



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

Architectural Review Board Staff Report

From: Jonathan Lait, Planning and Development Services Director
Lead Department: Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date: January 19, 2023

TITLE

Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for December 1, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Minutes of December 1, 2022

Report #:



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES: December 1, 2022
 Council Chamber & Zoom
 8:30 AM

Call to Order / Roll Call

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

Present: Chair David Hirsch, Vice Chair Peter Baltay, Boardmember Osma Thompson, Boardmember Kendra Rosenberg, Boardmember Yingxi Chen

Absent:

Oral Communications

Veronica Dao, Administrative Associate III, stated there were none.

Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

Claire Raybould, Senior Planner, indicated that staff had none.

Boardmember Rosenberg had a question about 2023. She asked when the first meeting would be held.

Ms. Raybould said it would be January 19, 2023.

Boardmember Chen asked if they were ready to discuss the townhomes.

Chair Hirsch asked if staff had received the slides.

Ms. Raybould stated that they had and that she would present them on his behalf later.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the item was on the agenda.

Chair Hirsch said it would be a non-agendized item.

Jodie Gerhardt, Manager of Current Planning, explained that it was not on the agenda but could be done during the announcements portion as a presentation and not a discussion.

Vice Chair Baltay previously asked staff for a report on the 739 Sutter project.

Ms. Raybould explained that she had heard back on the project the day before and they planned to resubmit. The City had not received a second set of plans after the initial round of comments on the project.

City Official Reports

1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, 2) Tentative Future Agenda items and 3) Recently Submitted Projects

Ms. Raybould displayed the ARB meeting schedule and said that the next hearing was scheduled for December 15, 2023. Boardmember Rosenberg would be absent for that meeting so she asked if anyone else had to be in order to confirm they would have a quorum.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that the ARB normally canceled its first hearing in January. The first meeting of 2023 would be January 19th.

Ms. Raybould noted several new projects added to the prescreening list including 250 Cambridge and the Advanced Water Purification System.

Chair Hirsch suggested that going forward staff place a checkmark next to the new projects.

Ms. Raybould said that she could do that but had placed the new items at the bottom.

Chair Hirsch asked if they would always be the last items.

Ms. Raybould indicated they would.

Chair Hirsch said that was simple enough and staff could continue doing that.

Vice Chair Baltay noted that the 1700 Embarcadero site was going before City Council at the next meeting. He thought it would be great if the ARB had a representative there.

Chair Hirsch asked if someone wanted to attend.

Vice Chair Baltay thought that was normally the job of the Chair and asked staff to confirm.

Ms. Gerhardt said that the Chair could delegate.

Vice Chair Baltay confirmed that the project was up for final approval at the December 5th Council meeting.

Ms. Gerhardt thought that was correct.

Chair Hirsch asked if he would be asked any questions.

Vice Chair Baltay thought the Council would appreciate hearing from the ARB.

Chair Hirsch stated that he would attend.

Ms. Gerhardt confirmed that it would be heard by Council on December 5th.

Chair Hirsch asked if they had the ad hoc list worked out or if they needed additional assignments. He thought they appeared to be month by month assignments.

Ms. Raybould asked Chair Hirsch to repeat his question.

Chair Hirsch said that he was speaking about the ad hoc list.

Boardmember Thompson said that was typically project specific.

Chair Hirsch asked if they had it covered and what the next ad hoc to come in would be.

Ms. Raybould said that the next item anticipated was 788 San Antonio. She needed to check with the planner to see if that would be ready for the December 15th or January 19th meetings. She thought it would be held on January 19th. There were ad hoc committee items related to that project. The applicant intended to file for their building permit by the end of the year prior to the code changes. Modifications would be made as necessary based on the ad hoc committee.

Chair Hirsch stated that Boardmember Rosenberg and Boardmember Chen were not on the ARB for those hearings. Accordingly he assigned Vice Chair Baltay and Boardmember Thompson to the ad hoc committee.

Ms. Gerhardt said staff would check if a decision had been made already, but Chair Hirsch was correct and the Boardmembers on the ad hoc committee might not be on the ARB anymore. Staff would email Chair Hirsch if necessary.

Action Items

2. PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 660 University [21PLN00341]: Consideration of a Planned Community (PC) Rezoning, to Combine 3 Parcels (511 Byron St, 660 University Ave, 680 University Ave/500 Middlefield Rd), Demolish Existing Buildings (9,216 SF Office) and Provide a New Four-Story Mixed-Use Building with Ground Floor Office (9,115 SF) and Multi-Family Residential (all Floors) Including a Two Level Below-Grade Parking Garage. Proposed Residential (41,570 SF) Will Include 65 Units (47 Studios, 12 1-Bedroom, 6 2-Bedroom); and Request for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Allow Replacement of Existing Office Floor Area in the Multiple Family (MF) Land Use Designation. Environmental Assessment: A Notice of Preparation for an Environmental Impact Report was circulated from November 4, 2022 Through December 5, 2022. For More Information, Please Contact the Project Planner: Emily Foley, emily.foley@cityofpal Alto.org.

Chair Hirsch called for disclosures.

Boardmember Thompson stated that she visited the site.

Boardmember Chen disclosed that she visited the site.

Vice Chair Baltay disclosed that he visited the site earlier in the week.

Boardmember Rosenberg also disclosed that she visited the site.

Chair Hirsch said that he lived nearby so had visited the site twice. He then called for the staff report.

Boardmember Thompson reminded Chair Hirsch to introduce the project.

Chair Hirsch introduced the project and then called for the staff report.

Emily Foley, Project Planner, shared her screen with the ARB and explained that it was 9,115 square feet (sf) of office and 65 new residential units, 20% of which would be affordable. The project featured two levels of underground parking containing 88 total parking spots. With respect to the Comprehensive Plan Amendment there was a height exception to the 35 foot special requirement for Planned Community (PC)

projects and reduced setbacks, including the Middlefield special setback. The project also merged three existing parcels. The project was located along University Avenue between Byron Street and Middlefield Road situated near two senior housing properties. The project was a PC or Planned Community District which allowed flexibility not otherwise attained under normal zoning requirements. The PC was required to provide a substantial public benefit and to conform with the Comprehensive Plan. There were special requirements that the project was subject to under zoning in the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) such as the 20% affordable housing and the requirement to provide more housing units than net new jobs. Council provided four options on how the project could attain the 20% and she displayed a slide with those broken down. The applicant proposed 20% Below Market Rate (BMR) units for a total of 13 units out of the 65. She then showed a slide demonstrating the PC process and explained this was the first ARB hearing on the project. Staff recommended that the item be continued since the environmental review had not been completed. After the ARB provided a recommendation the project would return to the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) for its recommendation. City Council ultimately had the final decision on the project. Simultaneously an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was being prepared and members of the public had until December 5th to comment on the scope. She showed a site plan of the project and stated that the proposed office was on the ground floor as was the lobby for the residential use and an owner's unit. All other residential units in the building would be rental units. The office featured outdoor space. The parking circulation entered and exited off of Middlefield Road, but pedestrian entrances were available on all sides of the building. There were three levels of residential use planned and she displayed an example floorplan. Each residential unit had a balcony. She then showed the roof plan which included a roof garden amenity for the residents. She showed the Byron Street and Middlefield Road elevations and highlighted the entrance to the parking garage. The large oak tree shown was part of the neighboring property, but the building was designed with a larger 25 foot setback to avoid impacting the tree roots. Proposed materials included glass, colored plaster, and metal. She then displayed the University elevation and the rear elevation. The key considerations were how the project conformed to the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, the height and daylight plane, the setback along Middlefield Road, and the circulation, parking, and bicycle parking. The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines identified the area as a gateway to Downtown and recommended including street trees on both the public right of way and within the project along University. The building was 45'5" to the top of the parapet, and 55'5" to the top of the mechanical enclosure. The roof deck required that the elevator tower be taller in order to provide the access. Accordingly, the elevator tower was 60'11". A PC typically had a 35 foot height requirement when adjacent to the RM 20 zoning district. However, as part of the PC process the applicant could request an exception. The project complied with the daylight plane on the interior side but not on the Byron Street side. While that would typically be considered the rear yard it was a thorough lot and staff did not recommend that it be stepped back further. She showed a slide displaying the existing setbacks on Middlefield Road. There was a special setback of 24 feet originally intended to allow for the widening of the street. Many of the properties had a 12 to 20 foot setback and only one currently met the standard. The project proposed 10' along Middlefield Road, 10' along Byron Street, and 6' along University Avenue. Staff appreciated any comments the ARB had on the setbacks. The project received a 20% parking space reduction with a 35% Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. The TDM plan was currently under review and a staffer from the Office of Transportation was available to answer questions related to circulation and parking. The proposed bicycle parking had long term spaces in the below grade garage. That was allowed under the code so long as there was access to

the elevators and stairwell, which the project complied with. The short term bicycle parking was along University where the building articulated inward. Staff recommended the ARB provide its initial comments and feedback then continue the item to a date uncertain. Finally, under the recently adopted Objective Standards projects with more than 50 dwelling units were required to provide at least one onsite short term loading space for rideshare, taxis, and delivery services. The project was not held to those standards and did not include the loading space, which the ARB could consider. The applicant was present and had a presentation for the ARB.

Chair Hirsch asked if there were multiple presentations by the applicant. He heard that there was one and told the applicant they had 10 minutes.

Boardmember Thompson requested the applicant state and spell their name for the record.

Boyd Smith, Smith Development, stated that the team worked hard to create a beautiful project that would fit into the existing neighborhood and provide housing. The project was by Smith Development and Palo Alto Dental Group, who owned the land and had operated in the City since 1934. If the project advanced Palo Alto Dental Group planned to relocate within Palo Alto. He introduced the project architect.

Ted Korth, KSH Architects, introduced his team and noted that Paul Lettieri of the Guzzardo Partnership was the landscape architect and was available via Zoom. He showed an aerial of the project site for context. There were a number of 4-story buildings adjacent to the site so it would not be the only 4-story building in the neighborhood. He showed views of the existing site and pictures of the other buildings in the neighborhood for context. Middlefield had a special setback of 24 feet, but the existing building on the site was only setback 10'9" and other buildings on the road also projected into the setback. He showed a site plan and explained that along Middlefield the sidewalk was proposed to be 14' wide and the setback from the property line to the building was 12', which was 24' from the curb line to the face of the building on Middlefield. On Byron it would also be 24' from the curb line to the face of the building. Along University there was a 14' sidewalk and a 6' setback. A level change was required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for flood control. There were two gradual ramps that flanked both entrances for that purpose. A large oak tree on the neighboring property was preserved by the project and the landscape architect would explain that further for the ARB. He displayed the elevations from each street perspective and noted that the bright yellow on the rendering was a placeholder for public art which would function as a welcoming feature. The plane and material changes were made to be sensitive to the neighborhood. The underground parking had two levels with a ramp coming off of Middlefield. They placed the ramp as far from the intersection as possible. If the ramp were to come off Bryon it would endanger the oak tree, so it had to be placed on Middlefield. The parking ramp was a right in and right out design. The ground floor had an outdoor terrace and then there were two elevators for the residential units and one for the office coming up from the underground parking. The project contained a mixture of unit types and featured ins and outs. Each unit had a private balcony. The top floor was setback to respect the daylight plane and featured an outdoor rooftop area for the residents. He displayed the unit layouts and the outdoor deck plans. Most of the activity space on the roof happened on the University side, but everything was setback from the edge of the building. He showed the ARB context drawings of the building on University and again pointed out the public art. He continued quickly running through the renderings while pointing out the oak tree, the building articulation, and the daylight plane. He stated that he would turn the presentation over to the landscape architect.

