



CITY OF
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ALTO**

Architectural Review Board Staff Report

From: Planning and Development Services Director
Lead Department: Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date: May 16, 2024
Report #: 2405-2970

TITLE

Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for January 18, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Architectural Review Board (ARB) adopt the attached meeting minutes.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Minutes of January 18, 2024

AUTHOR/TITLE:

ARB Liaison¹ & Contact Information

Claire Raybould, AICP, Principal Planner

(650) 329-2116

Claire.Raybould@CityofPaloAlto.org

¹ Emails may be sent directly to the ARB using the following address: arb@CityofPaloAlto.org.



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES: January 18, 2024
Council Chamber & Zoom
8:30 AM

Call to Order / Roll Call

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in Council Chambers and virtual teleconference at 8:31 a.m.

Present: Chair Peter Baltay, Vice Chair Kendra Rosenberg, Boardmember Yingxi Chen, Boardmember David Hirsch, Boardmember Adcock

Absent: None

Oral Communications

Administrative Associate III Veronica Dao noted there was one card submitted for Oral Communications.

Senior Planner and ARB Liaison Claire Raybould noted she would be showing a presentation while Shani Kleinhaus provided public comment via Zoom.

Ms. Kleinhaus stated she is the environmental advocate for the Santa Clara Valley Audubon as well as a member of the Park and Recreation Commission (PRC), however, was speaking on behalf of the Audubon and would be giving a presentation on bus shelters and bird safety regarding the transparency of shelters. Using Google images, Ms. Kleinhaus gave a brief explanation on the different styles and designs of shelters available for use to alert birds of the enclosures. After a request from Stanford regarding who maintained the bus shelters, Standard stated it was the purview of the Architectural Review Board (ARB); they were able to retrofit existing bus shelters with visual cues and would implement any future new shelters built. Palo Alto is working on a new bird safety ordinance, Ms. Kleinhaus wanted to take the time to remind the ARB that the best solution to minimize the hazards is to not create the bus shelters at all.

Chair Baltay thanked Shani Kleinhaus and moved to the next Agenda item.

Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

Senior Planner and Architectural Review Board (ARB) Liaison Claire Raybould indicated there were no Agenda changes, additions, or deletions.

City Official Reports

1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, 2) Tentative Future Agenda items and 3) Recently Submitted Projects

Senior Planner Raybould noted the February 1st hearing would be cancelled; however, staff were still resolving what the expected items on the Agenda would be for the February 15th hearing; a new project application had been submitted at 833 Los Trancos Road for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), and with it being a new building, the open space requires a site and design review. Today's project is 1066 E. Meadow, and 3265 El Camino Real is a new project for 100% affordable multi-family specifically for teacher housing. A new SB 330 pre-application was submitted for 762 San Antonio Road for a hundred and ninety-eight multi-family residential units.

Chair Baltay suggested waiting before assigning an ad hoc committee for East Meadow until after the presentation. Chair Baltay assigned Vice Chair Rosenberg and Boardmember Hirsch as the 3265 El Camino Real housing project ad hoc committee and assigned Chair Baltay and Boardmember Chen to the SB 330 application on San Antonio as ad hoc committee.

Chair Baltay indicated he'd be looking for a status update from the ad hoc committee for 739 Suter, as it had been resubmitted.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould noted the resubmittal on 739 Suter and would send to Council a revised application which has made substantial revisions.

Chair Baltay inquired if the ad hoc committee on Objective Design Standards (ODS) relative to townhomes had an update on what the standards may be.

Chair Baltay clarified they were to have done research on townhomes and from a broad perspective what development ODS would be appropriate and useful, and then formalize the information into what those standards might look like.

Boardmember Hirsch commented that the Planning Director stated there was no intention of moving forward so they had stopped working on it.

Chair Baltay clarified that the Planning Director felt they did not have resources to hire a consultant, but if the ARB could produce something, they would look at it. Chair Baltay stated it would be a shame to waste the research that had already been completed, and requested they continue with the ad hoc committee for the item.

Chair Baltay moved on to the Study Session.

