



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: DECEMBER 14, 2021

TO: DESIGN COMMISSION

FROM: DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR FINAL DESIGN REVIEW
NEW CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR-STORY, 20,962-SQUARE-FOOT MIXED-USE BUILDING WITH 4,840 SQUARE FEET OF COMMERCIAL SPACE AND 18 RESIDENTIAL UNITS
85 W. GREEN STREET

RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends that the Commission:

Environmental Determination

Find that the application for Final Design Review was subject to environmental review in the Categorical Exemption adopted by the Hearing Officer for Minor Conditional Use Permit #6647 on September 13, 2018, and that there are no changed circumstances or new information which would require further environmental review.

Findings for Compliance with the Tree Protection Ordinance

Acknowledge that the Design Commission approved with conditions the after-the-fact removal of two protected trees in conjunction with the approval of Concept Design Review on March 28, 2017 and that this application is consistent with the previous approval.

Findings for Final Design Approval

1. Find that the project, upon implementation of the conditions of Final Design Review approval, will comply with the conditions of Major Changes to an Approved Project;
2. Find that the project, upon implementation of the conditions of Final Design Review approval, will be consistent with the purposes of design review, the design-related goals and policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan; the Design Guidelines in the Central District Plan and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; and,

3. Based on these findings, approve the application for Final Design Review subject to the following conditions, which shall be subject to staff review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit:

Conditions:

1. The two separate balconies serving unit 2 shall be combined into a single balcony.
2. All mechanical vents shall be routed through the roof if feasible. Any required through-the-wall vents shall be located on secondary elevations not facing Green Street or De Lacey Avenue, to the extent possible. Any vents that are required to be placed on the Green Street or De Lacey Avenue facades shall be placed in the most discreet locations possible and shall not be placed on pilasters.
3. All materials and color transitions shall occur at inside corners, including at recessed storefront bays. In particular, the dark limestone framing storefront openings at the corner volumes shall be eliminated and only the lighter color limestone shall be used in these areas.
4. Provide a cap/sill or bullnose edge detail at the tile bulkheads.
5. Window muntins shall be either true-divided lights or exterior dimensional muntins and shall not be false, between-the-glass muntins.
6. Awnings shall not be wider than the openings to which they are connected and shall be lowered to adjoin the top of the openings as closely as possible to ensure window operability. Provide details of awning framing and attachment to the building, as well as specifications of awning fabric.
7. Provide landscape and hardscape plans for the two common courtyard spaces (third floor and roof deck). The courtyards shall be designed as usable spaces with amenities for the building residents such as outdoor cooking and eating space, gathering and seating space, water and/or fire features, or other similar facilities.
8. Pursuant to PMC §8.52.075.C, prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall pay an alternative replacement fee instead of planting 50% of the required number of replacement trees. The amount of the fee shall be \$3,850.00.
9. The project shall comply with all applicable Code requirements prior to issuance of a building permit, unless deviation is authorized by a Zoning entitlement.
10. A separate application for design review shall be required for any new signage proposed in conjunction with this project.
11. Comply with the conditions provided by the Departments of Public Works and Transportation listed in Attachment A, to the satisfaction of said departments.

12. The project shall comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and any changes to the proposed landscape design that may be required shall be reviewed and approved by staff prior to issuance of a building permit.
13. A copy of this decision letter, including written responses to each condition indicating how and where they are addressed, shall be included in the plans submitted for building permit plan check.
14. The lighting temperature specified on the final plans shall not rise above 3,000 kelvin for all proposed exterior fixtures. Replacement lighting elements should be regulated by maintenance staff in the future.
15. An 8' x 8' minimum mock-up panel of the building finishes shall be provided and reviewed by staff prior to construction and installation.
16. Prior to issuance of a building permit, submit to staff written confirmation from utility providers (Pasadena Water & Power and The Gas Company) that the utility equipment shown on the plans are sufficient to meet the demands of the project and that the locations shown in the plans are approved.
17. This project will be subject to 50%, 75%, and 100% inspection points and sign-off by staff of the Design & Historic Preservation section to ensure that the project is constructed as indicated and specified in the decision letter and that all work is performed consistent with the approved plans.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The application presents design revisions in response to the conditions of approval from the previous Concept Design Review (Major Changes on an Approved Project) phase in addition to providing more detailed plans, elevations, sections and color and material information for the project. The current drawings are more fully detailed and present a palette of materials that is consistent with the design of the building. Upon reviewing the drawings in detail, staff recommends approval of the application with the conditions of approval outlined above and explained within this report.