Paul Lettieri, The Guzzardo Partnership, stated that there would be low planters along the street frontages. The street trees deemed in poor condition would be replaced and others would be preserved. At the rear of the building the PTC was concerned about the oak tree, so they wanted to make sure the ARB understood the plan. The deck would be a wood deck on pedestals on top of the existing asphalt parking lot in order to minimize any disturbance to the tree. The current condition was not ideal, but there was consensus that trying to remove the asphalt might create more damage to the tree than leaving it. The planting areas on the deck were in pots and the asphalt would be completely covered by other materials. The drainage pattern would not change. He showed pictures of another tree the team worked on in Mountain View at 250 Bryant in 2012 and used it as an example to show the ARB the project team understood how to protect the oak. That oak was on the project site and in this project the oak is on a neighboring property. Currently the tree was growing in less than ideal condition and was still doing very well. Based on that they determined it was best to leave the retaining wall, asphalt, and ground in place. The fence would be replaced in kind. The planters on the roof deck were designed to create outdoor spaces with seating opportunities in two separate use areas. He showed pictures of the pavers, bicycle racks, fencing, lighting, decking material, and numerous plants. Currently they were 90% native plants in the plan, and they thought that would look great and have different color variations.

Chair Hirsch advised the applicant that their presentation was running over.

Mr. Lettieri said that they were happy to answer any questions.

Chair Hirsch called for ARB questions.

Boardmember Thompson asked if they wanted to take the public comment.

Chair Hirsch thought they should take questions for staff.

Boardmember Thompson indicated she had questions but would wait until after the public comment.

Vice Chair Baltay also wanted to wait to hear from the public.

Chair Hirsch said that they would call for the public comment.

Ms. Dao said that the first speaker was Leigh Prince, and she was joining over Zoom. Four people donated their time to her.

Ms. Gerhardt said that before Ms. Prince spoke she needed to confirm the people lending their time were present in the room or on Zoom.

Ms. Dao stated that they were present in the chambers, but the speaker was on Zoom.

Ms. Gerhardt thanked Ms. Dao.

Leigh Prince explained she was a land use attorney appearing on behalf of The Hamilton, which was the senior community adjacent to the proposed project. Many of the residents were present in chambers for the hearing. The ARB was to consider whether the project's design was consistent with the zoning, Comprehensive Plan, in harmony with adjacent uses, and if the design was beneficial for pedestrian and bicycle safety. She submitted a letter to the ARB that enumerated the ways the proposed project did not satisfy the findings. The ARB did have a say in density which was integral to the findings they needed to

make to approve the findings. Density of the project's magnitude was not consistent with the zoning or Comprehensive Plan as it was three to six times denser than the City planning documents allowed or than the draft Housing Element anticipated. The PC zoning required substantial public benefit and previous PC projects provided greater benefits for far less density. The Hamilton provided 19.4% affordable units and a \$500,000 subsidy and resale fees to establish a fund to benefit seniors and senior services. The Hamilton was only 33 units per acre and the proposed project was 126 units per acre. Lytton Gardens was a fully affordable project providing housing for low to moderate income seniors. That public benefit was far greater than the proposed project. Due to the density the project was not desirable or in harmony with the adjacent uses. Increased setbacks would decrease the overall density. The required setbacks on Middlefield, Bryon, and University were not respected and the project requested unnecessary reductions that would impede the City's ability to plan for necessary changes to the street, including those for multimodal improvements. When the other buildings were redeveloped they would be required to meet the setbacks, so they encouraged the ARB to require compliance with the setbacks. Increasing the setback of the building and related improvements like the decking near the oak tree would help reduce the density and intensity of the building while ensuring the preservation of a community asset. The applicant's renderings showed the canopy of the oak growing over the deck and into the upper balconies. That meant there were impacts to the tree beyond development and into the future. The tree was critically important, and the ARB had received and would receive many comments about it. Reducing the height of the building was another way to reduce the density and intensity of the project. PC zoning allowed for flexibility but specifically provided in Section 1838150 that sites within 150' of residential were subject to an additional height limitation of 35'. The project included heights up to 60' so the Hamilton encouraged the ARB to look at reducing the overall height of the project. She noted that there were 2-story buildings nearby. The Hamilton was also concerned about noise from the roof deck and requested it be removed and the open space be placed elsewhere. Hamilton also requested they direct the applicant to eliminate the office space which was inconsistent with zoning, the Comprehensive Plan, and the neighborhood. Office space brought added traffic congestion which was of significant concern to the senior residents. The community also already had more than adequate office space, much of which was currently vacant. The space should be used as a medical office to serve the neighboring seniors. Finally, the Hamilton encouraged the project to be designed with the full number of parking spaces in order to avoid parking intrusion on the surrounding streets. In her experience TDMs were more difficult in residential uses. She asked the ARB to review the project with a thoughtful eye on intensity and density and the impact on the senior neighbors. Further, the applicant should pull the project back significantly and return with a redesigned project for further ARB review.

Chair Hirsch asked if there were individual speakers.

Ms. Dao stated that there was another group.

Chair Hirsch asked how many people were represented.

Ms. Dao announced that two people donated their time and the speaker would have 9 minutes.

Christopher Reem: explained that he and his wife had been residents of the City for 51 years and spent the last 4 years living in The Hamilton. The Hamilton Board passed resolutions opposing the project as it was planned. The Hamilton was a senior facility for people 55 years and older with 36 units for a density

of 33 units per acre, which was significantly less than the proposed project. He was pleased that everyone agreed that the oak tree needed protection. As it was approximately 50" in diameter it required a Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) of about 45'. The plans show a TPZ of only 30' which went right to the building. As the parking structure went down two stories it would cut the roots of the tree at that point. Additionally, there would be construction and that might cut into the TPZ. Further, the limbs were as important as the roots, and they reached the proposed balconies and would therefore have to be trimmed. At that point he determined that there would only be 19' of protection for the tree limbs. The project arborist admitted that there would need to be pruning and that a 17" limb would have to be cut off. Traffic would enter and exit the project from Middlefield with a suggestion for a right turn only exit. He asked how that would be enforced as people would want to turn left to go to University and other places. There would be traffic problems. He asked how long the construction would take and where the workers would park. He assumed that Byron would be shut down for several years during construction which would cause problems. The project admitted that it was required to have 105 parking spaces but only provided 82. They were credited with another 7 spaces under Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) aisles. He noted that one could not park on a credit so there was a deficit of 23 cars that would need to park in the neighborhood. Parking was already a problem in Downtown Palo Alto and would be made worse by the project. The latest iteration of the project included a "party deck" on the roof containing barbeques and a wall mounted TV. He assumed that the building would house mostly younger single people who liked to party. Fourteen of the Hamilton units faced the proposed project, and the parties and noise would transmit and annoy neighbors. The ARB knew better than the Hamilton residents the importance of setbacks, which the project really cut down. With respect to balconies the ones facing the Hamilton would be in the oak tree. He did not believe a tree in Mountain View that did not die justified the cutting back of the TPZ in this project. On University the balconies went right to the sidewalk and were not aesthetically pleasing and would be dangerous. He asked what would happen when something was dropped from a balcony and noted that they would be distracting as one walked down the sidewalk. Finally, the office space made no sense. Palo Alto needed to meet its housing numbers and the office simply created further demand for housing under the state law. He suggested it be removed and replaced with housing units. He thanked the ARB for its time and asked them to suggest the applicant make corrections to the project.

Chair Hirsch asked if there were more speakers.

Ms. Dao indicated that they had at least two more individual speakers.

Ms. Gerhardt asked if the next speaker was with the applicant's team.

Ms. Dao said that she was.

Ms. Gerhardt indicated that she was not allowed to speak during the public comment period.

Dr. Shachi Bahl stated that she was part of the Palo Alto Dental Group.

Ms. Gerhardt indicated that was allowed.

Dr. Shachi Bahl said that she was speaking on behalf of the Palo Alto Dental Group. She thanked the ARB and said that she wanted to voice their strong support for the project. It made sense at the location and added much needed housing to the community. The project would not result in the closure of the dental

practice. If approved the Palo Alto Dental Group pledged to relocate within the City of Palo Alto and already had a variety of relocation options. The project represented positive change for the community and was appropriately located with access to retail and public transit.

Chair Hirsch asked if the facility was adjacent to the property.

Dr. Bahl stated that they were on the property.

Chair Hirsch thanked her and called for the next speaker.

Ms. Dao stated that there was another speaker on Zoom.

Xenia Hammer realized that Palo Alto needed additional housing but was very concerned about the project. The size and density needed to be significantly reduced as it exceeded the allowed zoned density. The setback issue concerned her as Middlefield had the setback to help the City improve traffic and pedestrian safety. Relaxing the setback constraints severely impeded the City's ability to do that in the future. She was a pedestrian and cyclist and the safety on Middlefield was already precarious and needed to be improved. She further suggested that the project needed a drop off/pickup spot for the residents to further mitigate traffic impacts on University and Middlefield. Finally, she wanted to discuss the mix of units. She noted the project had 47 studio apartments and stated that Palo Alto needed housing for more than just single people.

Chair Hirsch thanked the public speakers and confirmed there were no more.

Ms. Dao indicated there were two public speakers present in chambers.

Carolyn Tour: thanked the ARB for its time and explained that she was a 50+ year resident of Palo Alto that has lived at The Hamilton for the past 10 years. She enjoyed being able to walk Downtown and noted that the bus was not a particularly efficient means of travel for those without cars. She had tried to imagine what the project would be like. The studio apartments were not much larger than student housing but were a place of one's home. Palo Alto urgently needed more housing in Palo Alto. Few people would call the proposed project family friendly or affordable. She asked what it would take to build affordable family friendly units. Before the City moved ahead with the project the community needed answers for the developer's long list of concessions. She asked if the apartments would actually be at or near market rate. There were many questions about the affordability of the units built at El Camino and Page Mill and she assumed those questions would apply to the proposed project. She asked the Boardmembers to review that before they went on record about the project. She also asked if the oak tree would survive and noted it was important to many. For many Hamilton residents their exercise was a walk around the block every day. Cutting the setbacks affected those pedestrian's quality of life and she voiced concern about seniors and bicyclists trying to cross Middlefield Road with increased traffic. Currently the area was called "Senior Corner" and it would be very different with people leaving their studios for the roof deck with their music. She thought it could be disruptive to the patients at the Webster House Nursing facility a block away and scoffed at the idea of a 10:30 curfew. She asked what public benefit the project brought. The EIR could examine low cost senior housing for the site as a project alternative. She thanked the ARB for its time.

Carol Gilbert said that she was a member of the Board at the Hamilton and thanked the residents for attending and voicing their concerns. She learned the day before that there were petitions in the dental offices for the patients to sign. When the applicant states that they had signatures of people loving the building those were their patients and she questioned how ethical that was in a medical relationship. The ARB had purview over design review and architectural considerations. The location was considered the gateway to Downtown and tall buildings over narrow sidewalks flew in the face of aesthetic sensitivity. She asked them not to turn Downtown Palo Alto into Downtown San Jose. The project requested egregious variances to the normally required setbacks which would eliminate the possibility of widening Middlefield and improving the bicycle routes. The land was designated for 40 units per acre and the project was for 65 units. The City needed housing and that would be denser. Citizens understood that but the City needed to give consideration for the housing's effect on the surrounding neighborhood. She asked facetiously why the project was only four stories and 65 units when it could be eight stories and 150 units. Currently the City needed 101 projects to get close to meeting its housing goals for the next decade. Then she stated that she wanted to seriously discuss parking as the proposed project left residents without places to park within the building. The lower income units particularly did not have available parking. She previously sent the ARB a letter with photographs of the neighborhood. One could not prevent residents from owning cars.

Chair Hirsch stated that Ms. Gilbert was a minute over her allotted time.

Ms. Gilbert said that she was told she would have six minutes.

Chair Hirsch stated that it was three minutes per speaker and apologized for not announcing that at the beginning. The ARB always gave three minutes. He asked her to wind up her thoughts.