Study Session

2. 1066 E Meadow Circle [23PLN-00339]: Request for Preliminary Architectural Review to Consider the Deconstruction of an Existing 35,000 Square Foot Commercial Building, and Construction of a new 2-Story, 46,000 sf School Building. The Project Will Contain Classrooms, Administrative Offices, and a Multi-Purpose Room. Site Improvements Include Parking, a Play Area, and Rooftop Garden. Environmental Assessment: Not a Project. The Formal Application Will be Subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review. Zoning District: ROLM (Office Research and

Manufacturing). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Kallas at Emily.Kallas@CityofPaloAlto.org.

Chair Baltay introduced the item and called for staff's presentation.

Project Planner Kallas stated the proposed project included construction of a preschool through second grade campus, having twenty-six classrooms and three-multipurpose shared spaces, with a total of 46,000 square feet. The project will include three outdoor areas, with one on the second floor and one on the roof; the site plan includes queuing space for drop-off and pick-up areas and fifty-eight parking stalls. This project falls within the flood zone, so it includes grading a six-foot platform to elevate the building. The formal application will include major Architectural review and a conditional use permit for school use, as well as allow a rooftop garden, which requires a zoning text amendment to receive Council approval to allow a rooftop garden in this zoning district. Additional topics to consider for discussion are the overall site planning and architectural design, the circulation and parking, the height, grade and massing of the building and the play spaces in the rooftop garden. The site context along East Meadow Circle is bordered by Eichler Swim and Tennis Club to the rear, with single family residential neighborhoods off Lewis Road and Greer Road, and one-to-two story office spaces on the Circle itself. This property is zoned as Research Office and Light Manufacturing (ROLM). Ms. Kallas explained that the site plan includes a U-shaped building facing the parking lot, with a two-lane drop-off corridor, fifty-eight parking spaces, and a play yard that is built up at the platform level to allow grade separation from the parking area. An item to note was that due to it being an ROLM zoning site district, the 8,000 square feet area that will operate as a preschool is allowed as a floor area bonus and is not counted towards the floor area maximum allowance for the site, equivalent to 50%. Items to note on the Landscape Plans include a basketball court is proposed for the rooftop garden, the second floor terrace is primarily for seating, and the first floor play space is for the school. Ms. Kallas stated that upon discussion with the Planning Director, the six foot platform was considered a berm and the zoning maximum height of thirty-five feet would need to be measured from existing grade and not from the platform. The rooftop garden proposal as shown exceeds the maximum height, which would require a zoning text amendment as per the zoning code 18.04, grade is measured from the existing grade and excludes berms, planters, and similar therefore the proposed height is six feet taller than allowed. Ms. Kallas concluded her presentation and stated applicant Michelle Huber had a presentation as well.

Chair Baltay inquired if the Board had any questions for staff regarding the presentation.

Boardmember Hirsch questioned if the site, being on a flood plain, was allowed to be built if it had a waterproofing perimeter to it.

Ms. Kallas responded that Public Works requires the building to be one foot above the base flood elevation, so to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements and local regulations, it will need to be elevated. The question is not about how it is being raised, but how the maximum height of the building is being measured.

Vice Chair Rosenberg questioned if that applied to habitable spaces.

Ms. Raybould responded that for commercial versus residential you could have uninhabitable spaces such as parking, but it would involve a lot of waterproofing and would have to be one-foot above elevation and she believed the local base flood elevation is 10.5 for this area, so they would need to be at 11.5 for this project.

Boardmember Adcock inquired if the site was being measured by the existing grade.

Planner Kallas responded that the formal application requires a survey to be submitted with that information and it had not yet been submitted.

Chair Baltay stated he had visited the site previously and it was flat and within a foot.

Boardmember Adcock inquired whether the zoning amendment for the rooftop garden was for the height or the use of the roof.

Planner Kallas stated she believed it may be for both, but in this context, there were height limitations to rooftop gardens within one hundred and fifty feet of residential and are typically only allowed in downtown or certain housing project areas. The height exception is limited to those areas but in general overall use is also something for staff to consider.

Boardmember Chen asked for more information regarding the daycare floor area calculations and questioned if the 50% bonus and if it included a portion of the shared spaces such as the corridor and classrooms.

Planner Kallas responded that the zoning code is what allows the bonus area, but the calculations provided were still preliminary and staff would be looking into more details in the formal application for the exact breakdown.

Boardmember Chen questioned whether the calculations would include the shared spaces or only the preschool classrooms. Planner Kallas answered that the calculations included the areas exclusively for the preschool which may include some portion of the shared spaces, just not all of it if it's shared with higher grades.

