



City of Ann Arbor Design Review Board

Kerrytown Place Summary Report

February 20, 2013

3:30 p.m.

City Hall – Basement Conference Rooms A and B

The Design Review Board met on February 20, 2013 to review the **Kerrytown Place** proposal. The following report contains a summary of priority issues the Board would like the developer to consider in finalizing the design proposal. In addition, a summary of the meeting discussion is provided for background.

Members Present: Tamara Burns (Chair), William Kinley

Members Absent: Chet Hill, Mary Jukuri, Paul Fontaine, Richard Mitchell, Geoff Perkins

Staff Present: Alexis DiLeo

Design Team Representative: Tom Fitzsimmons (Huron Development)

Developer Representatives: Chris Allen (Allen Associates), Chet Hill (The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio)

Summary of Priority Issues

Examples of applicable guidelines are noted in parentheses; the full text of each referenced guideline is provided at the end of the summary. Please note that the Kerrytown Character Area guidelines also apply.

Site Planning

1. Minimize, or eliminate if possible, the street-level garage doors on North Fourth Avenue. Even if the space within the building is used for parking, and not a traditional active space, the street-level experience would be better if the doors were minimized and replaced with landscaping (see Guidelines A.4.1, A.4.2, A.4.3, and A.4.4).

Building Massing and Building Elements

1. The buildings, particularly the “Main Street” and “Alley” buildings, are not tall enough to warrant a complete change of materials at the top. The metal-covered penthouses read as if

they are screens hiding mechanical units. At minimum, a different (more vibrant, more complimentary to the other materials and colors, less neutral) color of the proposed metal material should be considered (see Guidelines B.1.4 and C.5.1).

2. Emphasize the main entry doors to each dwelling unit on North Fourth Avenue. These doors now take a distant second place to the prominent garage doors on this façade (see Guidelines C.2.1).

Referenced Sections of the City of Ann Arbor Downtown Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning

- A.4.1 Locate and size driveways, access points, service entries, alleys, loading docks, and trash receptacles to minimize impact on pedestrians and maintain pedestrian safety, circulation, and comfort.
- A.4.2 Provide a pedestrian-friendly street edge at the street level adjacent to surface parking areas and enclosed parking structures. Provide a landscape buffer appropriate for urban conditions at the edges of surface parking areas.
- A.4.3 Locate a parking structure or a surface parking lot behind or to the side of a building, minimizing the visual presence of parking on adjacent public right-of-way.
- A.4.4 Parking structures should incorporate architectural screens, public art, seating, lighting, kiosks, vending booths, and other ground level service shops adjacent to the street and sidewalk.

Design Guidelines for Buildings

- B.1.4 If appropriate to the context, establish a design treatment that includes a differentiated building top.

Design Guidelines for Building Elements

- C.2.1 Clearly define a primary entrance and orient it toward the street.
- C.5.1 Apply materials to provide a sense of scale in proportion to the scale and mass of the building.

Meeting Discussion Summary

Chair Burns noted that several of the Board members may have been confused, thinking this meeting was cancelled along with a special meeting that was cancelled the previous week. Since bylaws have not yet been adopted establishing a quorum for the Board, Chair Burns offered to hold the meeting as scheduled for the applicant or postpone to the next month's meeting. Tom Fitzsimmons, the applicant, chose to hear from the two Board members present.

Chet Hill of The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio described the features and characteristics of the site and site context. Chris Allen of Allen Associates (architects) described the designs of each building. Tom Fitzsimmons of Huron Development spoke about the valuable input that had already been received from meeting with the immediate neighbors to the site and provided background on the project history to date.

Chris Allen explained that the site layout and architectural design were greatly influenced by the "Johnson Street Townhomes" in Portland, Oregon and the "Wickliffe Place" development in the Kerrytown neighborhood of Ann Arbor. For reference purposes, the design team refers to the three proposed buildings on the site as the Main Street, Alley, and Fourth Ave buildings. The Main Street building, containing all townhouse-style units, has three stories. The Alley building includes stacked flat-style units and has four stories. Its fourth story is recessed from the lower floors, creating rooftop outdoor space. Below the Alley building and accessed from the alley are 13 parking spaces in an open garage. Below the Main Street building and including the space between the Main Street and Alley buildings are individual two-car garages for a total of 18 vehicles, access from a ramp off of the alley leading to a center aisle. The space between the buildings, over the center aisle between the individual garages, is wood decking with evenly spaced openings to allow for some natural light below. The Fourth Ave building is a four-story duplex with two two-car garages access from North Fourth Avenue. Along the south side of the Main Street and Alley buildings, and the north side of the Fourth Ave building and the surface parking lot, runs a pedestrian walkway. The ability to walk through the current site is a defining feature and the design team felt it was necessary to include a walkway in the proposed development.

