EXISTING SITE
616 RAMONA STREET
PROPOSED RAMONA STREET PROJECT
616 RAMONA STREET
PROPOSED PLANS
616 RAMONA STREET
March 10, 1988

HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
Palo Alto, California

COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN CD DISTRICT NONCOMPLYING FACILITY REGULATIONS: INTERPRETATION

Members of the Council:
This report is for informational purposes and no City Council action is necessary or recommended.

BACKGROUND

When the Commercial Downtown (CD) District zoning regulations were approved at the conclusion of the Downtown Study in July 1985, the substantially reduced floor area ratio (FAR) provisions resulted in a number of Downtown buildings becoming noncomplying by virtue of their exceeding the new FAR limits. The FARs were reduced from 2.0 to 1.0 to 0.8 to 1.0 in CD-C zoned areas and from 2.0 to 1.0 to 0.4 to 1.0 in most CD-S and CD-N zoned areas. The objectives of these new CD FAR provisions were to 1) reduce development potential and 2) reduce increases in traffic congestion and increases in the on-street parking deficit. The objectives of these Downtown CD regulations were not intended to trigger demolition of existing buildings over time.

As a result, the CD Noncomplying Facility provisions permitted existing buildings that had become noncomplying to be able to be remodeled, improved or replaced [see attached Section 18.49.040(C)]. Nonetheless, these provisions stipulated that any increase in site resulting from remodeling or rebuilding must qualify for one of the CD District exemption exceptions that were specifically identified [see attached Section 18.49.060(B) of the Zoning Regulations].

1. Handicapped improvements:
2. Seismic rehabilitation;
3. Historic restoration;
4. Two-hundred (200) square-foot exemptions for buildings not qualifying for either the seismic or historic exemptions; and
5. Residential development in the CD-S and CD-N sub-districts.

COM:18518

2. CD District noncomplying buildings

Where existing floor area at or above grade is eliminated

Such buildings would be permitted to be remodeled and replaced provided there would be no increase in the building's noncompliance, e.g., in floor area or in height. However, in remodeling or in replacing, such buildings would be permitted to be reconfigured in terms of height, width and height so long as existing floor area was not increased (except for the aforementioned existing exceptions in the CD regulations). Also, in no event would a building's height be allowed to exceed the height limit (50 feet except 35 feet within 150 feet of a residentially zoned district). Remodeling of buildings on the Historic Building Inventory would have to continue to comply with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and with Comprehensive Plan policies regarding the remodeling of historic buildings.

This could mean, for example, that a two-story, 10,000-square-foot building could become a three-story, 10,000-square-foot building with a reduced building footprint, so long as the height restrictions of the applicable district were not exceeded. Such an interpretation not only allows greater design flexibility (subject to Architectural Review Board review and approval), but could also permit provisions for on-site parking due to the reduced building footprint.

Staff wishes to point out that the City Attorney and chief building official have reviewed these interpretations and have found them consistent with the text of the CD District Noncomplying Facility provisions.

EFFECTS OF CD DISTRICT NONCOMPLYING FACILITY INTERPRETATION

Staff believes that these interpretations shall:

1. Not result in increased noncompliance in terms of floor area or height for buildings in the CD District currently exceeding the FAR and/or the height limits; and yet
2. Permit reasonable flexibility for buildings undergoing remodeling and/or replacement so that improved building design, that the City has identified over time as contributing to the enhancement of Downtown Palo Alto, will be encouraged.

In addition, another effect of these interpretations of the CD Noncomplying provisions should preclude unexpected building massing in remodelings that could result if entire basements were replaced by upper-story additions.

FUTURE ACTIONS

Staff is requesting that the Urban Design Committee develop design guidelines for the remodeling and replacement of noncomplying buildings in the CD District. Completion of the Urban Design Committee's work is expected in early 1989.

The aforementioned interpretations of CD District Noncomplying Facility provisions will apply until the City has the opportunity to act on the Urban Design Committee report.

CMR:18518

2/10/88

CITY MANAGER REPORT
©16 RAMONA STREET
EXISTING SITE
616 RAMONA STREET
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXISTING</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL BUILDING SIZE</td>
<td>8,344.3 SF</td>
<td>8,344.3 SF + 620 SF TDR for rooftop access</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>1.62/1</td>
<td>1.75/1, 3.0/1 allowed w/ exempt floor area</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEIGHT</td>
<td>19.5 - 29’</td>
<td>23.5’ 46’-0” TOP OF ELEVATOR SHAFT</td>
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<td>ALLOWED HEIGHT</td>
<td>50’</td>
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<td>BUILDING AGE</td>
<td>60 YEARS</td>
<td>NEW</td>
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<td>FIRE SPRINKLER</td>
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<td>ADA</td>
<td>NON-EXISTENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUILDING CODE STANDARDS</td>
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<td>CURRENT STANDARDS</td>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>NEW/ATTRACTIVE RESPONSIVE TO OUR TIME</td>
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