Ms. Raybould said that the speaker could have six minutes if someone gave her time.

Chair Hirsch asked if that was correct and then said that he would give her another two to three minutes.

Ms. Gilbert said that there were no parking spaces on the University or Middlefield sides of the building and limited parking on Byron side which were fully parked most of the week. The nearest residential spaces available under the residential parking permits were a three to four minute walk. Hamilton residents were also extremely concerned about where the construction vehicles and equipment would be located during construction. She asked if they would be on the 660 property as there was no space on the adjacent streets. The residents and the ARB needed to see the construction plan. The planned office space was totally unneeded. The area was called "Senior Corners" for a reason. Seniors had a higher sensitivity to air pollution and a greater desire to walk around the neighborhood safely away from bicycle and traffic. The roof top deck included lounges, large screen TVs, and barbeques. She asked the ARB to imagine Monday Night Football parties and the impact to neighbors. She suggested the developer remove the TV and speakers from the plan and build the area as an enclosed solarium to mitigate the noise. Finally, she suggested that it be a garden respite for residents instead. With the heritage oak tree she suggested the ARB defer to the Palo Alto City Arborist. Designating the project as 20% affordable was a handful and only four units were planned for low income. She thought workforce housing applied to those that made 120% of the Palo Alto (interrupted)

Chair Hirsch asked if she would wrap up.

Ms. Gilbert said that the City may as well hang a sign welcoming young tech workers and telling elders and families to go elsewhere.

Chair Hirsch thanked Ms. Gilbert and asked if there were further speakers.

Ms. Dao indicated that concluded the public comment.

Chair Hirsch asked the applicant to respond to the public comment.

Ms. Raybould indicated that the applicant had the option but was not required to respond to the public comment.

Chair Hirsch announced that the applicant passed on the opportunity. He called for Boardmember questions of staff and comments.

Boardmember Thompson said that she had several questions of the applicant. She asked what the building type was.

Amanda Borden [KSH Architecture]: indicated that it was a 3 A.

Boardmember Thompson asked them to briefly go over how the parking stackers worked.

Ms. Boden said that they looked at two different types of independent systems. In those systems cars did not have to be moved in order to get other cars out. There would be a pit with either a puzzle lift or double stackers.

Boardmember Thompson confirmed that they had not made any decisions.

Ms. Borden said that was correct.

Boardmember Thompson asked what the color palette was inspired by.

Mr. Korth said that they selected earth tones for the upper floors, clear glass, an off white, and a wood color window frame.

Boardmember Thompson confirmed that the façade was almost entirely plaster.

Mr. Korth agreed.

Boardmember Thompson asked if they considered using other materials.

Mr. Korth stated that they could but thought plaster was a nice material that did not require many joints and had a nice surface. They thought it was a good contrast to the balconies and windows which were smooth glass.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the plaster would be heavily textured.

Mr. Korth said that they were looking at a medium texture. The plaster provided a softer presence and that was why they thought it was appropriate.

Boardmember Thompson confirmed that the plaster was an off white color.

Mr. Korth said that it was.

Vice Chair Baltay noted that the sample said painted metal panel and provided a paint sample. He asked if he was missing something.

Mr. Korth explained that the balconies had a 1 foot band at the bottom for structure which would be clad in metal.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if the ARB had a sample of the cement plaster finish.

Mr. Korth apologized that they did not.

Vice Chair Baltay confirmed that material made up the majority of the exterior of the building.

Mr. Korth agreed that it did.

Vice Chair Baltay stated that the building was in the flood zone and asked staff if was permissible to have elevators and mechanical equipment below the flood plane in the underground parking garage. He asked if they needed a special floodgate.

Ms. Foley explained the Public Works Engineering Department reviewed the project and it would need a floodgate. She had no specific information about the elevators and parking stackers, but the project was reviewed.

Vice Chair Baltay thought those were significant issues.

Ms. Gerhardt said that it was normally the actual engines or motors that needed to be out of the waterways. There were unique solutions that needed to be handled.

Vice Chair Baltay just wanted the issue flagged as important. Unit M was a corner unit on the ground floor. He asked if there was a bedroom with a full height window on the corner. He asked to see the floor plan on the screen.

Boardmember Thompson said they could just show the ground floor and confirmed that Vice Chair Baltay was concerned about Unit M.

Vice Chair Baltay said that he wanted A 2.1.

Ms. Borden explained that was planned to be the onsite manager's unit.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if the bedroom window was floor to ceiling glass.

Ms. Borden believed there was a planter in front of the window with a sill. There was a window, but it was not slab to ceiling.

Vice Chair Baltay pointed to the Byron side and asked if there was a partition wall in the middle of the window.

Ms. Borden said that was correct. They typically terminated partitions at mullions so the partition would not hit the glass.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if they were confident that the elevations were correctly rendering that condition.

Ms. Borden explained that at one point they had the office and residential uses on different sides, and they mirrored them. She believed the elevations and renderings were correct, but she would double check.

Vice Chair Baltay specifically asked if the wider mullion was rendered that way because the wall terminated there.

Ms. Borden did not believe the interior conditions were in the renderings. They were still working on the unit design, so the interior walls were not reflected in the renderings of the exterior.

Vice Chair Baltay thanked her for the clarification. He asked staff if the elevator shafts and staircases were required to be within the height limit and asked if that was the case in Palo Alto.

Ms. Foley stated that was correct.

Vice Chair Baltay understood the project contained a request for additional height but wanted to understand how much extra they were talking about. He confirmed that on a 35' building the elevator shaft could not go above that height.

Ms. Foley said that was correct.

Vice Chair Baltay requested clarification on the rules related to amplified sound and TVs outdoors in places like the roof deck.

Ms. Foley stated that it needed to comply with the standard noise in PAMC 9.10. There was a standard daytime exception to 110 decibels but that was restricted to 8 or 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if watching a football game or having a live music performance would be allowed on the roof deck.

Ms. Foley said that it likely would not be. On other roof decks Downtown the City had placed limitations on amplified noise.

Vice Chair Baltay confirmed there was nothing in the City ordinances prohibiting the noise and that the project would need conditions.

Ms. Foley agreed that was correct.

Vice Chair Baltay told Chair Hirsch that he wanted the applicant to come and explain why there were so many studio units planned. Otherwise he was done with his questions.

Boardmember Chen asked staff if there was an arborist report for the project.

Ms. Foley explained it was in the Plan Set on Sheets T2 and T3.

Boardmember Chen said that typically the TPZ was 10 times the tree trunk size. she asked why this project was allowed in the TPZ.

Ms. Raybould noted that there were no restrictions on construction within the TPZ. The TPZ was identified, and the arborist's report outlined what measures needed to be taken for any work within the TPZ.

Boardmember Chen noted that there were three street trees along University Avenue which were slated to be replaced. She asked the applicant for an explanation.

Mr. Lettieri said that those trees were identified as being in poor condition by the arborist and were recommended to be replaced.

Boardmember Chen asked if there was screening on the edge of the rooftop deck on the Hamilton side.

Mr. Korth said that on Middlefield there was a 5' parapet. Facing the Hamilton there was also a solid 5' parapet. Additionally it was setback from the perimeter of the project by 10'.

Boardmember Rosenberg had questions for staff. The property was going from a Planned Home Zone (PHZ) to a PC, and she wanted to know if that was proposed or approved.

Ms. Foley explained it was currently zoned RM 20 and the rezoning was to PHZ or PC which were kind of synonyms. Currently there was a moratorium on PCs except for housing projects.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the rezoning application had been made and where it was in the process.

Ms. Foley said it was simultaneously happening with the architectural review. She displayed the process slide for the ARB.

Ms. Raybould stated that the ARB reviewed PC zoning, so the application was for a PC rezoning. Part of that PC rezoning was the development plan. The ARB review was part of the process. The PTC did a prescreening first and then would hear the project again after the ARB but before Council.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked what grounds the applicant needed to meet in order to qualify for the rezoning.

Ms. Raybould noted that the ARB's findings were the same findings that were relevant to the development of plan. The PTC and Council had additional findings they needed to make related to PC zoning specific to the public benefits and other things.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the setback reductions were based on the 20% BMR housing. She asked if that was the only qualification for reducing the setbacks including the special setback on Middlefield.

Ms. Raybould explained that the Council indicated it was willing to consider projects where the public benefit was increased affordability. Council had discretion to define that benefit based on the requests made by the applicant.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the parking stackers qualified as tandem parking spaces or if they had a different designation.

Ms. Foley indicated that they were not considered tandem so long as they were independently accessible.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked the applicant how they planned to dig the basement.

Ms. Borden believed a contractor was engaged to do a preliminary pre-construction review. The construction logistics plan had not been completed. The TPZ of 30' assumed a 5' shoring and foundation thickness. So there was 25' of root protection.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the applicant could confirm that they would not try to use an OSHA cut at that location because of the TPZ.

Ms. Borden could not confirm that without speaking to the contractor. She apologized that it was not her area of expertise.

Boardmember Rosenberg noted that the landscape architect stated that the existing asphalt would remain in place with a deck above. She requested clarification.

Mr. Lettieri explained that they would put pedestals on the asphalt like one would do on a roof deck in order to not disturb the asphalt. The building was slightly raised for flooding reasons so there was room for the deck to go on the asphalt.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if it would benefit the tree to remove the asphalt and allow for natural percolation into the ground.

Mr. Lettieri said that the benefit was arguable because removing the asphalt was a change in condition and that could be more of a problem for the tree. There was also a concern that removing the material could damage the tree. So to be cautious it was determined that they should leave it alone. Oaks did better when things did not change. The arborist report stated that it was preferable to not disturb the asphalt.

Boardmember Rosenberg confirmed that the managers unit on the ground floor was not a model showroom and rather a habitable space.

Ms. Borden indicated that was correct.

Boardmember Rosenberg noted that she saw the bicycle rack location but no diagrams showing bicycle pathing or pedestrian walkways. With the concerns of the local seniors she indicated she wanted to see more focus on that.

Ms. Borden confirmed that she was requesting a bicycle site circulation and said that they currently did not have one prepared.

Boardmember Rosenberg thanked the applicant.

Chair Hirsch had asked that Transportation be available to the ARB as he was concerned about the access to the building off of Middlefield and about traffic volume studies. He wanted to know if it was reasonable to have access to Middlefield. He asked staff if they could explain how the traffic worked related to the access of the building.

Ms. Raybould said that Sylvia Star-Lack from the Transportation Division was present.

Sylvia Star-Lack, Manager Transportation Planning, explained that the access on Middlefield was of concern to Office of Transportation staff because of how it might affect operations on Middlefield and

University. She explained that she was filling in for another staff member and was unsure if they had done an operations analysis for the project yet. Office of Transportation staff preferred a driveway design off of Byron that avoided issues with the oak tree roots. That also eliminated the right in and right out situation. It appeared that access off of University and onto Byron provided space for drivers to turn left. The Hamilton's main driveway was also on Byron so that already supported access to a major development.

Chair Hirsch asked if there were counts on Middlefield at the access point. Traffic moving south on Middlefield was often backed up.

Ms. Foley said that a Transportation Impact Analysis was being prepared as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis but was still in draft form. Staff hoped to have it by the next ARB hearing.

Chair Hirsch indicated that he would wait. There was a lot of discussion about the oak tree, so he asked if an arborist was available.

Ms. Foley said that no staff arborist was on hand, but Urban Forestry indicated they would incorporate the recommendations from the arborist report into the Conditions of Approval for the project.

Ms. Gerhardt said the project arborist was on call if there were questions and staff could get answers between hearings.

Chair Hirsch asked what she meant by between hearings.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that the project would have to return for a second hearing no matter what. If the ARB felt the applicant's arborist did not help them sufficiently then they would speak to staff.

