



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD DRAFT MINUTES: March 3, 2016

City Hall/City Council Chambers
250 Hamilton Avenue

Call to Order

Roll Call

Present: Chair Robert Gooyer; Vice Chair Alexander Lew, Board Members Wynne Furth, Peter Baltay

Absent: Board Member Kyu Kim

Oral Communications

David Carnahan, Deputy City Clerk, announced City recruitment for two positions on the Human Relations Commission, two positions on the Library Advisory Commission, and four positions on the Utilities Advisory Commission.

Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

None.

City Official Reports

1. Future Tentative Agenda Schedule and Subcommittee Assignments

Vice Chair Lew noted this item was continued to March 17, 2016. Board Member Furth inquired about other items on the March 17, 2016, agenda. Jodie Gerhardt would provide a list of addresses to the Board.

[Discussion continued after Item Number 3.]

Ms. Gerhardt listed the projects scheduled for the March 17 meeting.

2. List of Staff Approved (Minor) Architectural Reviews

Ms. Gerhardt reported staff provided a list of staff-level reviews to the Board.

Continued Business

None.

New Business

- 1. 2515-2585 El Camino Real [15PLN-00170]:** Request by the Hayes Group Architects on Behalf of ECRPA, LLC for Site and Design Review to Allow a New 39,858 Square Foot, 3-Story Mixed Use Building Including Retail, Office, 13 Residential Condominium Units and One Level of Underground Parking on a 39,638 square foot Lot to Replace a 9,694 Square Foot Existing

Restaurant (Olive Garden). The Project Includes a Request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to Exceed the 5,000 Square Foot Office for the Site by Approximately 4,835 Square Feet. Environmental Assessment: An Initial Study was drafted and a Mitigated Negative Declaration was circulated on January 19, 2016. Zoning Districts: CC (2) and CN. For more information, contact Margaret Netto at margaret.netto@cityofpaloalto.org.

[This item was heard after Item Number 2.]

Margaret Netto reported the project was subject to the recent interim office limit ordinance and to PTC review. The project would return to the ARB on March 17, 2016 for a recommendation to the Council. She reviewed details of the project. The project was compatible with the neighborhood and complied with context based design criteria and with performance standard criteria. Staff recommended the ARB provide comments and continue the project to March 17, 2016.

Ken Hayes, Hayes Group Architects, reviewed the location, surrounding properties, connections, and details of the project as well as comments from the previous ARB review.

Board Member Baltay inquired about the location of the pedestrian path mentioned on page 3 of the staff report. Mr. Hayes advised that the pedestrian path was the circulation on the back side of the building. The path was located on private property.

Vice Chair Lew requested staff explain the ARB's options under the Council's new process for office space. The ARB's last meeting before the deadline of March 31 was March 17. Ms. Gerhardt indicated the ARB could meet on March 24th, if an additional meeting was needed. Vice Chair Lew asked if the ARB could require details return to the subcommittee or staff. Ms. Gerhardt reported staff needed a recommendation from the ARB prior to March 31. That recommendation could require details return to subcommittee or staff. Vice Chair Lew asked if the shared mixed-use was based on retail and office or visitor spaces or affordable housing for the parking reduction. Mr. Hayes understood the dedicated spaces for residences resulted from the traffic consultant's recommendation. Vice Chair Lew asked if the applicant was seeking a parking reduction based on proximity to transit. Mr. Hayes responded no.

Board Member Furth felt the term townhouse should not be applied to residences in this project. She appreciated the plaza and the 12-foot sidewalk. She inquired about places for outdoor seating and suggested seating include backs and arms. She inquired about use of the balconies given street noise. She expressed concern that the project would be a heat island. The rear view of the parking structure could be improved with trees and greenery. Mr. Hayes explained plans for landscaping. She inquired about planting areas on either side of the garage near the sidewalk and suggested more plants in the raised planters would be desirable. She expressed concern regarding security for residents in the underground garage. Mr. Hayes advised that the garage would be gated.

Board Member Baltay noted three items of increasing importance that he hoped could be modified. He hoped the applicant could save the mature palm trees. Mr. Hayes would consider that. Board Member Baltay suggested the lobby be made an open space to allow access to the pedestrian path or the paving pattern could be made more visually obvious. Board Member Baltay suggested the two-dimensional façade element be folded into the corner of the building so as to acknowledge the corner. Mr. Hayes explained the concept for the façade element. Board Member Baltay felt there was an opportunity to do something more interesting at the corner. There was not a sense of a base, middle, and top to the architecture which the South El Camino Design Guidelines clearly called for to create a link to other buildings.

