

***Neighborhood Contact Virtual Meeting***  
***hosted by SMILE Land Use Committee***  
**Meeting Notes -- Dec 1, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Committee Chair David Schoellhamer. Land Use Committee members present: Miriam Erb, Rocky Johnson, Vikki DeGaa, Francisco Salgado, Kirsten Leising, Bob Burkholder and Shari Gilevich. Laura Standridge (Standridge Planning), Pam Verdadero (Stanton Street Building Company), and Rick Tolleshaug (Milbrandt Architects) attended to discuss the project. Twenty-seven community members also attended.

**Neighborhood Contact Meeting for SE Tacoma & 6th, the Bridgehead project:**

David described the proposal for two blocks on SE Tacoma: north of Tacoma, 535 and 545 SE Tacoma, and south of Tacoma, 536 SE Tacoma and 8145 SE 6th. Each block will have two buildings (one 4-story building with 5,000 square feet of ground floor retail and 3 floors of apartments, and one, all-residential 3-story building). Each block will have a total of 52 apartments (total of 104 dwelling units for this project). David Schoellhamer presented info about the zoning CM2d, community mixed use with a design overlay, applicable to the site.

**Project team presentation**

Laura Standridge presented slides of the site plan. The 4-story buildings front SE Tacoma and are separated from the 3-story structures by surface parking area. Twenty-one of the total 104 apartments will be "affordable." The project is using the City Design standards and the proposed design has been awarded at least 24 points, above the minimum 20 points needed. They also are using the Sellwood-Moreland Main Street Design Guidelines and appreciated having that level of contribution from the community.

Rick Tolleshaug continued the presentation and described details of the building facades. The graphics included pictures of existing neighborhood buildings alongside images of the proposed structures. He described the elements in the new structures -- brick façade, articulated parapet, cornices, pedestrian oriented signage, awnings along the retail frontage, clerestory windows and chamfered corner entrances -- that are preferred elements of the Sellwood-Moreland Main Street guidelines.

He noted that the north block building and the south block building have different façade treatments to add variety to the streetscape. Building materials include brick veneer, fiber cement panels, and concrete. The retail floor has 15-ft. high ceilings, so the 4-story building is allowed to be 50 feet in height.

Laura Standridge discussed other features of the development. Amenities include a corner "plaza" on SE Tacoma at corner of the large buildings and picnic area near the 3-story apartment buildings. Residential units consist of 18 studios, 32 one bedroom, and 54 two bedrooms. About 70 parking spaces are available for residents. No on-site parking is planned for the retail services.

## **Questions and Comments**

David thanked the team for using the Main Street guidelines and opened the meeting for questions. The information provided included:

### **Permit and Construction schedule**

Rick Tolleshaug said that they still need a few months to complete documents to submit to the city for building permits. Permit review by the city has been taking 8-9 months, and sometimes a year, so construction is at least a year out. The earliest for occupancy would be summer 2023. The developer already owns the property so they can file for the demo permits. They will post timing of activities on the site.

The sequence of construction is likely to be completing the ground work on both sides of Tacoma, then focusing on one side to finish the vertical work. Initial actions include tearing down the boat sales business and strip club on the north side of SE Tacoma. Pam Verdadero noted that the goal is to keep parking self-contained on site. Vertical and horizontal construction should take about 6 months, then interior work another 6 months.

SE 6th Ave. will stay open except for some periods when trenches need to be cut for utilities.

The unimproved Tenino Street right-of-way west of SE 6th is being vacated in a separate project by others. When vacated, this land could allow this project more area for open space, but the road vacation could reduce the area that Dwyer's business now uses for customer parking. The bridgehead project itself will not affect that automotive services business.

It may be helpful to have someone from the area volunteer to act as a liaison between residents and the developer. If anyone is interested in volunteering to do that, contact Vikki DeGaa.

### **Parking**

Pam Verdadero noted that there are competing requirements in the code with mixed use, retail and housing. Retail adds convenience to apartment dwellers. She said that they needed 4 stories to accommodate the various uses. They know there are parking issues, so do have on-site parking for the residential tenants.

### **Design**

Comments: Concerns were raised about the building height and mass. To some, the 4-story building will be out of scale with the neighborhood. Several opinions were that, instead of one large building that runs the length of the block, the preference would be for two separate buildings to cut down on sheer building mass. The graphic illustrating what the new streetscape will look like seemed like a tunnel on Tacoma.

Laura Standridge said the drawing may not capture the large sidewalk and generous setback of the proposed structures that should avoid the "tunnel" effect. Rick Tolleshaug said that designing the 4-story building as two structures was not looked at because the city wants a continuous building frontage. He thinks that the façade articulation and balconies help break up the building mass.

## **Traffic**

Comments: Area residents would like to hear more about traffic mitigation. Traffic issues on the bridge need to be addressed, especially when construction traffic mixes with existing traffic. A current resident experiences the parking issues brought on by developments with no or limited parking. There are concerns that SE 6th/Tacoma is a dangerous intersection in the summer with all the traffic to/from Oaks Park and the waterfront park. SE 6th Ave. needs to be widened because of the sheer volume of traffic.

Laura Standridge added that they are driven by what PBOT requires and doesn't expect that SE 6th will be widened.

## **Access and Safety**

Comments: For the block south of SE Tacoma, concerns were about safety on SE 6th (lighting and street width) for bicyclists and about access to the Springwater Corridor.

Pam Verdadero said that their goal is to improve bike and pedestrian connections where feasible and that the project will improve SE 6th and SE Spokane. SE 6th will have 14-ft. wide sidewalks. From the west lot line of the south block, there is a fairly steep, vegetated slope down to the adjacent railroad track which is a barrier between their block and the Springwater Corridor. They have no intention of trying to connect to the trail from this block because of this barrier. (There is access to the Springwater Corridor from SE Umatilla which borders the automotive services property on its south side.)

For the block north of SE Tacoma, bike/pedestrian access will be to the cul-de-sac of SE Grand Ave which intersects SE Spokane to the north.

## **Affordable units**

Pam Verdadero said that twenty percent of the apartments, 21 units, will be affordable for those at 80% of median household income. Their experience has been that it is very difficult to qualify at the 60% income because of minimum and maximum thresholds.

Further questions can be sent to David Schoellhamer at [land-use-chair@sellwood.org](mailto:land-use-chair@sellwood.org). He will ensure that they get to the developer and Rick said they all will be happy to provide written responses. They also will provide a copy of the PowerPoint materials.

Several attendees again thanked the presenters for all the information and for incorporating the Sellwood-Moreland Main Street design guidelines in the building design.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.