Boardmember Chen inquired about the irregular shape on the site plan, and asked where the rear and sides were.

Planner Kallas stated in general the rear setback is the one furthest and most parallel to the street but did not have a good answer at this moment due to the ROLM zoning district having twenty-foot setbacks for both interior and rear sides.

Senior Planner Raybould showed a close-up of the site plan from the top view.

Planner Kallas stated with the setbacks being the same on all sides it would likely be the street location to the rear and questioned if something in particular was affected.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould answered it would be twenty feet whether interior or otherwise.

Boardmember Chen commented there had been no daylight plane requirement at this location.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould responded that was correct.

Chair Baltay asked for background information regarding the site no longer being listed as a housing element opportunity site as stated in a letter to Council.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould responded her understanding from Housing and Community Department (HCD) comments, Staff was questioned on sites selected for the adopted housing element and were asked for assurance on certain sites becoming housing and/or choosing sites that would have a higher probability in becoming housing. In response to HCD, changes have been proposed for the housing element. This site has been marked as one to be removed and there are other sites that will be added to meet Palo Alto's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirements. Council has not yet adopted those changes, so the site has to be treated as an opportunity site that has already been adopted.

Chair Baltay inquired if the site is currently listed as a potential housing site in the housing element, would that force a development proposal other than housing.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould explained that just because it is a housing element site it does not force exclusive residential uses, but the City and Staff would have to evaluate how to meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) without the units being proposed. There are 10% buffers built in which allows flexibility within the housing element inventory sites.

Chair Baltay clarified that listing the site as a housing element site does not give it the force of zoning law that it must do that.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould responded that was correct.

Boardmember Chen inquired about the parking requirements only being for teachers and if there were short-term parking areas for parents to pick up and drop off, per the zoning code.

Planner Kallas responded not per the zoning code as listed on the cover sheet of project plans, and is based on teacher staffing, however, as part of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application for private schools a circulation study is required based on expected enrollment and staff would decide if additional parking would be needed.

Chair Baltay called for the applicants presentation and thanked them for their patience.

Applicant Barbara Greiner stated she was the Head of School for Silicon Valley International and gave a brief description of what the school pertains and programs they offer. Two campuses were created in Palo Alto in 1979, one site was leased, and it ended in 2021 and relocated to Menlo Park. In 2022 they purchased East Meadow Circle property with the goal of bringing back two campuses in Palo Alto and incorporating the younger students. Twenty percent of their families are Palo Alto City residents and if closer, it would increase the preschool enrollment. Ms. Greiner explained they opened communication with the neighborhood early in this process regarding the upcoming hearing and have received positive feedback.

Architect Michelle Huber from Studio Bondy Architecture hoped to get feedback regarding elements discussed by Planner Kallas such as building height, outdoor spaces, play areas and the rooftop garden. Ms. Huber showed an outline of the proposed footprint on the existing site and stated that the outlines in red were superimposed over the existing building, and images that showed the neighboring areas of

the site were also included. The proposed site plan showed the integrated landscape design with the design intent which was designed to support the school's programs and missions while respecting the privacy of the neighborhood. Ms. Huber stated that the solution was to rotate the building to act as an acoustic and visual buffer for the large preschool play yard in the center of the Campus. California dictates the minimum size allowed for the outdoor spaces and with 160 students, the minimum allowed is 12,000 square feet. The rooftop area play yard supports that requirement as the rest of the site has been filled with elements for the older students and a parking lot. The applicant stated that the goal in the preliminary traffic circulation study was to design a drive aisle long enough to allow as many vehicles as possible in the pick-up and drop off zone, as well as two one-way lanes through the site. The site elevation has a two-foot grade change from East Meadow Circle to the back of the parcel. Due to FEMA flood zoning requirements, the key challenge on flood elevations resulted in raising the first floor one foot above base flood elevation, which made the grade roughly six feet. The applicant showed an early concept of a rooftop garden appropriate for first and second graders including a half-court basketball court, a small play structure and one third of the garden area having raised planter beds for the school's Gardening program. They wanted to study this view as it was the same as the residential neighbors and with respect to their privacy, the rooftop garden was not visible from that angle. Ms. Huber gave a brief description of the design intent and stated that it would be a straight board building with modern aesthetics, a recessed entry to provide interest to the front façade, and an integrated raised elevation.