The Board complimented the design team on their informative and easy to understand application materials. Then, the Board indicated they agreed with the design team on their interpretation of the site's context and the way they handled the site's massing. The Board noted the layout included a tight street edge but with some privacy for the residents. Overall, the Board felt the design well satisfied the Downtown Design Guidelines.

However, the Board raised three points for the design team to further consider. First, regarding the Alley building penthouses, the building is not tall enough to warrant a complete change for the top level. The change of materials to a metal screen, particularly the "putty" color, read more like mechanical unit screening than penthouses that are part of a residential unit. The Board felt that feature would not be

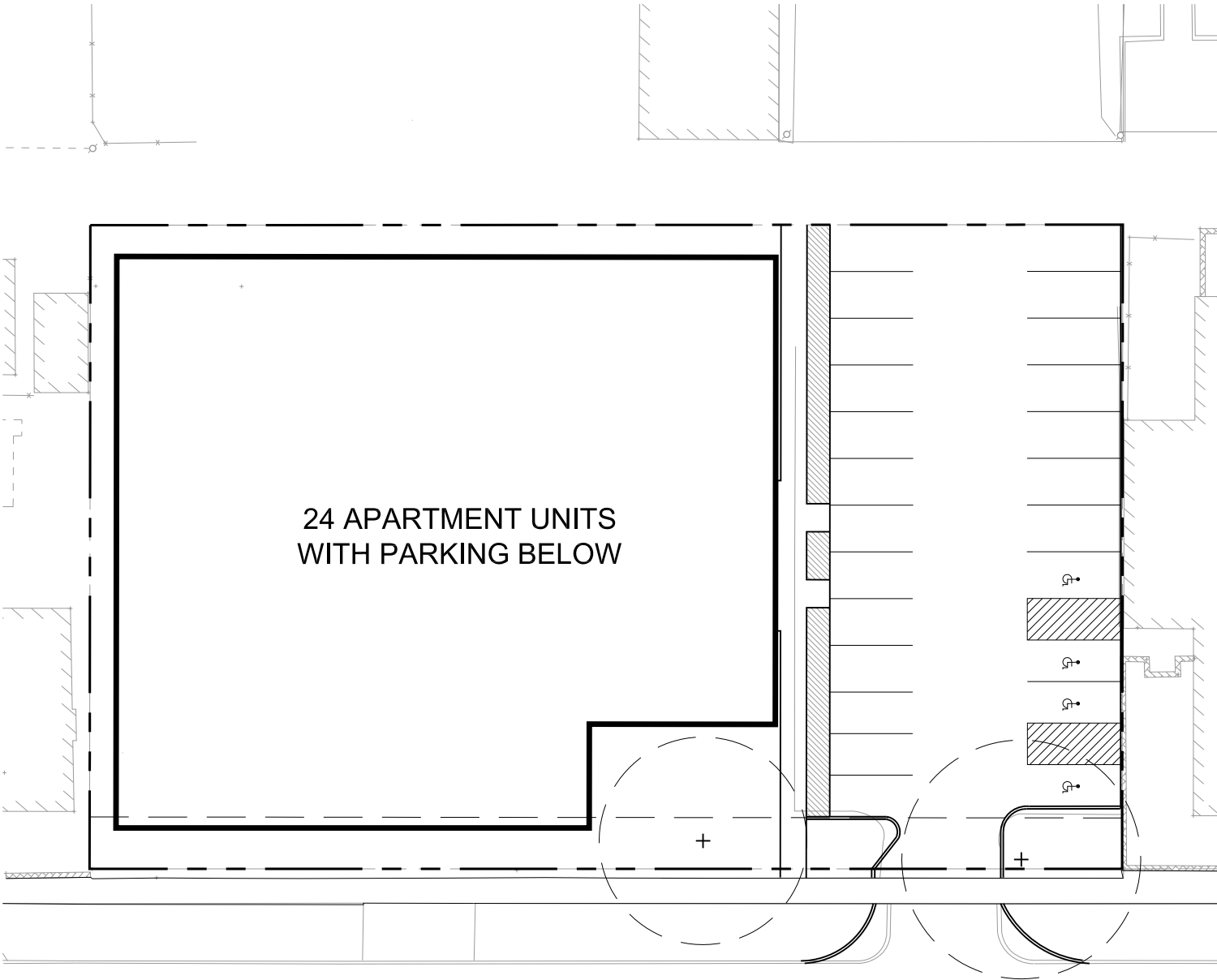
read correctly from the street level and suggested considering using the same materials as the lower portion of the building, changing the color of the metal material, adding more doors and windows to the penthouses, or some combination of those suggestions.

