



# Architectural Review Board

## Staff Report (ID # 13896)

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**Report Type:** Approval of Minutes **Meeting Date:** 1/20/2022

**Summary Title:** Minutes of November 18, 2021

**Title:** Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for November 18, 2021

**From:** Jonathan Lait

### Recommendation

Staff recommends the Architectural Review Board (ARB) adopt the attached meeting minutes.

### Background

Draft minutes from the November 18, 2021 Architectural Review Board (ARB) are available in Attachment A.

Draft and Approved Minutes are made available on the ARB webpage at [bit.ly/paloaltoARB](https://bit.ly/paloaltoARB)

### Attachments:

- Attachment A: November 18, 2021 Draft Minutes (DOCX)



## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES: November 18, 2021

Virtual Meeting  
8:30 AM

### **Call to Order / Roll Call**

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in virtual teleconference at 8:30 a.m.

Participating Remotely: Chair Osma Thompson, Vice Chair Grace Lee, Boardmember Peter Baltay, Boardmember David Hirsch, Boardmember Alex Lew

Absent:

### **Oral Communications**

None.

### **Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions**

None.

### **City Official Reports**

1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, 2) Tentative Future Agenda items and 3) Recent Project Decisions

Jodie Gerhardt, Manager of Current Planning, thanked Madina Klicheva, Administrative Assistant, for taking over for Vinh Nguyen, Administrative Associate III. The ARB will continue to meet virtually through the end of the year. The Castilleja School project will most likely be discussed at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### **Study Session / Preliminary Review**

2. 739 Sutter [21PLN-00222]: Request for Preliminary Architectural Review of a Proposed 12 Unit Townhome Development within two Buildings on a 0.38 Acre Site. Environmental Assessment: Not a Project. The Formal Application Will be Subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review. Zoning District: RM-20 (Multi-family Residential). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Stan Ketchum at sketchum@m-group.us.

Chair Thompson introduced the project and called for the staff report.

Ms. Gerhardt introduced the consultant, Stan Ketchum, of M-Group and explained he was assisting while Claire Raybould is out. She shared her screen with the ARB and called for the presentation.

Stan Ketchum, Project Planner, M-Group, thanked the ARB and introduced 739 Sutter. The project is on Sutter northeast from Middlefield Road. The plan is to demolish an existing 8-unit apartment building and redevelop the site to 12 townhomes. The site is approximately 0.38 acres and surrounding uses are multi-family and single-family. He explained that two key State housing laws affect the project, the Housing Accountability Act, and the Housing Crisis Act (SB 330). Two of the twelve units will be restricted to low-income residents, 25% of the project is made up of low-income units allowing for 3 concessions, the project qualifies for a density bonus and will request concessions for Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and will include a condominium subdivision to allow for-sale units. He showed the ARB the site plan and project building elevations. The key considerations identified in the staff report revolve around private street design which differs from city street design. The project will require a shared access easement. Following the ARB meeting the applicant may choose to file a formal application. The SB 330 application has been deemed complete and has triggered the 180 days to submit a formal application.

Chair Thompson called for the applicant's presentation and indicated they had 10 minutes.

Eric Muzzy, Planning Entitlement Manager for Dahlin Group, presented the conceptual design on behalf of the applicant. He thanked the ARB and Mr. Ketchum. They have added several items to the presentation based on a meeting with Planning. He showed a conceptual rendering of the proposed streetscape from Sutter. He also showed an aerial map of the project location. The existing parcel contains 8 residential units and a shared driveway with the adjacent multi-family property. The proposal is to replace the existing buildings with 12 for-sale units. He showed an aerial site plan and pointed out the garages and unit entries. He also showed the conceptual elevations and indicated they added materials list. The elevation style is contemporary, and the materials will be modern. Access requirements are included in the design. Since the top plate is only 30 feet aerial access is not required. He continued to show the elevations of the buildings, the conceptual unit plans, and the renderings from various angles. There was an application in 2018 that proposed a four-unit residential plan with a central drive within the site. City Transportation Department suggested the access be combined into a single driveway, which is the existing shared driveway. No easement exists so the current design incorporates a shared driveway and maintains access to the adjacent carports. The Fire Department told them to make the width of the driveway as close to 26 feet as possible, so currently the driveway measures at 22 feet wide. The applicant has spoken to the adjacent property owner and received a verbal agreement that the easement is acceptable. The City has noted that the easement is a condition of approval. They have not made a specific request related to the Density Bonus, but they anticipate requesting waivers and/or concessions.

Chair Thompson called for the public comment, but there was none. She called for ARB disclosures.

Boardmember Lew disclosed that he visited the site and researched the neighboring properties on San Carlos Court including fire maps, aerial photos, and zoning.

Boardmember Hirsch disclosed that he visited the site and its neighborhood. He noted the distinctly different character of Sutter as it approaches Middlefield Road.

Boardmember Baltay disclosed he visited the site.

Vice Chair Lee disclosed she visited the site.

Chair Thompson disclosed she visited the site. She called for ARB questions of the applicant or staff.

Vice Chair Lee asked the applicant to comment on their intention for open space and landscaping.

Mr. Muzzy explained that they had decks and porches proposed on the front building for private open space. The rear building has second floor decks for private open space. There is a shared rear paseo that will be landscaped. The existing frontage trees will be maintained, and lower scale landscaping will be added to define the private space. He noted that the landscaping was not included in the conceptual design plans yet, but the areas are allocated.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the applicant had done any studies on cars turning in and out of the garage, especially those against the property line.

Mr. Muzzy stated they had not done the studies on the site. They observed the driveway standards, which require a 10-foot radius. Typically, Civil will run the turning movements. A driveway of this depth with aprons should accommodate the turning movements.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if Transportation had looked at the plans.