Chair Baltay called for Public Comment prior to the Boards questions for the applicant.

PUBLIC COMMENT Kelly Tuke, manager of the Eichler Swim and Tennis Club, stated the Eichler Board and its members were concerned the large building would change the dynamic of their club due to the construction and current site plans, as it neighbors their tennis courts.

Helen Piekos, Head of Special Project at the Eichler Swim and Tennis Club, expressed concerns of the elevation and exterior rooftop garden being an issue on privacy and tranquility for their members, commenting she would be following up on the future hearings.

Chair Baltay closed public comments and brought the item back to the Board for questions.

Boardmember Hirsch asked for a description of how the buses will pick-up and drop-off in the circulation of the lot, and questioned what the plans were for private vehicle pickups and deliveries.

Ms. Grenier responded the current site is designed to allow a drop-off zone for parents and buses of kindergarten to second grade, with parking for parents of preschoolers and prekindergartners to bring into the building.

Ms. Kallas clarified that the E on the site plan is the designated drop off.

Ms. Grenier stated that their current campuses have three drop off times for different grade levels, with about a fifteen-minute spacing.

Boardmember Hirsch inquired if there were assigned teacher parking or if there was a circulation in the cul-de-sac of the site being a method of getting a parking spot.

Ms. Grenier referred to the Menlo Park Campus and stated there were assigned parking for parents and teachers and are looking at doing that design on this site.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if they would be using the street circle in any way for parking or other uses that could impact the major entry point.

Ms. Grenier responded yes as schools have deliveries throughout the day.

Planner Kallas added that it would be a one-way drive aisle with two driveways, the one farthest to the right being the entrance and the one closer to the parking spaces being the exit.

Boardmember Adcock requested more information on how the bus circulation would impact the parents waiting to drop off and pick up.

Ms. Grenier stated they intended to have buses parked in an area that would not block parents.

Boardmember Adcock commented that spot E showed to be blocking the area on the site plan.

Ms. Grenier replied they would need to designate a different area for parent drop-offs.

Boardmember Chen questioned how many kindergarten through second grade students would be attending.

Ms. Grenier responded there were about eighteen to twenty students in each grade.

Vice Chair Rosenberg commented that it would be about two hundred and forty students for kindergarten through second grade.

Boardmember Hirsch referred to the C on the site plan and questioned whether there should be more sidewalks along the pick-up and drop-off location, commenting on the trees and plantings that could be used for paving.

Ms. Grenier responded they would certainly look into it.

Vice Chair Rosenberg stated that her concerns were regarding the six-foot tall wall and what the height would be at the entry area.

Ms. Huber commented that the grade was lower so this area would be slightly lower.

Vice Chair Rosenberg asked if it was correct there were no sidewalks near the drive aisle, and if the aisle was directly next to a sheer six-foot tall retaining wall.

Ms. Huber answered that was correct and added that at the elevated grade there was a walkway that was part of the egress.

Vice Chair Rosenberg questioned if the outer perimeter adjacent to the drive aisle was at a lower grade.

Ms. Huber responded that would all be at grade.

Vice Chair Rosenberg asked for clarification as to how many parking spaces were required for teachers.

Ms. Huber stated the calculation is for fifty-eight spaces, which is what they are providing.

Vice Chair Rosenberg clarified that they were providing fifty-eight spaces for teachers and staff but were still expecting parents to park and drop off preschoolers.

Ms. Huber responded that the calculation is described by measuring against teacher stations, and that was the minimum required and the maximum allowed on the site while trying to accommodate the program.

Ms. Grenier commented that staggering drop-off times helps and makes circulation easier.

Vice Chair Rosenberg inquired if they considered a longer aisle which would mitigate the need for parents to park.

Ms. Grenier answered that parents are required to sign them into the classrooms.

Vice Chair Rosenberg asked if they had considered an underground parking structure beneath the building since it was already being raised six feet.

Ms. Huber responded it is prohibitively expensive and although not a significant grade to excavate, they must design it in a way vehicles can clear height minimums; in doing so it takes away from the play area perimeter and compromises needs within the program and noted that being in the flood zone there would need to be a more robust engineering design requirement.

Chair Baltay questioned how a second grader getting dropped off at site E would get into the building and which door they would enter.

