

**City of Palo Alto**

(ID # 6207)

**Architectural Review Board ARB Staff Report**

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**Report Type: New Business****Meeting Date: 10/15/2015****Summary Title: 180 El Camino Real - Vineyard Vines**

**Title: 180 El Camino Real [15PLN-00286]: Request by Jason Smith, Land Shark Development, on behalf of the Board of Trustees to the Leland Stanford Junior University, for Major Architectural Review of the Vineyard Vines exterior storefront facade and signage. The project site is the 3,168 square foot tenant space at Building BB at Stanford Shopping Center. Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Section 15301. Zone District: CC**

**From: Jonathan Lait****Lead Department: Architectural Review Board****RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) recommend the Director of Planning and Community Environment approve the proposed exterior storefront façade and signage, based upon draft Architectural Review findings and Context Based findings (Attachment A) and subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment B).

**BACKGROUND**

The project is the proposed exterior storefront façade at Building BB at Stanford Shopping Center for the retail company Vineyard Vines, as well as:

- installation of new tenant signage,
- interior improvements for the retail space.

*Previous Approvals*

In 2014, the ARB recommended and the Director of Planning and Community Environment (Director) approved Building BB's basic height, floor area, site improvements, and additional requirements as part of the larger Phase III Redevelopment project at Stanford Shopping Center. The Phase III Redevelopment project approved the demolition of the former Bloomingdales building and the construction of four new buildings in its former footprint. In 2015, the ARB recommended and the Director approved the Master Tenant Façade and Sign Program for Stanford Shopping Center (MTFSP).

### *Current Construction*

The demolition of the former Bloomingdales building is now complete. Construction is underway on the 'core and shell' of Buildings AA, BB, CC, and DD in the Phase III Redevelopment area. While building tenants are responsible for the build-outs of the remainder of the buildings' components and spaces.

### *Site Information*

Building BB is located adjacent to the new Bloomingdales building and the surface parking at the northeast corner of the Phase III Redevelopment area (as mapped on Attachment C). Building BB will be visible from Shopping Center Way and El Camino Real into the Stanford Shopping Center. The existing trees on Portico Way will remain with new planter areas. The approved design of the two-story Building BB includes a prominent, rounded corner that faces El Camino Real.

### *Tenant Facades and Entrances*

The overall design of the storefront is a nautical themed retail environment. Vineyard Vines facades would be seen on two sides of the northeast corner of Building BB. There would be two building entrances on Portico Way and El Camino Walk. Both retail entrances will have canopies above with non-illuminated signage. The storefront consists of three large storefront window areas separated by double doors with metal canopies. Each storefront window configuration area consists of a lower section of large pane windows with an upper section of gridded windows.

The middle storefront configuration (between the doors) has an upper gridded section that is taller than the outer store front windows to bring hierarchy to the center of the storefront. The entire storefront is clad in white wood with white trim embellishing the columns and the panels above and below the storefront windows.

Lighting is provided by nautical themed sconces that flank each side of both sets of entry doors, recessed LED fixtures underneath each canopy light the entry path, and track lights highlight the mannequins draped in merchandise within the window display.

The façades would display four primary materials: glass storefront windows/doors, solid mahogany cheery stain wood entrance doors, stone base along the entire length of the storefront. The canopies at the building entrances would be made of hot-rolled steel, with a matte finish (See Plan Sheet 6).

### *Signage*

Six proposed signs announcing Vineyard Vines would be of various types and materials, as shown on plan sheets 10 and 11. The signs would be located as follows:

- Two wall mounted signs above the north and east facing windows

- Two canopy/awning signs attached to canopies over the two entry doors
- Two blade signs, one on each end of the tenant space

### Discussion

The proposed project emphasizes the major characteristics of Building BB that contribute to its cohesive design, such as the meeting the storefront design criteria building finishes and colors, providing canopies over the storefront windows, the size of window and door openings, and lighting. Vineyard Vines has emphasized their unique branding and colors at the two tenant entrances and through material changes at the base storefront windows. The tenant space is located on the corner of Building BB, offering two entrances with signage on each façade

### Signage

The Stanford Shopping Center Master Tenant Sign and Façade Program (MTSFP) allows for a wall, blade/banner, and a canopy sign on a primary tenant façade and one wall or emblem sign on a secondary façade for a maximum of 4 signs for each tenant, as outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1**