Chair Hirsch thought there were many reasons why the arborist report needed to be carefully considered.

Boardmember Thompson asked if there was currently an arborist on the Zoom.

Ms. Gerhardt said the landscape architect was on the call.

Chair Hirsch noticed that there was no cover above the stairwells leading to the garage and asked if they would be covered or not.

Ms. Borden explained that the stairs were planned as exterior stairs without a volume above grade. They were under the perimeter canopy that wrapped the building.

Chair Hirsch stated that concluded his questions.

Vice Chair Baltay said that the Storm Management Plan said that there were stormwater retention areas near the wood deck. He asked if he was reading that correctly.

Mr. Lettieri stated that there was no stormwater treatment near the tree. It was primarily along the street frontage and was shown by a texture in the landscape plan.

Vice Chair Baltay confirmed that the round circles were potted plants.

Mr. Lettieri agreed that was correct. He pointed out that it was difficult to see the texture but the area outside the manager's unit had two stormwater planters and there were more along Middlefield which were recessed into the slab, so they were not tall above grade.

Vice Chair Baltay thanked Mr. Letteri. He asked Chair Hirsch if the developer could explain why there were so many small units in the building as a point of understanding.

Chair Hirsch thought that question was important.

Lund Smith, [Smith Development] explained that as part of their exploration after the Council prescreening hearing they encouraged the smaller unit mix given the location. They hired a consultant to look at the project and came to the conclusion that with the Downtown location it would be more desirable to have studios and 1-bedroom units. They were flexible and open to other ideas.

Boardmember Thompson asked him to state and spell his name for the record.

Chair Hirsch called for further questions but heard none, so he returned the conversation to the ARB for comments.

Boardmember Thompson thanked the applicant for the presentation and the public for its interest. Generally she supported the project but had caveats for the applicant to consider. Given that Middlefield was narrow it could use better bicycle and transportation improvements moving forward so she would support a taller building if the project respected the setbacks. Most of her comments related to the façade and building design. She found that plaster was a low quality material, and the ARB was required to find that the building was of high quality materials. The design intent to use earth tones was great and she encouraged the applicant to bring wood in as a material. The design needed to have a better relationship with nature. The proposed colors did not provide the contrast and texture the designer hoped for because they would appear very smooth. The façade lacked articulation and she suggested they punch in the windows for more relief. The façade lost coherence and so she encouraged another look at it. The ground level along University had a lot of small scale articulation. The ARB saw a lot of storefront ground level experiences and the applicant needed to decide what the experience would be in terms of articulation. She suggested more articulation on the planter and the guardrails, so the experience was not forgotten. Everyone wanted to save the oak tree so she requested they really look at what adding the deck would do. She understood there was a desire not to disturb the asphalt but questioned if the added deck would be a disturbance to the roots due to the weight. She understood the concerns about the driveway access on Middlefield and would be open to having other choices. How the stackers operated would affect the parking count and needed to be reviewed. She looked forward to the next iteration of the project.

Vice Chair Baltay noted that he agreed with most of Boardmember Thompson's comments. He credited the developer for pulling the building back from the oak tree but thought the vehicle entrance off Middlefield should be moved to Byron. Middlefield was already busy, the flood gate could be an issue, and people would definitely try to turn left so Byron was better. The project needed better service loading areas for things like rideshares and package delivery. Provisions had to be made for those services in order for the project to work. He questioned the location of the ground floor outdoor terrace. Placing it at the back by the trash pickup and parking garage separated it from the residences. He thought it would be nice to have near the tree if that was possible and stated that the building needed to relate to the open space,

which currently felt like an afterthought. It was critical that the applicant work with staff to ensure that they could use parking lifts and stackers in the flood plain. Generally speaking, mechanical equipment was not allowed below the flood plain by law. With the massing he found that it lacked a coherent design parti. It lacked inspiration and visual logic as the breaks felt haphazard. There was no base/middle/top or roof eaves to tie into the neighborhood. The other projects in the neighborhood tied back to the residential nature of the neighborhood with the roof eaves. The project also did not have a dramatic form that would cause it to stand out as a special architectural feature. There were so many balconies on the project that they felt almost arbitrary and that did not help with the overall design. The first floor canopy helped to reduce the massing but was not a powerful architectural element and competed with the vertical elements of the design. Overall he thought it was an overloaded program with the number of units, the flood plane issues, and the oak tree. The façade looked like it had been massaged to the point where it did not have a strong sense of architectural quality. The ARB had to find that the building had a functional design and to that end he stated that it needed loading spaces and things like that. The bicycle parking also did not work, and he suggested 50% of the parking be at grade and close to the primary building access. The bicycle parking in the basement was challenging as riders would have to carry their bicycles up three stairs and then take an elevator to the parking garage. That was not likely to happen, and he feared there would be bicycles tied to streetlamps. The City had asked other projects to create a bicycle storage room of some kind and he suggested that they look into that. There were many issues with the unit layouts. He referred to Drawing A 5.1 and noted that he heard the unit designs were still in flux. Unit A1 had no daylight, Unit C1 had an oddly proportioned room, and there were other issues that he wanted to see addressed in the next iteration. It was disappointing that there were no interior common spaces, especially given the very small units. Some indoor common spaces were necessary in humane housing. Typically lounges would be at the end of the hall near the stairs or elevator. He commended the project for its balconies but noted that there was no privacy between them. The rooftop spaces shown in A 2.3 were next to each other in a way that lacked privacy. The project required more thought around the unit designs and privacy. The rooftop deck featured a long, linear design that appeared to be at the mercy of the mechanical engineers. He suggested they create a more cohesive space and insist the mechanical engineers work with the remaining room to make the building better. He supported having a roof deck and thought it was a good amenity but cautioned that the project needed to be respectful of neighbors. He shared Boardmember Thompson's thoughts on the materials and colors and stated there was a lack of richness and depth. He gave the cedar shingles of Lytton Gardens or the detailed Mediterranean design of the Hamilton as examples of architecture that followed the Palo Alto ideas of residential architecture. He requested richer materials with more textures and colors that expressed what the materials were. He suggested that they look to the oak tree for inspiration with the materials. Finally, he requested to see a rendering from the corner of University and Byron.

Boardmember Chen thanked everyone for attending the hearing. She was generally supportive of the project and liked the rooftop garden and how the building stepped down toward the single story buildings behind the project. The applicant could consider several improvements such as relocating the garage entrance so as to not cause further congestion on Middlefield. She suggested they also add a short term parking/loading/delivery space. It was necessary to provide that since there would be 65 units on the property. She appreciated the common and private open space for the residents but encouraged them to reconsider if all the units needed canopies, especially those units near the tree canopy and above the

ramps near the entrance. With the setbacks she felt the one on Byron was acceptable, but along Middlefield she did not believe there was strong support for a reduced setback. Although the proposed setback was similar to the current condition it was not appropriate for a 4-story building to be that close to the road.

Boardmember Rosenberg thanked the applicant for the project and the local residents for coming to voice their concerns. she supported the comments of her fellow Boardmembers but was more pessimistic about the project which felt inherently flawed. The project was situated between two senior neighborhoods while trying to be active and lively near University Avenue and the balance was not met. Calling the area a gateway to Downtown with the visual form of the building felt borrowed. It was not an office building, but it was not a residential building. she encouraged them to move forward with housing, retail, and medical offices, but the project fell short. The materials were lackluster. The forms and balconies were either underthought or borrowed from somewhere else. The traffic would be a big issue and required more thought which would fundamentally change the design of the building. There was no ground to reduce the setback on Middlefield so significantly as it was a major throughfare. The other buildings on the street might not meet the 24' setback but were not 10' from the setback so she had a hard time supporting that especially with potential future bicycle improvements and street widening. She repeated that she did not find a significant reason for the setback to be granted. Generally the height was not a problem and was consistent with the neighborhood. Another Boardmember mentioned that they would support a height increase if the building maintained a bigger setback on Middlefield and she agreed with that. The roof deck on University was a beautiful feature. She understood the neighbor's concerns but felt the University side was appropriate for its placement. The fact that the deck was linear did not bother her as it is surrounded by the mechanical. The manager's suite on the ground floor was less than optimal as it was a very active corner and living space would not work well there. The number of studios and the size of the units made the project feel like a dorm and situating a dorm between two senior facilities was out of place. Palo Alto needed housing and she wanted to encourage that, but the thoughtfulness surrounding the housing was lacking. The orientation of some units and the lack of light in others needed improvement. Placing the vehicular entrance on Byron rather than Middlefield was a better idea, but she wondered if it could be located off of University. She understood that with the oak tree there were many constraints on the site and that she was asking for a lot but thought the design team was competent and she was excited to see their solutions. For the next iteration of the project she asked to see the pedestrian and bicycle pathing, a digging plan for the area around the oak tree, and better material samples. She stressed that the building would be very visible, and the materials were extremely important. Finally, she requested a reassessment of the traffic design and how it would function.

Chair Hirsch commented that his colleagues had done a great job. With respect to materiality he mentioned that fiber cement had detail, a variety of color, texture, and brought the scale of a building down. Those things were missing in the current project. Boardmember Thompson mentioned that the project lacked form and he agreed. The project team needed to think in terms of massing and the relationship. He appreciated the idea of having lounges on the upper floors and suggested that could be incorporated into the building design. The majority of the ARB voiced support for Byron as the vehicular access point. The site was not big enough for the proposed project which was an issue. Despite the fact that there were outs and ins the project was really just a big box that filled the entire site. Middlefield had traffic and that would presumably increase as the City built more housing so he thought it was a mistake

to place the building's entry where a bicycle path could go in the future. He did not believe the current scheme worked due to the high traffic area. The ground floor rear terrace under the oak tree would require daily cleaning and would not be a great place to spend time. He was also concerned about proportion and noted that the office was large but there was no bicycle access to the public area. In a large project bicycle storage needed access to the street, so he suggested using some office space as bicycle storage. Alternatively, the bicycle storage could be on the other side and part of the office could be used for the entry lobby or mail room. The ground floor was not appropriately planned, especially for bicyclists. The horizontal piece covering the stairwells probably did not provide the necessary weather cover and it was not a great idea to have open stairs to a cellar. Just creating a horizontal line at that point was an insufficient transfer between the ground floor and the upper part of the building. There needed to be a separation of materials or a cantilever of the whole structure from the ground floor. Many things could be addressed by taking another look at the form of the building, creating the entry off Byron, and massing the building appropriately. The forms required differentiation and did not need to be one long form with 100 balconies on it. The balconies were necessary because the tiny apartments needed more open space. That was not a sufficient reason to create balconies. He spent most of his career working on supportive housing and some of the units in the project were smaller than those. The kitchens were very small and therefore there would be many food deliveries to the building. The roof deck was a great thing and would have beautiful views but should be accompanied by lounges on each floor. The rest of the ARB addressed the materiality. The building currently had no articulation and that needed to be changed. With the oak tree he would defer to the arborist, but it needed protection and distance from the project. It could be used as a form giving piece that the architect could consider. He was not as concerned about the traffic as the neighbors and admitted that the construction would probably utilize Byron Street during construction. He hoped the project team would take the next step and provide something that was more exciting. The area was very important, and the benefit of the project needed to be considered. Per the Council the benefit was the affordable units, but the ARB needed to see a really great building and he hoped the team would take advantage of that opportunity.

Vice Chair Baltay recalled that during the premeeting with staff the ARB was asked to provide guidance about how much bicycle parking should be located proximate to the building's entrance versus in the basement. He asked if the Chair wanted to try and get consensus from the Board on the issue. He suggested that 50% of the required parking should be located close to the main entrance at the ground level.

Chair Hirsch asked about the code requirements.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that Ms. Foley shared the code requirement on the screen. In underground garages only long term bicycle parking was allowed. Those facilities needed to be located near elevators and stairways. Street level parking was encouraged and so the ARB could put parameters on the project as suggested by Vice Chair Baltay. Transportation staff were also available on the call.

