



Architectural Review Board

Staff Report (ID # 10947)

Report Type: Action Items **Meeting Date:** 1/16/2020

Summary Title: 788 San Antonio Road (2nd Formal)

Title: PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 788 San Antonio Avenue [19PLN-00079]: Consideration of a Major Architectural Review to Allow the Demolition of Existing 12,000 Square Feet of Commercial Space and the Construction of a Four-Story Mixed-Use Building that Includes 102 Residential Units and 1,780 Square Feet of Commercial Space. Sixteen of the Residential Units Would be Below Market Rate. The Project Also Requires a Zoning Amendment to Apply the Housing Incentive Program at this Location. Environmental Assessment: An Environmental Impact Report is Being Prepared in Accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Zoning District: CS (Service Commercial). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Sheldon S. Ah Sing at sahsing@m-group.us.

From: Jonathan Lait

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Architectural Review Board (ARB) take the following action(s):

1. Provide input and recommend continuation of the review to a date uncertain.

Report Summary

The subject project was previously reviewed by the ARB. An earlier staff report includes extensive background information, project analysis, and evaluation to city codes and policies. That report is available online: <https://tinyurl.com/788SanAntonio-ARBReport>. Efforts towards completion of the project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) are ongoing. It is expected that circulation of the Draft EIR would occur in late February 2020. Given the City's desire for additional housing staff seeks comments and direction from the ARB on the design of the project simultaneously. The project would return to the ARB during the circulation of the Draft EIR for recommendation to the City Council.

The purpose of this report is to restate the comments made by the ARB and detail the applicant's response to those comments. The analysis section below builds upon the information contained in the earlier report and is modified to reflect recent project changes.

Background

On August 15, 2019 the ARB reviewed the project. A video recording of the ARB meeting is available online: <https://tinyurl.com/788SanAntonio-ARB-Video>. The ARB's comments and the applicant's response are summarized in the following table:

ARB Comments/Direction	Project Revisions by Applicant
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the symmetry of the design• Design palette is complicated• Facades do not have enough offsets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building massing and design materials are broken down and simplified.• The corner includes a taller element over the retail.• Variety in the façade achieved through application of offset elements and framed recesses that reduce repetitiveness and provide visual depth. These framed recesses continue to the upper level open space to create framed view portals and break up the parapet.• Revised material palette is simple and consistent.• San Antonio facade includes a "ribbon" (reddish brown) that ties the ground floor spaces and the residential entry. <p><i>See Sheets A3.0a, A3.3a, A3.3b, A3.3c.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider an additional elevator	<p>Project now includes two elevators.</p> <p><i>See Sheet A2.1b.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building needs to respond to context of the neighborhood and connection to the street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Material palette relates to recent projects of similar scale along San Antonio Road (Taube Koret Campus and Mariott).• The design is less symmetrical.• Project references the former Chrysanthemum wholesaler use with stamped concrete pattern at the corner plaza and within the interior courtyard.• Recessed lobby space is meant to provide an open feel and connection

	<p>with the street.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visible bicycle spaces within the building will activate the street level.• Publicly accessible bike wash area along San Antonio Road will enhance pedestrian activity while providing water for dogs. <p><i>See Sheets A3.0a, A3.0b, A3.3a, A3.3b, A3.3c, A3.3f, A3.3h, A3.3i and LA-1.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glass corners do not convey a residential project	<p>Revamped design reduces the amount of glass at the southwest corner and revises the design for the northwestern corner units.</p> <p><i>See Sheets A3.3a, A3.3b, A3.3c, A3.3f, A3.3i and A3.3m.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider street drop offs for Transportation Network Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duck out added along Leghorn Street for two spaces.• Area will also serve as temporary staging area for solid waste/recycling pick up. <p><i>See Sheets A1.1a, A3.3f, and C2.0.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courtyard does not function well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant acknowledges that the interior courtyard was underdeveloped in the prior submittal.• Updated plan includes circulation and seating areas and more thought-out placement of planters for privacy.• Plants were chosen that will thrive in lower light conditions.• Upper level balconies facing the courtyard have only semi-solid roofs to allow more light into the area.• Planting theme now flows from the courtyard into the lobby area.• Future plan may include a water feature. <p><i>See Sheets A1.0a, A3.0c, A3.0d, A3.3i, A3.3n, and LA-1.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider different landscape	<p>Palm trees are eliminated as part of the</p>

<p>treatment on the terrace</p>	<p>roof terrace redesign. Terrace includes low-scale plantings.</p> <p><i>See Sheets A3.3j, A3.3k, A3.3l, A3.3m, and LA-2.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider being tall at the corner and stepping down	<p>Project includes more visual interest at the southwest corner while allowing the upper level open space on the northwest portion of the building to have panoramic views.</p> <p><i>See Sheets A3.3b, A3.3c, A3.3f, and A3.3l.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Landscape planting needs more native species	<p>Landscape palette includes more native species.</p> <p><i>See Sheet LA-1.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bicycle room shouldn't be open to the lobby	<p>The lobby includes partitioned bicycle rooms.</p> <p><i>See Sheets A2.1b, A3.3a, and A3.3k.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roof terrace has no function• Consider open space on upper level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project includes a resigned roof terrace that is now open on the north end with views toward the bay.• The space is partially covered and includes seating. <p><i>See Sheets A2.2e, A3.3j, A3.3l, A3.3m, and LA-2.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relocate trash chutes to be closer to the vertical circulation	<p>Trash chutes are relocated near northeast elevator.</p> <p><i>See floor plans.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider alternative entry to the building and location of retail space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project keeps the retail location at the Leghorn Street corner.• The corner could function well with a coffee shop or café.• Storefront glazing could be fixed glazing or folding/roll up doors to enhance outdoor/indoor dining• Explored moving the residential entry to the corner but would lose connection with interior courtyard.• Project activates the corner with retail use and expanded plaza area.

- Reduce west facing glazing for residential spaces

See Sheets A1.0a, A3.3c, A3.3f, A3.3g, A3.3h, and A3.3k.

Reduced the west facing glazing for units that open onto other orientations, including the reduction in glazing for the southwestern corner units.

See Sheets A3.3e, A3.3b, and A3.3f.

Analysis¹

The applicant provides a holistic response to the comments from the ARB that result in significant changes to the exterior design of the building. Primarily these changes affect the massing, symmetry, the roof terrace, courtyard, materials, and use of the building. Required Architectural Review findings are provided as Attachment B for reference.

Massing/Symmetry

The ARB commented that the project had too much symmetry and the glass features at the south and north ends of the building were out of context. In response, the applicant significantly revised the façade and massing of the building (Figure 1). The retail space on the ground floor remains at the southern end of the building at the street intersection. A vertical glass element remains above the retail space, but the size is now reduced. The glass element on the opposite end of the building is removed. In its place, an expanded roof terrace would allow for panoramic views. A dark color ribbon feature draws attention towards the ground level and intermittently jogs to the upper floors tying the upper and lower levels together. A variety of framed recesses provide visual interest along the streets. Overall, the building is less symmetrical and focuses more attention at the southwest corner.

The changes make the project more consistent with Findings #2 and #3.

Figure 1: Front Elevation Comparison



Source: Studio S Squared

¹ The information provided in this section is based on analysis prepared by the report author prior to the public hearing. The Architectural Review Board in its review of the administrative record and based on public testimony may reach a different conclusion from that presented in this report and may choose to take an alternative action from the recommendation in this report.

Intersection Corner & Project Entry

The ARB members had different opinions regarding the appropriate use and design for the corner. One position is that the residential entry should be at the corner and another position is that the retail use makes sense in the corner. The current iteration maintains the retail space at the corner and further strengthens its connection with the street (Figures 2 & 3). The applicant envisions creating a focal point at the corner with a street corner café. The storefront facing San Antonio could be either fixed glazing as proposed or folding/roll up doors to enhance the indoor/outdoor dining experience. While previously the corner was physically disconnected from the street, the corner plaza now has a connection to the corner and is enhanced with landscaping. This connection includes a stamped concrete flower pattern as a reference to the former historic use of the site (Chrysanthemum wholesaler).

The project maintains the residential entry to the building at the center. The applicant explored the option of relocating the entry. As proposed, the lobby provides a visual connection to the interior courtyard of the project. Outside the residential entry is a bicycle wash area that could also couple as a rest area for those with pets. This amenity is intended for the tenants and the public. Overall, the design of the lobby area is meant to provide an open and active feel to the project design.

The revisions make the project more consistent with Findings #2, #4 and #5.

Figures 2 & 3: Corner Perspective



Source: Studio S Squared



Source: Studio S Squared

Courtyard and Roof Terrace

The prior iteration of the project included an underdeveloped interior courtyard concept. In response to the ARB, the applicant provides a more thorough concept. Seating areas and planters are positioned to consider privacy. In response to the challenge of lower light conditions, the upper level balconies have semi-solid roofs allowing filtered sunlight. The planting of the area flows into the lobby of the building resulting in a connection between the two spaces. A stamped concrete flower pattern within the courtyard make a reference to the former historic use of the site.

The prior iteration included a covered terrace centrally located on the upper floor. This area included palm trees that protruded through openings in the canopy. The ARB thought that the terrace had limited function and did not take advantage of potential design opportunities. In response, the applicant relocated the roof terrace to the north end of the building (Figure 4). Lower scale planting replaces the palm trees. Parapets are lowered to provide 135-degree views.

The changes make the project more consistent with Findings #2, #4 and #6

Figure 4: Perspective Showing Roof Terrace



Source: Studio S Squared

Environmental Review

The subject project has been assessed in accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the environmental regulations of the City. Specifically, the project requires the certification of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) because the existing building at 788 San Antonio is eligible for listing on the California Register and the applicant proposes to demolish the structure, which is considered a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA.

The City prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and conducted a Scoping Meeting on September 11, 2019 in conjunction with a Planning & Transportation Commission public hearing. That staff report is available online: <https://tinyurl.com/788SanAntonio-PTCReport>. A video recording of the ARB meeting is available online: <https://tinyurl.com/wsb3a3v>. The following were items identified at the scoping meeting to be included as part of the EIR analysis:

- Include Hazards and Hazardous Materials as a topic in the EIR
- Better understand recreation impacts

- Clarify the school district boundary
- Discuss traffic/bicycle lanes and connectivity to existing routes
- Look at Mountain View projects nearby
- Identify the closest Elementary school as Fairmeadow
- Discuss safe routes to work bicycle program
- Identify that San Antonio Road is a truck route
- Ensuring the proper project descriptions and alternatives to the project

The work continues towards completing the Draft EIR for circulation that is expected in late February 2020.

Public Notification, Outreach & Comments

The Palo Alto Municipal Code requires notice of this public hearing be published in a local paper and mailed to owners and occupants of property within 600 feet of the subject property at least ten days in advance. Notice of a public hearing for this project was published in the *Daily Post* on January 3, 2020, which is 13 days in advance of the meeting. Postcard mailing occurred on December 20, 2019, which is 27 in advance of the meeting.

Public Comments

As of the writing of this report, no project-related, public comments were received.

Alternative Actions

No other alternative actions are recommended.