**Stanford Shopping Center Master Sign Program Sign Types, Number, and Locations**

Sign	Requirement	Number	Maximum Size	Location
Primary sign (wall sign)	Required	1	Maximum height 24" and otherwise proportional to logo characteristics; Stacked signs not to exceed 36" in height; no sign closer to 24" from demising wall or building corner.	Primary facade
Banner or blade sign (Projecting sign)	Required	1	Banner: 24" projection x 60" height	Primary facade
Canopy or Awning Sign	(optional)	1	Maximum height is 9" and otherwise proportional to logo characteristics	Primary facade
Super-graphic	(optional)	Not limited	None	Flexible
Secondary sign or Emblem	(optional)	1 where applicable	Secondary sign: Maximum height 18" and otherwise proportional to logo characteristics Emblem: Maximum height is 24" in any direction.	Secondary façade where applicable

Advertising graphics and signs	(optional)	Not limited	None	Only on the inside plane of storefront window (s)
Digital images and digital signage	(optional)	Not limited	42" measured diagonally	Only in storefront window

\*Maximum Allowable Sign Area for Wall Signs. Wall signs and sign area are defined in PAMC 16.20.010. Canopy and awning signs erected parallel to a building face are also considered wall signs. The maximum total allowable sign area of a single wall sign or the combined total maximum allowable area of multiple wall signs per building face shall be consistent with the sign area limits outlined in PAMC 16.20 Table 3. Staff level architectural review is required for any sign at the shopping center exterior that requires approval of an exception to these sign area limits. Logos are considered wall signs and can be utilized as a primary wall sign or can be a component of a primary wall sign. Logos shall not exceed the maximum height of a stacked sign, which is 36-inches. Logos shall be included in calculations of maximum wall sign area limits.

While the signage as proposed is compatible with the characteristics of Building BB, the proposed signage is not consistent with the approved MTSFP. The project is proposing six signs where three signs (wall, blade and canopy) would be allowed and the proposed wall signs are slightly taller than allowed by the MTSFP. As noted below, the two wall mounted signs are proposed above the storefront windows on each façade; these signs are 10 inches taller than set forth in the MTSFP and there are two of them. Although a “primary” sign is allowed to be larger, the two signs of equal size provide symmetry of the facades. An additional blade sign is proposed to increase awareness of the tenant for the pedestrians approaching from Portico Way and the El Camino Walk. The blade signs are proposed to be located on the outer most columns of the storefronts. The PAMC 16.20.140, Sign Ordinance allows for two blade signs for each building face. Two canopy signs with pin mounted letters are proposed above each entry to maintain an aesthetic symmetry and to provide clear brand identification at each point of entry. Since the tenant site is located on the corner of Building BB and provides two entrances, staff supports the additional signage, and would appreciate the ARB’s feedback on these requested deviations from the Master Sign Program.

**Vineyard Vines North Facing Elevation:**

Note – These signs are consistent with the MTSFP, with the exception of the wall sign height

- 1 Wall sign – 10 inches higher than allowed 24 inches (including logo)
- 1 Canopy sign – 9 inches high
- 1 blade sign – 24 inches by 15 inches

**Vineyard Vines East Facing Elevation:**

Note - These signs would be above the allowed number of signs, but are otherwise consistent with the MTSFP.

- 1 Wall sign - 10 inches higher than allowed 24 inches (including logo)
- 1 Canopy sign - 9 inches high
- 1 blade sign - 24 inches by 15 inches

Implementation of these proposed signs would result in four minor deviations from the MTFSP. These deviations would be in regard to having taller wall signs, and an additional wall, blade and canopy signs on a secondary elevation, where only one of each sign is allowed according to the MTFSP. In contrast, two wall signs per building elevation would typically be allowed under PAMC Chapter 16.20. Consequently, staff determined that it was not necessary to prepare Sign Exception findings as part of Attachment A.

#### Municipal Code Compliance

The relevant Community Commercial (CC) zoning district development standards are contained in PAMC Section 18.16.060. The proposed project does not conflict with building floor area, lot coverage, parking, employee showers, and other development standards in the CC zoning district.

Due to its location within the CC zoning district, the project is subject to any relevant performance criteria contained in PAMC Chapter 18.23. The project, as conditioned, will comply with the requirements for lighting and landscaping.

#### Architectural Review and Context-Based Findings

Consistent with the architectural review findings set forth in PAMC Section 18.76.020 (d) and the context –based findings in PAMC Section 18.16.090 (b), draft findings are included in Attachment A. The project is also required to be consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies to ensure that these findings are met.

#### Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The proposed project is consistent with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including Goal B-5: Attractive, Vibrant Business Centers, Each with a Mix of Uses and a Distinctive Character and Policy B-22: Work with Stanford University to ensure that the Stanford Shopping Center is sustained as a distinctive, competitive, high quality regional shopping center.

In staff’s assessment, the project design meets the Architectural Review Board findings as noted in Attachment A.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application is exempt from environmental review under provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per CEQA Section 15301.

### **COURTESY COPIES**

jsmith@landsharkdevelopment.com

**Prepared by:** Margaret Netto, Contract Planner

**Reviewed by:** Jodie Gerhardt, AICP, Current Planning Manager  
Jonathan Lait, AICP, Assistant Director  
Cara Silver, Senior Assistant Attorney

**Attachments:**

- ATTACHMENT A: Draft Findings and Approval (DOCX)
- ATTACHMENT B: Conditions of Approval (DOCX)
- Attachment C: Applicant's Letter (PDF)
- Attachment D: Project Plans (TXT)

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**ATTACHMENT A**  
**ARB DRAFT FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL**  
**CONTEXT BASED FINDINGS**

180 El Camino Real  
15PLN-00286

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**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

The design and architecture of the proposed improvements, as conditioned, complies with the Findings for Architectural Review findings as required in Chapter 18.76.020 of the PAMC.

**Comprehensive Plan and Purpose of ARB:**

Finding #1: The design is consistent and compatible with applicable elements of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan.

Finding #16: The design is consistent and compatible with the purpose of architectural review, which is to:

- Promote orderly and harmonious development in the city;
- Enhance the desirability of residence or investment in the city;
- Encourage the attainment of the most desirable use of land and improvements;
- Enhance the desirability of living conditions upon the immediate site or in adjacent areas; and
- Promote visual environments which are of high aesthetic quality and variety and which, at the same time, are considerate of each other.

*The project is consistent with Findings #1 and #16 because:*

The project is consistent with Goal B-5: Attractive, Vibrant Business Centers, Each with a Mix of Uses and a Distinctive Character and Policy B-22: Work with Stanford University to ensure that the Stanford Shopping Center is sustained as a distinctive, competitive, high quality regional shopping center. The project is compatible with the new Building BB tenant space in a manner that respects the overall base building design, while still incorporating brand elements to make the tenant space distinctive. Providing two entrances helps to promote easy pedestrian access and helps pedestrians move through the Shopping Center.

**Compatibility and Character:**

Finding #2: The design is compatible with the immediate environment of the site.

Finding #4: This finding of compatibility with unified or historic character is not applicable to the project.

Finding #5: The design promotes harmonious transitions in scale and character in areas between different designated land uses.

Finding #6: The design is compatible with approved improvements both on and off the site.

*The project is consistent with Findings #2, #4, #5 and #6 because:*

The project respects the overall design of Building BB, creates an attractive street presence, and a welcoming pedestrian access point to the Shopping Center. The design of the tenant façade and signage is integrated on both elevations and helps to promote easy pedestrian access by

providing two entrances. The project is located within the Community Commercial zoning district and is surrounded by existing commercial buildings, hospital buildings, parking garages, a public park, and residential neighborhoods. The project is a retail use that is compatible with the Community Commercial land use designation.

### **Functionality and Open Space:**

Finding #3: The design is appropriate to the function of the project.

Finding #7: The planning and siting of the building on the site creates an internal sense of order and provides a desirable environment for occupants, visitors and the general community.

Finding #8: The amount and arrangement of open space are appropriate to the design and the function of the structures.

*The project is consistent with Findings #3 and #7 because:*

The tenant façade and signage uniquely identifies the tenant brand, incorporates design elements that identify the two separate entrances, and promotes an urban design environment that is consistent with modern commercial retail centers. The project is compatible with the new Building BB tenant space in a manner that respects the overall base building design.

Finding #8 is not applicable to the project.

### **Circulation and Traffic:**

Finding #9: Sufficient ancillary functions are **Circulation and Traffic:**

Finding #9: Sufficient ancillary functions are provided to support the main functions of the project and the same are compatible with the project's design concept.

Finding #10: Access to the property and circulation thereon are safe and convenient for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

Findings #9 and #10 are not applicable to the project.

### **Landscaping and Plant Materials:**

Finding #11: Natural features are appropriately preserved and integrated with the project.