Mr. Ketchum confirmed they had not.

Ms. Gerhardt clarified that given the proposal is for 12 condominiums it needs to be on a private street. The Private Street standards apply. That is a concession the applicant has requested. There are several other concessions requested in Attachment B.

Mr. Muzzy said that they would request waivers and concessions where necessary.

Ms. Gerhardt explained that waivers are generally only used for bonus units in Palo Alto. The detail would be worked out in the formal application.

Boardmember Hirsch inquired about the project zoning.

Mr. Muzzy confirmed that it was zoned RM-20. The 40 dwelling units per acre was based on the General Plan designation. No rezoning is proposed.

Chair Thompson requested more information on the height restrictions.

Ms. Gerhardt said that it is an RM-20 district, so all the restrictions apply. The maximum height limit is 30 feet, and 35 feet is being proposed. Affordable housing projects are allowed to request concessions. The preliminary project proposes 25% low-income housing which grants three concessions. Attachment B contains the list of concessions.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the zoning allowed the concessions.

Ms. Gerhardt explained the State law required them and had been written into Palo Alto code.

Boardmember Baltay stated that floor to floor height was approximately 10'3". He asked why the building was 35 feet in height.

Mr. Muzzy stated that there would be a parapet and likely a solar zone. There could potentially be air conditioning units on the roof as well. The foundation is also built into the number.

Boardmember Baltay said that assuming the building was within a foot of grade he did not see how they got to 35 feet.

Mr. Muzzy explained that they had a 42-inch parapet. If they could decrease it then they will.

Boardmember Baltay inquired about the daylight plane restrictions on the site.

Ms. Gerhardt shared Attachment B with the ARB. Anything that does not meet the standards is listed in bold. As the project is for affordable housing the applicant is allowed three concessions. The project has not been fully analyzed yet as it is still in the preliminary stage. The daylight plane is standard.

Boardmember Baltay asked if that applied to the back of the property where it abuts R-1.

Ms. Gerhardt stated it applied to the rear and the side of the property. RM-20 and under is considered low density for daylight plane.

Boardmember Baltay asked if the substandard lots to the rear of the project impacted the criteria.

Boardmember Lew stated that the substandard lots are restricted to one story buildings and a 16- or 17-foot height limit.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that staff would look at it again, but that she did not believe anything extra was required.

Boardmember Baltay confirmed that the daylight plane exists at the back fence. Secondly, the HAA Act says that to deny or reduce the density they had to find that there was a significant impact to the public's health and welfare. He asked how that was phrased.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that it was a high bar to cross.

Boardmember Baltay explained that the staff report said that staff considered the reduced fire drive to be an "adverse impact on public safety."

Ms. Gerhardt said that was correct, if the Fire Department could not gain access to the site safely it would be an adverse impact. However, Planning, Fire, and the applicant have worked together and are moving forward.

Boardmember Baltay asked if a shadow on the neighboring property could be considered an adverse impact on public health.

Ms. Gerhardt said that was something staff could explore.

Boardmember Baltay asked if the public health referred to the public in general or the public as in the owners of the neighboring properties.

Ms. Gerhardt explained it was all based on new State law. The main ones that are seen as having an impact on public health are for fire and flood. The ARB can give its thoughts and Planning will have the City Attorney's Office review it. This is new regulation that all cities are learning how to implement.

Boardmember Baltay said that State law requires that they do not reduce the density, which is measured by housing units per area. He asked for the physical size definition of housing unit.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that she believed the size was in the 150 or 250 square foot range.

Boardmember Baltay asked the applicant about the size of the units.

Mr. Muzzy stated that all 12 units were three bedrooms.

Boardmember Baltay asked if the existing 8 units were rentals or condominiums.

Mr. Muzzy explained that they may have indicated condominiums on the initial application, but they could be simple homes as well. The current 8 units are rental.

Boardmember Baltay said that they were going from 8 rental units to 12 for sale houses.

Mr. Muzzy confirmed that was the proposal.

Boardmember Hirsch stated that the FAR currently on site is [.5.1 and it's going to 1.43 34:42] and asked how that was determined. He also wanted to understand the rationale behind the increase.

Ms. Gerhardt said that there is a significant increase in FAR. The applicant is allowed bonus square footage and concession square footage. Those details will be looked at further, but under the new State regulations a 50% bonus is not unheard of.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the ARB should expect a compromise.

Ms. Gerhardt deferred to the applicant.

Mr. Muzzy explained they were trying to create a nice lifestyle in 12 units allowed under the 50% density bonus. The floor area is less than the 50% bonus on top of what is allowed. If the site design and architectural design are refined the FAR could be lower or could be anywhere from what they proposed to 1.5.

Chair Thompson called for further ARB questions.

Boardmember Baltay asked how the City calculated the affordable housing units.

Mr. Muzzy explained that based on State law the affordable housing units were calculated from the base units. The base units on this project are 8 so 25% of that are at low-income affordability.

Boardmember Baltay asked if staff confirmed that.

Ms. Gerhardt said that staff is in the process of learning and reviewing the project. The project itself is still a moving target. Generally, staff agrees with the applicant.

Mr. Muzzy said that he is a land planner and not an attorney, so he only conveys what he had learned.

Boardmember Baltay asked if it was possible to request a concession for a reduction in required parking.

Ms. Gerhardt believed that it was possible, but not likely.

Boardmember Baltay confirmed that each unit would receive two parking spots.

Ms. Gerhardt said that was correct and noted that met the City standards. There is a 58% tandem, which is above Palo Alto standards, but is allowed by law.