Vice Chair Lew was opposed to the project because of the length of the façade along El Camino Real. He liked the sizable residential component, the skylights, and the extensive ground-floor retail. He distinguished between a row house and a townhouse. The architectural style of the project was compatible with the buildings on Grant and Sherman. The project was longer than any other building with less modulation in the vicinity of El Camino Real. Better buildings had bigger breaks and more

prominent lobbies facing El Camino Real. Mr. Hayes disagreed in that the commercial space was clearly differentiated from the residential space. Vice Chair Lew felt the project did not fit the existing urban pattern along El Camino Real. A stronger alley connection from the plaza on Sherman would be better for the urban pattern. Vice Chair Lew concurred with Board Member Baltay's comments regarding the corner and the sense of top, middle, and base. He suggested planters along El Camino, a continuous planter strip along Grant, and a different type of bicycle rack. At the present time, he would oppose the project as proposed.

Chair Gooyer agreed with comments regarding the sense of a top, middle, and base. He did not like the repetitiveness of the six items. The repetitiveness and the corner enhanced the length of the building. He liked the separation of the commercial and residential spaces. The lobby could be opened up for the pathway.

Mr. Hayes inquired whether the corner element could return for subcommittee review in order to meet the deadline for approval by March 31. Chair Gooyer did not believe so.

Board Member Furth asked if context-based criteria applied to the project. Ms. Netto responded yes. Board Member Furth felt it was essential for the pedestrian walkway to appear available, open, inviting for public use. She agreed that the building needed more landscaping and attractive landscaping on the sidewalk along El Camino Real. Landscaping along the east side was not compatible with the development across the street; proposed landscaping was too bright, too hard and insufficiently green. She did not see how buildings similar to the project would be successful on the avenue.

Board Members and staff discussed the amount of time the applicant would have to submit revisions prior to the March 17 meeting.

MOTION: Board Member Baltay moved, seconded by Board Member Furth, to continue the item to the March 17, 2016 hearing.

MOTION PASSED: 4-1-0-0

2. **744-750 San Antonio Road (15PLN-00314):** Request for a Community Scoping Meeting to take verbal comments regarding the scope and content of the forthcoming Draft EIR. The proposed discretionary Architectural Review application is for a request by Rashik Patel on behalf of M10 Dev, LLC for Architectural Review of a lot merger, architectural review, demolition of existing structures and construction of two new hotel buildings (297 rooms in 153,580 square feet). The project includes surface parking and an underground garage, hotel amenities and other minor site improvements. Environmental Assessment: An Environmental Impact Report will be prepared. Zoning District: Service Commercial CS. For more information, contact Sheldon A. Sing at sheldon@mplanninggroup.com.

[This item was heard following City Official Reports.]

Sheldon Ah Sing explained the purpose, content, and process of the Environmental Impact Report and next steps.

Board Member Furth could not locate an Initial Study for the project. Mr. Sing advised that an Initial Study had not been prepared. Board Member Furth felt having a copy of the questionnaire would be helpful when an Initial Study was not prepared.

Nancy Martin noted current traffic congestion on San Antonio and concerns for traffic flow after construction was complete. Construction vehicles and equipment would create noise and dirt and damage San Antonio Road. An underground garage would have a huge groundwater impact.

Joan Larrabee commented regarding contamination of groundwater with diesel fuel and VOCs. The use of Uber and Lyft services would increase traffic. Additional traffic would not decrease the very high accident rate.

Pat Starrett advised that a traffic sign on Alma directed trucks of certain tonnage to utilize San Antonio Road. The cumulative impact of additional traffic from a hotel would be negative.

Alex van Riesen did not receive notice of the meeting. Jodie Gerhardt indicated notice was provided to owners and occupants within 600 feet of the project. He felt the EIR for this project could not be properly performed until Comprehensive Plan EIR was complete. Ms. Gerhardt explained EIRs contained information regarding projects that had been approved as well as future projects. The project EIR would take that into account. He suggested suspending the project EIR until the conclusion of the Comprehensive Plan EIR.

Randy Popp reported the project had been significantly reconsidered. The applicant had completed and submitted a TIA. He requested a logistics plan for construction be added. Phase I and II analyses to assess hazardous conditions at the site had been submitted. The applicant intended to fund the optimization of traffic signals. He requested the ARB consider the effect of signal optimization in analysis of traffic.

Chris expressed concerns about degradation of air quality because of increased traffic.

Herb Borock stated CEQA required a stable project description. Mr. Popp had indicated the project would be different. The applicant should submit the new project, and the City should re-notice the scoping section. The public could not comment unless they could review the new project description, the historic assessment, and the goal of overriding considerations.

Vice Chair Lew inquired whether the project was properly noticed through newspapers. Mr. Sing advised that the project was noticed in the newspaper. Vice Chair Lew understood the official notification was newspaper publication. The community's main concern was traffic. In previous comments, the public expressed concerns regarding shading, parking, and the proposed transient use. He did not believe on-street parking was considered in the environmental impact.

