



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

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Architectural Review Board

Staff Report

Agenda Date: March 7, 2013

To: Architectural Review Board

From: Russ Reich, Senior Planner **Department: Planning and
Community Environment**

Subject: **490 San Antonio Avenue 12PLN-00183:** Request by William Bondy on behalf of Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School for Preliminary Architectural Review for the demolition of two existing office buildings and the construction of a new gymnasium/classroom building, a new playing field, a new parking lot, and new landscaping in the Research Office and Limited Manufacturing (ROLM) zone district.

RECOMMENDATION

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) is requested to conduct a Preliminary Review of the project concept. No formal action may be taken at a preliminary review; comments made at a preliminary review are not binding on the City or the applicant.

BACKGROUND

The applicant has provided a letter describing the proposed project (Attachment A).

Site Information

The project site is comprised of two parcels located on south side of San Antonio Avenue between Nita Avenue and San Antonio Court. The combined lot area, of the two parcels, is approximately 179,203 square feet (s.f.). They are located within the Research, Office and Limited Manufacturing (ROLM) Zone District. The combined site is currently occupied by four, two-story buildings that were originally built as office buildings. In 2003 two of the buildings (450 and 470 San Antonio Avenue) were renovated for occupancy by a private school, the Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School. The other two buildings, (490 and 560 San Antonio Avenue) are also owned by the school but have remained vacant. To the south (right side) of the property are multifamily condominiums known as the Rose Walk. To the east (rear) of the property are single family homes within the City of Mountain View. Also to the east of the property, at the northern end, is a multifamily apartment complex known as Palo Alto Gardens with a row of carports that abut the rear property line. To the north (left) of the site is a private street known as San Antonio

Court with a multifamily condominium development across the street known as San Antonio Village.

Project Description

The project proposal includes the merger of the two separate parcels into one and the demolition of the two vacant buildings (490 and 560 San Antonio Avenue). A new 17,751 square foot gym/classroom building would replace the demolished building at 490 San Antonio Avenue and a new turf playing field and parking lot would replace the office building at 560 San Antonio Avenue.

The new gym/classroom building would be located in the approximate footprint of the demolished building at 490 San Antonio Avenue. The building would provide multiple program spaces including spaces for a gymnasium, theater, art room, music room, and a religious study and prayer space. It would be single story, with the taller gym portion of the building located closer to the street. The roof would rise up at an angle and then breaks to slope back down facing San Antonio Avenue to reduce the overall height of the building. The tall gym portion of the building is surrounded by lower elements to transition the building height and breakdown the perceived height and mass of the building. The exterior of the building would primarily be a sand float finish cement plaster with some areas having a decorative colored composite infill panel. Other areas would have green screens covering the walls. The windows and doors would be prefinished aluminum storefronts with low e glazing. Windows would be operable to allow for cross ventilation.

Between the existing building and the new gym/classroom building would be a new courtyard with trees and decorative boulders for seating, providing a new outdoor gathering space. On the 560 San Antonio Avenue parcel there would be a new turf playing field and new parking area.

Much of the project frontage along San Antonio Avenue has an existing eight foot tall concrete grape stake wall painted a tan color. The proposal includes the extension of this wall along the San Antonio frontage. According to the current plan, the wall would extend down to San Antonio Court and wrap the corner. New landscape material is proposed in front of the wall that would coordinate with the new landscape material that the City planted in the median and at the street edge.

The floor area allowance for the property is 70,853 square feet. A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of .4:1. After project completion, the total floor area on site would be 65,779 square feet. The parking requirement for the private school is two parking spaces for each teaching station. With approximately 20 teaching stations the parking requirement per the code would be 40 spaces. The project proposes to provide a total of 122 parking spaces.