BACKGROUND:

On June 8, 2021, the Design Commission approved an application for Major Changes to an Approved Project for construction of a four-story, 20,962-square-foot mixed-use building with 4,840 square feet of commercial space and 18 residential units. This application is for Final Design Review of the same project.

Project Overview

- General Plan Designation: Medium Mixed Use (0.0 – 2.25 FAR)
- Zoning District: CD-1 AD-1 (Central District Specific Plan, Alcohol Overlay District)

- Design Guidelines:
 - Design-related Goals and Policies of the General Plan Land Use Element
 - Design Guidelines in the Central District Specific Plan
 - Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

- Site: The 8,534 sq. ft. site is located at the northwest corner of West Green Street and South De Lacey Avenue, and is located within the Old Pasadena Historic District (non-contributing property) and the Central District Specific Plan area. The north side of the site fronts on Martin Alley. The site is a rectangular-shaped corner parcel of land, with street frontage of approximately 80 feet along West Green Street and 100 feet along South De Lacey Avenue. The site was formerly occupied by a gas station and was redeveloped in 1994 with the Twin Palms Restaurant, which consisted of two semi-enclosed structures and a large canopy, designed to accommodate a large outdoor dining area. These structures have since been removed. The site continues to be surrounded by a stucco wall with openings.

- Surroundings: The site is surrounded by commercial and mixed-use buildings ranging between one and three stories in height. There is also a church at 80 West Dayton Street to the south. The project site is non-contributing to the Old Pasadena Historic District; however it is immediately adjacent to two contributing structures (101 and 111 West Green Street) and the surrounding context is historically and architecturally sensitive.

- Project Description: The project consists of the new construction of a four-story, mixed-use project with a total of 4,840 square feet of ground-floor commercial space and 18 residential units. Two existing buildings on the site that are non-contributing to the Old Pasadena Historic District have been partially demolished after receiving approval of an application for Relief from the Replacement Building Permit Requirement and two protected trees were previously approved for removal after-the-fact. No parking is proposed on-site; parking credits and an off-site lease agreement have been determined to satisfy the project's parking requirement.

- Site Design: The proposed site design consists of a four-story building with no setback from the west property line where it adjoins an existing building on the neighboring property. The building has minimal setbacks from the north and south property lines and at the extreme north and south ends of the east elevation, primarily at ground-floor recessed entries. The central portion of the east elevation is set back approximately 12'6" from the property line. A two-story recessed niche at the rear northwest corner of the site provides space for an electrical transformer. No on-site parking or loading areas are proposed.

- Architectural Style: Main Street Commercial

- Developer: Sunshine Management Group, LLC

- Architect/Landscape Architect: Alen Malekian, AIA

ANALYSIS:

Conditions of Major Changes to an Approved Project:

Below are the Commission’s conditions of approval and recommendation from its previous approval of Major Changes to an Approved Project, as well as the architect’s responses and staff’s comments. See Attachment A for the full responses and diagrams and Attachment B for the complete set of revised plans, elevations, wall sections, architectural details and materials specifications and imagery.

Major Changes to an Approved Project Conditions, June 8, 2021:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
<p>1. The project shall comply with all applicable Code requirements prior to issuance of a building permit, unless deviation is authorized by a Zoning entitlement. The review process for the Zoning entitlements required for the project shall be completed prior to the Design Commission’s review of an application for Final Design Review.</p>	<p>No architect response required.</p>	<p><i>Condition to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>The staff of the Current Planning Section has reviewed the Final Design Review plans and determined that they comply with the Zoning Code and approved Minor Conditional Use Permit for the project. To reinforce this requirement, staff recommends that this condition be retained in this decision.</p>
<p>2. Pursuant to PMC §8.52.075.C, prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall pay an alternative replacement fee instead of planting 50% of the required number of replacement trees. The amount of the fee shall be verified by staff and shall include \$3,850.00, which is documented in a letter dated February 22, 2019 from William R. McKinley, Consulting Arborist (Attachment B) as being 100% of the appraised value of the tree that cannot be replaced.</p>	<p>No architect response required.</p>	<p><i>Condition to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>At this time, the required alternative replacement fee has not been paid; therefore, staff recommends that this condition be retained in this decision to ensure it is paid prior to issuance of a building permit for the project.</p>