Ms. Grenier stated they have multiple entrances, but depending on grade they would have teacher assistance getting to their classrooms.

Chair Baltay asked if they intended students to come down the hallway of classrooms and if they would still be able to cross the play yard during inclement weather, noting the reception area was the entrance to the front door of the school.

Ms. Huber commented that the reception area of East Meadow Circle has a secondary entrance that runs along the multi-purpose room the students could use, which leads students directly to the hallway leading to classrooms.

Chair Baltay inquired why they oriented the courtyard to the north.

Ms. Huber responded it was an area with seven property lines and odd shaped spaces, but they were able to design an efficient u-shaped building protecting the preschool play yard on three sides, and when facing north it was the best orientation for the size and allowed the building to be a buffer to the southern neighbors.

Chair Baltay asked if they were buffering from industrial neighbors, not residential.

Ms. Huber answered the southern wing of the building is the property line adjacent to the residential zone.

Boardmember Adcock inquired if they had considered the garage being under the Preschool play yard using the entire plinth, as adding it had the potential to solve neighbor concerns on the rooftop garden

and it was plausible to get the fifty-eight parking spaces to fit underground, which would allow the teacher parking to be used for the upper and it would alleviate the thirty-five plus six plus ten issue. Boardmember Adcock mentioned they should take this into consideration as the parking did not need to be taller since it was already six feet above grade.

Ms. Huber responded they will look into it while they further their study. The thirty-five plus ten plus six was slightly less due to the fence line being measured from the top of the roof, subtracting a few feet.

Boardmember Chen asked if there were any controlled points of security around the building other than just the gate.

Ms. Huber responded there would be a perimeter fence around the building with both pedestrian and vehicular entrances, but the main security checkpoint would be at the reception area which would have views of the two entry points.

Boardmember Chen inquired about the entry stairwells and if they would be included in the security perimeter.

Ms. Huber stated they are outside the perimeter fence so it would give public access to the entry doors from the main entrance.

Boardmember Chen asked if they had any thoughts on the floor assembly and what the sitting height was for the classrooms.

Ms. Huber answered the preliminary design on the floor assembly would be a steel frame structure with flange beams and a concrete filled metal pan deck for the flooring, and the standard when designing schools is a basis of fifteen feet for the mechanical systems, plumbing and drop ceiling are usually three to four feet which makes the ceiling height a range of eleven to twelve feet.

Vice Chair Rosenberg questioned if the multi-purpose room was considered a double height structure.

Ms. Huber responded it would be, maybe a little lower.

Chair Baltay asked if they had done classrooms with lower ceiling heights, and if so, what have they reduced it to in the past.

Ms. Huber answered when starting from scratch they typically stay to the height limits stated before, maybe dropping a foot lower but when doing so it gives a feeling of being less open.

Chair Baltay inquired about the three-dimensional space within the classrooms.

Ms. Huber stated that the preschool classrooms are a bit larger, but the other classrooms are in the general range of 750 to 850 square feet, with the width being twenty-seven feet and length roughly being thirty-five feet.

Boardmember Hirsch questioned would it be assumed that there would be hung ceilings in classrooms and stated there was nothing indicated in the schematics phase regarding the mechanicals.

Ms. Huber responded that was correct.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if it would be possible to move parking underground to eliminate the conflict of the play yard area, allowing more room for the playground in the cul-de-sac itself referring to the section named A.

Ms. Huber commented to be efficient in underground parking, the real estate required had the potential of not getting the appropriate number of spaces for the cost trade-off.

Boardmember Hirsch noted that the residential neighborhood was behind the rooftop play area and the soundproofing would be mitigated if they considered moving the play yard to other available areas.

Ms. Huber commented that the only time the play grounds would be used would be during the daytime hours and only at set times, and with the wall surrounding the play area it did help with the visual disturbance.

Chair Baltay asked if the property had a historic designation.

Planner Kallas responded it was not formally designated but was recognized as an original Eichler structure so if evaluated it would likely be eligible.

Chair Baltay inquired if they would be doing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on this project and if one would be done for the impact on what could potentially be a historic structure.

Planner Kallas responded it is typically limited to structures on the site itself, not to adjacent structures on a development proposal.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould clarified she did not know if they had made a determination on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis but there will be an environmental analysis.

Chair Baltay asked if there was any contextual compatibility requirement in this zoning district.