DISCUSSION

Privacy Concerns

Adjacent neighbors to the rear of the site have expressed concerns in the past about noise and privacy. The new gym/classroom building would be single story building such that it would not have second floor windows to impact the privacy of the single family residences adjacent to the rear property line. The taller portion (gym area) of the building would set further away from the

rear neighbors, closer to San Antonio Avenue. The high point of the building would be 35 feet tall at the peak and the lower portion of the building surrounding the gym ranges in height from 12 to 18 feet tall. The lower portion of the building would be 114 feet from the rear property line at its closest point. The taller (gym) portion of the building would be 184 feet from the rear property line. The new paying field would also be sited away from the single family homes and would be 142 feet from the rear property line at its closest point.

Landscaping at San Antonio frontage

The proposal for new landscape material in front of the proposed street facing wall has not yet been specified in this preliminary review application. The applicant has indicated that new planting would be coordinated with the new median and street edge plantings done by the City a few years ago. Based on the current plan, it appears that new planting is only proposed in front of the new wall sections. Staff would recommend that the landscaping in front of the wall and in the planter strip for the entire property frontage be considered. This is recommended because the existing landscaping in front of the wall appears to need improvement. By reexamining the entire frontage, it provides the opportunity to provide a consistent landscape pallet for the whole property frontage rather than just the new portion.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

No environmental review is required for a Preliminary Review as it is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Applicant's Project Description*
- Attachment B: Site Location Map
- Attachment C: Zoning Table
- Attachment D: Development Plans (Board Members Only)*

* Prepared by Applicant; all other attachments prepared by Staff

COURTESY COPIES

- William Bondy AIA, 110 Linden Street, Oakland, CA 94607
- Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School, 450 San Antonio Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306

Prepared By: Russ Reich, Senior Planner

Reviewed By: Amy French, AICP, Acting Assistant Planning Director

Gideon Hausner Gym/Classroom Building
490 San Antonio Road
Project Description

The current Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School site consists of two renovated two story buildings at 450 and 470 San Antonio Road and a third abandoned and partially demolished two story building at 490 San Antonio Road. The school owns the adjacent lot at 560 San Antonio Road and intends to remove the common lot line to create a single parcel.

The project scope includes the demolition of a partially demolished two story 22,420 square foot office building at 490 San Antonio Road and a two story 20,920 square foot office building at 560 San Antonio Road. The 560 San Antonio Road portion of the site will be developed as a new playfield and a parking lot. The current eight foot high concrete grape stake fence along San Antonio will be extended for the full length of the site along San Antonio Road. Landscaping along the street frontage will be coordinated with City officials to be in keeping with the spirit of the newly installed upgrades to the median and street edge.

The proposed Gym/Classroom Building is a single story 17,751 square foot structure sited generally on the existing footprint of the former office structure at 490 San Antonio Road. The massing, exterior palette, and fenestration are designed to temper the overall scale of the building and to create rooms with excellent day lighting and easy access to the outdoors. The taller roof of the Gym slopes down to create a lower profile to San Antonio Road and the lower mass of the classrooms and the support spaces surrounding the gym reduce the apparent scale of the building on all elevations. The larger south facing slope of the gym room will serve as a deck for a solar panel array with excellent solar orientation. The exterior materials include cement plaster walls, sand float finish, with decorative infill panel siding of a colored solid composite panel system. Windows and doors are prefinished aluminum storefronts with low e glazing to match existing buildings. At several locations along the ground-level walls green screens are incorporated. Light shelves are provided at all classrooms to enhance daylight at the interior of the rooms. All rooms will have operable fenestration with cross ventilation. The building will meet or exceed all of the Palo Alto Green Building requirements. Because of the single story character of the building no views into adjacent neighbor's yards will be possible from the proposed project.

The Gym/Classroom Building will consist of four primary program spaces; Gymnasium/Theater, Art Room, Music Room, and Beit Tefillah (religious study and prayer space). The Gymnasium /Theater will have facilities for indoor physical education and sports, assemblies and school performing arts productions. Motorized theatrical style seats are provided for quick conversion from athletic activities to assembly uses. The Art Room and Music Room will open to the existing sports field with large glass doors. The Beit Tefillah will be finished with a warmer palette of wood paneling, custom cabinetry, a sculptural ceiling and a sprung wood floor that will allow for other movement activities such as folk dancing or yoga.