Finding #12: The materials, textures and colors and details of construction and plant material are an appropriate expression to the design and function and compatible with the adjacent and neighboring structures, landscape elements and functions.

Finding #13: The landscape design concept for the site, as shown by the relationship of plant masses, open space, scale, plant forms and foliage textures and colors create a desirable and functional environment on the site and the landscape concept depicts an appropriate unit with the various buildings on the site.

Finding #14: Plant material is suitable and adaptable to the site, capable of being properly maintained on the site, and is of a variety that would tend to be drought-resistant and to reduce consumption of water in its installation and maintenance.

### **Sustainability:**

Finding #15: The design is energy efficient and incorporates renewable energy design elements including, but not limited to:

- a. Careful building orientation to optimize daylight to interiors

- b. High performance, low-emissivity glazing
- c. Cool roof and roof insulation beyond Code minimum
- d. Solar ready roof
- e. Use of energy efficient LED lighting
- f. Low-flow plumbing and shower fixtures
- g. Below grade parking to allow for increased landscape and stormwater treatment areas

*The project is consistent with Finding #15 because:*

The project proposes new storefront windows and new elements would be energy efficient and of durable materials.

## CONTEXT-BASED DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND FINDINGS

In addition to the Architectural Review approval findings, the project is subject to the Context Based Design Criteria found in the PAMC Section 18.16.090, the following additional findings have been made in the affirmative:

- (1) **Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment.** *The design of new projects shall promote pedestrian walkability, a bicycle friendly environment, and connectivity through design elements.* This finding can be made in the affirmative because the project provides two entrances in a manner that helps to promote easy pedestrian access and helps pedestrians move through the Shopping Center. The tenant space will have a visually open ground floor façade design and signage that will be noticeable to both pedestrians and cyclists.
- (2) **Street Building Facades.** *Street facades shall be designed to provide a strong relationship with the sidewalk and the street(s), to create an environment that supports and encourages pedestrian activity through design elements.* This finding can be made in the affirmative because the tenant façade and signage creates an attractive street presence, a visually open ground floor façade design, and promotes easy pedestrian access by providing two entrances.
- (3) **Massing and Setbacks.** *Buildings shall be designed to minimize massing and conform to proper setbacks.* This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project does not increase the massing of the shopping center and respects the overall design of Building BB.
- (4) **Low-Density Residential Transitions.** *Where new projects are built abutting existing lower scale residential development, care shall be taken to respect the scale and privacy of neighboring properties.* This finding does not apply.
- (5) **Project Open Space.** *Private and public open space shall be provided so that it is usable for residents, visitors, and/or employees of the site.* This finding does not apply.
- (6) **Parking Design.** *Parking needs shall be accommodated but shall not be allowed to overwhelm the character of the project or detract from the pedestrian environment.* This finding does not apply.
- (7) **Large (Multi-Acre) Sites.** *Large sites (over one acre) shall be designed so that street, block, and building patterns are consistent with those of the surrounding neighborhood.* This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the tenant façade and signage fit within the overall design of Building BB and contribute positively toward creating a welcoming pedestrian access point to the Shopping Center.
- (8) **Sustainability and Green Building Design.** *Project design and materials to achieve sustainability and green building design should be incorporated into the project.* The project proposes new storefront windows and new elements would be of durable materials.



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**ATTACHMENT B**  
**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

180 El Camino Real

14PLN-000286

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1. The plans submitted to obtain all permits through the Building Division shall be in substantial conformance with the project plans on file with the City of Palo Alto Planning Division dated August 24, 2015, as well as project details and materials reviewed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB), except as modified by these conditions of approval.
2. The approval letter shall be printed on the plans submitted for building permit, including all conditions of approval.
3. Except as expressly specified herein, the site plan, floor plans, building elevations and any additional information or representations, submitted by the Applicant during the Staff review and public hearing process leading to the approval of this entitlement, whether oral or written, which indicated the proposed structure or manner of operation, are deemed conditions of approval.
4. The approved use and/or construction are subject to, and shall comply with, all applicable City ordinances and laws and regulations of other governmental agencies.
5. The project approval shall be valid for a period of one year from the original date of approval. In the event a building permit(s), if applicable, is not secured for the project within the time limit specified above, the ARB approval shall expire and be of no further force or effect. Application for extension of this entitlement may be made prior to the one year expiration.
6. Indemnify and Hold Harmless. To the extent permitted by law, the Applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the City, its City Council, its officers, employees and agents (the "indemnified parties") from and against any claim, action, or proceeding brought by a third party against the indemnified parties and the applicant to attack, set aside or void, any permit or approval authorized hereby for the Project, including (without limitation) reimbursing the City for its actual attorneys' fees and costs incurred in defense of the litigation. The City may, in its sole discretion, elect to defend any such action with attorneys of its own choice.
7. Illuminated signs require Building department review and permits. Plans shall show sign location, wiring sizes and type, disconnect size and location of panel, conduit type and size, structural elements, etc.

