

WATRY DESIGN, INC.
Architects • Engineers • Parking Planners



July 12th, 2018

City of Palo Alto
Department of Planning & Community Environment
250 Hamilton Avenue, 5th floor
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Re: 375 Hamilton Ave., Downtown Parking Garage, ARB Formal Review Project Description

To Planning Staff and ARB Members:

Attached is the formal ARB submittal package for 375 Hamilton Avenue, the proposed Downtown Parking Garage. The project applicant is Watry Design Inc., with Hayes Group Architects, on behalf of our client, the City of Palo Alto.

This package includes 14 sets of half size drawings and two sets of full size drawings, including the vicinity map, neighborhood context, site plan, landscape plan, proposed floor plans, elevations, sections, and perspectives.

SCOPE OF WORK

Due to an increased parking demand and a shortage of available parking spaces in the downtown area, the City of Palo Alto has begun the process for the design of a new parking structure at the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Waverley Street. The primary goals of this project are to maximize the amount of structured parking while integrating the structure within the downtown context of retail storefronts.

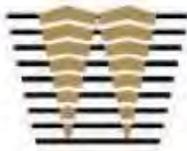
EXISTING SITE USE

The site is located at the east corner of Hamilton Avenue and Waverley Street. The rear of the site adjoins Lane 21. The surrounding vicinity is a mix of downtown retail and office uses. Southwest of the property, at 345 Hamilton is the four-story AT&T central office. Northwest along Waverley are several one and two-story retail buildings, including historic buildings at 526 Waverley, a category 3 historic building and 510 Waverley, a category 2 historic building. Across Hamilton, to the Southeast, is the historic, two-story Post Office, a category 1 historic building. Across Waverley to the Northeast is the All Saints Episcopal Church. The site is more than 150 feet from any residentially zoned properties so increased zoning restrictions do not apply.

The zone district is PF: Public Facility. The district has a 50 foot height limit. A PF zone amendment, allowing an exception to the seven foot special setback at Hamilton Avenue, was approved by Palo Alto City Council. Easements are not known at this time.

The site area is 29,164 SF, accommodating a surface-level parking lot for 86 vehicles. There is a public restroom at the corner of Hamilton and Waverley. The Arborist Report identifies eight trees on the property, including one protected Coast Live Oak. The protected Coastal Oak is in fair condition with good grow but is not suitable for transplanting.

The occupants of 526, 550 and 560 Waverley utilize a portion of the site to access the backs of their buildings and pick up trash and recycling.



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PROPOSED USE

The proposed parking structure shall be five levels above ground and one basement level with a ground floor retail area of **1,955 SF**. The main entry to the building will be from Hamilton Avenue. Access is also provided from Lane 21, however this access will generally be for exit only with entry only in the event that the Hamilton Avenue access may be restricted.

This project shall provide **325** total parking stalls. Of these, there will be provision for accessible spaces (**8**); electric vehicle charging (**82, 17** to be installed initially) stalls serving the new retail area (**6**) and a stall serving 550 Waverley.

A long-term bike storage room shall be provided at Hamilton Avenue near the main vehicle entry/exit. This room shall be approximately **438** square feet and have space for approximately **50** bicycles with additional space for child carriers etc. Short-term bicycle storage can be provided at the sidewalk near the retail space.

A common refuse storage room shall be at Lane 21 near the secondary vehicle entry / exit. This room shall be approximately **450** square feet. It will serve the Waverley businesses and the proposed new retail space.

The parking structure will be **50'-0"** to the top of rail on the fifth deck with an elevator penthouse continuing to **63'-0"**.

The building will be designed with infrastructure to allow for the future installation of photovoltaic panels mounted above the top parking deck.

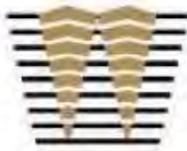
SITE AND BUILDING CONCEPT

The proposed building sits three feet away from the property line at Hamilton Avenue; it extends four feet into the special setback. The building extends to the property line at Waverley Street. A continuous 12 foot sidewalk wraps both frontages. The structure is two feet from the interior lot line at the AT&T building.

At the north property line, shared with 560 Waverley, the edge of the garage sets back 10 feet from the property line. This facilitates construction, provides a path for underground utilities, allows openings for natural ventilation into the parking garage, and lets light reach the existing windows at 560 Waverley. This necessary setback also creates an opportunity for a pedestrian walkway, focused on and leading to the secondary stair vertical circulation element. Additionally, a visual connection to All Saints Episcopal Church is created between the garage and the church by way of the new alley connection. The alley is visually enhanced with architectural paving, plantings, benches and decorative lighting features that will provide the infrastructure for a useable space.

The primary stair and elevator circulation features are prominently positioned at the corner of Waverley Street and Hamilton Avenue since pedestrian way finding is an important aspect of garage navigation. At this street corner, the building edge erodes, creating a pedestrian court with access to the stair and elevator, as well as an entrance to the ground floor retail space that extends down Waverley Street.

In order to maintain access for utilities, services and secondary means of egress for the existing buildings fronting Waverley Street, the garage sets back 16 feet from the shared property line at this location. Vehicle access will



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be restricted in this alley to those vehicles needed for service. The alley will be enhanced with architectural paving, new planting, benches and lighting so that it can be a useable space.