Planner Kallas responded yes; the contact space design criteria would be applicable.

Vice Chair Rosenberg questioned if the primary means of access, ingress/egress, to the rooftop terrace were the staircases.

Ms. Huber answered there were two means of egress, one being an interior stair, and first and second graders would be using one flight of stairs to the rooftop from the classrooms.

Vice Chair Rosenberg inquired if there was an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility via the elevator.

Ms. Huber responded yes.

Boardmember Adcock asked if the stair on the right behind the corner hub fell on the drive aisle.

Ms. Huber answered the stairs fall onto a plinth height walkway that runs along the east side of the building to the front, and then leads to a ramp to get to East Meadow.

Boardmember Adcock asked if that would require rated windows along the side of the building.

Ms. Huber responded they had yet to meet the City Building Department to confirm, but they would comply if necessary.

Boardmember Adcock commented that if they were able to come down to the drive aisle and go to the street, the path of egress travel along the building would require the classrooms and offices to require one out-rated window and adding a walkway along the drive aisle would alleviate some of the issues.

Ms. Huber said that was something they would look at and would help to extend the stairs.

Boardmember Adcock added that it should be considered how the visibility safety of the edge on site plan E would affect the students and parents at drop-off.

Ms. Huber said they can have good design development, but it would be a combination with the teacher elements to assist on early or late drop offs.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the main enclosed stairwell leading to the rooftop was a fire escape stairwell and if it would be better if it were not egress.

Ms. Huber answered they would love to open that stairwell, but were limited due to communication between two floors, and in doing so it would eliminate the fire stair which is required.

Boardmember Chen inquired where the students ate meals.

Ms. Grenier answered the first and second graders eat outside on the rooftop playground and the preschoolers in the main play area, unless inclement weather, then they would eat in the classrooms.

Chair Baltay moved item to ARB Comments.

Chair Baltay commented that he did not feel the height limit was being met by compressing the floor assembly from the four feet to two feet, and supported planning departments Directors' decision on the exemption not working in this case. He referenced the site plan image looking at the street elevations, saying the plinth is a constructed element of the building, and the existing grade should start where the road is and it will need to meet those requirements, which would in turn change everything in the parti. Chair Baltay stated that if the playground were moved from the rooftop to the ground and parking was underground, the cost trade-off would allow the expenses to be lowered in other areas of construction; and noted an additional concern of the daylight plane of the rooftop and the stairwell leading up to the roof not being sufficient for the students. Changing the parking plans to underground parking would fix many of these things. Additionally, the massing of the building was boxy and too tall. Chair Baltay expressed concern that the plans needed more articulation and detailing of the variation of the finish materials as they did not match Palo Alto's quality of design, but these are all things that can be reconsidered and he believed they could get there however, they would need to meet the height limits. He commended their efforts in communicating with the community and their concern for potential impacts on the neighbors.

Boardmember Adcock stated that the parking is dictating the orientation of the building and if they made that change with the play area on ground level with protective fencing, they would get a better response from the neighborhood, and it would also help the noise mitigation.

Boardmember Hirsch commented that the plan and circulation had not been considered enough for the different daylight changes throughout the day, and he liked the idea of the playground on the roof and but also like the idea of the playground in the courtyard as the building could serve as a protection barrier , but they would need to study the daylight effects on the building massing more to prove it would be a useful courtyard throughout the year. He noted that the entry ways into the building seemed too far and the way the circulation worked did not seem to be the best for the students during drop off; putting some of the circulation on the building is costly, but not an unreasonable idea as previously suggested. Boardmember Hirsch stated the ARB would be asking about fence detailing and requirements, and they should research other school fencing projects to help with the design issues and there needed to be a better way than using Exterior insulation and finish system (EIFS) on this type of construction. There could be better textures and colors used in the design to add to the excitement of the building itself. If the play area isn't on the roof, then the fire stairs are fine. He expressed concern for the City's requirement on podium construction cutting two thousand square feet of potential space and if the bottom of the building could be waterproofed as is, then it could be done to the parking garage, and they could make better use of the space.

Chair Baltay asked for clarification on what he meant on the two thousand square feet.

Boardmember Hirsch responded the floor area ratio (FAR) was much larger than what they were using and could be used in the Podium area.

Chair Baltay asked staff to clarify who made the requirement.