Report Author & Contact Information

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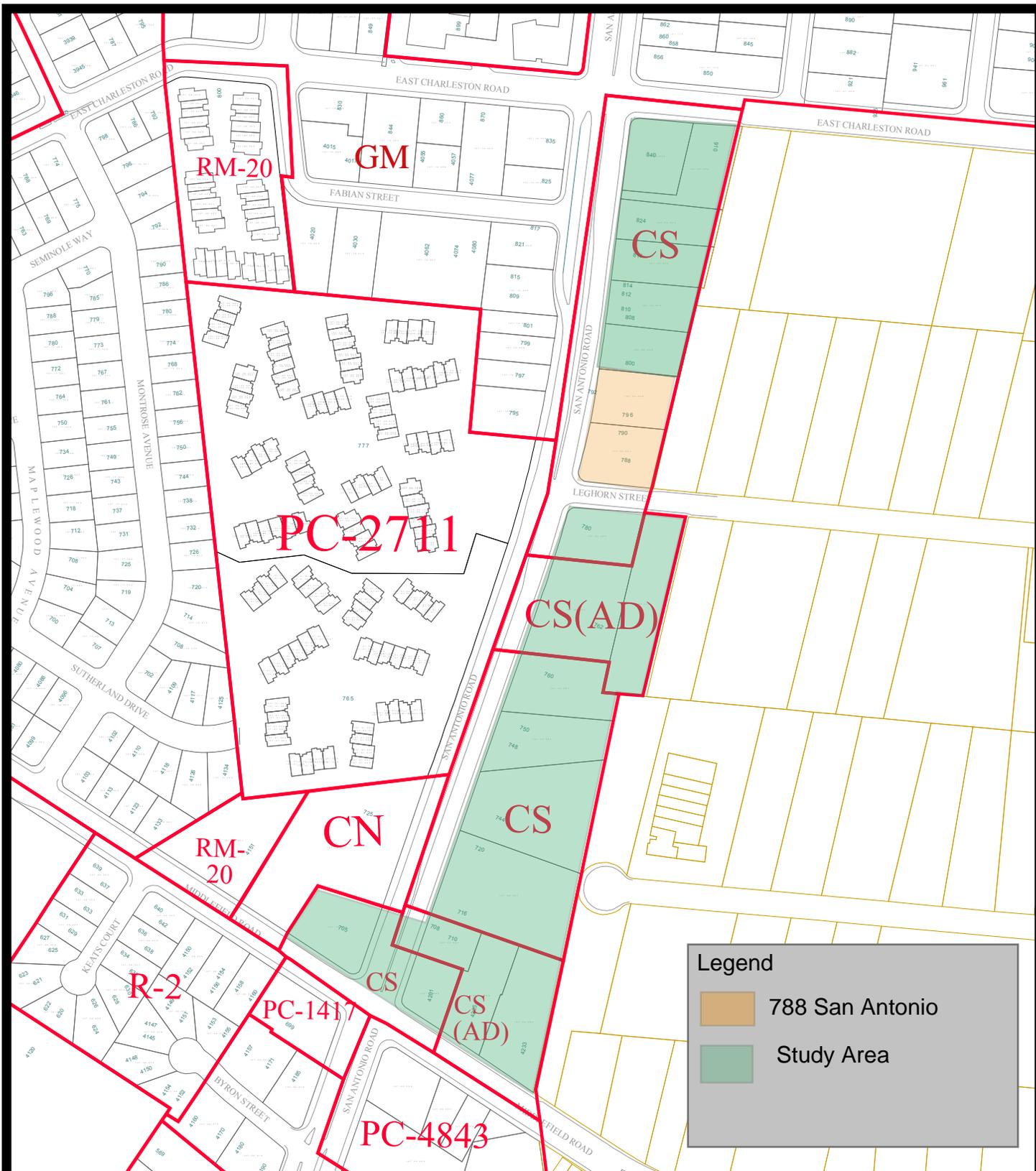
ARB² Liaison & Contact Information

Jodie Gerhardt, AICP, Planning Manager
(650) 329-2575
jodie.gerhardt@cityofpaloalto.org

Attachments:

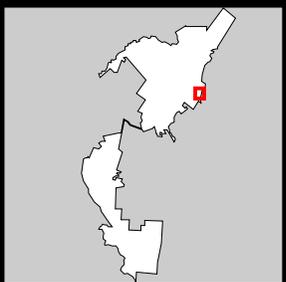
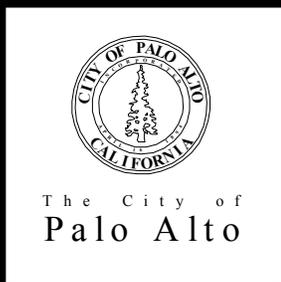
- Attachment A: Location Map (PDF)
- Attachment B: ARB Findings (DOCX)
- Attachment C: Zoning Comparison Table (DOCX)
- Attachment D: August 15, 2019 ARB Excerpt Minutes (PDF)
- Attachment E: Applicant's Resubmittal Response Letter (PDF)
- Attachment F: Project Plans (DOCX)

² Emails may be sent directly to the ARB using the following address: arb@cityofpaloalto.org



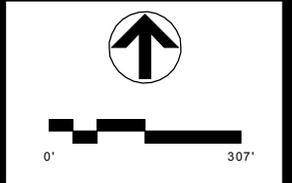
Legend

- 788 San Antonio
- Study Area



788-796 San Antonio & San Antonio Study Area

This map is a product of the
City of Palo Alto GIS



**ATTACHMENT B
ARB FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL**

In order for the ARB to make a future recommendation of approval, the project must comply with the following Findings for Architectural Review as required in Chapter 18.76.020 of the PAMC.

Finding #1: The design is consistent with applicable provisions of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, coordinated area plans (including compatibility requirements), and any relevant design guides.

Finding #2: The project has a unified and coherent design, that:

- a. creates an internal sense of order and desirable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community,
- b. preserves, respects and integrates existing natural features that contribute positively to the site and the historic character including historic resources of the area when relevant,
- c. is consistent with the context-based design criteria of the applicable zone district,
- d. provides harmonious transitions in scale, mass and character to adjacent land uses and land use designations,
- e. enhances living conditions on the site (if it includes residential uses) and in adjacent residential areas.

Finding #3: The design is of high aesthetic quality, using high quality, integrated materials and appropriate construction techniques, and incorporating textures, colors, and other details that are compatible with and enhance the surrounding area.

Finding #4: The design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and providing for elements that support the building's necessary operations (e.g. convenient vehicle access to property and utilities, appropriate arrangement and amount of open space and integrated signage, if applicable, etc.).

Finding #5: The landscape design complements and enhances the building design and its surroundings, is appropriate to the site's functions, and utilizes to the extent practical, regional indigenous drought resistant plant material capable of providing desirable habitat that can be appropriately maintained.

Finding #6: The project incorporates design principles that achieve sustainability in areas related to energy efficiency, water conservation, building materials, landscaping, and site planning.

Context-Based Design Criteria PAMC 18.16.90

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment

The design of new projects shall promote pedestrian walkability, a bicycle friendly environment, and connectivity through design elements

2. Street Building Facades

Street facades shall be designed to provide a strong relationship with the sidewalk and the street (s), to create an environment that supports and encourages pedestrian activity through design elements

3. Massing and Setbacks

Buildings shall be designed to minimize massing and conform to proper setbacks

4. Low Density Residential Transitions

Where new projects are built abutting existing lower scale residential development, care shall be taken to respect the scale and privacy of neighboring properties

5. Project Open Space

Private and public open space shall be provided so that it is usable for the residents and visitors of the site

6. Parking Design

Parking shall be accommodated but shall not be allowed to overwhelm the character of the project or detract from the pedestrian environment

7. Large Multi-Acre Sites

Large sites (over one acre) shall be designed so that street, block, and building patterns are consistent with those of the surrounding neighborhood

8. Sustainability and Green Building Design

Project design and materials to achieve sustainability and green building design should be incorporated into the project

ATTACHMENT C
ZONING COMPARISON TABLE
788 San Antonio Road

Table 1: CS ZONING DISTRICT COMPARISON TABLE			
Zoning District	CS (Existing Zoning)	Housing Incentive Program (HIP)	Proposed Project if HIP approved
Regulation	Required	Required	Proposed
Minimum Site Area (ft²)	None Required	Not Applicable	43,390 sf (0.996 acres)
Site Width (ft)	None Required	Not Applicable	234-255 feet (varies)
Site Depth (ft)	None Required	Not Applicable	147-187 feet (varies)
Min. Front Yard (Leghorn Street)	0 – 10 feet to create an 8 – 12 feet effective sidewalk width ⁽¹⁾	Not Applicable	25 feet 3 inches with 5 foot sidewalk
Min. Rear Yard	10 feet for residential portion; no requirement for commercial portion	Not Applicable	10 feet 4 inches
Min. Interior Side Yard	10 feet (for lots abutting a residential zone district)	Not Applicable	10 feet 1 inch
Min. Street Side Yard (San Antonio Road)	5 feet	Not Applicable	26 feet 1 inch
Special Setback	Yes, 24 feet along San Antonio Road and 15 feet along Leghorn Street	Not Applicable	26 feet 1 inch along San Antonio Road and 25 feet 3 inches along Leghorn Street
Build-to-Lines	50 percent of frontage built to setback; 33 percent of side street built to setback ⁽¹⁾	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Maximum Site Coverage	50 percent (21,695 sf)	May be waived by the Director of Planning	59 percent (25,625 sf)
Maximum Height	50 feet	Not Applicable	49 feet 9 inches
Maximum Residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.6:1 (26,034 sf)	May be waived by the Director of Planning	1.93:1 (83,945.21 sf)
Maximum Non-Residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.4:1 (17,356 sf)	Not Applicable	0.04:1 (1,779 sf)

Table 1: CS ZONING DISTRICT COMPARISON TABLE

Zoning District	CS (Existing Zoning)	Housing Incentive Program (HIP)	Proposed Project if HIP approved
Regulation	Required	Required	Proposed
Maximum Combined Residential and Commercial Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	1.0:1 (43,390 sf)	1.5:1	1.97:1 (85,945.21 sf)
Minimum Mixed-Use Ground Floor Commercial FAR	0.15:1 (6,508 sf)	Not Applicable	0.04:1 (1,779.5 sf)
Daylight Plane for lot lines abutting one or more residential zone districts	Daylight plane height and slope shall be identical to those of the most restrictive residential zoning district abutting the lot line	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Maximum Residential Density per Acre Sites on El Camino Real	30 units/per acre No Maximum	Not Applicable	102.34 units per acre
Minimum Site Open Space (percent)	30 percent	Not Applicable	15,412.31 sf (35.5%)
Minimum Usable Open Space (sf per unit)	150 sf per unit (15,300 sf)	Not Applicable	155 sf per unit (15,823.86 sf)

CS Zoning Notes for Mixed Use Projects

(1) Twenty-five-foot driveway access permitted regardless of frontage; build-to requirement does not apply to CC district.

(2) Required usable open space: (1) may be any combination of private and common open spaces; (2) does not need to be located on the ground (but rooftop gardens are not included as open space); (3) minimum private open space dimension six feet; and (4) minimum common open space dimension twelve feet.

(k) Housing Incentive Program

(1) For an exclusively residential or residential mixed-use project in the CC(2) zone or on CN or CS zoned sites on El Camino Real, the Director may waive the residential floor area ratio (FAR) limit and the maximum site coverage requirement after the project with the proposed waiver or waivers is reviewed by the Architectural Review Board, if the Director finds that a project exceeding these standards is consistent with the required architectural review findings. In no event shall the Director approve a commercial FAR that exceeds the standard in Table 4 of Section 18.16.060(b) or a total FAR (including both residential and commercial FAR) in excess of 2.0 in the CC(2) zone or 1.5 in the CN or CS zone.