Boardmember Baltay asked if they increased the density if they would have to add spaces per unit or if they could request an exemption.

Ms. Gerhardt stated they would need a concession for additional units and another for the parking reduction. So, it would use two of the three concessions and is therefore unlikely.

Boardmember Lew said he did not think that was correct. In the density bonus section there is a separate provision where the applicant can request a parking reduction and another list of parking concessions. He thought they might be able to go to one space per unit by choice.

Ms. Gerhardt said that the applicant is proposing more than what is required.

Mr. Muzzy stated that current density bonus law for 2 and 3 bedrooms requires 1.5 parking spaces per unit. If there were a one bedroom or studio they would be allowed 1 space. In this case with the private garages 1.5 spaces is not feasible so they are meeting the standard by providing 2 spaces.

Chair Thompson noted that in the elevations the finishes for Building 1 and Building 2 were slightly different. She inquired about the design intent.

Mr. Muzzy showed the ARB the elevations and asked if Padru Kang, Design Director at Dahlin, could answer the question.

Padru Kang, Director of Design at Dahlin Group, introduced himself and explained that the materials were a way to create modulation with the elevation and accent the modulation vertically to break the horizontal feel of the architecture. They also wanted to focus on the entry doors. There are three different materials being applied to each elevation. With Building 2 they looked to compliment but not mimic what was happening in Building 1.

Chair Thompson heard no further questions, so she called for ARB feedback.

Boardmember Hirsch said that it was a project full of concessions requesting maximum concessions, perhaps with the assumption they would be whittled down in some way. It is difficult for the ARB to review the project due to the new law and because of its great impact on the neighborhood in general. The character of the street varies and a decision on this project impacts everything between it and Middlefield Road. This is also a major zoning change due to the concessions. He noted that Palo Alto was working on the Housing Element and the report must go through Council upon receipt. The State is pushing major changes to most of the zoning. The design of the project is nice, and he appreciated the changes from the front building to the back. There is narrow passage to the back units. With the fire access and safety issues he requested further clarification. He noted that there were balconies over a traffic lane. This project is not like Palo Alto because the City values the open space landscaping. He said that he had many doubts about the project and that they involved the Housing Element Study and how the City would manage this kind of increase in zoning. In this area it might be more reasonable to have a lower FAR exception and less units. He questioned the FAR of the existing buildings on the site and noted that it was probably very dense. Overall, he did not look favorably on the project as designed. The City must come to grips with the

planning under the new rules quickly. He asked if there were better sites for denser projects and is this an appropriately dense project for its neighborhood and site.

Boardmember Baltay thanked the applicant for the project. He agreed with Boardmember Hirsch and stated it was important to note that this was not the best place in town to increase housing density. He understood that was not a required finding, but there are other places where the level of density would fit. This is a crisis situation, and they are faced with concessions to zoning, but it may not work next to R-1 zoning. There are ways for the applicant to reduce the height of the building by not having mechanical units or a parapet on the roof. Regardless of zoning status the applicant would be better off not pushing the height limit. The extra five feet makes a significant difference in neighborhood compatibility. He was extremely concerned about the impacts to the daylight plane. That is the greatest zoning concession requested, especially at the rear. A building of this size is an adverse impact to those residents' health. He requested that staff research the issue further. He was also concerned about ground level open space and landscaping. Currently the site is nicely landscaped, and families will need an open space at ground level; it is not enough to have a deck off the unit. He suggested that the applicant investigate reducing its parking. The density is not an issue, but each unit is too big, so he suggested smaller units or variability of unit sizes. The basic design style is appropriate for the area, but he needed more information and a more refined design to provide further feedback. He repeated that he did not believe this was the best place in Palo Alto for the proposed density.

Vice Chair Lee thanked the applicant for the proposal and was pleased to review a multi-family project. She knew the site and area well and felt it was the right project for the site. She understood that preliminary reviews did not require several things including landscape plans and materials boards. One of the things that is helpful in the preliminary review is context. She looked forward to seeing the project improve and the applicant providing further context. The setbacks should be revisited to be more in line with other projects in Palo Alto. The side setback on the south side given the massing should be revisited. She agreed with Boardmember Hirsch about the variation between the buildings. She suggested the applicant think about decreasing the verticality. With landscaping in a town home context, she was interested to see the shared mailboxes, walkways, and bicycle storage. The applicant could provide more of that context even in the preliminary application. She looked forward to seeing the project move forward and noted it was needed in the area. The neighborhood already has multi-family projects, and the density is appropriate.

Boardmember Lew thanked the applicant for bringing the project forward. His thoughts were most aligned with Vice Chair Lee. He thought the site was perfect for adding density. He shared Boardmember Hirsch and Baltay's concerns about concessions. The number of concessions requested show that the project does not present the correct solutions. In the RM-20 Zone a townhouse project should be allowed. Three story townhomes are economically feasible and many of these units are under construction in the greater Bay Area. Because of this he was concerned that Palo Alto's zoning was not in line with the market. The zoning and density bonuses are in place, but the applicant does not have the right solution. In townhomes the end units are often smaller and stepped down to the neighbors. The roof line should be explored and minimized. The project had a long way to go to meet the context criteria. He also wondered if there was a way to reduce the parking as that could help reduce the massing. The project requests too



many concessions, but he thought that the architects were accomplished and could create a site-specific design that works. He looked forward to the project's return to the ARB.