Board Member Furth hoped to address site-specific problems imposed by the project through the EIR. She questioned whether the project would have an impact on the view of the hills from Highway 101 to San Antonio Road. Spillover parking was an issue because of local thresholds. She did not wish to hold another scoping session without an Initial Study or questionnaire.

Board Member Baltay felt studying shading and shadowing of the potential building on neighboring properties as well as the daylight plane was important. The location of a hotel would affect traffic throughout the City. He questioned the impact of this project on traffic across the City.

Chair Gooyer suspected changes to the project would move the project closer to ARB wishes.

Board Member Furth stated CEQA anticipated an iterative interaction between information learned in the environmental review and modification of the project. The goal was no adverse impacts rather than overriding considerations.

Vice Chair Lew asked if one alternate scenario within the EIR could be an all residential project on the site. Current zoning did not allow an all residential project.

Mr. Popp remarked that the project should be studied in the context of current zoning. The only way to have a predominantly residential project was to include a 15-percent commercial component. The minimum allowed by CS zoning was 0.6 residential and 0.15 commercial in a mixed-use project.

Board Member Furth noted CEQA contained a section about housing. The issue was thresholds; she did not know what the City considered appropriate. Hotels traditionally employed a large number of low-wage workers. She hoped the City would address the housing shortage for low-wage workers.

3. **355 University Avenue [15PLN-00237]:** Request by Terrence Murphey of Hayes Group Architects, on behalf of Palo Alto Masonic Temple Association, for Architectural Review, Historic Review, Sign Exception, and Seismic Rehabilitation Floor Area Bonus for new façades and signage on University Avenue and Florence Street, new ground floor parking accessed from the adjacent public alley, new second story with outdoor rooftop display area, and interior modifications. Environmental Assessment: Categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guideline Section 15301 Existing Facilities, Section 15304 Minor Alterations to Land, and Section 15311 Accessory Structures. Zoning District: Downtown Commercial (CD-C(GF)(P). For more information, contact Rebecca Atkinson at rebecca.atkinson@cityofpaloalto.org.

Rebecca Atkinson reported regarding details of the project, the address situation, and the proposed new signage and options. Key topics were compatibility with the University Avenue District and the Florence Avenue Subdistrict; the alley design and operation; the proposed sign exception; and requirements of the Pedestrian Shopping Combining District. The Historic Resources Board was scheduled to review the project on March 10th. The Director would determine if the project correctly utilized the seismic rehabilitation floor area bonus.

Ken Hayes, Hayes Group Architects, requested the project be continued to March 17.

Laith Sayigh, DFA Architects, provided the context of the project and details of elements, signage, and seismic upgrades.

Vice Chair Lew inquired whether the alley was public or private property. Ms. Atkinson advised the alley was public property. Vice Chair Lew asked who was responsible for maintaining the alley. Ms. Atkinson did not know.

Board Member Furth inquired whether the City allowed the building to be constructed on public property. She asked if the alley extended to the building or if there was a setback between the alley and the back of Cheesecake Factory. In other words, she inquired whether trash bins were located in the right-of-way. Ms. Atkinson did not analyze the back of the house of adjacent properties. The alley extended from the property line and was 20 feet from the back of the property line.

Board Member Baltay requested the location of the green wall on the second floor. Mr. Sayigh replied in the section with the glass façade. Board Member Baltay asked if the glazing on the University Avenue face would be glass abutting glass. Mr. Sayigh advised it would be glass to glass with back-mounted mullions. Board Member Baltay felt the proportions of glazing, mullions, and entry did not work. The entrance felt too narrow. The Florence Street supergraphic was inappropriate. The applicant should do something architectural with the wall. The roll-up door should be either a retail front or some sort of public amenity or service, perhaps a place to sit or to park bicycles. Parking in that location was a mistake. He urged that the Board insist the applicant do something to make the street frontage more pedestrian-friendly and welcoming and not allow a billboard on the side of the building.

Vice Chair Lew noted the applicant provided four alternate designs for the Florence street façade. He requested the applicant's preference. Mr. Sayigh preferred the large supergraphic, because it appeared as a piece of art rather than as advertising or a billboard. With respect to the University Avenue façade, Vice Chair Lew felt more was better for the glass setback from the street edge. The renderings did not appear to be accurate. Mr. Sayigh explained that the zinc metal plates were chamfered, and the angle of chamfering gave the illusion of it being deeper than it actually was. Vice Chair Lew did not believe the proposed mount of the soffit would be good. The design put everything on the second floor. He felt emphasis should be lower, at the pedestrian-scale. The lighting in the alley was in different patterns;

LED lighting could improve that. The back of the building needed cleaning and painting. In general, he supported the project and could make the findings. The storefront had few pedestrian amenities which were requested in the pedestrian guidelines.