Chair Hirsch asked to hear from Ms. Star-Lack.

Ms. Star-Lack said that one thing that needed to be considered was that people had all different sizes of bicycles. In the future staff wanted to adjust the code requirements to acknowledge that. In this project they noticed that if people did not want to or could not use the elevator to move their large box bike they

would have to use a very steep ramp. Things like that impacted bicycle usage and needed to be managed. Based on that she really appreciated the ARB's comments.

Chair Hirsch did not believe that they needed a Motion on the matter.

Vice Chair Baltay remembered that Ms. Gerhardt had asked for guidance. Bicycle parking came up on almost every project so he thought the ARB should be upfront about what it wanted. He asked Ms. Gerhardt if that was correct.

Ms. Gerhardt said that everyone involved appreciated clarity.

Chair Hirsch asked if they wanted to include lounges on each floor.

Vice Chair Baltay indicated that he just wanted to know if the Boardmembers agreed that some percentage of bicycle parking should be located on the ground floor proximate to the entrance of the building. All that was needed was a statement from each Boardmember.

Chair Hirsch said that he and Vice Chair Baltay had already expressed their opinions and polled the rest of the ARB.

Boardmember Chen clarified that they were talking about the short term bicycle storage and not both long and short term.

Chair Hirsch thought that they were talking about both long term and short term and that the short term was not answered sufficiently.

Ms. Gerhardt stated that short term bicycle parking would always be at the ground level and near the main entrance. It was the longer term parking that had more deviation, so she asked the ARB to focus on that.

Chair Hirsch called for a straw poll and whether everyone agreed about the short term parking.

Boardmember Thompson said that the short term parking was Class 2, which were the rings on the ground without cover. Long term parking was Class 1, which had weather protection and security.

Chair Hirsch suggested that if they put the parking indoors near a ramp that could then be long term parking by definition.

Boardmember Thompson said that was correct and that she thought that was considered Class 1 parking. It was on Sheet A 2.P1.

Chair Hirsch agreed. He explained that they were discussing putting the long term parking where it was more accessible to the street. He asked if everyone agreed that was a good idea.

Boardmember Chen said it was difficult for her to fully support the idea because if only a portion of the spaces were on the street level she wondered who would occupy them.

Boardmember Rosenberg agreed. She asked if there was a method for daily bicycle commuters to get preferential treatment for those spaces or if there would be a lottery system. There were many questions that went into the functionality and running of the building that was possibly beyond the ARB's purview.

In theory she hated that the bicycle parking was in the basement. There were daily bicycle commuters and going in and out of the basement every day was an inconvenience. She also cautioned against the over customization of bicycle storage spaces. She understood that some people had box bikes, but the architect could not be required to account for every choice a tenant made. It was nice to think about but to make the architect consider it seemed excessive.

Boardmember Thompson explained that she had been a bicycle commuter for over 12 years. Over the years the bicycle got bigger and heavier because that made it more useful for things like grocery shopping. Because of that experience she was jaded with bicycle parking locations. They were often forgotten spaces. She advocated that 100% of the bicycle parking should be on the ground level next to the entrance. She thought that would be used, unlike an area that was difficult to get to where it would not be used. The ARB wanted to encourage use. 50% was a nice number, but she would take anything. She repeated that she preferred 100% if others would support that. She also encouraged more space for larger bicycles. The riders that used Caltrain had serious equipment that required space. Bicycle parking regulations were out of date and the future needed to be considered in City design.

Chair Hirsch thought it was an important issue but not the only issue that the ARB had discussed. He cautioned that the bicycle parking conversation might not be as significant as the amount of time it was discussed suggested. He agreed with Boardmember Thompson that methods of mobility were changing daily so bicycle parking had to be dealt with. the ARB wanted to see a proper solution, so he asked the applicant to think about it. He suggested that they wrap up the item.

MOTION: Vice Chair Baltay moved, seconded by Boardmember Chen, to continue the project to a date uncertain subject to the comments made.

VOTE: 5-0-0-0

Chair Hirsch thanked the applicant and the community and stated that the ARB would take a break.

The ARB took a break

3. PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 123 Sherman [21PLN-00172]: Consideration of a Major Architectural Review Application to Allow Demolition of Four Existing Buildings and Construction of a New 3-story Office Building With Two Levels of Below-grade Parking. This Project Would Also Require a Lot Merger to Merge Three Existing Parcels. Environmental Assessment: An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration is Being Prepared in Accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Zoning District: CC (2)(R). For More Information Contact the Project Planner, Emily Foley, at Emily.Foley@cityofpaloalto.org.

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

Vice Chair Baltay reminded Chair Hirsch that the ARB needed to make disclosures.

Chair Hirsch called for the disclosures.

Vice Chair Baltay disclosed that he visited the site earlier in the week and met with Mr. Dan Baca, the maintenance manager for the apartment condominium to the rear. Mr. Baca took him to the 3rd floor of his building where they could look over the project site. From that vantage point it was clear that there

was not a large impact from the building on the condominiums at the railroad. Secondly, Mr. Baca believed that the water table was about 15 feet below ground based on his experience with the building next door.

Boardmember Chen disclosed that she visited the site earlier in the week.

Boardmember Thompson indicated she had nothing to disclose.

Chair Hirsch disclosed that he visited the site but had not met anyone there.

Boardmember Rosenberg disclosed that she also visited the site and had kept to herself.

Ms. Foley introduced herself and explained that the applicant team for the project was the same as for the prior item. The project included demolition of two existing office buildings and one existing vacant single family residence. The proposed project included 4,123 sf of retail on the ground floor and 8,330 sf of office space, about 35,000 sf of which was new office space, plus approximately 1,600 sf of amenity space. The project had frontages on Park Boulevard, Sherman, and Grant Avenue. It wrapped the 2555 Park Boulevard office building and was within ½ mile to the California Avenue Caltrain Station. There were condominiums on three sides of the project and was close to the new Public Safety Building. The project had a prescreening application in 2021 but that was withdrawn before it went to Council. At that point it included a residential component and was approximately 50' tall, which was not supported by neighbors or the City. The applicant withdrew that application and returned with the current project. The office building application was fully code compliant. She displayed the site plan and explained that in addition to retail there was also ground floor vehicular and bicycle parking in addition to the two levels of below grade parking. The setback on the interior rear side of the project was increased from the current state. The project proposed a 10 foot setback to where the excavation for the parking began and a 20 foot setback to the building footprint. The second and third floors were office spaces and featured exterior terrace areas as amenity spaces. She showed the elevations and explained that landscape screening was proposed along the interior side. Proposed materials included perforated and solid metal and glass. The next rendering showed the existing condos along the rear interior side and how the massing of the proposed building related to them. The Grant Avenue and Sherman Avenue frontages were shown as were the proposed heights. The proposed height of 35' complied with the zoning as did the elevator and mechanical screening which reached 47' as there was a 15' allowance in the zoning for mechanical screening. Key considerations included the annual office limit, parking and circulation, and neighborhood privacy. The City had an annual office limit on new office space that could be added in any given Fiscal Year (FY). No office space had been built in the 2022-2023 FY and there was also 42,000 sf remaining from 2021-2022. The project proposed approximately 35,000 sf so there was adequate allowance for the office. The proposed parking included a 20% parking space reduction with 35% TDM plan. The TDM plan was currently under review by the Transportation Department. There was a total of 127 parking spaces proposed, both at grade and in the underground garage. The bicycle parking included 16 short term outdoor spaces and 24 long term spaces at the street level bicycle enclosure room. The project provided 1 off-street loading space with access off of Grant Avenue, which was opposite of the main driveway on Sherman. She displayed renderings showing the context around the project and photographs of neighboring properties. There were two residences that mainly looked out over Sherman but would have views towards the project site. One image also showed four Redwood trees which were protected in the project. The majority of the windows at the condos to the rear of the project faced interior to their site

and not at the proposed project. Staff recommended that the ARB provide comments and then continue the project to a date uncertain. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was being prepared for the project and was not yet completed or reviewed. The applicant was present with a presentation.

Chair Hirsch called for the applicant's presentation.

Lund Smith, [Smith Development], stated that his firm had worked on both projects since before COVID and found it humorous that they were heard at the same ARB meeting. He thanked the ARB for its patience. With 123 Sherman it was an iterative process even though this was the first ARB hearing. They were pleased with the conversations with the neighbors and the changes to the project and landscaping. The changes were largely made in response to conversations with the neighbors. They opened discussions with the neighbors in 2021 and met with them several times in 2022 including an official community meeting. The conversations were productive, and the project was better for them. He repeated that the project was fully complaint and turned the presentation over to the architect.

Ted Korth, KSH Architects, confirmed that he had 10 minutes and stated that there were many drawings to show the ARB.

Chair Hirsch stated that he had 9 minutes left.

Mr. Korth displayed a rendering from the corner of Park Boulevard and Sherman with a list of changes made based on neighborhood meetings. There had been a total of 3 neighborhood meetings with the third being only the day before. The building was cut back to preserve the redwood trees. He showed slides of the existing site, the current adjacent uses, the views of the project from existing buildings, an aerial view of the project with notated windows, a diagram of the setbacks, a diagram of the trees indicating which would be removed and which would be saved, the existing trash service areas, a rendering with the proposed curb cuts, a diagram of the existing on street parking sites, and the ground floor setback requirements. The building was setback on Grant and Sherman beyond the setback requirements and was setback along Park Boulevard similar to the neighboring building. He showed the setbacks for the 2nd and 3rd floors. There was a terrace in the middle of the Sherman Avenue elevation and terraces with an interior setback in the middle between the existing office building and the project. The 3rd floor featured a terrace on Grant and an outdoor deck on Sherman. The neighbors were very concerned about the trash pickup so he displayed a diagram illustrating how the garbage truck would navigate the site. Trash pickup occurred within the site and not on the street. He displayed a diagram of the proposed curb cuts and explained that increased the parking on street by one spot. He showed an arial view and pointed out the yellow outlined windows which represented the neighbors that could view the project. The project was designed with the intent to be sensitive to those views. The next diagram was the view from Caltrain and showed how the building stepped back to meet the setbacks and the breaks between the residential buildings. The window line was cut in half so that there would be less exposure to the gaps between the buildings. The next aerial diagram displayed how the building was cutback, showed the protected redwood trees, and showed the tree cover design. He noted that the landscape architect could describe that design in detail. The building was 35' high and the adjacent office building on Park Boulevard was 37' high. The building had a horizontal expression which they thought would accentuate the fact that the building was low and not a vertical composition. The view along Sherman showed how the building was broken into three segments. The railing used to be glass and was 3'6" high

but had been increased to 4'6" high and changed to a stenciled metal. The gray panels were stenciled metal and would be opaque to provide privacy. He showed a view along Grant with the existing trees and the gap between the buildings. Finally, he displayed a rendering of the proposed project from above and handed the presentation over to his colleague.

Morgan Burke, The Guzzardo Partnership, explained his firm were the landscape architects. Privacy along the backside of the building was paramount to the project. They planned to provide a vegetative screen. An initial design idea was to use bamboo due to the tight spatial constraints. The redwoods would be retained. He showed a time lapse elevation with the bamboo at installation height and at year 3. By year 3 the bamboo would reach the full height of the building and provide a full screen. One of the neighborhood comments was about using native species instead of bamboo and Catalina Ironwood was a tree that would fit with a tight upright canopy. He showed another timelapse with the trees at installation and at year 10. The Catalina Ironwood was a slower grower than the bamboo but could achieve the screening over time.

Mr. Korth stated that the presentation was almost done. They met with neighbors the prior day and talked about the trees. One person liked the bamboo, and two others preferred the Ironwood. The neighbors were great and very active and involved. They made probably about 15 changes to the project based on neighborhood input and the neighbors were very appreciative of that during the meeting. He thanked the ARB for its time.