Second, regarding the Fourth Ave building, the two double-wide garage doors dominate the street level façade. The Fourth Ave garage doors were cited as the one glaring deviation from the intent of the design guidelines and the Board felt the doors were no better than a surface parking lot. The garage doors overwhelm the existence of the pedestrian front doors to each unit. The design team explained there was not enough lot width to accommodate a double-loaded parking lot and two double-garage doors at the rear of the building. The design team also noted that if the garage doors were relocated to the rear of the building, the Fourth Avenue street level façade would still not have active uses. The Board felt that a blank wall with landscaping between the building and sidewalk would be an improvement and better achieve the intent of the design guidelines.

Staff suggested that the two double overhead doors facing S. Fourth Avenue could be replaced by two single doors facing S. Fourth Avenue and two single doors facing the parking lot at the rear of the building. This may allow up to 20 feet of the S. Fourth Avenue façade to be used for plantings and windows while still allowing car access for two cars into each unit's garage. The Board members explored this idea and supported the concept to the development team.

Finally, regarding the ends of the Main Street building, and to a lesser extent the Alley building, the Board suggested softening those facades. The Board recommended exploring vines and other plant materials as well as other detailing to add visual interest especially for the properties immediately north of the site.

Also, the Board suggested that, for security purposes, it would be good to provide openings at each end of the open garage at alley grade on the west side of the Alley Building for better visual access into and out of the garage from the north and south.