Chair Thompson agreed with Boardmember Lew and Vice Chair Lee that the project was appropriate for the site. Middlefield Road is getting developed commercially and she noted that the Safeway there operates differently than the one on San Antonio because of density. This project will bolster the site and make it successful. Generally, she agreed with her colleagues that there are too many requested concessions. She thought the design could use more work in terms of aesthetics. The front elevation of Building 2 is successful due to the light/dark play with a pop of color. Initially she thought they should flip the facades for Buildings 1 and 2, but now she would encourage the design team to further explore the concepts of Building 2 in all the building elevations. She did not think that the shading elements would be effective because of where they are placed so she urged the design team to consider other options. Building 2 has a light/dark palette with a color pop but Building 1 is simply different shades of beige. She suggested another color, perhaps sage, to give the façade more visual interest. The wood tones overall will feel refreshing on the street. She appreciated the rendering, but due to the included trees it was not as helpful as it could have been. She further suggested adding a section showing how the small lots to the north are affected by the building. She supported a reduction of parking as mentioned by other ARB members.

Vice Chair Lee wondered if the applicant had considered the path of travel or daily activities of users on the site. She also wanted trees and their dimensions added to the plans and for the drawings to be done to the scale of a person for context.

Boardmember Baltay looked at Building 2's elevation and questioned the privacy impacts of the windows and the difference in window design to the other buildings.

Chair Thompson explained that she planned to let the applicant speak after the ARB finished its discussion. She wondered if the windows were placed on the north side to allow more light in the units. On Building 1 the windows are smaller and contain shading elements. There is something about the parti of the front elevation of Building 2 that is more successful than Building 1.

Boardmember Hirsch commented that he wanted to stress Boardmember Lew's points about the massing of the building. The ARB is discussing detail at the preliminary stage while not pinning down the FAR and other issues. The massing comment is applicable right now. It would be possible to have a rooftop deck if there were smaller units with a step back situation. There needs to be a bigger study of the formal aspects of the project. It is unreasonable to make a lot of comments about the detail on the buildings when these larger issues have not been addressed such as massing, privacy, and scale. If the project started with two less units or two-bedroom units it could reduce the parking and massing and have a better relationship to its neighbors. The project needs to be developed that way before they get into the details.

Chair Thompson called for further comments, but there were none. She called for the applicant to respond to the ARB.

Mr. Kang said meeting with the ARB and hearing their comments is welcomed and productive. The design is conceptual and should be seen as a starting point, the application is not formal. They have taken notes

and when the ARB reviews it next he hopes they see that their opinions were considered. He thanked them for their time.

Mr. Muzzy thanked the ARB for its time and stated they would incorporate their thoughts into the project.

Chair Thompson noted that no formal action was requested and closed the item.

### **The ARB took a Break**

#### **Action Items**

3. Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing Use of Teleconferencing for Architectural Review Board During Covid-19 State of Emergency.

Chair Thompson introduced the item and called for the staff report.

Ms. Gerhardt explained that the pandemic started in early 2020. In September 2021, the Governor amended the Brown Act to allow local policy bodies to continue to meet by teleconference during a state of emergency given they pass monthly resolutions confirming that there is still a local state of emergency. This item will become a monthly occurrence and may change in 2022 when they move to a hybrid model.

Chair Thompson asked if they needed a Motion.

Ms. Gerhardt said that they needed a Motion and then Chair Thompson and staff would sign the resolution.

Boardmember Baltay asked if they needed to hear the item monthly.

Ms. Gerhardt explained that they did as that was the way the State set it up. The must state that there is still a state of emergency in the local area.

Boardmember Baltay inquired about what would happen if the ARB did not meet in a given month.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that the resolution needed to be placed on the agenda of the following meeting.

**MOTION:** Boardmember Baltay moved, seconded by Boardmember Lew, to adopt the Resolution Authorizing Use of Teleconferencing for Architectural Review Board During Covid-19 State of Emergency.

**MOTION PASSED:** 5-0

4. ARB Awards: Consider the Reduced List of Eligible Projects and Associated Photographs Taken by Board Members and Develop a List of Award Categories.

Chair Thompson recapped the work done by the ARB on the Awards thus far and stated that the goal for the meeting was to create categories, make nominations, and possibly vote on winners.

Ms. Gerhardt said that staff had the original photographs taken by the ARB and some additional aerial photographs. Vice Chair Lee also provided additional pictures. She shared her screen to show the short list of projects and photographs.

Chair Thompson suggested they go project by project and discuss their thoughts.

Boardmember Hirsch stated the list was still long and suggested projects be nominated by more than one Boardmember to be considered.

Chair Thompson appreciated the idea.

Vice Chair Lee said that she was part of the review of most of the projects and requested that Boardmembers state the reason for their nomination.

Chair Thompson also liked Vice Chair Lee's idea and suggested the ARB do both.

Ms. Gerhardt asked Chair Thompson to state when they wanted to advance the slides and indicated she would take notes.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if staff included more ARB pictures in the slideshow.

Ms. Gerhardt said that except for the most recent email from Vice Chair Lee all the ARB pictures are included in the slideshow. Nothing was added related to the museum.

Boardmember Hirsch indicated he would comment on the museum when they reached it.

Chair Thompson called for thoughts on the Bowman School Annex.

Boardmember Baltay said that the photograph did not show the recessed group area behind the buildings that he would like to see photographed and discussed.

Chair Thompson asked if anyone had access to the image.

Ms. Gerhardt said that would require the plan set which would take more staff time. She suggested whittling the list down before they pulled site plans.

Boardmember Hirsch thought that what Boardmember Baltay meant is that they needed to see more information on the project.

Boardmember Baltay suggested it stay on the list and that either a Boardmember could take additional photographs, or the Bowman School could supply a photograph.