The Gym opens to both a small courtyard for community gathering and to the new playfield on the 560 San Antonio Site. This site will provide a much needed extra outdoor play space and incorporate the school's traffic circulation pattern with a new parking lot. This lot provides for fire apparatus access and includes an entry only gate off of San Antonio for parents and staff who want to park and walk into the school without joining the pick-up drop-off queue.

The site design for the Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School project ties into both the immediate and local context while providing a meaningful cultural link to the school's curriculum. The design proposes a parking lot with bio-swales to treat water run-off, a small playing field, and courtyards and pathways to support a new multi-use building. In addition, there are several areas dedicated to outdoor education where planting, harvesting, and other activities explicitly supporting Gideon Hausner's outdoor science curriculum will take place.

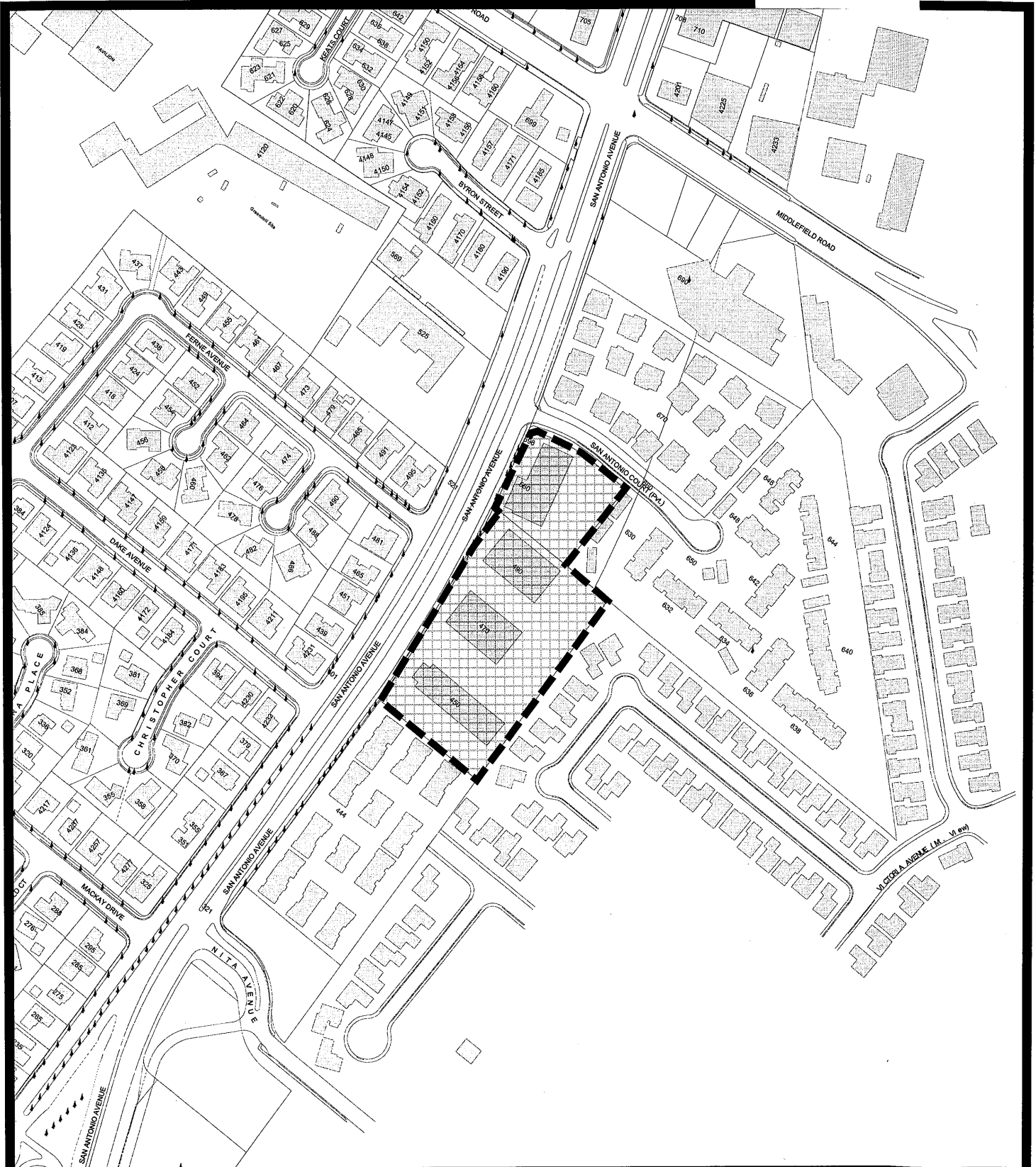
The project incorporates site materials such as SRI-reflective colored concrete and concrete pavers that complement the architecture of the existing and new buildings. Large, rectangular boulders of Jerusalem stone act as architectural elements in the courtyard, breaking the large area into smaller, more intimate gathering spaces while also providing seating. A trellis divides the courtyard from the more functional outdoor classrooms. There are three "rooms" within the garden classroom area: one is intended for educational curriculum and will serve as an "edible schoolyard"; a second, informal "room" under the canopy of large pine trees will serve as either a quiet contemplative space or an outdoor classroom; the third space will meet the needs of the cultural curriculum by providing an area for growing sacred plants.