Major Changes to an Approved Project Conditions, June 8, 2021:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
<p>3. Provide for review references/inspiration images to support and demonstrate the architectural language proposed for the building.</p>	<p>No written response; see Attachment A for inspiration imagery provided.</p>	<p><i>Condition satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The applicant has provided the requested imagery for the Commission’s consideration.</p>
<p>4. Further study the integration of the fourth floor into the overall design of the building along the east side (De Lacey Avenue). One option would be to push the fourth floor volume further back from the edge of the building so that it would no longer be visible from the street level, although the applicant may present other options.</p>	<p>“One of the main features of the residences is having a common courtyard on the third floor which also helps in satisfying the city’s height averaging calculations. Pushing the fourth level volume back without making the courtyard narrower will affect circulation and exiting towards the 2 ends of the building where the stairwells are located.</p> <p>The fourth level volume will also not be visible from the adjacent sidewalk to even the centerline of De Lacey Avenue since it’s already pushed back 10’- 8” away from the lower floor façade and 23 feet away from sidewalk. See images [in Attachment A].”</p>	<p><i>Condition satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>While the applicant has not modified the design of the fourth floor, they have provided perspective renderings that demonstrate that the fourth floor will not be visible from the public right-of-way due to the setback of the main building along De Lacey Avenue and the further fourth floor setbacks from the main building volume. Staff finds that these images satisfactorily demonstrate the limited visibility of this floor to the public.</p>
<p>5. Further study measures to differentiate the balcony and canopy treatments at the third floor along Green Street from those at the second floor, in order to create visual continuity of a two-story element at this location.</p>	<p>“Two studies were made for the façade along Green Street. Fig.4. (Façade study A) shows the second floor without the fabric canopies. This is consistent with De Lacey Ave. being that the fabric canopies only happen on the third level, but this approach renders all the units unprotected against the southern sun. Fig.5. (Façade study B) shows no fabric awning on second level and canopies on third floor.</p> <p>Both 2nd and 3rd level balcony and canopy treatments are consistent with the whole building and we feel that the stepping alone helps create a differentiation between the 2 floors. The consistent approach on the balconies and the canopies helps tie the 2 floors together even if they are not on the same plane. See image [in Attachment A].”</p>	<p><i>Condition satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The applicant has conducted studies to address this condition of approval and determined that the original proposed design is their preferred design. As described further in the response to condition 6, below, the balconies have been differentiated where they serve the same residential unit. Staff finds that the applicant’s proposed approach is appropriate and maintains differentiation of shading devices between the main facades and the corner volumes.</p>

<p>6. Study the size, number and location of balconies in relation to the total design, as well as the number of accessories such as lighting fixtures and mechanical vents.</p>	<p>“The balconies that are serving the same unit will be combined to create visual interests and variations instead of creating vertical separation between pilasters. Lighting and vents are minimized on the upper floors per CDR conditions. See image [in Attachment A].”</p>	<p><i>Condition to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>Along De Lacey Avenue, balconies that were previously separate but were serving the same room in the same unit have been combined, which has created greater variety on the exterior of the building and relates better to the interior program. However, along Green Street, the two central balconies at the second floor both serve studio unit 2 and, to ensure that the balcony design logic is carried through in the design, these separate balconies should also be combined into one. Staff has recommended a condition to this effect. Although there are also multiple balconies serving the same units on the north elevation, these balconies are very shallow and the space between them would not be usable; therefore, staff does not recommend combining these balconies. Finally, the number of mechanical vents shown on the elevations has been reduced. However, staff recommends a condition requiring further study of the venting in an effort to eliminate or further reduce the number of them along the street facades, including exploration of venting to the roof rather than the exterior walls (particularly in light of the location of bathrooms and kitchens within the interior of the building) and, if venting to exterior street facades is required, locating them in the most discreet</p>
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Major Changes to an Approved Project Conditions, June 8, 2021:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
		locations possible and avoiding placing them on pilasters.
7. Study the possibility of lowering the floor of the courtyard space along De Lacey Avenue to align with the floor level of the restaurant spaces adjoining it, possibly creating a low wall separating the courtyard from the street to further define the space and ensure its usability for outdoor dining.	"The entry courtyard along De Lacey Avenue will be leveled and a low wall will be provided to separate the grade change between the sidewalk and the said courtyard."	<i>Condition satisfactorily addressed.</i> The applicant has studied and implemented this design for the courtyard space along De Lacey Avenue.

Materials & Colors:

The building’s exterior materials will consist of: a precast stone base by Advance Architectural Stone in two colors (light beige limestone at the building corners along Green Street and De Lacey Avenue, brown limestone on the wall areas between the corner volumes and framing storefronts at the corner volumes) and, smooth stucco coating with elastomeric paint (“Swiss Coffee” by Dunn Edwards) on the upper floors. The stone base is proposed to be at the first floor only, except for a two-story base proposed at the building lobby entry at the west end of the south elevation. All cornices are also proposed to be in the stone material and engaged pilasters are proposed to be furred out from the wall and coated in plaster, with those outside of tower elements having an EIFS base and cap detail. Balcony bases are proposed to be coated in stucco in a dark grey color (Dunn Edwards “Black Bean”). All storefront openings are also proposed to have a metal-clad header matching the window framing and a tile bulkhead. All windows and storefronts are proposed to be black-anodized aluminum by Arcadia. Flat window canopies at the corner volumes are proposed to be metal-clad with metal “C-channel” ends. Simple metal-picket railings are proposed at the balconies. Details and specifications for the proposed fabric awnings have not been provided.