(2) For a 100% affordable housing project in the CC(2) zone or on CN or CS zoned sites on El Camino Real, the Director may waive any development standard including parking after the project with the proposed waiver or waivers is reviewed by the Architectural Review Board, if the Director finds that a project with such waiver or waivers is consistent with the required architectural review findings. In no event shall the Director approve development standards more permissive than the standards applicable to the Affordable Housing (AH) Combining District in Chapter 18.30(J). A "100% affordable housing project" as used herein means a multiple-family housing or mixed-use project in which the residential component consists entirely of affordable units, as defined in Section 16.65.020 of this code, available only to households with income levels at or below 120% of the area median income, as defined in Section 16.65.020, and where the average

household income does not exceed 60% of the area median income level, except for a building manager's unit.

(3) This program is a local alternative to the state density bonus law, and therefore, a project utilizing this program shall not be eligible for a density bonus under Chapter 18.15 (Residential Density Bonus).

18.16.080 Performance Standards. All development in the CS district shall comply with the performance criteria outlined in [Chapter 18.23](#) of the Zoning Ordinance, including all mixed use development

18.16.090 Context-Based Design Criteria. As further described in a separate attachment, development in a commercial district shall be responsible to its context and compatible with adjacent development, and shall promote the establishment of pedestrian oriented design.

Table 2: CONFORMANCE WITH CHAPTER 18.52 (Off-Street Parking and Loading)

Type	Required		Proposed	Conforms?
Multiple-Family	1 space per studio and one-bedroom; 2 spaces per two-bedroom unit	Studio: 32 1-bedroom: 67 2-bedroom: 3 105 spaces	105 spaces*	Yes, with use of mechanical lifts (81 stackers)
Commercial	1 space per 350 square feet (First 1,500 sf exempted from parking)	1,779 -1,500 = 279 sf 1 space	2 space	Yes
Bicycle Parking	1 space per unit/ 100% Long Term (LT) 1 space per 10 units short term for guests (ST) 1 space per 3,500 square feet (20% LT/ 80% ST)	102 LT spaces 10.2 ST spaces 1 ST space Total Required: 102 LT spaces & 11 ST spaces	104 LT Spaces 12 ST Spaces	Yes



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES: August 15, 2019
City Hall/City Council Chambers
250 Hamilton Avenue
8:30 AM

Call to Order/Roll Call

Present: Chair Peter Baltay, Vice Chair Osma Thompson, Board Members Alexander Lew and David Hirsch.

Absent: None

Chair Baltay: Good morning. Welcome to the August 15 meeting of the Palo Alto Architectural Review Board. Could we have a roll call, please?

[Roll Call]

Action Items

2. PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 788 San Antonio Avenue [19PLN-00079]: Consideration of a Major Architectural Review to Allow the Demolition of Existing 12,000 Square Feet of Commercial Space and the Construction of a Four-Story Mixed Use Building that Includes 102 Residential Units

and 1,780 Square Feet of Commercial Space. Sixteen of the Residential Units Would be Below Market Rate. The Project Also Requires a Zoning Amendment to Apply the Housing Incentive Program at this Location. Environmental Assessment: An Environmental Impact Report is Being Prepared in Accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Zoning District: CS (Service Commercial). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Sheldon S. Ah Sing at sahsing@m-group.us.

Chair Baltay: Then we're going to move on to our first action item. That's item number 2. It's a public hearing for 788 San Antonio Avenue. Consideration of a major architectural review to allow the demolition of existing 12,000 square feet of commercial space and the construction of a four-story mixed-use building that includes 102 residential units and 1,780 square feet of commercial space. Sixteen of the residential units would be below market. The project also requires a zoning amendment to apply the housing incentive program at this location. Before we get started, I'd like to ask if anyone has any disclosures to make, starting with Alex.

Board Member Lew: Yes, I visited the site on Tuesday, and I've done additional research on four items. One is, I looked into the zoning for the property next door in Mountain View, which is MM General Industrial with zero setbacks required. Also researched the new trees on San Antonio Road that were installed by the City in 2012. I looked into the vacant building next door on Leghorn, which seems to be vacant since about 2014. And then, the last item is I did look at a project called the Parker and Berkeley [phonetic], which has, like a lounge looking bicycle room, similar to what the applicant is proposing today. I was looking to see how well it was actually functioning.

Chair Baltay: Perhaps during your comments you can bring us more information about that.

Board Member Lew: Yeah.

Chair Baltay: Osma?

Vice Chair Thompson: I visited the site.

Chair Baltay: David?

Board Member Hirsch: I visited the site. Walked the neighborhood. Yes, visited the site.

Chair Baltay: I, too, visited the site. Nothing else. Thank you. Okay, staff, do we have a report?

Sheldon Ah Sing, Consultant Planner: Yes, we do. Good morning. I'm Sheldon Ah Sing, Project Planner. The applicant is also here with their presentation, as well. I'll give an overview about the project and why we're here. A little bit of context as well because there is a zoning amendment that is going on at the same time. This is a formal review of a development for a four-story mixed-use building with about 1,800 square feet of commercial space at the corner, the building at Leghorn and San Antonio. They are proposing 102 dwelling units on a one-acre site. The request does include, in addition to the major architectural review, which is under the purview of the Board, there is a zoning amendment. I'll go through that in more detail. There's also a parking reduction request and a partial waiver of retail space. The City does have retail preservation, a certain amount of retail and retail-like space that needs to go back onto the site after it's demolished. The project is proposing something that is less than that. Since this project is really at the beginning, we need a lot of other components to come together. It also includes an environmental impact report. We're seeking no recommendation at this time, just to get some feedback on some items. We'll get into that. A little bit of background. The existing zoning and comp plan designation for the site is Service Commercial, and that's consistent with the majority of properties along this corridor. As mentioned, this site is just under an acre. The uses on the site would be some, prior uses would be retail, wholesale, auto services. There's a martial arts studio there now, as well as a contractor's office. Existing buildings are about 18,000 square feet, and they were built in the 50's and 60's. Just a little bit of context here. This project is at the intersection of San Antonio and Leghorn. It's right on the border between Palo Alto and

Mountain View. The rear of the property serves as that border. And as mentioned by Board Member Lew, yes, the adjacent properties in Mountain View are industrial. You do have some single-story, some two-story buildings in the area. You have the Greenhouse Community residential multi-family neighborhood that's across the street from the project. And then, at Charleston and San Antonio, there is the kind of larger senior community building there, a complex. And then, also along San Antonio, you have the hotels that are under construction right now that this Board has just seen a couple years ago. It is an area that is in transition. Looking at the zoning map here, again, this is the zoning area. It's mostly CS. You do have some, the residential neighborhood is a PC designation. I put two X's on the map. One is the project location, as well as the hotel site that's under construction now, just for a little bit of context of larger buildings in the area. The hotel building has a 2.0 FAR [Floor Area Ratio] also. An overview about the project. Presently, it's 102 units, a residential mixed-use project for ownership units. The applicant can go into whether that's going to be the case in the future, of ownership. It might be rental. There's a lot of studio, one-bedroom types of units. There's really a handful of two-bedroom and three-bedroom types of units, so it might lend itself more likely to be a rental project. The project does include an underground garage containing the parking. There's 93 spaces that are provided; 110 are required for the site. Forty-two of those are with mechanical lifts, and the others are on the surface without any lifts. As mentioned, it's about 1,800 square feet of ground floor commercial space at the corner. As presently proposed, the project doesn't meet the zoning. They have to go through a zoning amendment process, and the idea is to extend the housing incentive program to this area. That is something that was recently implemented as part of the zoning amendments to El Camino Real and the Downtown area. The project site is actually identified in the housing element as a housing opportunity site. There is a comprehensive plan policy to eliminate these housing opportunity sites along San Antonio and focus and concentrate on sites within the Downtown El Camino Real. This would be a little bit different, but we do have a willing applicant to come forward with housing that has a really good amount of density to help out with the City's issue with residential. The idea would be with this zoning amendment to include this housing incentive program, not only for the site, but on the corridor for CS properties between Charleston and Middlefield. It would allow higher FAR for projects. Right now, the FAR is up to 1.5, but it we're looking at up to 2.0 for this project. As part of this housing incentive, it does eliminate the maximum density and creates a waiver for lot coverage. It also would allow for any types of rooftop gardens. None is proposed in this project, I believe. There's a little bit of covered rooftop garden. It also excludes 1,500 square feet of retail/retail-like floor area from parking requirements, so it helps out a little bit with the parking there. And as I mentioned, the highlighted green area there on the map would be the areas we would be considering including in this housing incentive program. Comparison of what's existing now and how it's proposed. This matrix here, you see some of the things that we'd have to change with the zoning. The maximum combined FAR, maximum is 1.5; this project is looking at about 2.0, so we'd be looking at something a little more intense. We did run this by the Council in the pre-screening process last May and they seemed receptive to the project going forward, with the request. Maximum density under CS zoning district is 30 units per acre; this project is just over 102. The retail preservation, there's a partial replacement. There is already an existing exemption and waiver in the code. This would seek a modification of that. And then, looking at the parking, the project would require an exemption because there is a reduction in the amount of parking spaces. This is actually the elevation of the under-construction hotel project, just to give a little bit of context there on what this Board did there. There is a special setback along San Antonio, the same special setback that's in front of the subject property. For this project, the Board did want to see a step-back at the upper levels, and some terraces there with some landscaping. That was important for the Board. This is the proposed San Antonio elevation for the project. I will let the applicant kind of describe, sort of their design intent of what they're trying to do here, but I just wanted to provide this image for you early on. You do have that covered roof deck with palm trees up there. This is more of the Leghorn Street elevation. You can see the entrance to the parking garage, as well as the retail space there at the corner, to the left. This is the rear elevation, looking from the Mountain View properties. A lot up there is with the brick and stucco façade. Again, that corner elevation looking more at the retail plaza area and how that works with the pedestrian streetscape. I think we're going to ask the applicant to provide a better interior courtyard elevation, just so we get an idea of what and how that open space works. I think we can do a better job there, but that's what was in the planning packet. We have the covered roof deck image there, and that shows what that experience would look like from that level. Just to touch upon some of the affordability requirements. As presently proposed, if the project goes forward with ownership, then 15 percent of the

amount that they're proposing is 16 affordable units. If they decide to change the project to rental, then they would be subject to a payment of a fee. With respect to the California Environmental Quality Act, the building at 788 San Antonio is eligible for listing on the California Registry that deems it to be historic. Therefore, demolition of the structure constitutes a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA. That requires an Environmental Impact Report. That effort is ongoing right now, and we're trying to do some traffic counts. We're going to the Planning Commission with a scoping meeting. It's a Notice of Preparation. Thank you. There're so many acronyms these days. Those preparations do start that process. In conclusion, we do have a series of questions because we're not expecting to have a recommendation of approval today. We're pretty early on now. But just some observations that we made. There's a large expanse of curtain walls, glass and glazing on the project. Does the project provide sufficient visual articulation along the street elevations? Is the retail space designed in a manner that will be successful? Are the open space areas designed to maximize their potential use? Are the floor to ceiling heights appropriate? Are the windows sufficiently set back to provide relief? Is there sufficient connection with the streets? And there may be some other issues that the Board recognized in their evaluation of the materials. In the next steps, we're at Step 1 here, with the ARB meeting, number 1. We are going to the Planning Commission on September 11th. That will also serve as the environmental scoping meeting. We'll discuss the zoning amendment concepts with them there. They're not going to have purview over design of the building but will at least explain to them what happened here at this meeting. And then, we're anticipating a couple more ARB meetings. That's the maximum anyway that we could have. There will be a second Planning Commission meeting, and then, the public draft of the Environmental Impact Report will be circulated for comment. Finally, this will all culminate in everybody making recommendation to the City Council. With that, we're asking the Board to consider the proposed project and provide feedback on the project design to the staff and the applicant, and continue the item to a date uncertain. That completes my presentation. I'd be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Sheldon, if you could, I think all of us might have some questions, but I believe this went to a preliminary hearing before the City Council. Could you summarize how that went, please?

