the building features arctic white Neolith panels with vertical accent strips and in-fill panels of Abet Laminati in black. The smaller forms and building façade along the north and east are proposing Abet Laminati panels in a medium gray tone with the same black vertical accent strips. The soffits of the main roof structure, first floor cantilevers and accents around the sliding doors of each unit are Resysta siding in dark taupe to give the warmth of wood, but much more durable and longer lasting than traditional wood siding.

At the ground level, perforated metal panels are used to create a separation between the private garage and the loading zone and adjacent properties. Along the property lines, these perforated panels are used as a fence and shall be no more than six feet in height. Next to the loading zone and trash enclosure, these panels are full height to integrate in the building façade and help carry this language around the corner with the perforated garage door.



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Per MICC 19.11.070, landscaped surfaces should equal 25% of the site. To meet this requirement on such a small site, the proposed development is proposing a few options.

- Ground Level Planting – The available space is very limited. Between the public open space, planter strip south of the driveway, and a couple patches along the south property line there is 295 SF of available space for planting of shrubs and ground cover. All ground level planting is calculated at a rate of 100%.
- Green Wall – Two green walls will be incorporated into the public open space along the north property line that will cover up the blank wall of the adjacent property and adjacent to the garage entry. These will be approximately 235 SF, and since they are proposed as being artistic green walls, will count at a rate of 125% will equal 295 SF.
- Green Roof – This will be largest portion of landscaping on site. There will be approximately 3,250 SF of irrigated sedum modules on the roof that will be populated with three varieties, which count at a rate of 50%, or 1,625 SF.

Adding these up brings a landscaping total of 2,213 SF, or 30% of the site.

Thank you,

Kelly Hallstrom  
Project Manager