To satisfy the car count goal, the garage is four stories, with parking at the roof level, plus one level of basement parking. The main vehicle entry / exit shall be on Hamilton Avenue near the south corner of the lot since Hamilton is a more travelled way. A secondary vehicular exit shall be at Lane 21.

The building will be naturally ventilated and as such must meet California Building Code requirements for openness. This requirement requires that the design must have a sustainably open façade to achieve the prescribed open area and open length. The basement will be mechanically ventilated.

The building concept is one of transition and compatibility. The garage is integrated into the context of the downtown rather than being self-conscious and aggressive. An integrated building defines itself through program, connections with the site and context as well as streetscape character without replicating architectural styles but drawing from them.

The general massing of the façade is scaled to the street with a new canopy at Hamilton and Waverley. This canopy, higher at Waverley Street, relates to the adjacent retail and nearby Post Office arcade. The height of the AT&T building at seventy-five (75) feet serves as a backdrop to our building that is 50% shorter. The retail storefront assists in the transition to mercantile buildings along Waverley Street.

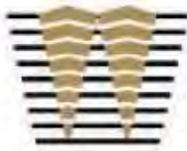
MATERIALS, COLORS, AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The primary construction material is poured in place concrete columns, slabs and walls. Along the street edges, the building base columns and shear wall are board-formed concrete in a natural color, similar to All Saints Church. Flat metal bars painted a dark bronze color infill the first floor openings to create pedestrian screening. The metalwork continues on the runs and landings of the stair, celebrating the metalwork found in the post office and other Spanish revival buildings. An illuminated perforated metal scrim wraps the main corner stair creating a lantern element that serves as a wayfinding device. This element is also the focus of the public art program for the building. Vertical metal louvers, fill the space between columns at the second, third and fourth stories. The vertical louvers serve to create a body to the building while allowing for the required garage ventilation. Their color is reminiscent of the terracotta colors found in the downtown. Above the roof parking level, a dark bronze metal 'cap' and metal railing create a cornice for the building. This design is enhanced by, but not dependent on, future columns and beams supporting photovoltaic panels.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUS SUBMITTAL

In response to board member comments on February 15th and June 21st, we have made several changes to the design. The building moved three feet back from the Hamilton Avenue property line, better aligning with the existing AT&T building. A pedestrian pathway through the structure leads from the bike parking entry near Gilman Street to Lane 21 near CVS as recommended by the Transportation Department. Responding to comments on proportion and massing, the heavy two-story arcade base is now a narrow canopy at Hamilton and Waverley. The material of the perforated metal shroud at the corner stair has been refined into a more open, transparent structure.

The vertical fins were lowered to line up with the upper parking deck, and a new metal cap and open metal guardrail create a cornice at the top of the building. The bike locker received decorative screening, an accent paint at the back wall, and a protected walkway. A long planter shifted to add more bench seating Hamilton. Seating was also added near the corner plaza. The latest renderings of the garage show the public art incorporated into the perforated metal shroud at the corner stair.



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LANDSCAPE CONCEPT

The landscape of the proposed parking structure is designed to enhance the pedestrian environment of downtown Palo Alto and encourages positive social interaction through providing an inviting streetscape and creating a unique and convenient pedestrian alleyway between the existing surrounding buildings and the proposed structure.

The streetscape walkways are replaced and widened to provide more room for circulation along the proposed retail space on Waverley Street and for enjoying the built-in benches and landscaped raised planters on Hamilton Avenue. New street trees are proposed along Hamilton in enlarged, 4'x7' tree wells and a suspended pavement system to help ensure healthy growth of the new Ginkgo trees which reflect the existing species of the preserved street trees on Waverley Street. Three native Oak trees have been added on Hamilton to compensate for the removal of the one protected oak tree.

The corner of the parking structure features a small plaza area that introduces decorative pavers which are also used in the pedestrian access alleys.

The pedestrian access alleys offer a quiet and human scaled alternative route through the project site. To invite people to explore and use the alley we use decorative pervious pavement, generous benches, landscaped storm water treatment planters, and pedestrian scaled lighting. The storm water planters in the alley and to Lane 21 are about three feet high, and will feature a combination of low growing foliage and flowering plants that provide year round interest and function to cleanse storm water directed from the parking structure roof. Planting species have been carefully selected to be successful in the alley environment and to enhance the pedestrian experience creating a pleasant atmosphere for what is expected to be a well-used passageway.

Maintenance access for surrounding Waverley Street businesses is provided in the pedestrian access alley. Concrete paving is used at the north end for durable access to the refuse storage room. Vines trained to grow on the façade visually soften the appearance of the parking structure.

PUBLIC ART

The public art installation will form an integral part of the building's fabric. Public art shall incorporate into and onto the perforated metal panel screens around the stair at the corner of Hamilton and Waverley and above the parking entrance on Hamilton Avenue.

GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM

The building will comply with the mandatory requirements of the 2016 Non Residential California Green Building Code (CALGREEN + TIER 2).

We look forward to our presentation and discussion with the Architectural Review Board.

Sincerely,

Ken Hayes, AIA
Principal

cc: Watry Design Group
enclosed: Arborist Report, June 2017