Chair Hirsch thanked the applicant.

Ms. Raybould asked if Chair Hirsch wanted to take the public comment.

Chair Hirsch asked if there were any public comments.

Ms. Dao stated that there was a member of the public on Zoom and another in the chambers. Each speaker received three minutes.

David Huber, Palo Alto resident, explained he lived in a complex between California, Park, and Sherman. His unit overlooked the project area. In general, the prior development that proposed a mix of housing and commercial and he was very supportive of the housing component. The development was very large and loomed over the area, so it received pushback. Philosophically it seemed like an area that was appropriate for high density housing since it was surrounded on three sides by housing and was a block from transit, grocery stores, and other amenities. He understood that was not a topic for the ARB but wanted to make his thoughts known. Related to the proposed development he was concerned that a lot of attention was paid to Phase II of the development which was the all residential part that ran along the train tracks and would be immediately adjacent to the project. It did not appear there was a lot of thought given to the impact on the neighbors directly across the street on Sherman. There were 5 units directly overlooking the project and the way they were configured they had both bedroom and living window views of the project. It would be the main portion of his view from his unit. The development would have a significant impact on both sightline and daylight plane. He appreciated the applicant gave thought to what was going on to the rear, but he thought the ARB needed to give more consideration to the impact on the units on the Sherman side. He understood that the units were on the commercial side of their development, but the residential units on the 3rd and 4th floor needed to have their views and privacy

considered. There was no mention of street trees or other screening to keep people from looking into their units. He asked the ARB to take his thoughts into account and thanked them for their time.

Patience Young, Palo Alto resident, referenced the final slide shown of the backside view from Grant Avenue and pointed out the transformer box. The architects told the neighbors that the specifications for the transformers came from the City. She asked how neighbors could be assured that the noise or hum from the transformer would be mitigated since people lived nearby. Additionally, the neighbors applauded the architect for making many changes at their request. One such change was placing the trash pickup location inside the building. by doing that they moved a parking space further into Grant Avenue. People at that end of the community were concerned about sufficient turnaround space for deliveries and such. She suggested that the parking space may not be well situated for that purpose and thanked the ARB for its time.

Chair Hirsch thanked the public speakers and asked if there were any more.

Ms. Dao indicated that concluded the list of public speakers.

Chair Hirsch called for ARB questions of the staff or applicant.

Boardmember Thompson asked if there was a visible soffit on the street level. She asked if it was the white material.

Mr. Korth explained it was currently planned as white outdoor sheetrock cement board.

Boardmember Thompson clarified that it was a white metal panel facia which turned to white cement board.

Mr. Korth stated that it would turn in and then after the turn would be a reveal and then a smooth plaster ceiling.

Boardmember Thompson asked what color the perforated metal elements would be.

Mr. Korth said they were thinking about a warm gray color.

Boardmember Thompson pointed to a spot on the material board and confirmed that was the color.

Mr. Korth said she was correct and explained they did a similar panel on another project in a different color with a laser cut stencil to create an abstraction of foliage. It gave a nice shadowy effect. There would most likely be two layers with a gap in between. It added depth and detail, and they thought it would be a nice thing.

Boardmember Thompson requested he repeat the address of the project with that detailing.

Mr. Korth said it was at 520 Almanor Boulevard.

Boardmember Thompson clarified that the design intent for the metal panel would be similar with two layers.

Mr. Korth explained that the one they would see was on a parking structure and was part of the public art for the program. This would not be the same, but that project would give the ARB an idea of the depth that was possible. There would be a second layer.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the foliage abstraction was done with circles.

Mr. Korth stated it was a random and irregular pattern so that it was not geometric. It was a more natural texture.

Boardmember Thompson heard that for the façade facing Caltrain there was a privacy element that indicated rhythm, but for the other façades she asked about the design intent behind the rhythm of the panels.

Mr. Korth said the idea was to define the floors and have a sense of movement at the upper levels. That way they would not have a rigid rectangular pattern. It was to add some softness or movement to the façade.

Boardmember Thompson confirmed that there was nothing else that was external that they were responding to on the other three façades and that the intention was to feel random.

Mr. Korth said that was correct.

Boardmember Thompson inquired about the color for the loading dock screen.

Mr. Korth said it was green. He did not know if it was on the material board.

Boardmember Thompson pointed to a color on the board and asked if that was the one.

Mr. Korth directed her to the color in the lower corner. However, he noted that they needed to get larger panels in the colors and look at them in a mockup. They always built a mockup and invited people to see it. He thought it was very hard to do on a small scale and color needed a lot of attention and full size samples to comprehend.

Boardmember Thompson said that the ARB had received larger samples in the past. She asked if it was a powder coat metal finish.

Mr. Korth indicated that it was.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the intent was to match the other green walls.

Mr. Korth said that the building next door on Park and Grant had a green wall concealing their parking. They introduced a living green wall adjacent to the lobby on their project. There was a section of the same green color perforated panel to the right of the lobby. That was the area between their building and the adjacent office building and was visible in the rendering. That green was a backdrop for landscaping as there would be a planter in front of it. He offered to show the drawing again.

Boardmember Thompson asked him to please do that.

Mr. Korth pulled up the drawing and illustrated where the green wall and areas were. The area beneath the overhang was planned as a manicured living green wall.

Boardmember Thompson confirmed which was the living green wall and which was the perforated metal screen with no planting on it.

Mr. Korth said that the planting was in front of the metal screen.

Boardmember Thompson asked if it would climb the walls.

Mr. Korth said that it could climb the walls.

Boardmember Thompson asked for the planting intent.

Mr. Burke said that it was low shrub planting to continue the character from the neighboring property. However, they could grow something on the wall. Currently it was foreground planting in front of the building.

Boardmember Thompson said that their answers were very helpful and thanked the applicant.

Vice Chair Baltay wanted to follow up with some of Boardmember Thompson's thoughts. He asked if the loading dock entrance off of Grant Avenue had a living wall treatment on the door.

Boardmember Thompson thought that was the metal panel. She asked if it was the same green metal as the ground level.

Mr. Korth indicated it was.

Vice Chair Baltay asked what it was.

Mr. Korth said it would be a sandwich of a stenciled panel at the front with holes in a regular pattern. It was the same idea for the gray panels on the upper floors. Then there would be an air gap with a solid panel behind it. That gave depth. They displayed inspiration images for the gray panels. He explained they could not plant on Grant because the first two panels were an operable door that would open to service the trash or for loading. He stated that the details were not resolved yet.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if the design intent was to mimic the appearance of a living wall.

Mr. Korth explained the idea was an abstraction of planting. The project on Alma they did was a similar example of the idea. It was not a literal interpretation but more of an abstraction like a tree with foliage.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the inspiration images were a different pattern.

Mr. Korth said that they would develop the pattern themselves. The images were inspiration. The panel was almost artistic in a way.

Boardmember Thompson asked if they had a material selected for the solid panel that would sit behind the perforated metal.

Mr. Korth explained that it would be the same color but would be set back a couple inches to provide the sense of depth. It could be a contrasting color to emphasize the pattern in the foreground.

Boardmember Thompson stated that the idea was not 100% defined.

Mr. Korth agreed that was true.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the applicant had a geotechnical report for the site. She also wanted to know about a piezometer study or hydrology study of the water table and its limits.

Mr. Smith stated that they did a thorough analysis of the depth of the water table and a geotechnical report. They were confident they could go down to the level they proposed in the underground parking garage. They needed to cooperate with Public Works to pump the water out but were confident it could be accomplished.

Boardmember Rosenberg said that she was happy the bicycle storage was on the ground floor. She asked for clarification about the walls around the fitness space.

Ms. Borden explained that in a parking garage they would have a plaster finish on the walls. Within the fitness space there would probably be some glazing to provide more natural light. They did not define the design of the space yet, it was more about the program of having long term bicycle storage and the fitness and shower amenities.

Boardmember Rosenberg noted that the HVAC screen was 12' tall. She asked if that was accurate.

Ms. Borden said that it was and that represented the worst case scenario. They did that to help define the massing and not have to return for additional height. The mechanical engineer developed three different schemes and the one submitted reflected the worst case scenario of the equipment plus a pad height for screening.

Boardmember Thompson had a clarification question on the screen.

Boardmember Rosenberg stated that she should ask it.

Boardmember Thompson asked if they had an HVAC screen material and color selected.

Boardmember Rosenberg was also interested in the answer to those questions.

Ms. Borden said the HVAC screen was typically a lighter gray or a medium gray which could kind of disappear. She said that the color might be similar to the top middle color on the board although it might be lighter. They would propose a cement plaster for the equipment screening.

Boardmember Rosenberg thought a lot hinged on the perforated metal panels. She understood that it was still in flux and that the applicant would return with more refinement on the panel. She asked if they knew the height of the front building that was not their property.

[Someone in the room off microphone] said it was 37'.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the terrace was at the second floor level. She wanted to understand the shading and shadow effect on the interior courtyard terrace.

Mr. Korth explained that the terrace on Grant was on the third level and the terrace internal on the inbound corner was on the second level.

Boardmember Rosenberg confirmed that the internal terrace would have two stories above it on three or four sides.

Mr. Korth said it had two sides from the project building and one side from the neighbor's building. The terrace would be in shadow at some point, but there were people that preferred the shade.

Boardmember Rosenberg thanked him for the clarification.

Boardmember Chen requested clarification on the floor to ceiling height in the retail on the ground floor.

Ms. Borden said they were currently proposing floor to ceiling glass for the retail.

Boardmember Chen asked for the ceiling height.

Ms. Borden apologized for the misunderstanding. The floor to floor there was 10'6" and they hoped to get a 9' to the soffit. They hoped to maintain a 9' ceiling but might have to step it down to 8' inside depending on the structural scheme.

Boardmember Chen asked for an explanation of why the trash loading was on Grant while all the trash rooms were on the Sherman side.

Ms. Borden explained the last round they had staging and loading of the trash on Sherman. The enclosures were as close as they could get so they could stage on the curb. There was discussion about relocating those and they were open to feedback. It was mostly about how to lay out the program for the garage.

Boardmember Chen asked about the exterior elevation along Park Boulevard and if there was designated signage on the third floor as shown in the elevation.

Ms. Borden said that they had placeholder future tenant locations. She thought that had been requested by Planning. They identified in the Planning submittal the approximate areas that would be allowed. The locations were a placeholder and would be developed within a master sign program.

Boardmember Chen thanked the applicant.

Chair Hirsch thought he saw a note about the location of the plume and asked if it was in the plume.

Ms. Foley stated that it was in the California-Olive Emerson (COE) Plume.

Chair Hirsch asked how the building was protected from the plume.

Mr. Smith explained they were working with an environmental consultant and were in process with the County. they were voluntarily cleaning up and mitigating the impacts while digging the parking garage. There were many things that could be done including soil and vapor barriers. The County would be involved in the decisions. They were very aware of the challenges presented by the plume.

Chair Hirsch asked what kind of retail was intended for the location.

Mr. Smith wanted to engage with the neighborhood about the type of retail it wanted. That was part of the 2021 conversation, and they were still open to ideas. It was a unique location and probably not a great location for it. Truthfully they did not want the retail, but it was part of the zoning. They wanted it to be a vibrant and cool spot.

Ms. Foley clarified that the project was in the retail zoning overlay CC (2)(R).

Chair Hirsch stated that required them to have commercial.

Ms. Foley stated that they were required to have ground floor retail.

Chair Hirsch asked if the neighbors to the rear of the building were on board with the planting and privacy. He asked how that worked.

Ms. Borden did not think it was fair to speak on behalf of the residents.

Chair Hirsch noted that they were not present.

