



# Architectural Review Board

## Staff Report (ID # 12188)

**Report Type:** Subcommittee Items **Meeting Date:** 5/6/2021

**Summary Title:** 233 University Avenue: Ad Hoc Review of Benches

**Title:** 233 University Avenue [18PLN-00344]: Ad Hoc Committee Review of Two Benches. Boardmembers Baltay and Lew will preside. Environmental Assessment: Exempt From CEQA per Guideline Section 15332 (In-fill Development). Zoning District: CD-C (GF)(P) (Commercial Downtown Community with Ground Floor and Pedestrian Shopping Combining Districts). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Claire Raybould at Claire.Raybould@Cityofpaloalto.org.

**From:** Jonathan Lait

### Recommendation

Staff recommends the Architectural Review Board Ad Hoc Committee take the following action(s):

1. Discuss and provide direction, or
2. Confirm the revised project meets the full ARB's direction and recommend the Director consider the Conditions of Approval to be satisfied.

### Background

On June 4, 2019, the Director of Planning and Development Services approved the subject project, the seismic rehabilitation of the existing single-story structure and addition of a second story for office use as well as a rooftop terrace. At the Board's recommendation, staff-imposed Condition of Approval #6, requiring that certain project elements to return to the ARB Ad Hoc Committee for review. This report summarizes the condition of approval and the applicant's response to the requirement.

Links to the ARB's May 2, 2019 hearing

Staff Report: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/70973>

Minutes: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/74510>

Video: <https://midpenmedia.org/architectural-review-board-74-522019/>

City of Palo Alto  
 Planning & Development Services  
 250 Hamilton Avenue  
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 (650) 329-2442

## Discussion/Analysis

Condition of Approval #6 states: “Provide at least two benches along the Ramona or University frontage within the vicinity of the project site in order to improve the pedestrian environment within this area. Benches may be within the private property or within the public right-of-way. Any benches placed within the public right-of-way must be located and designed to the satisfaction of Public Works Engineering, the Office of Transportation, and the Director of Planning. Benches may include traditional benches or other seating areas built into the design of the building such as seating areas built into windows or planters.”

### Applicant’s Response:

- The project plans in Attachment A show two benches, one within the public right-of-way at the corner of Ramona and University and one built into the façade at the rear of the building on the Ramona Avenue frontage. A rendering of the built-in window seat bench is provided and pictures of the proposed bench within the public right-of-way are provided.

### Staff Analysis:

- Staff believes that the proposed benches meet the requirements of the condition of approval. The bench proposed within the public right-of-way is the preferred bench design, per the request of Public Works Operations staff. The bench within the public right-of-way complies with the three-foot setback requirement from the curb, per Office of Transportation requirements, and maintains at least a five-foot right-of-way along Ramona Street per Public Works requirements.

The Ad Hoc Committee is encouraged to affirm that the proposed revisions meet Approval Condition #6. Otherwise, the Committee should provide direction to staff and the applicant if the submittal requires further refinement.

#### Report Author & Contact Information

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### Attachments:

- Attachment A: Project Plans (DOCX)

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<sup>1</sup> Emails may be sent directly to the ARB using the following address: [arb@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:arb@cityofpaloalto.org)

## Attachment A

### **Project Plans**

Hardcopies of project plans are provided to ARB Ad Hoc Committee members. During Shelter-in-Place, project plans are only available online.

#### **Directions to review Project plans online:**

1. Go to: [bit.ly/PAPendingprojects](https://bit.ly/PAPendingprojects)
2. Scroll down to find “233 University” 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-Articles/Planning-and-Development-Services/233-University-Avenue-18PLN-00344-Ad-Hoc-Committee>