24 APARTMENT UNITS
WITH PARKING BELOW

ALTERNATE 1

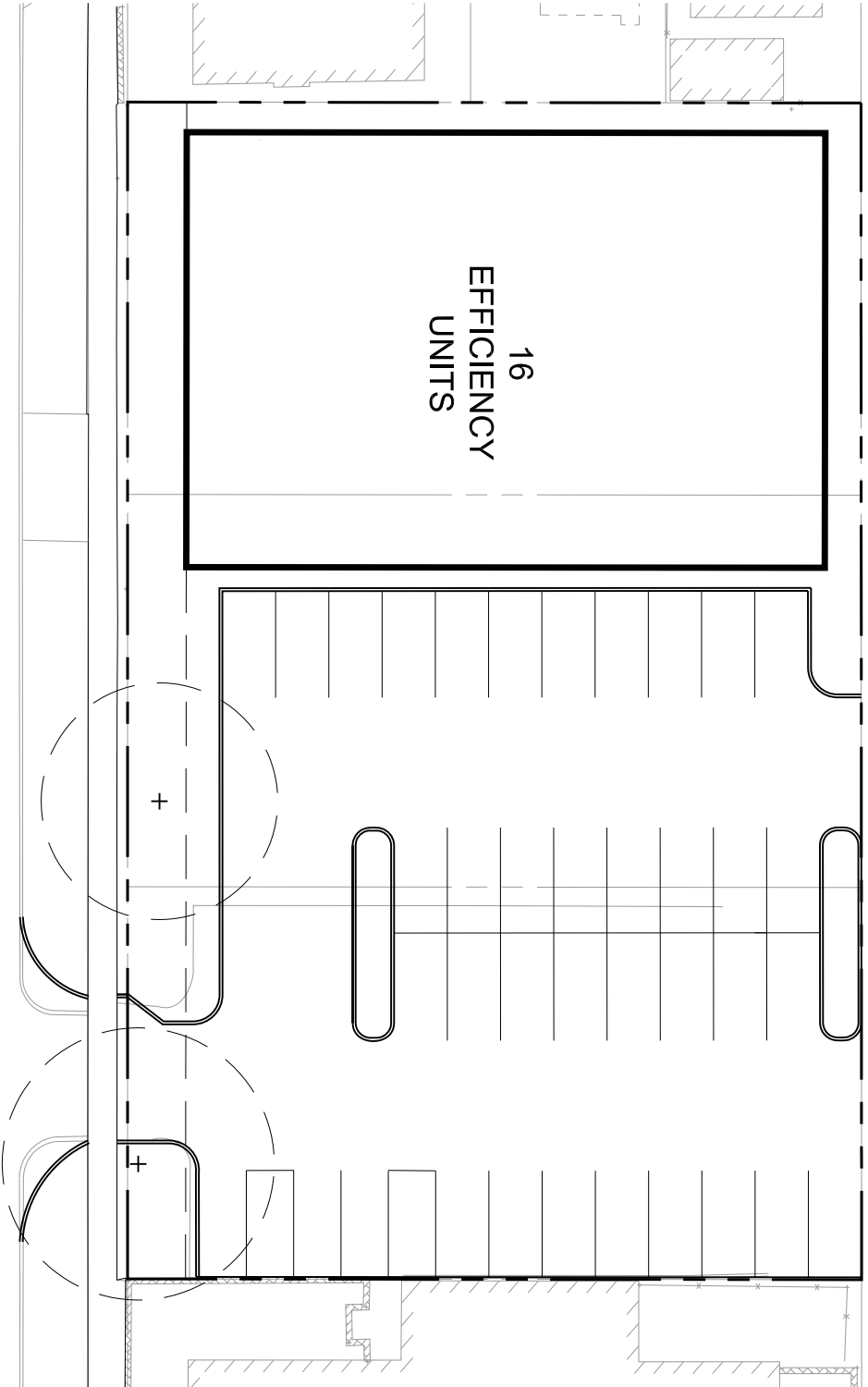
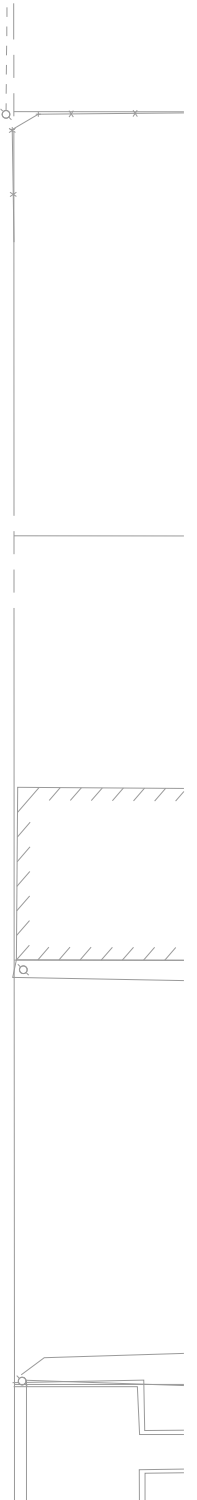
Pros:

- Two saved landmark trees
- Connector walk with bioretention

Cons:

- Limited surface parking (some parking for McKinley located underground)
- Very limited amount of open space
- Traditional style apartment building which does not meet market demand for housing stock
- Large building mass to accommodate program