Chair Thompson heard Boardmember Hirsch and Baltay support the project. She thought reducing the list was a good goal for the meeting. The end of the year seemed like a reasonable time to wrap up the project, so the ARB has an additional two meetings to discuss the Awards.

Boardmember Baltay suggested running through all the pictures.

Chair Thompson said that was the plan.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 260 California Ave.

Chair Thompson asked if it was only the outdoor seating part of the project.

Ms. Gerhardt said that was the most recent application.

Boardmember Lew said the original building did not include a restaurant. They made modifications for seating and parking.

Chair Thompson called for support for the project, but there was none.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 1451 California Avenue, the Stanford residential subdivision.

Vice Chair Lee stated she sent Ms. Gerhardt an additional aerial picture of the project. She suggested keeping it on the list for site plan and neighborhood connectivity as well as the massing and the landscape.

Ms. Gerhardt said that they stepped down the density toward California Avenue.

Boardmember Hirsch thought the project was worth keeping on the list. It deals with the neighborhood context nicely and the site planning is significant.

Vice Chair Lee noted that there were two tiers of open space as well.

Boardmember Hirsch appreciated the cul-de-sacs as well. There is a variety of planning ideas.

Chair Thompson asked what the ARB application was.

Ms. Gerhardt said that the ARB looked at limited development standards.

Boardmember Lew suggested it stay on the list but limit it to context since the ARB had no purview over the site plans.

Vice Chair Lee said given that she was not sure that it should stay on the list.

Boardmember Hirsch agreed.

Boardmember Lew stated that matching the context was key to getting community support. It was not easy to achieve.

Vice Chair Lee withdrew her support.

Boardmember Lew said the condominiums had unusual features. They tried hard to incorporate large decks, privacy, and corner units. That could be acknowledged without providing a full award.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the judgement was dependent on how much review the ARB did or on the quality of the project.

Boardmember Lew thought that was up to the ARB. The Bylaws state that the Awards can be given to projects that the ARB reviewed. Multi-family housing is an important issue, and this is probably the best project for that category.

Boardmember Hirsch voted to keep the project on the list since they found it compatible with the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Lee stated she had changed her opinion and would support keeping the project on the list.

Boardmember Lew and Boardmember Baltay also stated support.

Ms. Gerhardt said that once the list was cut in half staff could provide additional research. She announced 400 Channing, comprised of 4 units.

Boardmember Baltay thought the elevation along Channing was not well done. He could not support the project. He recalled that Planning had to make changes to the screening.

Ms. Gerhardt explained additional equipment had to be added later and they had to determine how to screen it.

Chair Thompson shared her screen and showed the equipment mentioned by Boardmember Baltay.

Boardmember Baltay said it was not an award worthy piece of architecture.

Boardmember Lew asked if the oak tree was cut down.

Ms. Gerhardt stated she would check.

Boardmember Lew indicated he would look at the plans.

Ms. Gerhardt confirmed that there were no votes for the project. She announced 611 Cowper, a mixed-use building.

Boardmember Baltay indicated he liked the building.

Boardmembers Hirsch and Lew agreed.

Boardmember Hirsch enjoyed the scale.

Boardmember Baltay was impressed with the use of materials.

Chair Thompson confirmed the project was new construction.

Boardmember Lew said that 611 Cowper won an American Institute of Architects (AIA) Award.

Ms. Gerhardt said that it would stay on the list and announced 405 Curtner.

Vice Chair Lee said she did not plan to nominate the project but supported an award for housing.

Chair Thompson said she could support the project.

Boardmembers Baltay and Hirsch also supported it.

Ms. Gerhardt confirmed they were keeping it and announced 180 El Camino, Shopping Center Phase III.

Boardmember Lew said that they removed it from the list at the last meeting, but that Boardmember Hirsch voted for the Vineyard Vines which was part of Phase III.

Boardmember Hirsch supported keeping Vineyard Vines on the list.

Boardmember Baltay asked to see the Shake Shack building.

Ms. Gerhardt showed the picture.

Boardmember Baltay suggested they nominate Shake Shack instead.

Boardmember Hirsch preferred Vineyard Vines.

Chair Thompson supported Shake Shack but not Vineyard Vines.

Ms. Gerhardt said that three supported Shake Shack, but only one for Vineyard Vines.

Boardmember Lew said that the second floor of Vineyard Vines was office space.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 2585 El Camino, a three-story mixed-use development.

Boardmembers Hirsch, Baltay, and Chair Thompson supported the project.

Ms. Gerhardt announced Fire Station #3.

Boardmembers Baltay, Hirsch, and Lew supported the Fire Station.

Ms. Gerhardt announced the Sludge Facility on 2501 Embarcadero Road.

Chair Thompson apologized for taking the wrong photo and not replacing it before the meeting.

Boardmember Baltay thought they should see a picture of the building before removing the project from the list.

Boardmember Hirsch said that the access point was not handsome.

Boardmember Baltay agreed, but said it was not part of the building. The building is industrial but has interesting detailing and a large entrance door.

Boardmember Lew volunteered to go take pictures.

Ms. Gerhardt announced the Baylands Boardwalk at 2775 Embarcadero.

Chair Thompson and Boardmember Hirsch stated support.

Boardmember Baltay explained that it was only the actual boardwalk that was built, not the building.

Ms. Gerhardt agreed.

Boardmember Lew said it was done very well.

Boardmember Hirsch said that by itself it was not enough and withdrew his support.

Boardmember Baltay and Vice Chair Lee agreed to go walk the boardwalk.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 135 Hamilton Avenue.

Boardmember Lew explained that Downtown has a ground floor retail requirement the City waived in this location. There is a penthouse, and the rest of the building is office.