Mr. Sing: Yes. We did go to the Council. We had a smaller project. We had a project that had 64 dwelling units. We proposed the idea of a larger project, more dwelling units, bringing the housing incentive program to that site. Some of the waiver of the retail space. There is sort of a dichotomy between retail and housing, as you would expect, but in the end, there was support to move the concept forward through the process including the housing incentive program there, having a project come back with a larger FAR, having more housing, but do include the retail.

Chair Baltay: I want to be clear that it's your opinion that City Council is in support of this type of large difference in zoning. It's a much bigger building than would normally be allowed. I'm not saying to you to tell me what they would say, but we're being asked to judge this based on a hypothetical zoning standard. I'd like to think that that's reasonably supported by the rest of the City.

Mr. Sing: That's right.

Chair Baltay: Thank you. Any other questions?

Board Member Hirsch: Yes, I do.

Chair Baltay: Go ahead, David.

Board Member Hirsch: Sheldon, why are we seeing this prior to the PTC? There seems to be a million different things that are questionable concerning the zoning. Wouldn't the City normally have gone to the PTC first, and then come to us? Why is this on our agenda?

Mr. Sing: We've been to the City Council on a couple of occasions for the prescreening. They seem to be, as I mentioned, supportive of the concept, as well as there's not an order in the zoning code that would

say you have to go to the Planning Commission first. We're just thinking in terms of this is an opportunity for the Board to provide some feedback on this design of the project.

Board Member Hirsch: We're not looking at the zoning issues then here in particular? We're just looking at the architectural issues. Is that the point?

Ms. Gerhardt: Correct. The zoning is not in the purview of the ARB. And that's why we're asking you to... We believe the Council to be supportive of this concept, so we're asking you to look at it from that perspective.

Board Member Hirsch: I have to say it seems to me that the process is upside down.

Chair Baltay: These are questions, David.

Board Member Hirsch: Yes. A question. I'm just making a statement regarding that. Because I think it would be nice to have a more generalized, if you will, zoning first.

Chair Baltay: Any other questions from my colleagues? Okay. Do we have a presentation from our applicant? You will have 10 minutes to speak. If you could state and spell your name for the record, please.

Ted O'Hanlon, Project Manager: Good morning, Board. My name is Ted O'Hanlon [spells name]. I'm a project manager. I work closely with the owners. I'm going to do a very brief introduction, then let our architect speak to the things you guys are most considerate of. We acquired this property about 14 months ago. When we first saw it, it's availability, we remarked its location on a principal arterial, being San Antonio Road. We thought that was particularly interesting. We liked its proximity to Highway 101, but we also liked the fact that even though it is one mile, it still is a direct shot to the San Antonio Caltrain station. WE started to imagine it as a very interesting opportunity to build more residential units than perhaps a CS zoning might allow. We had a City Council prescreening in October of last year as well, where we had proposed 48 units with a zone change to RM-40. This preceded the housing incentive program, which was formalized in January. As we were continuing to work on our 48-home design, we started to look more closely at the housing incentive program, which would have us not do a zone change, but utilize that City Council-approved method to incentivize more housing units. As we've gone along, one thing that we've done that has made a larger unit count is to reduce the impact of two-bedroom units. In October, we had 27 in a 48-unit plan. In May, we had 18 two-bedroom units. Now, we have seven two-bedroom units. We also incorporated 32 studio units. That's what's caused a lot of the unit inflation as we've gone along, but we also think it's better for the ultimate users of this type of property for where they might want to be and where they want to get to. And a type of housing stock that we don't really see too much of coming online in the Palo Alto area. Another thing I just wanted to point out as a part of this is, our initial application included a transportation demand management write-up. This will be incorporated into the environmental review. One of the primary recommendations that they have with this is to unbundle parking spaces from units, meaning if you rent or own a unit, you do not automatically get a parking space. You would have to pay a premium for that. What these TDM studies have determined is that creates less of a demand for parking when you have to pay on top of your housing for it. What that does is it allows us to still operate an efficient building and still sufficiently meet the demand of the users because there's alternative transportation measures provided to them, whether that's bicycle, bus, rail, or other means, like carpools. Eugene is the leader of Studio S Squared. We have his whole team here. I'm going to hand you off to him, and I thank you guys very much for your consideration, going out to the site and thinking about this project.

Chair Baltay: To the architect, if you could, again, state and spell your name, please.

Eugene Sakai, Studio S Squared Architecture: Sure thing. I'm Eugene Sakai [spells name], Studio S Squared Architecture. Is there a timer here? I want to respect the time limit.

Chair Baltay: You have a green light in front of you. You have six minutes and 18 seconds left. It will turn yellow when you have one minute remaining.

Mr. Sakai: Perfect, thank you. Thank you to Ted, and thank you also, ARB members, for your service to Palo Alto and to this project. We look forward to working with you in the weeks and months to come. Questions of whether this site is appropriate for housing, the density, the parking ratios and FAR, of set housing, are really above my pay grade, and better left to elected officials, professional planners, and the collective wisdom of folks like yourselves. As a residential architect, however, I do see the incredible potential that this site has for pointing the way to a very different vision of San Antonio Road than what we see now. Driving up and down San Antonio Road now, between Middlefield and 101 is not a very pleasant visual experience, as I'm sure you well know. Especially...

Female??: [off-microphone, inaudible]

Chair Baltay: Ma'am, if we could please let him finish. You will have your chance to speak. Please.

Mr. Sakai: Especially on our side of the street, it's mostly an unrelenting procession of parking lots, gas stations, and similar auto-oriented uses. Almost all buildings, even newer ones such as the JCC campus, feature unwelcoming blank or nearly blank walls facing San Antonio, making the streetscape even more inhospitable. The interesting thing about this stretch of San Antonio, especially on our side of the street, is the number of relatively large quarter to one-half acre lots with low utilization rates. And therein lies the potential. With carefully curated land uses and street facing design such as ours and the Marriott Hotel a few doors down now under construction, it's not hard to envision how this stretch of six to seven traffic lanes connecting the thriving employment centers along 101 to the Caltrain station at San Antonio and Alma Street could transform parcel by parcel over time into an environment much more attractive than what we see today. Our project sits nicely amongst a rich established network of bike lanes that connects our site to major employment centers, retail and community amenities, all within easy biking distance. We believe that over time, dependence on the automobile will wane as bike and e-transport is promoted by forward looking projects like ours, and the promise of self-driving vehicles gradually becomes a reality. For all these reasons, we designed a building that facilitates the bike and other alternative modes of transportation, limiting the footprint and visual impact of the car, with a rich materials palette that proudly fronts on and engages with San Antonio Road. With transparency deep into the landscaped courtyard heart of the building through a double height lobby, and 170 feet of continuous ground floor glazing facing San Antonio to help enliven the street scape. Instead of consigning the bicycle parking into an underground storage room, we've chosen to elevate it above grade and celebrate it, placing bike storage right off the main lobby and adjacent to a communal bike repair room and the community mail room. Visible through that expansive glazing and clear to all passers-by that this is a bike-friendly building. Our landscape design reinforces the centrality of our entry with a grand double stair for pedestrians and a pair of gradual ramps for bikes, taking visitors and residents from sidewalk level up to the residential lobby in an elegant and welcoming way. Our corner retail space continues the glazing motif with an at-grade entry and a distinctive overhang that provides both a signage opportunity and creates an interesting shadow line at the gracious corner plaza designed by our landscape architect. Auto access is relegated to Leghorn Avenue, as far away from the intersection as site geometry will allow. This frontage also offers a generous duck-out for carshare pickup and package delivery. Along San Antonio, we've broken down the mass of our building by stepping down from four stories at the corners to three stories in the middle, leaving room under the height limit for parapets, which will screen the rooftop solar panels and the mechanical equipment. Special two-bedroom corner units will provide secondary focal points with our curtain wall design, and further promote the idea of transparency. In typical housing projects, community open spaces are often inwardly focused spaces hidden deep within the building. In contrast, our public gathering space for the residents will be a grand rooftop terrace, looking out over San Antonio Road. Having learned our lessons from rooftop gardens we've done in San Jose – and lived in, in San Jose – we are here proposing a visually striking and highly functional shade structure, with a gentle curve and five apertures to let palm trees grow up and sunlight filter down. The arced canopy here recalls the shape of the entry walkways, and besides offering daytime shade, also provides opportunities for evening gatherings, with downlighting, speaker arrays featuring soft music, and strategically placed heat lamps. We've even created an opportunity for a connection with one of the past historic uses of the site with chrysanthemums and steel planters fronting the storefront glass along San Antonio. Thank you very much for your attention. We look forward to hearing your input on how we can improve our project for the site.

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much. Very impressive timing. You had one second left. With that, we have two speaker cards. If anyone else, any member of the public would like to speak, please give us a card. If not, we have a Joan Larrabee, followed by Warren Storkman. You will each have three minutes to speak, and if you could state and spell your name for the record, we would appreciate it, please. Welcome.

Joan Larrabee: Good morning. I'm Joan Larrabee, I live at 777 San Antonio Road, which is the Palo Alto Greenhouse, which is very beautiful and attractive, with lots of green trees and grass and a swimming pool.

Chair Baltay: Could I please interrupt you to spell your last name?

Ms. Larrabee: [spells name].

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much. Please continue.

Ms. Larrabee: Well, this has twice the number of units that it had in May, so we're trying to hit a moving target here. The first thing is that the architect needs to learn how to count, which is something we learn in Kindergarten. San Antonio Road from the railroad tracks to 101 only has four lanes of traffic. It does not have six or seven. It only has four. The City needs to realize that San Antonio Road, with only four lanes wide, is not built to accommodate the four-, five- and six-story buildings and all of their activities that the City is trying to thrust into that corridor. Mountain View west of the train tracks and west of Alma Street over to El Camino does have six lanes of traffic. In other words, it has a 50 percent higher capacity than we do where we live. It is already coming to a standstill. There have been times when I've had to go wait for the traffic signal through three cycles. And the hotel is not even open yet. The hotel is going to have 300 rooms. The City has not allowed the infrastructure to accommodate all of the activities they're trying to push into this. We need a comprehensive traffic plan. We do not have one. Secondly, if you start putting in mechanical lifts, and now, they're talking about rental units, of which there will be turnover. I mean, I've been in my condo in Palo Alto with a garage for 35 years. I know how to open and close a garage door. But if you start having rentals where people come in and out, this year, six-month rental... How long are the rentals going to be? Six months? A year? You're going to change things. Again, we would like the project to be successful. We would welcome residents into the area. Primary land use along San Antonio is residential, but this is too many units with too many people coming and going. And the infrastructure does not support all of this activity and all of this construction. And it's only four lanes wide. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much. Warren Storkman, please.