Ms. Borden explained they met the day before and it was productive and helpful. A predominant number were more interested in the native species planting, but they also admitted that they were not the direct neighbors adjacent to the property line that would be the most impacted. The neighbor that was directly on the property line favored the bamboo potentially because it grew faster. That was still under discussion, and they wanted the ARB feedback. The team planned to incorporate things they learned at the latest neighborhood meeting in the plan. The discussion was ongoing.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the bamboo was running or clumping.

Mr. Burke stated that it was clumping.

Boardmember Thompson asked if it was a Type 1 concrete building and received indication that it was [note – no one came to the microphone].

Chair Hirsch concluded the question section of the discussion.

Ms. Borden returned to the podium and explained that there would be a concrete slab, but the building would either be concrete framed or steel framed. It would be a Type 1B building probably.

Chair Hirsch called for ARB comments.

Vice Chair Baltay wanted to comment on all the neighborhood questions about why this was not going to be a residential building. All the feedback from the community indicated that they wanted it to be housing and it would be a fine site for housing, but it was zoned commercial, and the ARB did not have the ability to change the zoning. The applicant bought the land and was developing it as zoned. The site layout was good and logical. The pedestrian corner at Sherman and Park was wonderful. Having an additional entrance on Grant was great. The project had a minimal impact on the residential buildings behind it and nearby. It was stepped back such that they got more privacy and he thought that was better. He was previously concerned about window impacts, but he did not see that and thought the neighbors were marginally impacted. He suggested they focus on Sherman after the parking garage entrance. There was a unit with an outdoor patio, and they were removing a tree. That area warranted additional landscaping to be a privacy buffer. The overall massing of the building was good, but he was concerned about the long roof eave line without variation. That could be better, and he pointed to the neighboring building for inspiration. He cited Drawing R1B and asked the ARB to review it. He thought it would be better if it had more variation. Since the whole building was treated that way it became too monotonous. He directed the ARB to Drawing A3.1B which reinforced his point. Similar to the last project with the same architect

he thought the materials could be a little richer as they over relied on painted metal panels. The cornice details on Sheet A810 Detail 3 were two painted aluminum pieces. He recommended a soffit that was a different material, such as wood. He requested more detail in the future on the metal screening panel at the parking garage entrance. The panels on Park ought to be actual landscaping. The panel idea was more appropriate on a movable door and landscaping was more successful. The landscaping was successful on the adjacent building. When the ARB heard that project it discussed the pedestrian experience, and the landscaping was successful because of it. He repeated that they were relying too heavily on the metal panels in the façade and indicated he would like more variation. He wanted more expression on the materials and less focus on their color. Overall he could support the project and thought it would be an attractive building.

Boardmember Rosenberg thanked the applicant for their presentation and time. She thought that being an architect was difficult and the hearing was a perfect example of that. One project was housing and people disliked that and then the second was a housing project and the public did not want that, so it was changed to office and now people wanted housing. She agreed with Vice Chair Baltay that the area was zoned for commercial, and the project was an office building located close to public transportation. The ARB loved housing and wanted it near public transportation they also needed offices to be near transportation too. If all the offices were far from public transportation then it was not very useful. The building was nice and well thought out. She appreciated the traffic flow, and the curb cuts were clever and well laid out. The corner exposure with the tucked in moment at the ground floor was inviting. With the aesthetics and materials she thought the metal panels needed more thought. She had worked on projects with metal panels where the buildings really relied on the laser cut portioning. It could be very successful, but she wanted more thought around why the panels were where they were and why they were shaped. She was excited to see the concept of the dual panel more planned out and detailed. The project was a great idea that she wanted to see thoughtfully executed. The retail was great, and she understood it was a difficult location, but it would probably service the neighborhood and office building itself. the north corner stairwell popped out toward the residences and had a blank wall with open ends. She asked that they ensure that big wall was pretty. That was the closest element of the building to the residences, so it needed some thought. The setbacks were nicely done, and she preferred the native tree species to the bamboo. Finally, the rear façade fell a little flat. She understood it was not that visible, but it was very long and uninterrupted. She requested more variation and texture there to break it up. She read through all the public letters which were provided to the ARB in their packets. One letter stood out to her, and she wanted to put her thoughts on record about it. There was an accusation made that the staff was either mistaken in some information they presented or that they were outright lying. She thought that was troubling as the staff diligently worked hard at their jobs. She wanted to state her support for the staff and their work.

Boardmember Chen thanked the applicant for the application. She was in favor of the project and appreciated how it opened the street corner. She also liked the green wall and the landscape design. There were some improvements they could consider to make the building better. On the side elevations they could reconsider solid wall locations or screening options to provide better privacy for the neighbors. An 8' ceiling was pretty low for ground floor retail, especially for the size of the space. It might also be low for the fitness center, so she hoped they would reconsider the height of the ground floor. With the bicycle parking it was always preferred to have it near the door but thought that area might be more useful for

the retail to use as an outdoor display. Therefore, she suggested they reconsider the street bicycle storage space. With the materiality she agreed with her colleagues and requested they add richness to the materials. Specifically, the yellow and white banding could use more depth and detail.

Boardmember Thompson thanked the applicant for the presentation and the members of the public for their comments. She agreed with most of what was said by her colleagues and indicated that she might be harder on some things than they were. She initially wondered why the site was not used for housing and she reminded the ARB that they had another project that was not zoned for housing where they pushed for housing but acquiesced to the zoning that was there. This site was great for housing and the project could contain a level of office and then housing above it. They could also look at future proofing the building in case more housing could be added later if the zoning and height requirements changed. The current design of the building was a great base for something to go above it. She understood that they had been through a long process, but she encouraged them not to give up on housing. She struggled with this project and the last one with the sustainability story. Office buildings used a lot of energy, and the building did not appear to have operable windows, which she encouraged. She also might encourage mass timber. Concrete was not as sustainable and mass timber would add warmth and richness. A10.1 showed conceptual imagery of wood, but that did not come through in the design. If that was the design intent the execution did not follow through. She encouraged them to consider a Type 4 building moving forward. With the massing she agreed with Vice Chair Baltay that the elevations appeared relentless. They had a long, steady, unchanging form. There were ways that could be mitigated with fins, shading, elements that protruded, or outside spaces for the office tenants that looked onto Park. Those could be used to modulate the façade. The parapet could also use more modulation and visual interest. It was too plain especially compared to neighboring buildings which included things that added to pedestrian interest. The retail location was not in the correct location. It needed to go up against Park. The office entrance could be on Sherman, but the retail would be hidden there. It needed to come to the front in order to be successful. She agreed with Boardmember Chen that retail needed to have 14' minimum to the ceiling in order to feel good. She stated that she very much wanted to push the applicant to consider those points. Additionally, she encouraged them not to make it a curtain wall retail façade. She suggested they add something to create character on the street. The ARB was seeing a lot of glass curtain walls and the future could not look like that everywhere on the ground floor. The green walls were amazing, but she was disappointed to hear that the one on Park Street was not actually a green wall. Accordingly, she encouraged that be a real green wall to the extent possible. She understood the perforated metal screen at the back being not really green. The metal screen panel did a lot of the heavy lifting, but she was a fan of the idea. In theory it sounded nice, and she wanted to see it and what it could do to modulate the façade in multiple planes. She was a fan of the wood soffit suggestion. There were a lot of cold colors in the palette and that did not seem to be in the design intent. She stated that she would support the project if the ARB saw some of the suggested changes. There were opportunities to be explored and ideas that needed to grow.

Chair Hirsch generally supported the massing of the building and thought it addressed each street pretty well. The Sherman façade was good. He thought the retail was in a difficult location. The green walls and repeating of the neighbor's landscaping was appreciated. He liked the idea of the privacy issue being addressed by the perforated metal elements. With respect to the length of the wall he suggested that they look at it in plan view. Like Boardmember Thompson said they could create a more interesting corner

up above if they created a small balcony. That was the major corner of the building and what could be done with it was exciting. He took issue with the fussy yellow band detail. That needed more work as it was not a strong element. The rear elevation was functional and the patterning with the perforated metal elements broke it up. He appreciated the interior courtyards and the little balconies. The zoning forced them into retail which was kind of unfortunate. If they put it in the corner they would lose their wonderful entry idea and the green wall. He understood that they wanted the office entry there. He also agreed with Boardmember Chen that the first floor ceiling height did not work. He did not know how to answer that with the building's height limitations, but the retail really needed a 14' ceiling to be reasonable. Other than those comments and the few others made by his colleagues he thought the building would be very successful. Overall they did an excellent job in planning how the offices would be used, taking care of the parking, and dealing with the neighbors. Many of the ARB's comments were applicable and he hoped they would use them to improve the project.

Vice Chair Baltay wanted to go on record that the ground floor was too low. They needed a taller ceiling height in order for the retail to be successful. They needed to take that height from the office ceilings because there were more than 10' tall office ceilings.

Boardmember Thompson said that she had another comment on the façade. she had a bit of a gripe with curtain walls but encouraged the design team to consider sculptural elements of solid on the wall. That would add more to the façade other than curtain walls. She did not know if the ARB would agree with that. She heard that she and Chair Hirsch disagreed on the location of the retail. That was something the ARB needed to weigh in on so that the applicant did not receive conflicting feedback.

Chair Hirsch called a straw poll.

Boardmember Thompson confirmed it was on the location of the retail.

Chair Hirsch said that was correct.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if they could have staff comment before they answered. He understood the City Council said the space had to be retail, but he did not believe anyone thought retail would work there.

Boardmember Thompson said that was not true.

Boardmember Rosenberg also disagreed. She thought it could be successful there, but she supported Boardmember Thompson's comment. The corner was successful, and she did not want to change it, but the retail being near the front façade would make a difference.

Chair Hirsch asked staff how much retail was required.

Ms. Foley explained that the retail shopping combining district allowed only retail or retail like commercial developments on the ground floor. So the current proposal included the lobby for access to the upper floors and then retail space and parking.

Boardmember Thompson stated that there was a pizza place and a French restaurant down the street. There was reason to have retail and commercial in the corridor.

Ms. Raybould noted that additional housing would be coming at 231 Grant. That project had just over 100 units.

Vice Chair Baltay asked for a definition of “retail like.”

Ms. Foley said that there was a list, but it was mainly eating, drinking, and service oriented commercial.

Ms. Raybould explained that some commercial recreation type uses were in the category as were personal services like salons.

Vice Chair Baltay thought there were salons in the adjacent building towards California. If they wanted to make it a food service he asked if there were additional parking requirements.

Ms. Raybould stated that eating and drinking had higher requirements. There was a food/retail under the retail allowances they could have a service with limited seating like an ice cream shop or some coffee shops.

Vice Chair Baltay thought if they switched the office lobby and the retail they could keep both the interesting entrance and move the retail closer to the street. He did not want to lose the nice corner treatment.

Boardmember Thompson agreed.

Vice Chair Baltay thought they could then reconfigure the stairs to get more frontage. All that was good, but he doubted it would be vibrant retail when California Avenue could not fill the storefronts.

Boardmember Chen supported the idea to relocate the retail to face a major street while keeping the corner open.

Boardmember Thompson thought that it sounded like the majority wanted that.

Chair Hirsch wanted to clarify Boardmember Chen’s thoughts. He asked if the corner would stay as an open plaza.

Boardmember Chen said that was correct.

Chair Hirsch said that they would then move the office elevators.

Boardmember Chen said that she would just switch the office lobby and the retail.

Ms. Raybould confirmed there was an interest in switching the retail to front Park versus the office.

Boardmember Thompson asked her to repeat the question.

Ms. Raybould asked if there was any interest in having the retail front Park.

Boardmember Thompson said that everyone liked the plaza on the corner. If the retail were tucked back on Sherman it would not be as successful as it would be on Park.