Boardmember Hirsch was bothered by the stone façade. The proportions and detail are nice, but the rusticated stone is out of place.

Boardmember Baltay said that at night the stone is up lit and is very dramatic.

Chair Thompson confirmed there was no support for the project.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 180 Hamilton, the Nobu façade and some changes to the hotel.

Chair Thompson thought the façade was nice at night.

Ms. Gerhardt explained that the Nobu annex was not complete yet.

Chair Thompson suggested a category for nicest material.

Vice Chair Lee supported a category for materiality or exterior renovation details.

Boardmember Baltay asked if there was supposed to be a bench instead of the planter.

Ms. Gerhardt said that there were many conversations about that.

Chair Thompson voiced support for the project.

Vice Chair Lee voted to support as she liked the category.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 261 Hamilton Avenue, a remodel of the whole building.

Amy French, Chief Planning Official, explained that the building was remodeled. They used historic tile and uncovered some details that had been previously covered.

Boardmember Hirsch said that he would need to see a before and after picture to understand the changes. He called the block incredible and praised its consistency. If the project fits with the block and was a significant renovation he would support it.

Ms. French said they could pull together more images.

Vice Chair Lee stated her support.

Boardmember Baltay voiced disappointment that University Art was chased out by the renovation.

Ms. Gerhardt confirmed that it received two votes. She announced 3223 Hanover, the “butterfly” building in the Research Park. The building also includes a tuck under garage.

Chair Thompson and Boardmember Hirsch voted for the building.

Chair Thompson stated that the website had pictures of the building and shared her screen.

Ms. Gerhardt said that there are several Research Park projects on the list. There could be a Research Park category.

Boardmember Lew noted that the project had to work with existing grading to save existing landscaping. The project could be compared to the same architect and landscape designer’s building on Page Mill.

Chair Thompson said the building could be a candidate for some kind of sustainability award.

Boardmember Lew also supported the project.

Ms. Gerhardt said that there were two buildings on the site. She confirmed they would view it as one property even though it was built in phases.

Boardmember Hirsch noted that there was an interior courtyard that was not pictured.

Boardmember Lew said that he had taken a picture.

Boardmember Hirsch thought the sighting was interesting.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 3406 Hillview, which was also in the Research Park. There is both underground and hillside parking.

Vice Chair Lee noted that there was significant landscaping on the project.

Chair Thompson thought they had discussed this project receiving a landscape award.

Boardmember Baltay asked if there were more pictures of the landscaping.

Vice Chair Lee apologized for not getting more pictures and suggested they keep it on the list for landscape.

Boardmember Baltay said he remembered having significant concerns about the parking and landscaping in the back of the project.

Boardmember Hirsch thought this project was not necessary because they kept the last.

Chair Thompson said they would be for different categories. The previous project would be in a sustainability category while this would be for landscape.

Boardmember Baltay and Vice Chair Lee did not support the building.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 480 Lytton Avenue.

Boardmember Baltay supported the building.

Boardmember Lew said that he would support it in a small project category. The last ARB Awards included a small scope project.

Chair Thompson said that the categories were still open.

Boardmember Hirsch saw a "small" project as being residential.

Boardmember Baltay urged the ARB to look at the glass fins on the façade. They are sophisticated.

Chair Thompson said that she had not seen the project in person.

Boardmember Lew said he would support the building conditionally.

Ms. Gerhardt announced Congregation Kol Emeth at 4175 Manuela Avenue.

Chair Thompson and Boardmember Hirsch supported the building.

Ms. Gerhardt asked if they had suggestions for categories.

Chair Thompson shared her screen and noted that there was a potential for a sustainability award for the building.



B Hirsh enjoyed the site plan and the open space brought into the building. He thought it was a wonderful piece of architecture that deserved to be nominated for more than just being sustainable.

Vice Chair Lee supported the project.

Ms. Gerhardt announced the 13 residential units at 567 Maybell. There was controversy behind the project.

Boardmember Baltay noted there was a piece about the project in the New York Times. He stated he could not support it.

Boardmember Hirsch also could not support the project.

Ms. French explained the New York Times article was critical of the community.

Ms. Gerhardt said it was planned for 60 units and the community wanted lower density. There was a referendum and ultimately 16 units were approved.

Chair Thompson thought the homes were nice looking.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 636 Middlefield Road.

Boardmember Hirsch apologized for the photographs and explained he could not get good light on the building. The use of the red against the background and the chimneys made the project unique. The buildings are simple forms and are shaped different. He appreciated it and voted in support.

Boardmember Lew said that there was an existing building and then three units were added to the site.

Boardmember Baltay said the project had a crazy tandem drive through parking feature added to meet code. He was not impressed with the materials or detailing of the remodel.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 1451 Middlefield Road.

Boardmember Baltay said the building was excellent.

Boardmember Hirsch agreed and explained that the building opens through the parking lot to Lucy Stern. He suggested ARB members look at the entry and scale and the way in which it approaches the street. There is also a courtyard.

Chair Thompson said the ARB liked the project and suggested Ms. Gerhardt move on.

Ms. French noted that the feature Boardmember Hirsch thought was flagpoles was interactive public art.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 2555 Park Boulevard.

Vice Chair Lee indicated she sent Ms. Gerhardt better photographs of the building. She wanted to keep the project on the list for the vertical garden by the sidewalk. The signage is also well done.

Boardmember Hirsch suggested a special award just for the vertical garden.

Vice Chair Lee said the façade was very long and they were able to break it into two separate masses. She did not love the corner above the vertical garden.

Boardmember Hirsch said it could receive an environmental detail award for the ground floor.