MAIN STREET
(82.5' ROW)
47' B/B ASPHALT PAVEMENT

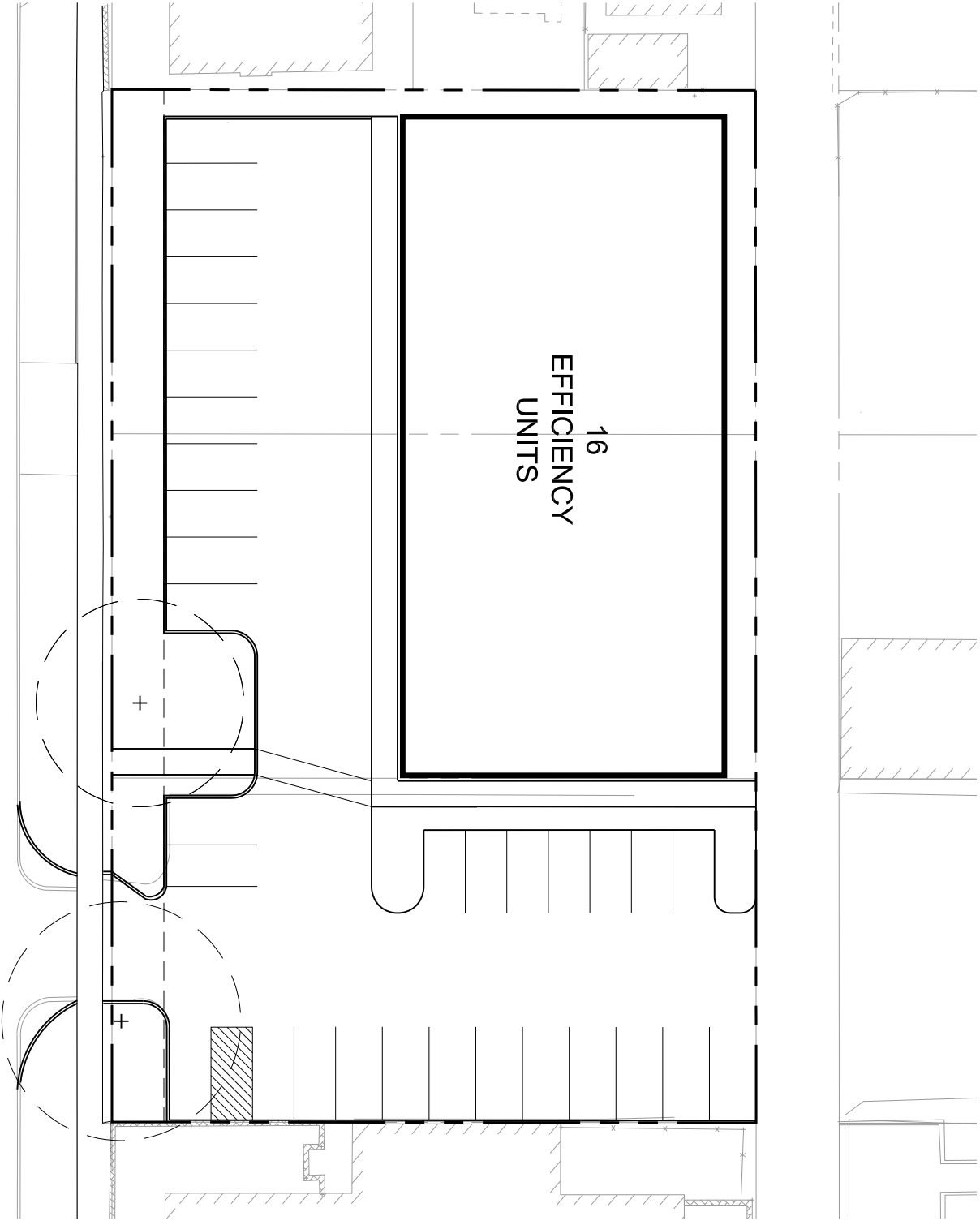


MAIN STREET
(82.5' ROW)
47' B/B ASPHALT PAVEMENT

ALTERNATE 2

- Pros:**
- Two saved landmark trees
 - Surface parking has two interior islands

- Cons:**
- Limited parking (38 spaces for McKinley, 2 spaces for residents)
 - Large amount of parking visible from Main Street
 - Large amount of impervious parking area
 - Limited open space
 - No connector walk
 - No bioretention
 - Dwelling unit type does not meet market demand



ALTERNATE 3

Pros:

- Two saved landmark trees
- Connector walk

Cons:

- Limited parking does not accommodate McKinley's needs
- No parking available for residents
- Underground parking not feasible
- Connector walkway in dripline of landmark tree
- Parking highly visible from Main Street
- Building does not front Main Street
- Dwelling unit type does not meet market demand
- Large amount of impervious parking
- Very limited amount of open space

MAIN STREET

(82.5' ROW)
47' B/B ASPHALT PAVEMENT