Boardmember Rosenberg clarified that the ARB was simply asking to flip flop the orientation. The sizing of the lobby and retail were appropriate. She asked if the ARB agreed with that and received nonverbal confirmation. She asked if the applicant had a question.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the applicant was allowed to speak.

Chair Hirsch said that the ARB was discussing a major change and asked the applicant if that was possible.

Mr. Smith stated that they could study it. Retail was possible but that was a major change that could really impact the project. He repeated that they were happy to study it. The ceiling heights and lobby location had a huge impact on the office.

Boardmember Thompson thought that the ARB was looking out for the project's best interest.

Chair Hirsch saw that as well and thought the suggestion came very naturally from all Boardmembers. They wanted the retail to succeed as well as the entire building.

Vice Chair Baltay cautioned the applicant not to underestimate the ARB's comments. Some retail needed to be there per the City Council and the whole town. To succeed it needed to be closer to the street, have a taller ceiling, and allow for more parking to make it a food service. The applicant knew food service would be the thing that would succeed. If they did not have the parking then that would not work either so now was the time to solve the problem. He cited Protégé restaurant as an example of how difficult it was to figure out later.

Chair Hirsch thought the applicant followed directions well. Overall it was a successful project, and the retail was possibly the most difficult part. The height did not work for retail.

Lund Smith said that they looked at the issue a fair amount already. They could explore changing the locations but could not go lower on the office ceiling heights without compromising the ability to lease the office space. They had to keep the 35' height limit. They could look at creative HVAC and keeping the ceiling as open as possible in the retail space, but they could not go into the office height.

Ms. Gerhardt suggested the ARB review Sheet A3.3. That provided a section through the building and showed the first floor was 10'6" while the office floors were 11'9". Those were floor to floor measurements, so the actual floor took away from the size.

Boardmember Thompson noted that on Sheet A4.0B it showed the floor to ceiling heights. She asked Chair Hirsch if she could suggest another straw poll.

Chair Hirsch said that he was still looking at the floor to floor which was 10'6". He acknowledged Boardmember Thompson.

Boardmember Thompson said that it was a more conceptual idea. She asked if they wanted to encourage the applicant to explore something. In their area they saw a lot of office buildings that were curtain wall on slab that were articulated as such on the façade. She had encouraged the applicant to consider exploring a solid expression that was not all curtain wall and wanted to know how the Board felt.

Vice Chair Baltay thought it would benefit the project by reducing the monotony of the façade.

Boardmember Chen agreed.

Chair Hirsch agreed to the extent that the privacy panel could be moved in and out in some way for depth.

Vice Chair Baltay thought Boardmember Thompson meant that they should do something different.

Boardmember Thompson knew the team was a fan of plaster and there were cool things that could only be done with plaster. The existing building was kind of sculptural and something cool could happen if they encouraged the applicant to explore doing something that was not a curtain wall or metal panel system but a designed wall that created something on the façade.

Chair Hirsch said that they could think about that.

Ms. Raybould asked if the ARB wanted to hear a summary of what staff took down.

Chair Hirsch asked her to go ahead.

Ms. Raybould stated that staff heard an interest in the following: adding depth and detail to the materials, having more details and thought behind the design intent with the metal panels, requesting consideration of green walls similar to the neighboring building, look into increasing the ground floor retail floor to ceiling height, consider locating the retail along Park rather than Sherman, consider elements that provide more modulation to the long steady façade, place additional attention on articulation to the rear façade, consider a warmer color palette, consider designs that could accommodate housing above in the future, and consider sculptural elements for the solid wall rather than curtain wall. She asked if there were additions.

Vice Chair Baltay heard several Boardmembers requested a warmer color palette not just “at least one.”

Boardmember Thompson asked if she had mentioned retail.

Ms. Raybould indicated she had.

Boardmember Thompson apologized for missing it.

Chair Hirsch indicated that staff had summarized the ARB’s thoughts.

MOTION: B Thompson moved, seconded by Vice Chair Baltay, to continue the item to a date uncertain.

VOTE: 5-0-0-0

Approval of Minutes

4. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for October 20, 2022

Chair Hirsch asked if Boardmembers had read the minutes for October 20, 2022.

Boardmember Rosenberg indicated that on Package Page 114 she was unhappy with the wording that she did not understand the legalities. She indicated that it was more that she was not familiar with the legalities involved and requested staff make that adjustment.

Ms. Gerhardt confirmed the placement and wording Boardmember Rosenberg was requesting.

Vice Chair Baltay recalled that was what Boardmember Rosenberg had meant. He then directed staff to Page 99 and stated that the name was Louis Kahn.

Ms. Gerhardt requested the spelling again.

Vice Chair Baltay said it was Louis Kahn. He was an architect that deserved their respect.

MOTION: Vice Chair Baltay moved, seconded by Chair Hirsch, to approve the meeting minutes for October 20, 2022, as amended.

VOTE: 5-0-0-0

5. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for November 3, 2022

MOTION: Boardmember Rosenberg moved, seconded by Vice Chair Baltay, to approve the meeting minutes for November 3, 2022, as presented.

VOTE: 5-0-0-0

Board Member Questions, Comments or Announcements

Chair Hirsch suggested that they move the next item as it would take 10 to 15 minutes.

Vice Chair Baltay thought that they should continue.

Boardmember Thompson said that was up to the Chair.

Chair Hirsch stated that he was prepared to move forward.

Vice Chair Baltay was in favor of hearing the item.

Chair Hirsch asked staff to get the slideshow ready. He explained that he and Boardmember Chen had changed courses. They began looking at the Objective Standards and then a townhouse project came along so they shifted focus to that. They took many photos of projects both in Palo Alto and nearby. The first slide displayed the projects they reviewed in Palo Alto and their locations. A few of the projects were slab structures with housing on top of parking while the rest were on the ground. The next slide displayed the projects they reviewed in the Bay Area and their locations. They studied the projects under 8 categories: neighborhood context, community circulation, building typology, landscape/open space, privacy, rhythm and pattern, materiality, and operation services. He showed a project that he described as being of historic context in an industrial area that used materials and context to fit into the neighborhood. He showed the Landsby project and noted the corner detail and the fact that there were very small street trees.

Boardmember Chen stated that the project was new and was on two major streets.

Chair Hirsch showed the Arbor Real project and noted that the corner was very setback and the project appeared as a single building although it was several. The project had significant trees. In this case the site was very large and included many different aspects of housing such as different prototypes.

Boardmember Chen indicated that the next slide was another picture of the Landsby.

Vice Chair Baltay asked if they were townhomes.

Chair Hirsch said that was a good question as that part of the project looked very dense.

Boardmember Thompson was not sure that the project on San Antonio was a townhome.

Boardmember Rosenberg confirmed that the building on the right in the picture was townhomes, but she was unsure about the building on the left.

Chair Hirsch said that they would go back and make sure that they had the project in the correct category. He pointed out the street trees and noted that they were a strong issue. The next slide discussed different choices related to the hierarchy of effectiveness on street treatments whether it was a major street or minor street. He noted that it related to height, roof lines, and rules about corner units and buildings. Corner unit buildings ought to have different treatments than mid-block units. The next slide continued to describe the corner issues. With community circulation they found different prototypes related to vehicle access/parking and pedestrian/bicycle paths. The next slide showed the JCC podium scheme for part of the project. The interior was quite different from the exterior. It had a parking entry that affected pretty much everything and would likely be too expensive to build for most developers. The next slide showed a cul-de-sac scheme that was interesting as it was paved differently and had minor trees which were an issue in terms of shading. The length of the cul-de-sac was also significant, and he thought they needed to limit them and discuss how long the series of buildings were allowed to be. The next slide showed an aerial view of the same project which faced El Camino Real. The townhome on the opposite side of the street was also a cul-de-sac project but it had two means of entry. The next slide showed Livermore which was a large development with a number of prototypes. The slide showed the cul-de-sac type and an area for a strictly pedestrian zone. The next slide showed the setbacks for the houses on Arbor Real which were separated from one another and had front yard space with private entries and street edges consistently planted with trees. The next slide was an example of slab type construction with units along the top. That provided for landscaping which created interest and openness. He then showed an aerial view of the same project and noted that it provided guest parking for residents. It did a good job of providing privacy and was limited in the length of the clusters. One building was longer than the next and that difference was significant. The parking helped mitigate the impact to the public street area.

Boardmember Chen stated that the next slide was another aerial view of Arbor Real and was still about guest parking.

Chair Hirsch noted that it was on the street guest parking which was good for guests and deliveries. The more street parking the better the project would be. He showed a slide of text and stated that he did not want to go into the text and asked to continue viewing the photographs.

Ms. Gerhardt apologized for the speed of the computer.

Chair Hirsch explained that there were many possibilities related to building typologies. He showed the site plan for Arbor Real and explained that there were four different types of housing in the project. Those types worked well together and created a very successful aesthetic. There was tremendous variety in the project and many trees. Cul-de-sac parking schemes were used throughout the project, except for the units shown in red. The next slide was a site plan of Sterling Court in the Bayshore/Loma Verde area. It had two way circulation and at least three different housing types. He asked Boardmember Chen what the slide illustrated.

Boardmember Chen explained it was related to typology.

Chair Hirsch thought it would be interesting to review the sales documents on the individual houses, which sold very quickly. The next slide showed the idea of three typologies on the Bayshore project. In order to fit in guest parking there was a small slab. The entryways were maximized in order to get to all the houses within the development. He questioned how they should determine how many prototypes were necessary for the size of a property. A larger property could have several different prototypes whereas a smaller property could only afford two prototypes. When the ARB next discussed the issue it needed to make some decisions. For landscape/open space he showed a slide of the Arbor Real project's activity space. There was also a swimming pool and community building at the center of the project. In Alma Village they took a picture of the area behind the grocery outlet in front of the detached houses. The public area opened to a commercial area which allowed for late night guest parking and the streetscape also provided parking. The passageways between were beautiful and the ARB needed to consider the treatment of passageways. If they were large enough to allow for planting a lot could be done. He suggested a 12' wide passageway with a 4' and 4' landscaping on either side with houses behind. He showed a shared open space at JCC and instructed staff to skip the text slides. He stated that the next photo was of Arbor Real on the opposite side of the cul-de-sac parking. The buildings could have been a little further apart and the landscaping could have been improved. The areas were left without activity so there were problems there that the ARB needed to deal with.

Boardmember Chen noted that the ARB would probably prefer staggered windows instead of the large windows facing each other as these slides were related to privacy.

Chair Hirsch showed a slide of a large deck that handled privacy appropriately.

Boardmember Chen noted that the slide showed the front yard at Arbor Real.

Chair Hirsch said that the JCC housing had about a 20' backyard or less. The space was nice, but people lost privacy since the windows faced each other.

Vice Chair Baltay stated that they were done.

Chair Hirsch agreed that they would have to end.

Boardmember Rosenberg asked if the slide deck could be emailed to the Boardmembers for review.

Chair Hirsch stated that was acceptable and they would do so. In summary, he thought that they had presented the topics the ARB needed to discuss related to townhomes. They also needed to review the examples to determine what parts of the projects made sense for Palo Alto. He confirmed that the December 15th hearing included Fry's.

Ms. Raybould explained that on December 15th there would be a discussion scheduled on the topic separate from Fry's.

Chair Hirsch confirmed that Ms. Raybould meant they would have a discussion on the townhome standards.

Ms. Raybould asked if that was what Chair Hirsch had asked her about.

Chair Hirsch asked when Fry's would be heard.

Ms. Raybould said that was also on December 15th.

Chair Hirsch suggested that the ARB continue the conversation following Fry's.

Ms. Raybould agreed.

Chair Hirsch indicated that was the plan.

Vice Chair Baltay thanked Chair Hirsch and Boardmember Chen and noted that he would be "spinning" thinking about it.

Adjournment

Chair Hirsch adjourned the meeting.