The planting for the Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School project will both reflect the California landscape and provide an important cultural connection to the school's curriculum. Moreover, the plantings will reflect a commitment to drought tolerant landscaping with a corresponding irrigation system supporting water conservation as well. In addition to California native plantings, plant selections throughout the project will incorporate biblically sacred plants; these may include fig, pomegranate, wheat, citron, grapes, olives, myrtle, and date palm.

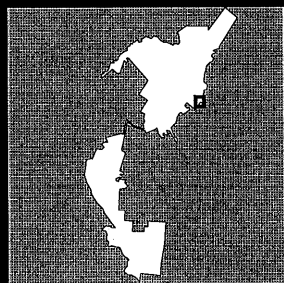
The central courtyard will contain a mix of medium-scale deciduous or flowering trees to shade the space in the summer months. These plantings will include native California grasses as well as plantings with cultural significance. Selected walls of the new building will be planted with vines on a green-screen trellis.

The site is divided into a series of outdoor classrooms, each of which will support the school's cultural and environmental curriculum. These spaces will be planted with a mix of fruiting trees, vegetables, and edible landscaping.

Across the site, a mixture of columnar, deciduous, and evergreen trees will frame the building entrance, provide shade throughout the summer months, reduce reflected heat from the parking lot, and support the parking lot's bio-swale filtration.



The City of
Palo Alto



450-560 San Antonio Avenue

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



ATTACHMENT C
ZONING COMPLIANCE TABLE
450-560 San Antonio Avenue / File No. 12PLN-00511

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR ROLM ZONE DISTRICT	ZONE DISTRICT STANDARD	PROPOSED PROJECT	CONFORMANCE
Minimum Building setbacks			
Front Yard	20"	22'	conforms
Rear Yard	20'	114'	conforms
Interior Side Yard (right)	20'	na	conforms
Interior Side Yard (left)	20'	na	conforms
Total Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.4:1 (70,853 sq. ft.)	0.37:1(65,779 sq. ft.)	conforms
Maximum Site Coverage	30% (53,140 sq. ft.)	24% (41,768 sq. ft.)	conforms
Maximum Height (within 150 feet of residential zone)	35'	35'	conforms
Daylight Plane	10 feet up 45 degree angle	complies	conforms
Parking Requirement (2 parking spaces per teaching station)	Approximately 20 teaching stations = 40 spaces required	122 spaces	conforms