Board Member Furth read from the Downtown guidelines regarding alleys. She liked the general approach to University Avenue. She inquired about the width of the doorway. Mr. Sayigh believed it was more than 6 feet. Board Member Furth felt the doorway was too narrow. Hard-edged, shorn, trimmed landscaping would be appropriate for the project. She liked the step-down, step-up design. She assumed the back of the building needed to be cleaned up significantly as part of the project. Florence Avenue almost met the description of an alley. She did not support diagonal parking on the right-hand portion of the building. She suggested the area be converted to bicycle parking. The graphics were not attractive and would not enhance the street. She preferred something that made the frontage work better.

Chair Gooyer liked the basic concept of the glass wall on University. On the second floor, it had no top which he did not like. The door was too narrow. The trim was too thin. He liked the concept of looking down. He asked if a showroom would be located downstairs, Mr. Sayigh responded yes. Chair Gooyer suggested greenery be added along the front. He preferred the building have some reminiscence of a regular two-story building. Rather than having a full garage, the project should have something like a vitrine on one side which appeared to connect to the store on the other side. He suggested the applicant treat the portion as an adjunct to the building.

Board Member Furth liked the idea of a second-floor terrace. She inquired whether the terrace would shade the street or sidewalk. Chair Gooyer did not believe that was an issue. Ms. Gerhardt indicated staff could explore that.

Chair Gooyer requested renderings provide details for the living wall. Ms. Gerhardt indicated details should include information for maintenance and water usage.

Board Members discussed a date for the project to return and inquired whether the applicant could revise the project for a hearing on March 17. The applicant could revise the University Avenue side with no difficulty. The applicant could not make major architectural changes to the second floor on the Florence Street side. Chair Gooyer did not feel the Board's comments involved major architectural changes. Board Member Baltay felt strongly the applicant should do something on the second floor. The applicant requested concessions from the City; therefore, the Board should ask the applicant to do something on the second floor. Chair Gooyer concurred. Board Member Baltay felt the applicant needed more than a week to consult with the building owner and with staff and to make modifications. Board Member Furth related the problems with the project site. The guidelines and standards should be applied to the project. Vice Chair Lew inquired about the projects slated for hearing at the March 17 meeting. Ms. Gerhardt listed those projects. Chair Gooyer did not believe the project should be continued to March 17 as the agenda was full. Board Member Baltay inquired about the next date available after March 17. Ms. Gerhardt responded April 7, but reports were due March 10.

MOTION: Board Member Baltay moved, seconded by Board Member Furth, to continue the item to April 7, 2016.

MOTION PASSED: 4-1-0-0

Board Member Furth expected at the minimum a supplement to the Staff report addressing unresolved issues.

Study Session

None.

Minutes Approval:

January 21, 2016 Draft Minutes

Board Member Baltay recalled providing a detailed description of how and why a variance for FAR might be granted with respect to the synagogue project located at 4175 Manuela Avenue. He requested his comments be included in the record. With regard to the wood wall, Board Members wanted to understand the durability and finish of the wood wall.

Vice Chair Lew noted the subcommittee item for 50 El Camino Real had no report. Board Members determined they had different versions of the minutes, some of which contained reports of subcommittee items and some did not.

MOTION: Board Member Furth moved, seconded by Board Member Baltay, to approve the January 21, 2016 minutes as amended.

MOTION PASSED: 4-1-0-0

February 18, 2016 Draft Minutes

Board Member Baltay clarified that Item Number 2 should reflect that Board Members remarked that the project appeared incompatible with the Baylands Design Guidelines rather than the Baylands.

MOTION: Board Member Baltay moved, seconded by Vice Chair Lew, to approve the February 18, 2016, minutes as amended.

MOTION PASSED: 4-1-0-0

Subcommittee Item

180 El Camino Real [15PLN-00355]: Review responses to Condition of Approval #14 regarding b) exterior lighting and f) living wall for The North Face at Stanford Shopping Center.

MOTION:

The ARB Subcommittee reviewed and approved the responses to Condition of Approval #14, dated received on February 22, 2016, regarding b) exterior lighting and f) living wall for The North Face at Stanford Shopping Center.

Board Member Questions, Comments, Announcements

Board Member Furth wanted the Board to agendaize general topics of concern for discussion so that staff and applicants could understand the Board's thinking in interpreting rules. Chair Gooyer was concerned about increasing the length of meetings for these discussions. Board Member Furth requested an agenda item to discuss topics for further discussion. Chair Gooyer suggested a designated agenda item for issues that arise. Ms. Gerhardt requested the Board provide a list of such topics so that staff could begin adding them to smaller agendas.

Board Member Furth noted John Hannah's letter objecting to the idea of subjective criteria in review processes.

Adjournment