Chair Thompson announced that Vice Chair Lee and Boardmember Hirsch voted for the building.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 3045 Park Boulevard in the Research Park. The project was going to have an above grade surface parking lot, but they changed it to below grade. Beginning to end the project improved so she suggested a “most improved” award.

Chair Thompson, Boardmember Baltay, and Boardmember Hirsch indicated they could not support the project.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 3180 Porter. Hearing no support, she announced 1400 Page Mill.

Chair Thompson asked if there was a sustainability thought with the project since it was near a river.

Ms. Gerhardt said that it is a concrete channel, so she was not sure how much attention was paid to it.

Boardmember Lew explained the channel was existing and went through the Research Park. The building is net zero electric use and was done speculatively. Stanford is the developer and they committed to net zero before they lined up a tenant. They also regraded the site, so they removed all the trees.

Chair Thompson asked if there was any support.

Boardmember Lew said he would support this project or 636 Waverley because they are net zero electric.

Boardmembers Baltay, Hirsch and Chair Thompson did not support the building.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 1050 Page Mill in the Research Park. It is four large buildings on a large site. There is underground parking and a center courtyard.

Chair Thompson supported the project.

Boardmember Hirsch stated he did not support the project.

Vice Chair Lee explained that she did not get photographs of the courtyard and noted that she had not seen it used due to Covid. The project is also not done so she is still on the fence.

Boardmember Lew suggested looking at a before and after photo for the project. He thought the landscaping was nicely done.

Vice Chair Lee suggested they keep it on the list.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 355 University Avenue. There is bonus space for seismic renovation.

Boardmember Baltay strongly supported the project. They opened up the lower level from the street and it is extremely successful at increasing retail frontage without changing the mass of the building.

Vice Chair Lee supported the project.

Boardmember Baltay said the project would work well for a storefront category.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 375 University Avenue.

Boardmember Hirsch thought it was beautiful.

Boardmember Baltay said it was well proportioned and detailed.

Chair Thompson supported the project.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 500 University Avenue.

Boardmember Baltay thought it was a beautiful building.

Boardmember Lew voted for the building.

Chair Thompson asked what they liked about the building.

Boardmember Baltay asked if there was a street view that captured the overhang and the third-floor balcony. He also liked how it opened to the parking on the backside. The project is pedestrian friendly and has a glass enclosed coffee shop.

Chair Thompson asked if he was thinking about retail.

Boardmember Baltay said he liked the building as a whole. It does a lot to animate pedestrian and retail activity on University. He also appreciated the scale.

Boardmember Hirsch thought it looked overdone.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 636 Waverley.

Chair Thompson said it was the other net zero building. She asked if there was a second.

Boardmember Baltay said he did not support the project.

Ms. Gerhardt announced 701 Welch, the Children's Hospital.

Boardmember Hirsch said they needed to look at the building from across Welch. The project is nicely done and detailed.

Boardmember Lew noted that the inside of the building was interesting. There is a redwood tree design and treehouses.

Chair Thompson asked if Boardmember Lew supported the project.

Boardmember Lew said that he really appreciated the inside which was not accessible to the public, so his support depended on the category.

Chair Thompson said that the ARB does not review interiors so she did not think they could do awards for that.

Boardmember Hirsch said the pictures do not do the building justice.

Chair Thompson asked if there was further support.

Boardmember Baltay explained he needed to abstain because one of his clients was really involved in the project.

Boardmember Lew asked Boardmember Hirsch about a possible category for the building.

Boardmember Hirsch said that he liked the exterior and that the photos did not show the detailing. It is a huge complex with nice detailing. He asked if the ARB had anything to do with the artwork on the exterior.

Vice Chair Lee voted to support the project.

Boardmember Lew [unintelligible-crosstalk 2:49:40] would support.

Ms. Gerhardt said that they got through the list.

Chair Thompson said she counted about 20 projects, so they eliminated about a third.

Vice Chair Lee asked if they had a focused assignment to work on.

Ms. Gerhardt confirmed there were 25 projects still on the list.

Boardmember Baltay asked if 1400 Page Mill was still on the list.

Chair Thompson said it was crossed off.

Ms. Gerhardt said she listed it as a 1.5 support because of the net zero.

Boardmember Baltay asked if it was a yes or no on the list.

Chair Thompson asked who was the .5

Boardmember Lew said that his support depended on the categories.

Chair Thompson said that for categories she wrote down that they discussed materiality, sustainability, retail, housing, and landscape.

Vice Chair Lee asked if they could each send in their votes and then see a spreadsheet of the breakdown to inform the next discussion.

Chair Thompson asked if they should nail down categories first or if they should continue to think about them while they send in their favorites.

Vice Chair Lee suggested they each write a list with categories and addresses and then review them for consensus. Given the time constraints Boardmembers should have homework.

Chair Thompson suggested that Ms. Gerhardt send out the updated list and Boardmembers review it, list their preferences and categories, and return it to her for collation.

Boardmember Baltay said that they must go through Ms. Gerhardt since it is a public meeting.

Ms. Gerhardt agreed and suggested she speak with Ms. French and the attorneys to see if a Google document was acceptable.

Chair Thompson suggested they send the short list out as an Excel file so that it was easier to collate.

Ms. Gerhardt said she would have a column for proposed category and one for support.

Chair Thompson called for last thoughts, but there were none. She closed the item.

### **Approval of Minutes**

5. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for October 7, 2021.

Chair Thompson called for comments or a Motion.

**MOTION:** Boardmember Lew moved, seconded by Vice Chair Lee, to approve the Minutes for the ARB meeting of October 7, 2021.

**MOTION PASSED:** 5-0

6. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for October 21, 2021.

Chair Thompson called for comments or a Motion.