Warren Storkman: Pardon me. The name is Warren Storkman. I've been residing at 4180 McKay Drive for 64 years.

Chair Baltay: Could I trouble you to spell your last name, please?

Mr. Storkman: [Spells last name].

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much.

Mr. Storkman: I've been living at this residence for 64 years. I remember watching Eichler pushing the cows out of the way to build his homes coming toward San Antonio 64 years ago. And now, we're just bulging at the seams, and it seems to me, what my major concern is – and hopefully you'll give it some consideration – is that San Antonio Road is now becoming overused. We soon will have gridlock if we continue letting things like this develop. We won't have enough room for the cars. It's already bad because San Antonio, I live close to, and I think that you gentlemen and ladies should give some consideration of, thinking about approving this project. It's just too many people and too many cars on that, well, around Leghorn, is where it is. That's about all I can say. Please give it real consideration because we don't need this problem anymore. It's going to close San Antonio Road down now. It's very serious. It's very serious. Your traffic will just be unbearable. Or, I should say, contribute it to being unbearable. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much. To the applicant, you have a chance to respond to or rebut any of the comments that have been made, if you wish to speak.

Mr. Sakai: No, thank you.

Chair Baltay: Okay, no, thank you. Any questions from any of the Board members, for anyone? Then, I would like to remind my colleagues, I think it's important for us to remember that this is an architecture review board, and with the zoning especially uncertain or unclear here, I'd really like to see us try to make positive comments towards the building and design of the building. As much as there's a lot of questions arising about the zoning and the land use and the parking, our purview really about what the building will look like. I think that's how we can be most constructive. Before we start, I'd like to ask Ms. Larrabee, I know you've been very concerned about this project and the hotel next door, and I'd like to offer you a chance to address any comments you may have towards the design of the building. Do you have anything to say to us regarding how the building looks, it's mass, it's size? Because that's what we're here to look at. I want to be sure that you've had a chance to say what you really think about that. I know on the hotel, you had some concerns, and we listened to me. If my colleagues will humor me.

Ms. Larrabee: If you could put the front elevation up, the San Antonio Road elevation up, please. I don't understand what the white thing is in the middle.

Chair Baltay: Okay, I don't want to guide you what to say. I'm just giving you a chance to give us feedback along the lines of what we're here to review.

Ms. Larrabee: I'm a little concerned about it. It looks like it's going to take off like a 747, but I don't understand what the white thing is. I know he's trying. You know, you've got to go the in-and-out and in-and-out business and change the colors and everything. I'm not real excited about it. But as far as the architecture, the parking and having underground parking is part of the architecture.

Chair Baltay: Of course.

Ms. Larrabee: And there's no parking for visitors or anything like that. I prefer buildings either to be all glass or all brick, but that's just me. I know he's trying, but I don't know what that white thing is there. It looks a little odd. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Okay, well, thank you very much for your comments. Okay, then, bringing it back to the Board, Alex, could you start us off on this one, please?

Board Member Lew: Okay. I have comments on zoning, but if we're going to bypass all that, I will.... In my mind, I think it's worth the Board discussing it at some level because it's new for us, right? The housing incentive program is new. We haven't reviewed it before. There are issues here, like retail parking exemptions that are in our letter, in our letter to the Council. You put things like that. And it's sort of been addressed in the housing incentive program, to a certain degree. I think it's worth discussing it at some point. Maybe not on this particular project, but...

Chair Baltay: Why don't we then separate our discussions? I think it's true that zoning is an important element. Why don't you address comments regarding the zoning change, and we'll go around and everybody can say their piece on that.

Board Member Lew: Sure.

Chair Baltay: And then we can come back to the architecture itself. I want to be clear to the architect, that they get real guidance from us on the design of the building.

Board Member Lew: Yeah, I mean, that's what our role is, and we have PTC and Council as well.

Chair Baltay: Why don't we first say, what do you think about this housing incentive program change? Anything about the zoning, and then we'll come back to the rest of the design.

Board Member Lew: It seems to me that the housing incentive program is intended for downtown and El Camino, as I understand it. And then, so, we have the CS zone on El Camino, and we have the CS zone on San Antonio. What is the difference? I just want to say, in my mind, the difference is the transportation. If you look at the, say, the bus lines and community shuttles that serve San Antonio Road, it's pretty marginal. I'm looking at, it's like a mile walk to get to the Mountain View shuttle on Rengstorff. It's three-quarters of a mile to get to the Palo Alto shuttle on Charleston. Caltrain is over a mile away, like a 23-minute walk. But you can walk to Google, you can walk to Costco, which is a half mile, so those are a 10-minute walk. But to me, it's not the same as being on El Camino, which has pretty fast express buses. It's not really close enough to Caltrain. To me, that's a major difference. The bus lines that are there, like the VTA bus lines, you can get to the Research Park, or to east San Jose, or maybe Gunn High School, or the VA. I'm finding it kind of lacking in there, but I would support it in concept just because of the large number of employees at Google. It's really relatively close by, and in theory it can be done quickly by bicycle. On the retail, so, we have, with the housing incentive program, I think there's a parking... Actually, in the parking ordinance, there's a new provision that, there's a 1,500 square foot exemption for parking for the retail, which I think is desirable from our point of view because we've seen projects not, housing projects without any retail on the ground floor, so I think I'm willing to support that. The downside I see is that if it doesn't have any parking, people are either walking or they're parking on the street. But anybody who knows San Antonio Road, just circling around the block in that area at rush hour, that's not possible. You're waiting through two or three light cycles, and you just wouldn't do that. You would just bypass the store. And we have businesses on El Camino like Starbucks, and they say half their business is just drive-by customers. They see it and it's like, "Oh, I'll stop here because I can get in and out quickly." That's a major concern I have for the retail. I do support in concept having a corner retail. I would say cities like Emeryville and their big housing projects, they're always incorporating sandwich shops and coffee places on their big housing projects, even when they're not in the major downtown destination. And I think it does make a positive difference. I think I'll leave it at that for the zoning.

Chair Baltay: Okay, why don't we work our way through? David, you also had some concerns, or questions at least. What do you think about the zoning change?

Board Member Hirsch: Well, I agree 100 percent with what Alex has said, and he's done an excellent analysis of the distances, environmental issues, and transportation issues. I have nothing to add to any of that. But it's an unfriendly corridor as it is now, although the majority of uses is residential on the opposite side of the street. That's certainly not true on this side of the street. I would have thought that the City would, rather than run after housing so quickly in this area, done a more comprehensive plan for the whole block, all the way from the Mountain View end all the way down. And it would have been a planning study of some greater depth. Unfortunately, we don't have that. We have a new building being placed here. I'd reserve more of my comments to the building itself, but agreeing with Alex entirely about the planning issues.

Chair Baltay: Wonderful, thank you. Osma?

Vice Chair Thompson: Hi. Yeah, I think in terms of zoning, so, I live on San Antonio, a little bit further away from this, so I pass this corridor pretty frequently. I have been passing pretty frequently for most of my life. It's true, it's going through some changes right now. You know, we're all talking about retail being important, and I will concur. Not just retail, but the martial arts studio that's there, there's sort of other, not just coffee and sandwich shops, but community focused, ground-level activities along that corridor that have some pretty strong communities that go there and come together, and I think that's really important to maintain. If this corridor, you know, biking is becoming really big. This is a transit-oriented development. I've biked on San Antonio. It's not the most pleasant bicycling experience, so, I definitely think the corridor itself could use some work. I know there's a lot of construction happening there right now. It's true, if the street can be more amenable to the new modes of transit that are going to serve it, I think that would be a huge uplift. I mean, the Baylands is just down the street, and then, a lot of people, you know, I've often

thought of biking down there, but a lot of the time, I don't, just because it's really dangerous. But it would be great, you know, this future vision of having bicycles be a part of the corridor language, so, I'm all in favor of that. I think there's the possibility for something really great in the future.

Chair Baltay: Okay. I'm agreement with what everybody else said. I have nothing further to add. Alex, why don't you start us off on the building design now.

Board Member Lew: Okay. Thank you for the presentation and the package. It looks very good for being such a, at the beginning stages of the review process. I think my main concern is that the height of the retail space is, I think nine-foot ceilings, which is relatively low for retail. Normally, I would look for something higher if it's for that kind of space. This is only, like, that size square footage, possibly lower is fine. I think that there is, I think you've got two glass corners, and I think the one on the left side, I think is not really working. But when I look at the neighbor and maybe what could happen next door, I'm not sure the left one makes sense. Also, the left side ground floor unit with a lot of glass right up against the street, that doesn't really make sense to me. I think you're also showing... Oh, and I want to thank you for trying to do a prominent two-story entrance on San Antonio Road. That's something we asked for on El Camino as part of our El Camino guidelines and we rarely get it. We don't require it here, but you're doing it, so I definitely wanted to acknowledge that. I would actually probably try to encourage you to add more detail to the secondary entrance. I think there's a stair entrance on Leghorn. I was sort of trying to pretend, if I were living here, my hunch is that I would use that entrance on Leghorn. That would be my preferred way of getting in and out of the building. It seems to me that that could be a really nice entrance. I'm supportive of brick. I think it does add a lot of texture. It seems to me it's not really compatible with the neighborhood, but if you look at the new Amazon building in East Palo Alto, the brick actually adds a lot of character to fairly boxy buildings. On the canopy, on the fourth-floor canopy with the Chinese windmill palms, I'm not sure I really understand what's going on. I don't really get the big idea, so maybe the architect can explain it. It might help. I appreciate trying to do something different, and I want to encourage you to think out of the box. I live on a street with two blocks of Chinese windmill palms, and I really love them, and they really look great against, as a silhouette against the sky. Right now, we have a full moon, and a full moon with the palm trees is really stunning. But I don't get that at all when you mix it in with the canopy, so I'm not really quite sure how that all works together. Also, with regard to the roof garden, if you look at our zoning code for roof gardens, I think we've added a new section for that, and it does require a minimum amount of landscaping, and I don't think you're meeting it at this point. On the bicycle room, I did have two comments. One, previous councils have asked for that on housing projects, like here in the downtown area. They really wanted the easy access to the bicycles because the theory is it would enhance the usage of bicycles. If you have to go down to a locked room in the basement, I think the tendency is you would just leave it down in the basement. I do want to acknowledge that, and I think that that does make things better. In the research I've done on some projects in Berkeley, I've read online comments that when they're in the lobby and they're just locked to a rack, that things get stolen off of the bikes. You know, it's not in a designated room that's locked, like a locked room in a locked building. I think I just have that kind of concern. I generally like the idea of having open lounges and bike rooms sort of mixed in together. A project in Berkeley called the Parker, it's like having a garage in your apartment building. Like having a single-family garage in your apartment building. It's actually kind of nice. I have friends who lived in condominiums here in downtown and they actually sold them and moved to houses because there was.... If you're mountain biking, you've got a dirty bike and you just want to hose it off, if you're in a fancy condo, there's actually nowhere to do it. They're missing all that kind of space and they just find them unlivable. They look nice in marketing photos and stuff, and you're actually trying to live there and do things; they're actually not very useable. So, I do like those kinds of spaces. I do want to go back to one thing, too. Also, on the roof gardens and all the open spaces, I do want to encourage you to look at our revised open space definition, that we're really trying to get them to be useable. Useable for kids, as well as adults. And not just lounge seating. It can be, like, the fire pits. If you look at the Jewish Community Center, it's like senior housing, but the play area is used until like nine o'clock every night by the neighboring kids. And at least in my neighborhood, those little one-bedroom apartments are now occupied by families. That's sort of where we are today with the prices in the neighborhood. I think that might be all I have. Oh, one last thing on landscape. I think at this point, I could not support the landscape planting palette. I don't think it meets our native plant requirement yet, or the finding, which requires the

greatest [inaudible] feasible that can be maintained. I think it's not there yet. Particularly with the shrubs. It's missing all four of our major native plant shrub categories, like manzanitas, ceanothus [phonetic], areogonys [phonetic] and sages. That's all that I have at the moment. I'm curious to see what my other Board members think.