Senior Planner Raybould responded it was a federal requirement from FEMA.

Planner Kallas commented technically speaking the flood zone is a FEMA requirement, and the additional one foot above may be a local requirement.

Boardmember Chen stated that she agreed with the concerns of the drop off and circulation and suggested adding short-term parking for parents and a south facing outdoor playground is important and suggested reconsidering the building orientation. A suggestion might be to have the connected area facing the street, this would allow for two driveways on each side connecting to the back parking. She noted that the reception was being under used as the majority of students would not enter through the reception area. The ceiling height on this particular building could be lower since it was a school for younger students. The agreed with her colleagues about the materials and colors need to be higher quality and the exterior elevations should be scaled to the children.

Vice Chair Rosenberg appreciated the presentation and how difficult the project is and commented that the perimeter drive aisle was a good idea but suggested extending the drop off area. There is an appendix area to the side which was prohibiting the design, and it should be designated as the surface parking to allow focus on the pentagon area in the middle to figure out the best orientation for this site. She said the surface parking was taking too much space and the rooftop garden would not be successful in this situation. The large building next the south facing neighborhood could be imposing and could be the play area and noted that she appreciated the thoughtfulness of the neighbors and respect to surrounding buildings by keeping it within the 20-foot setbacks. They should consider a partial or full basement parking for staff specifically to help with drop off circulation. Vice Chair Rosenberg brought up the six foot

perimeter wall being problematic due to believing there needed to be a forty-two inch high fence setting on top to prevent falls and felt more options should be explored she agreed on the Board's concern with the reception area, the materials, trash service, delivery loading and unloading, and bicycle circulation regulations. The Board will need further information about the mechanical equipment location.

Chair Baltay asked the applicants if they had any questions.

Mindie Romanowsky introduced herself as the Assisting Silicon Valley International School with land use and inquired about the process moving forward if they made changes that were as a result of the ARB's feedback.

Senior Planner Raybould responded there was nothing precluding them from having another preliminary review for early feedback, usually projects take the ARB's comments and work with staff to find a reasonable medium.

Chair Baltay commented that an ad hoc committee could be formed to help facilitate the ARB's feedback and suggested that the applicants could reach out to the committee in an effort to avoid having to return for another preliminary review.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould believed there is an option for creating an ad-hoc to communicate with the applicants, but she would need to confirm the process so to remain in compliance with the Brown Act.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould clarified there are no resubmittals for preliminaries and once the Study Session is over the preliminary review is closed. If they chose to file a new preliminary before a formal application, the fees would need to be paid and they would allow a full Board Study Session, as part of that they could do the ad hoc but they would need to think of what the ad hoc's role would be prior to filing a formal application once the fee and process details have been worked out.

Chair Baltay commented that the reasoning for the ad hoc committee was to have two members focused on this project once made a formal project.

Senior Planner Claire Raybould suggested they take this discussion offline and talk with the Chair and management on the issue so when they come to the next hearing, they could have a better understanding of how this would work.

Ms. Romanosky stated they would be open to an ad hoc committee and would pay for the staff's time but needed to discuss amongst themselves whether they would be able to move forward from the feedback heard. If not, they would not reach out for ad hoc due to some of the concerns raised rendering the project infeasible, commenting that if there were some collaborative issues worked into the formal application to save money on another preliminary hearing, it would make the most sense.

Chair Baltay said he would hold off on appointing an ad hoc committee for a few days wanting to consult with the Vice Chair and Staff but will make an appointment of two members within the week, and very much appreciated the programs of the school.

Vice Chair Rosenberg commented that they really hoped the project would return and that the preliminary review was not a discouragement, but rather a motivation.

Boardmember Hirsch agreed it would be a shame to lose the project.

Approval of Minutes

6. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for November 2, 2023.

Chair Baltay asked for comments or a motion.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rosenberg moved, seconded by Boardmember Chen, to approve the meeting minutes for November 2, 2023 as written.

Chair Baltay offered a friendly amendment for a correction on the 11th page, packet page 36, 6 paragraph down, move forward inhibited should have been move forward uninhibited.

Vice Chair Rosenberg and Boardmember Chen agreed to the Friendly Amendment.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Boardmember Questions, Comments or Announcements

None

Adjournment

Chair Baltay adjourned the meeting at 10:41 a.m.