Boardmember Lew noted that in the minutes one of the architects was labeled as a “Mr.” instead of a “Ms.” on Packet Page 57, 60, and 62.

Ms. Gerhardt said she had noted the change.

**MOTION:** Boardmember Baltay moved, seconded by Boardmember Lew, to approve the Minutes for the ARB meeting of September 2, 2021, as amended.

**MOTION PASSED:** 5-0

### **Board Member Questions, Comments or Announcements**

North of Ventura Coordinated Area Plan (NVCAP) Working Group Updates – Boardmember Lew

Chair Thompson asked Boardmember Lew if he thought the NVCAP should be removed from the agenda.

Boardmember Lew explained there was currently no action by the working group, but that it was possible to reconvene the committee. It could be removed and readded later if necessary.

Chair Thompson agreed and said it could be put back on if necessary. She also noted that the Mayor had asked the ARB to discuss ideas for California Avenue.

Ms. Gerhardt said that the topic was on the digital agenda under announcements. There was not enough time to make it an action item. The Council hearing was moved to January so there is more time before Council will discuss it. Chair Thompson could open the conversation and lay out the facts and then continue the discussion to the next meeting.

Chair Thompson explained that the Mayor met with the Chairs of the City Boards and mentioned that he wanted the ARB to discuss California Avenue. Cal Ave. has been shut down to vehicles and has live music and restaurants. He wants the ARB to propose suggestions to make the project successful.

Ms. Gerhardt said that Cal Ave. is shut down until 2022. Council will need to have that conversation as well.

Chair Thompson said that the ARB could also provide short term ideas as well. She wanted the ARB to think about what it could do in terms of projects or research from an architectural and space planning perspective. She called for the ARB's initial thoughts.

Boardmember Baltay explained he had informally discussed the idea of an outdoor performance space/stage with several Council Members on either Cal Ave. or University Avenue. Redwood City has a similar concept that draws a lot of people. The Council Members suggested that the ARB take the lead and set up an architectural design competition to the community for ideas. The ARB could have an ad hoc subcommittee that organizes the design competition at very little cost to the City. Properly structured, the City would receive lots of helpful ideas. He has created a one-page outline of the idea and met with Chair Thompson about it once. He was also not sure how appropriate it was for the ARB to push forward with the idea, but he liked it.

Ms. Gerhardt said that Council had requested ARB interest in the topic.

Chair Thompson thought Boardmember Baltay had a great idea and that if they wanted to move forward they should set up an ad hoc subcommittee or have the Cal Ave ad hoc committee take it up.

Vice Chair Lee liked Boardmember Baltay's idea. She thought it was important to look at Council's ask before acting. She thought it was also important to identify stakeholder groups and understand their needs. She hoped that mapping was occurring on the Council side and that the ask is well articulated.

Ms. Gerhardt said that so far Council had directed staff to return with a process recommendation to pursue a pro bono design expertise such as the American Institute of Architects (AIA) or ARB and to include an evaluation of potential sites for permanent performance stages in other potential areas such as Downtown. Staff will speak to Council further in January 2022 and can include ARB questions in the discussion.

Boardmember Lew noted that the City had done something like this before in the Downtown. He remembered that the brought in teams of students from Cal Poly and they analyzed different parts of Downtown then made recommendations. Many of the concepts were eventually included in the Comprehensive Plan. Anything with the City takes a long time.

Boardmember Hirsch said that in New York when they built the original World Trade Center the ground floors were used in very flexible ways for commercial uses. Things then happen on the street and invite people to the area. California Avenue is currently very successful at noontime and has a variety of attractions. He suggested giving the project the flexibility to create itself.

Chair Thompson agreed that the flexibility was critical.

Boardmember Baltay wanted to fight City inertia by asking staff to act. He requested they form an ad hoc committee with two ARB members, two members of the City Council, and possibly two members of

the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) to explore doing a design charrette competition this spring. He volunteered to be one of the ARB members on the ad hoc committee if that was acceptable to Chair Thompson.

Vice Chair Lee agreed with Boardmember Baltay.

Boardmember Hirsch also agreed.

Vice Chair Lee thought there should be public listening workshops.

Boardmember Baltay agreed that outreach was important.

Vice Chair Lee wanted to map out a process since it was already November, and the deadline is June 2022. If anything was going to happen it needed to have a masterplan.

Boardmember Baltay was excited to see the community's ideas. He asked if it was feasible to ask Council to form a committee.

Ms. Gerhardt indicated that they were putting together a January staff report for Council and that she would include the ARB ideas. She suggested an ARB representative attend the meeting.

Chair Thompson asked if it was appropriate to form the committee in advance.

Ms. Gerhardt said that given the noticing she did not think they should form the committee at this meeting, but that they could gauge interest.

Chair Thompson instructed Boardmembers to contact her with interest.

Boardmember Baltay said he was interested in being on the committee if the idea has Council support. He wanted that stressed in the report to Council.

Chair Thompson suggested that the project might be more long term in nature. She also liked Boardmember Lew's suggestion of including students. The Stanford d.school could be a good collaborative partner.

Vice Chair Lee said that they could work with the architectural design program at Stanford or even with younger students.

Chair Thompson thanked the ARB for their thoughts and asked them to message her individually with their thoughts.

Amy French, Chief Planning Official, announced that the ARB December 2<sup>nd</sup> electronic packet would be out two weeks in advance of the meeting. The ARB would also receive hardcopy plans on the Castilleja project on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that they were trying to get out the public information early for the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Chair Thompson stated that following the meeting there would be an ad hoc subcommittee item with Boardmember Lew and Boardmember Hirsch.

**Adjournment**

Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:47 a.m.