Mr. Sing: Sorry, to the Chair, just a response to Board Member Lew's comment about the retail height. On Sheet A5.0A, there's a cross section. It's a little more height than nine feet. I mean, not much more. It's, like, an additional 1 ½ feet, it's kind of sunken down into the garage space.

Board Member Lew: I saw some dash lines, and I think I did notice that. Thank you for that, though.

Chair Baltay: Does that change your thought, Alex, if it's 10 ½ feet high compared to nine?

Board Member Lew: I think I said that nine is okay in my mind. I think my point is higher is better. Say there's a new mixed-use building near me, near my house, and it has a Pete's on the corner, the glass corner. And I haven't measured it but I was looking at photos and I think it's 12 or 13 feet high, and it looks really nice. This nice open, spacious, and light, and people hang out there. To me, we should try to get that, ideally.

Chair Baltay: Thank you for bringing that to our attention, Sheldon. David?

Board Member Hirsch: First, a question of Sheldon and staff. How is the commercial going to be used? What is it planned for? Nobody has spoken to that.

Mr. Sing: I think I'll defer to the applicant on that.

Board Member Hirsch: Okay. I understood...

[crosstalk]

Mr. Sing: ...retail, retail-like...

Board Member Hirsch: Is it going to be just general retail, or is it physical [crosstalk] for tenants?

Mr. Sing: We'll let the applicant respond to that.

Chair Baltay: David, could we put that off and just get our comments out first?

Board Member Hirsch: All right. Well, that's very important, I think, at this point, to determine that.

Chair Baltay: Would you prefer the applicant answer that question now then?

Board Member Hirsch: I'll weave that into what I'm going to say. In looking at this building from a planning point of view, I noticed that, you know, four-story building, a lot of tenants in it at upper levels. There's a single elevator, and it's on the Leghorn corner of the building, and there's a refuse room on the opposite corner, not near any stair whatsoever. I'm looking at this... And Alex referred to this in a more minor way, but for me, it's the most major issue here in the way this building is organized. Because, in fact, the traffic and closeness of the street here is really not a nice environment to be adjacent to or walking to. The building will be accessed I think from the Leghorn corner, and the Leghorn corner is kind of given over to this retail usage. Whereas, if that retail usage were something like a health club, or whatever, for the building itself, it could be put on an upper level, and you could have a major entry at that corner of Leghorn. And it seems to me that would make so much more sense for the way in which this kind of a building, which is really longer along San Antonio than it is width wide, going deep into the site. If you entered where the elevator was, you'd certainly be better capable of getting access to your apartment. Something illogical about having an entry in the middle of the building, and a symmetrical building of this nature, on the street,

which forces people to walk to the middle of the building, and then, where are they? They're in a lobby, but they're not anywhere near the elevator. To me, that's not a logical arrangement. I would recommend that you reconsider the major location of the entry into this building on Leghorn, which the setback from San Antonio Road is a nice feature because it allows you to give some more privacy to the ground floor usages, which could then be more residential usage on that façade. And they would then have kind of a setback relationship with the building that would give them some privacy, so that they wouldn't be on view from the street. Of course, the other aspect is then the service portion of the building, where garbage would be collected, could be more on the area closer to where the elevator or service is, on that end of the building, the Leghorn end of the building. And then, you would have the garbage getting out to the street somehow, because where else are you going to take the garbage to? It goes to a garbage room in the cellar at present, and that room is at the other end of the building as well. This is sort of obvious planning, and I think it hasn't been logically arranged here. It does set up an aesthetic for the building itself. Then you have a major entry on San Antonio Road, in the middle of the building, which is kind of a... Well, it's a kind of a symmetrical quality to this building that doesn't really make sense. It doesn't make sense in terms of people entering the building. There's no reason why two paths would be used in this way in that front, to go through the landscape to the central entry at that location. These are practical planning thoughts. I think this would have the possibility of a much better building if it weren't a prisoner to its symmetry. The symmetry carries through to the roof of the building as well, to what is really a kind of, it reminds me of a Miami Beach kind of idea of putting trees on the rooftop like this. We've been looking at other buildings in which the socializing space is in an open area at an upper level, and they are quite successful if they're more designed to the use of the kind of a tenant that's in the building. And I think there are reasons why people get together and have parties, etc., on a rooftop like that. But this is arranged to create a false sense of open space up there. It isn't a real useful space. It isn't planned for furnishing to be useful on there. It's just kind of a physical presentation for show and tell, not for a use function. I'm not understanding what the vertical strips are on this building. I don't really see it detailed here, but in the earlier drawings that we had, there are vertical strips, kind of decorative elements, on the front. They've been removed, I can't really tell if they've been removed or not in this iteration. What I'm looking at here on the screen doesn't seem to show that anymore. And if they're not there, I appreciate that it would be a simpler scheme that way, and the ins and outs of the building are what determine the façade of the building. I would urge you to look at this design differently. If you're going to make the corner at Leghorn – and you ought to do so – into the major entry, a major lobby where you have that glass corner, and then, as you move down the block, through the middle of the building, the volumes could relate more so that it isn't symmetrical, so that you really don't have that opposite end looking like the entry to the building. I note that the entire relationship of the glass mullions is very casual. There's no order to it. I think if you're going to create a glass feature, you really ought to use it as an emphasis, and it ought to be designed entirely from ground to top, and it ought to be the major expression of this building. That's pretty much what I have to say.

Chair Baltay: Thank you, David. Osma?

Vice Chair Thompson: Hi, there. I just wanted to thank my fellow Board members for their comments. I thank the applicant for their presentation; thank the members of the public for speaking, especially Mr. Storkman, who gave us the visual of Eichler chasing the cows away. That was a highlight. I'm just going to focus on the aesthetics of the architecture. I did want to make a note to the applicant for next time we see this. It's really important for us when we're reviewing this to really understand your design intent, and part of that is being very clear about your observations of the site that are not only functional observations, but environmental, aesthetic, and ambient impressions of the site. And relate that to how your project is responding to that. For example, if you find that Palo Alto, this street in particular, has a really strong landscape, you know, we have a lot of trees, the adjacent properties have a lot of trees, then make a story of how your project really brings that in and makes greenery an integral part of the design. Obviously, that's not the story you told today, but I'm giving you an example of something where you can show how this building is really important. It's specific to this site; it's not just any building that could be anywhere in Palo Alto, or even in the United States, or even anywhere in the world. But why this is important for this particular site. Because this site is unique, and this building is going to be really important because it's going to be up and coming, and it's going to be something that future buildings are going to be next to, and we're going to... This is going to be part of the future context. I think it's really important that this

relationship to the city street, to the people that use this site, the cars, is part of the architecture. It's not just the planning, and zoning, and the first-floor plan. It's about the façade. It's about how people are going to actually feel when they're walking down this street. And at the moment, they're going to feel a big wall of glass. And even the relationship that the residential units have to the street, these windows don't look operable. There's no connection right now between this building and the street, especially on the corners. There's a bit more connection where you've got the screen in the middle, and I think out of this whole façade that we're looking at, that middle part where you have the screen is probably the most dynamic and interesting architectural element that we've encountered, and everything else kind of feels a step away from that. The façade is sort of in danger of being a little too flat everywhere else, and it's missing a lot of character as a result. The glassy corners of the building feel a little more office than they do residential, and I know a lot of newer multifamily housing is using a glassy character, but is that right for Palo Alto? Maybe it's right for over there, but I feel like there's a lot of conceptual development that I think would really strengthen this design. In terms of the rooftop, the curved canopy is a bold choice. It's sort of in that place where I could see a potential for it to get more interesting, but at the moment, where it is, it has no relationship to anything else in the building, so it really doesn't feel justified in that way. But I think if it did, if there was more of a story of why it was like that, I think I would be on board a little bit more. So, yeah, the design is sort of under-articulated, and that rendering of the courtyard should not have been in the packet, honestly. In terms of the material, you have a lot of material expressions throughout your façade. The most simplest one is from the back, where we're just looking at brick and one other material – I can't remember right now. On the front, we're sort of looking at a glass expression, a stucco expression, a brick expression, and a metal panel expression. That's quite a lot. It seems like a little bit too much. I understand you're trying to break up a big façade. I don't know if using four different types of expressions is the right way to do that. I think there are other things you could do in terms of adding relief. There's a question about, do the windows add relief? Where the screen is there, I think that's a little more successful, but everywhere else, I think that plus the extra materials is a bit too jarring on the eyes. Materially speaking, though, I don't mind the brick. I agree that it adds a lot of character in an otherwise blank façade. I think it sort of makes blank facades really interesting. And there are very few other materials that do that, unfortunately, unless you go through the actual trouble of articulating your stucco façade. I'd support raising the retail floor so that that bottom floor is a little bit taller. I could support changing the entry to the corner as well. And I understand right now, the entry is sort of breaking up the façade, but if the middle were that community space, the martial arts studio, ballroom dance studio, or whatever it may be, that could also break up the façade as well. It doesn't necessarily have to be the entry. So, yes, a lot of work to do on this design. It's got a little ways to go. I'm just going to reiterate that design intent is really important, so whatever your design intent... I heard the applicant say transparency. I think that on its own isn't enough. There needs to be more about the site and why the design is the way it is. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Okay, thank you. I find myself in agreement with my colleagues, and find their comments insightful and appropriate. In no particular order, but to reiterate what Osma was saying, the applicant made a number of statements, painting a picture of San Antonio, which were not entirely positive, yet we have a building with enormous walls of glass, looking at this avenue. If it's not that positive of a street, why is the building doing what it's doing? And I'm not saying it should be one way or the other, but she's bringing up a very valid point about trying to take your design to a level where you really do make sure it fits into this location, and this community, and these needs. My feeling is that it really just needs a little bit more thought. And I can understand where, as an applicant, you've got so many balls in the air, so many agencies and boards and laws to meet that it's complicated. Let me bring that around then because David's comment about organization of the building at a fundamental level, I think is very insightful. If you were to put the primary entrance on the corner, it would make more sense organizing the building. It would let you then respond to Alex's comment about the two glass elements, the symmetrical organization not making sense. The one on the left doesn't relate as well. You only have one corner really on the building. It would let you then perhaps question the use of the retail. "Retail" is a funny term to use here. This is a destination type space, like the karate studio. Somebody has an appointment; they go there at a certain time. They don't need to drive by it. It doesn't need a corner presence. It's not like it's on El Camino. It could easily be a second- and third-floor studio in the middle of that corner tower, with the fourth floor being your open area, which would then enjoy a much nicer view. You then wouldn't have residential units