8. Signage attached to structures shall include an engineered design for all load combinations for the attachment and/or support(s) associated with the signage.
9. Interior and Exterior illuminated signs are required to comply with Title 24 Energy requirements as stated in sections 110.9, 130.0, 130.3 for mandatory measures. Submit, at a minimum, Title 24 Energy Form NRCC-LTS-01-E to show compliance.
10. Penetrations of fire resistive construction shall be returned to an equivalent fire resistive condition by using fire dampers, fire caulks, and/or fire resistive construction methods using listed materials and assemblies approved by CPA authorities.
11. Seismic attachment and/or bracing is required for sales and storage shelving, elements of the sales displays, etc.
12. All sales and display areas shall be constructed to meet minimum accessibility requirements.
13. **The project is a non-residential building alteration and has a permit value of \$200,000 or more** and therefore must comply with California Green Building Standards Code Mandatory requirements, as applicable to the scope of work. (2013 CGBC Section 301.3, Chapter 5). The project applicant shall indicate the requirements on the Permit Plans. The requirements are subject to inspection. The submittal requirements are outlined here: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/ds/green\\_building/default.asp](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/ds/green_building/default.asp).
14. **The project is a nonresidential projects exceeding \$100,000 valuation** and therefore must acquire an Energy STAR Portfolio Manager Rating and submit the rating to the City of Palo Alto once the project has been occupied after 12 months. PAMC 16.14.380 (Ord. 5324 § 1 (part), 2015). The Energy Star Project Profile shall be submitted to the Building Department prior to permit issuance. Submittal info can be found at:  
[https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/utl/business/benchmarking\\_your\\_building.asp](https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/utl/business/benchmarking_your_building.asp).

# Attachment C



**LandShark Development Services Group**

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vineyard vines®

**Received**

**AUG 24 2015**

Department of Planning  
& Community Environment

August 20, 2015

Project Description Letter for vineyard vines – Stanford Shopping Center Palo Alto, CA

To Whom It May Concern:

The overall design of the storefront is consistent with the typical storefront design for Vineyard Vines and conveys their brand identity.

Vineyard Vines is a nautical themed retail environment expressed both on the exterior and interior of every store through the use of materials and colors. At the Stanford Shopping Center, Vineyard Vines will be infilling the shell building with storefront along two faces at the Northeast corner of building BB. This storefront consists of three large storefront window areas separated by two entry double doors with metal canopies. Each storefront window configuration area consists of a lower section of large pane windows with a upper section of gridded windows.

The middle storefront window configuration (between the doors) has an upper gridded section that is taller than the outer storefront windows to bring hierarchy to the center of the storefront. The entire storefront is clad in white wood with white trim embellishing the columns and the panels above and below the storefront windows.

Lighting is provided by nautical sconces that flank each side of both sets of entry doors, recessed LED fixtures underneath each canopy light the entry path, and hidden track lights highlight the mannequins draped in merchandise within the display windows.

Our signage inventory:

- 2 wall mounted signs: They are to be located above the storefront windows, 1 on the north facing side and 1 on the east facing side, both within the dimension restrictions set forth in the Simon tenant criteria for 'secondary' signs. Although a 'primary' sign is allowed to be larger, in favor of maintaining symmetry both are proposed to be the same size by adhering to the more restrictive of the two categories.
- 2 blade signs: As this space is situated on a corner, and although only one blade is allowed, an additional blade is proposed to increase awareness of the shop for pedestrians approaching from different directions. They are to be located on the outer most columns of the storefront.
- 2 canopy signs: Although only one set is allowed, sets of pin mounted letters are proposed at the top of both canopies to maintain an aesthetic symmetry and to provide clear brand identification at both entry points.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jason M. Smith  
LandShark Development Services Group

15190.txt

Link for the project plans:

[http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/new\\_projects/commercial\\_and\\_mixed\\_use\\_projects.asp#E](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/new_projects/commercial_and_mixed_use_projects.asp#E)