on the west facing façade, where right now, it would be really tough to, on a day like today, in that glass room, I would never want to be there, even with shades and air conditioning. That kind of, just react to the site a little bit more. But it might be worth questioning what that retail really is going to be. I know you have to have it, and it's a struggle for you from a design point of view, but maybe come up with a more creative idea. Or, you could put it someplace else along the ground floor that doesn't need as much visibility, because it doesn't. The other element of the building planning that I question, and I would like to get my colleagues to respond to, is the overall massing. This is a four-story tall building, and it goes pretty much straight up to four stories. We are tasked with finding it to be contextually compatible, and I know on the hotel project up the road, we struggled mightily with that, and forced a series of step-backs and quite a bit of landscaping on the terraces of the building. It seems to me we haven't addressed whether we think that's appropriate here. I think it is, and I think a design with more of a central tower perhaps on the corner, some larger element there, but with the building stepping down, away from that, would be more appropriate. I would like to see the applicant provide us with renderings of what this looks like as you come up San Antonio from, say, the corner of Charleston, working your way out. Similar to what we had done for the hotel project, again. Because this really is visible against the skyline of the hills for people going up and down San Antonio Road, and it's one of the first things you see coming into the town. Right now, I fear that, it's 50 feet tall, straight up, and it will form quite a boxy presence, so I'm concerned about that massing. I found that the parking layout downstairs didn't quite work. Some of those spaces were just a little bit too tight to get in and out of. I'd like to see you think it through a little bit more. I know it's schematic, but stacker units with only 20 feet or so of backup space in front and the corner sites really were tough. I'd also like to see you think through a little bit more the street drop-offs. This site will make extensive use of things like Uber's and ride-sharing services. San Antonio especially is a very busy road. I think it's imperative that you have ample places to pull over and make a delivery, pick someone up. And I see only one small space on Leghorn. It's very unlikely somebody wants to turn into Leghorn because then they have to wait for the signal and the traffic delay, so I think you really need to think through how that's going to work. The transportation is critical in this project, and that's a key element of it for most buildings in this area today. I find the courtyard, the way you've designed it, to be just too tight. I think it will be dark and unused. Again, four-story walls surrounding a space of that scale, I'm afraid I don't think it will work. In any case, you should satisfy yourself that it will, then present us with images and renderings to back that up. Because right now, what we see is horrific, and we'd like to really believe that that space will be useful. As Osma mentioned, I think you have so many architectural styles and vocabularies at play here. I think the brick is a fine choice. It seems to feel residential, although maybe it's new for the area. But certainly, you could get with that. But then, to be pairing that with all these other elements – the glass curtain walls, these massive cantered, beveled elements, the white things around the entrance, and then, the curve on the roof – there's just so much going on, to maybe tone down your design hand a little bit and think of one way to go. I think that you do need to have more indigenous plants in the landscaping, just to meet our code. I question whether the palm trees on the roof are practical. This is a wood-frame structure and palm trees are large and heavy and need a real substantial planter to thrive. You don't have room to drop them into the structure with the apartments below. I just wonder how that's really going to work. I do agree that a shaded outdoor roof terrace is a wonderful potential space. You might want to think through whether the trees and the shade canopy work together, and what's a way to really accomplish that. It's critically important that that space be well landscaped and well thought through so it's very functional. With that, I'd like to get my colleagues to respond to David's idea on a corner entrance. Alex, you didn't see anything about that. And then, the massing and stepping of it. Just so we're giving them clear direction as a Board. Alex?

Board Member Lew: I'd support corner retail. I don't think I support a corner residential entrance. Retail really needs visibility. And I think you guys had comments about putting things up on the upper floors, and I don't really understand that. It seems to me that raises all sorts of other issues. I think I understand the idea, though, of trying to reorganize the building, so I don't want to discourage other ideas from occurring.

Chair Baltay: That's a big change for the applicant. I want to be sure they're hearing clearly what we're saying.

Board Member Lew: Yeah. The retail should be on the corner.

Chair Baltay: You think retail should be on the corner. Okay.

Board Member Lew: And we don't really know what it could be, and it could be many different things over the lifetime of the building, so it should be flexible.

Chair Baltay: About the stepping of the building as it goes up? Do you have any response to that?

Board Member Lew: Yeah, you know, I'm undecided. I stood over by the Greenhouse and spent a lot of time looking at it the other day. I think you're characterizing it as this 50-foot wall, but I don't really quite see it like that because the middle is different. It's only three stories. It depends how you read that roof canopy. Yeah, I think the hard thing here is that we have a context finding, but in this case, there's really not a lot of context to work with. We've got, like, abandoned buildings in Mountain View, and one-story mid-century buildings to the left of the site, so I think it's very hard to get this to work. Ideally, you know, it would be breaking up the materials, perhaps even more than what's shown, and maybe not trying to make it a symmetrical composition, but actually just trying to make clear differences in the façade. Like Santana Row. It's actually, like, some artificial break in the facades to make them seemingly smaller. A lot of times architects, they draw the facades in isolation, and I'm thinking this is longer than the neighboring buildings. If we looked at a street scape over the rest of the block, try to bring in that rhythm of the street, of those street facades into the building. And they're trying to do that, they're starting to do it, and I think I would just encourage to do that even more. And then, with your comment about the massing, to me, that's a floor area issue, right? I think the Board has always struggled with 2.0 floor area, on every project that I've seen. Generally, like on the big hotel projects, usually when it goes down to, like, 1.75, you get more stepping, and usually people are happier with that. I will just leave it at that.

Chair Baltay: I'm trying mostly to get us to be consistent. We pushed the hotel project very hard to step, and they have, and I think it makes a difference, looking up against the skyline. Do we want the same thing here? And they need to hear that from us right now.

Board Member Lew: And we did that. The Board pushed really hard on the Hilton Garden Inn, to push the floor area down from 2 to 1.75, and it steps on the El Camino frontage. And I think it's effective.

Chair Baltay: Any thoughts, Osma?

Vice Chair Thompson: Yeah. I think I'm going to revise what I said in terms of the entrance. I do agree with Board Member Lew, that the retail should be on the corner because of visibility, and also longevity. I feel like Board Member Hirsch's comment was mainly about the functionality of the inside, so that could be revised to make the entrance make more sense. But I do agree that the retail corner is the right way to go. In terms of the massing, I do think that if this architecture, if the façade had more relief, and if it had more character, and if the design intent, whatever it is, whether it's, like, a screening intent, or if there's a strong landscaping element, was threaded through this façade more thoughtfully, I think this could work. The stepping back may not be needed because of the relief. If we had a deep enough relief at the front, it would be potentially more palatable without needing to step back. That might be an outlier. I think the 2.0 FAR could work, but it just requires way more thoughtful architecture to make it work. And I'm also going to slightly disagree with Board Member Lew on the context. I do think there is a lot to respond to in the context. It's not really a one-for-one thing. This is, like, its own thing in this area, but there is... I feel like you don't need necessarily another building to want to be like, but I think it's more about the feeling of the street that you can translate into your architecture. So, in terms of context, and also, across the street, there's just a lot to respond to in terms of architectural concepts that this thing could work on. I think there's a lot of opportunity.

Board Member Lew: My comment about the context is just really the literal wording of our ordinance, which is, like, window patterns, colors and materials. I don't disagree with anything that you're saying, I'm just... I was just reading our context criteria, which were really meant for urban, really urban areas. They weren't really written for more suburban areas with setbacks and parking in front of the buildings.

Vice Chair Thompson: Sure. That's fair. That's fair.

Chair Baltay: The context is predominantly one-story commercial buildings, and this is a 50-foot-tall four-story building. David, do you have any thoughts to add, especially at the corner, and the massing? We'll wrap it up, then.

Board Member Hirsch: Well, yes, that's my biggest concern. I think it creates a different kind of a building if you start with a premise that you're going to enter from Leghorn. I disagree with my fellow board members here, that the commercial has to be on the ground floor, because I don't think it's really that kind of commercial. Or, in fact, if it is some kind of commercial that's really used exclusively by this building, then they too could access it from a second floor. And if it's something like an athletic facility or exercise facility for the building, definitely doesn't need to be on the first floor. So, defining what that retail really is, is very, very significant for this building, especially if you consider just functionality, that the right place for the entry is going to be the corner. I think that really sets the character of the rest of the building, too, with the massing happening at the corner. More or less what you were saying, Peter, before, that that would be the defining element of the building. You'd want to enter there, you'd want to have access to bicycles there, you'd want to make that the major activity corner of the building. It's on the street, it has access from the street, it has access from the side street. Because we all agree, it's a four-lane street. It can't really accept much happening off of San Antonio Road. It's a very, very busy road. You really want to get off of it in order to use the building. The character of the building ought to be something where it's focused at the corner, and then, it's a repetitive series of elements that move down the block. It is not, after all, a building that fills a block front from one street to the next. The end of the building further down is only partway to the next intersection. There's going to be another building there at some point, likely. So, there's no reason to feature it exclusively as a symmetrical building the way it's been described. I think the setback allows for the front to have different uses on the ground floor. I mean, instead of just being an entryway, if the entry is moved, it can accommodate more of the residential with the private areas on the outside still relieved from the street by the distance the building is set back. I want to point out that I don't think any of the rear of the building... And our fellow board members ought to consider the tightness of this building around the perimeter. Because there's residences immediately close to adjacent walls of commercial right now. There ought to be some exterior private garden usages on the outside of the building at the rear and at the far side. As to the open space, I don't know why it couldn't be part of, say, the upper floor of the building. You know, the exciting thing about the valley and the context of the whole valley is that one direction you look across the bay, you see mountains on the other side, and up the hill, you're looking at the foothills and the foothill mountains that are up there, so the views from so many areas, including the senior center, are really up or down the hill. Knowing the context, not just of this street, but of the whole valley, is I think very significant for the way buildings are designed here in Palo Alto. I've been super impressed by those areas where you have views of the mountains, that create this valley. I think that there's a lot of work to be done on this. In terms of some of the detail, yeah, there's a repetition of the same kind of window again and again here, slight variations. But if you're having decks and interior divisions of the spaces on the outside, you can try a window that isn't just in the center of a box. There's a lot of other varieties of window forms that have not been explored in this design. I'm talking more of the physical design. The context down the street, of the street, on this side of the street, wouldn't it be nice if it, in some way, answered issues of a bicycle path that began somewhere here, or began up the hill further, and allowed you to get down to the Baylands. The front of the building really ought to be a continuing bicycle path that leads to the Baylands, for example. Which, the comment was made, it's impossible to get there. I agree. It's not a friendly environment. But, if the buildings are in the setback, the possibility of the front of the building as a landscaped continuum that takes you down to the Baylands would be a generous offer from this project. Plantings that would be accommodating to that sort of setback would be a major improvement, an urban improvement to the street.

Chair Baltay: Thanks, David. I just wanted to make sure we had clear guidance to the applicant regarding the corner retail and the massing of the building. What I've heard is that, I think a majority of us would like to see... At least half of us would like to see the actual retail activity on the ground floor at the corner. And I think nobody is opposed to finding a way to make the building entrance on or near the corner either. Just to be clear. I haven't heard any consensus beyond that, so I think we should leave it at that. Does the

applicant have any questions or thoughts before we close up? I'll be looking to my colleagues for a motion and a second. We're trying to keep this informal. We really want to be sure you understand and have a sense of where to go.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Board Member Hirsch, we haven't gone that deep on what ultimately the retail usage would be. I think that the most obvious opportunity would be a café of some sort. I think it would get a high amount of usage from this building. We've stayed away from the exercise facility idea, both for the amenities of these ultimate tenants, because the Oshman JCC is right up the street, and it provides a lot of different opportunities for exercise, and classes, and it's a wonderful community service that's right up the street.

Chair Baltay: Okay, thank you. With that, do we have a motion?

Mr. Sakai: I just want to clarify...

Chair Baltay: Oh, please, go ahead. I'm sorry.

Mr. Sakai: ... a couple of things. There was a fair amount of discussion about the ceiling height at the retail. The typical floor to floor height at the residential is nine, so the podium is actually set at 30 inches above grade. If you step back down a grade at the corner retail, you add 30 inches to the typical nine-foot ceiling, so the corner retail ceiling height is actually 11 foot 6 inches. I actually feel pretty strongly about keeping the retail on the corner. The retail tenants on this stretch of San Antonio, there's a lot of vacancy there. Retail tenants seem to be struggling, actually. Before I became a residential architect, I was a retail architect, doing shopping centers all over the Bay Area. The corner spaces are always the most desirable for tenants. They capture higher rents per square foot, they're more visible, they're more desirable, they're more accessible, so I really don't support the idea of moving a retail use up into the upper floors of the building. I think it creates a lot of issues with access. Right now, there's a clear division between public access at the ground floor at the corner, and to sort of move that retail component with – hopefully – a fair amount of traffic, up into the bowels of the building, to me, it just... It sort of goes against what good retail design has proven to be over the years. We actually at one time had a corner lobby entrance, right at the intersection of San Antonio and Leghorn. It was closer to the elevator. One of the big downsides that we saw in that previous design – which we took all the way to City Council – was it really offered no transparency between the lobby and the inner landscaped courtyard. Right now, we have that. We have a glass curtain wall, add a two-story lobby, with a similar glass curtain wall at the interior of the courtyard, which will offer really, I think, unusual and very nice view of greenery through that glass on both sides.

Chair Baltay: Excuse me, Eugene. If we could, we're looking for you to respond to our comments, not continue to sell the building to us. Because we really want to wrap up.

Mr. Sakai: Okay. With regard to context, I do agree with Commissioner Lew, in that there isn't really a lot to respond to in terms of architectural form. I think the nicest thing about this stretch of San Antonio, as one of the members of the audience pointed out, is actually the landscaping right across the street for the Greenhouse Apartments. Really, that's what we were trying to open up onto. All of your comments are well taken, well appreciated. There's quite a diversity of thought here, so I'm not quite sure actually if we have a direction that I can walk away with and sort of noodle on with my staff here. But, perhaps in the remaining minutes that we have, you can come to some clear direction for us. That would be much appreciated.

Chair Baltay: Okay, thank you. I'm looking for a motion from someone to continue this. I just don't know if we have any more clear guidance than what we've already put out in the record.

MOTION

Vice Chair Thompson: Okay. I move that we continue this project to a date uncertain.

Board Member Lew: I will second that.

Chair Baltay: Okay, moved and seconded. All those in favor, aye. Opposed. Okay, the motion carries 4-0.

MOTION TO CONTINUE PASSES 4-0.



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October 16, 2019

City of Palo Alto
Planning and Community Environment
250 Hamilton Avenue, 5th Floor
Palo Alto, CA 94301
Attn: Sheldon S. Ah Sing, AICP, Planning
SAhSing@m-group.us

Re: 788 San Antonio Road; 19PLN-00079
Studio S Squared job#: 18019

Dear Mr. Ah Sing,

Thank you for taking the time to review our revised drawings in response to multiple department reviews as well as the initial ARB review from August 15, 2019. The following pages detail our responses.

We look forward to further working with you on this project; please do not hesitate to call our office should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Eugene H. Sakai, AIA, LEED AP
President, Studio S² Architecture, Inc.

cc: Property Owners
File

ARB Comments

Since no formal ARB letter was received, please see below for our notes from the ARB Hearing on August 15th, 2019.

- **Alex Lew's Comments:**
 - Proposed height of retail too low – Response: Retail height is +/-11'-6" since retail is entered at grade, not the same height as the residential space.
 - Ground floor glass at north west corner seems odd – Response: One prominent glass corner remains facing the intersection, the northern glass corner has been removed to avoid symmetry
 - Love the two story tall lobby – Response: Agreed, this lobby space with views to the inner courtyard is meant to be a very attractive feature for the San Antonio Road, and we have enhanced it further as noted below.
 - Palms on roof terrace doesn't make sense – Response: Palms have been eliminated as part of the upper floor terrace redesign. Planting areas comply with minimum area requirements for roof gardens.
 - Bike Room can't be open to the lobby, consider adding a bike wash area – Response: Partitioned off bike rooms (20 bikes max) are proposed now. We would like to discuss with the ARB and Staff the possibility of one open bike room for greater layout efficiency and community, given the transparency/visibility of this room.
 - An outdoor bike wash area for both tenant and public use is proposed along the sloped walkway leading to the bike rooms.
 - Landscape planting needs more native species – Response: Agreed, see revised landscape planting plan which incorporates more native species
 - Retail at corner makes sense
 - – Response:
 - We agree and our revised design keeps the retail at the corner of San Antonio Road and Leghorn.
 - This retail area could function really well as a street corner café, and will bolster the street café presence of the Japanese Tapas & Ramen restaurant on the same block of San Antonio.
 - The storefront facing San Antonio could be either fixed glazing as shown, or folding/roll up doors system to enhance indoor/outdoor dining.
- **David Hirsch's Comments:**
 - Central residential entrance seems odd. Consider moving residential lobby to corner – Response: We explored the option of relocating the residential lobby entrance to the corner, but the loss of the visual connection to the inner courtyard made this tradeoff not worthwhile. We also wanted to activate the corner with a retail use as noted above. We respectfully insist that keeping the lobby entrance centered on the inner courtyard is the right path forward for this design.
 - Relocate trash chutes to be closer to vertical circulation – Response: Agreed, this change has been implemented.
 - Design is victim of its own symmetry – Response: Agreed, we have broken down the symmetry both in massing, as well as materials.

- Roof terrace has no function, though views to Bay would be nice – Response: Excellent feedback! We have relocated the upper level open space so that it is now open on the north end with views towards the Taube Koret Campus and beyond. The location of the open space now has 135 degree views.
- Open space on upper level would be nice – Response: Agreed, 4th level open space provided
- Vertical strips on elevations are hard to understand – Response: Revised material palette is meant to be simpler and more consistent compared to the previous design.
- Windows do not need to be so consistent throughout – Response: We respectfully disagree, and feel that consistent window sizes lend a degree of simplicity and consistency for the elevations. We have varied the “surrounds” around the windows to provide variety in color and form and feel this adds sufficient visual interest.
- Only one elevator seems like it could be an issue – Response: Agreed, vertical circulation has been revamped, and now two elevator areas are proposed.
- **Osma Thompson**
 - Building needs to respond to context and site
 - – Response:
 - We’ve changed our material palette to better tie in to recent projects of similar scale along San Antonio (Taube Koret Campus, SA Center Marriott)
 - We’ve adjusted the massing of our building to be more asymmetrical and focused on the corner
 - We’ve referenced the historic use of the site (Chrysanthemum wholesaler) with a subtle stamped concrete pattern at the corner plaza and our interior courtyard.
 - There doesn’t seem to be any connection to the street
 - – Response:
 - Our recessed and glassy lobby space centered on the open inner courtyard is meant to provide a very open and active feel to our project’s design, and the scale of this space is intended to provide a pleasing visual for drivers and bikers passing by as well as residents.
 - We are now showing a much more active corner café area with an enhanced landscape plaza.
 - Seeing the bike parking areas through the ground-level glazing will showcase these spaces and help activate the street level
 - A publicly accessible bike wash area along San Antonio will enhance pedestrian activity while providing water for dogs out on walks.
 - Given all of the above, we feel our design compares very favorably in this regard to recently built projects along San Antonio.
 - Overly glassy corners feel more like office spaces than residential – Response: Agreed, we have significantly reduced the amount of glass at

the southwestern corner, and completely revamped the design of the northwestern corner units.

- Inner courtyard needs development – Response: Agreed! We have had time to develop this space, please see below.
- Too many materials proposed at elevations – Response: Revised material palette is simpler and more consistent compared to the previous design.
- Retail at corner is OK – Response: We agree, please see above.
- **Peter Baltay**
 - Residential entry at corner makes more sense – Response: See above.
 - Retail here should be an appointment only type space, and could be on a higher level – Response: We respectfully disagree and feel that the retail space should be on the ground level to provide a more active and interesting corner presence for this site.
 - West facing glazing for residential spaces would be unpleasant – Response: We have reduced much of the west facing glazing for the units that open onto other orientations, including most notably the reduction in glazing at the southwestern corner units.
 - Design is a 4-story building that goes straight up from the street to the roof – Response: Our revised design has quite a bit of massing variety in elevation, from the recessed two story curtain wall of the lobby entrance, to the stepped back 4th floor. The upper level open space has a parapet height that is much lower than the adjacent units lending a pleasant variety and feel to the elevation.
 - Parking layout is too compact, 20 feet of backup space is not enough – Response: The smallest backup space in the garage is 25 feet.
 - Think about street drop offs and Uber – Response: We have incorporated a short term (5 minute) parking duckout sufficient for two cars along Leghorn Street to allow for such uses. A seat wall has been provided in the landscaping for the comfort of those waiting, and plantings will help screen the adjacent resident balconies.
 - Courtyard is nonfunctioning
 - – Response:
 - The previous design was underdeveloped at the time of our previous submittal.
 - We have now laid out the courtyard with both circulation and seating zones, while positioning planters to provide privacy for the courtyard facing studio apartments.
 - We've specified plantings that will flourish in lower light conditions given that the courtyard is surrounded on 4 sides.
 - To help allow more light into the courtyard, the upper level balconies facing the courtyard have only semi-solid roofs.
 - We are considering adding a water feature to enhance the user experience of this space.
 - The planting now flows into the 2 story lobby, to further enhance the indoor-outdoor theme of the building.
 - Too many architectural styles at play
 - – Response:
 - We feel the current proposal has a much simpler architectural style consisting mainly of a playful “ribbon”

that ties the ground floor spaces together, and a series of “framed recesses” surrounding the balcony spaces.

- The “ribbon” also juts out into the ground plane in the setbacks framing certain special landscape areas which help provide more privacy for the ground level residential units and help with stormwater mitigation.
 - The “framed recesses” also continue up to the upper level open space to create framed view portals at that level, while also helping to break up the parapet facing San Antonio Road.
- Palm trees will not work on a roof terrace – Response: No large trees are proposed for the upper level open space.
 - Consider being tall at the corner and then stepping down from there – Response: Our revised design along San Antonio Road provides more visual interest while also allowing the upper level open space near-panoramic views of the surrounding area.

Attachment F

Project Plans

Hardcopies of project plans are provided to Board members. These plans are available to the public online and/or by visiting the Planning and Development Services Department on the 5th floor of City Hall at 250 Hamilton Avenue.

Directions to review Project plans online:

1. Go to: bit.ly/PAPendingprojects
2. Scroll down to find “788 San Antonio Road” and click the address link
3. On this project specific webpage you will find a link to the project plans and other important information

Direct Link to Project Webpage:

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=4575&TargetID=319>