A range of wall sections and details has been provided to demonstrate the level of articulation of the facades, which is generally consistent with the character of surrounding buildings. Cornices are shown projecting between four and six inches from the façade planes and pilasters include multiple articulations totaling eight inches in depth, with bases and caps, where included, projecting an additional two inches. Windows and doors are shown recessed from the wall plane, between two and four inches. The materials proposed are high quality and compatible with the surrounding historic context.

Overall, the design is consistent with the design presented during the previous review of Major Changes to an Approved Project, with changes to address the conditions of that approval and to better align with the inspiration images provided. In particular, the removal of the dark panels between window openings on the corner volumes is an improvement. With respect to materiality and detailing, staff recommends several conditions of approval to ensure adequate

documentation of the design for construction and to refine portions of the design. In particular, staff is concerned that the proposed dark limestone surrounding the storefront openings at the corner volumes, which transitions in the same wall plane as the lighter color limestone of the adjoining field area, will have a thin appearance and recommends a condition requiring only the lighter color to be utilized in this area. Further, staff recommends a condition requiring all materials transitions to occur at inside corners, which will ensure that the limestone cladding wraps into the recessed storefront bays. Staff also recommends conditions requiring inclusion of a cap or bullnose edge detail at the tile bulkheads, use of dimensional window muntins and, to ensure consistency with the City's Awning Guidelines, that awnings not be wider than their associated openings and be mounted as close to the opening headers as possible while retaining door and window operability. Provision of additional details and specifications of the awnings is also recommended as a condition of approval.

Mechanical Screening:

The fourth floor plan on sheet A2.3 depicts placement of mechanical systems on the roof of the building at the northwest and southwest corners. The southwest corner location adjoins a common deck area and the mechanical units are screened from the common area. Similarly, the third floor plan shows a screened mechanical area adjoining the courtyard on that floor. In addition, the ground floor plan shows service areas and utility spaces along the alley at the north side of the building, including an electrical room, an electrical meter room, a gas meter room, a trash/recycle room and an electrical transformer area. A Fire Department Connection location is not provided. A standard condition of approval is recommended to require confirmation of utility locations by the utility providers to ensure that the locations shown are approved and that they are adequately screened as much as possible from public view.

As previously noted, staff also recommends a condition requiring further study of mechanical venting placement. Given that all of the spaces requiring mechanical ventilation are within the interior of the building, and the relatively low height of the building, ventilation to the roof should be possible and is preferred. If this is found to be infeasible, staff recommends that through-the-wall vents be located away from the Green Street and De Lacey Avenue elevations and, if this is infeasible, that they be in as discreet locations as possible and not within pilasters.

Landscaping:

The proposed building has minimal landscape opportunities due to zero setback requirements in the Central District; however, the outdoor dining courtyard that is proposed along De Lacey Avenue will be planted with four 36-inch-box Fruitless Olive Trees to satisfy a portion of the replacement requirement for the protected palm trees that were previously removed without permits. The Commission previously approved use of the alternative replacement fee for the remainder of the replacement requirement and a condition of approval is recommended to reinforce that requirement. The fee was determined based on a letter dated February 22, 2019 from William R. McKinley, Consulting Arborist (Attachment C), which has been verified as accurate by Urban Forestry staff. The paving in this area is called out in the drawings as three grey tones of very light exposed aggregate finish concrete and a steel tree well grate is also shown in the drawings.

Designs for the common open spaces within the project have not been provided for review.

Although these spaces are not visible to the public, they are typically reviewed during design review to ensure that they are integrated with the design of the building and incorporate usable space and amenities for the building residents. Staff recommends a condition of approval requiring this to be provided for review during building plan check.

Lighting:

The elevation drawings depict exterior lighting consisting only of a black rectangular wall sconce fixture by Progress Lighting, which is shown in detail on sheet A5.2, flanking each storefront opening. The fixture proposed is consistent with the design of the building.

Signage:

The plans provided do not indicate any signage proposed for the building. Because the Zoning Code requires design review for signs on all new development projects, staff recommends that this requirement be reinforced with a condition of approval.

Comments from Other Departments:

Interdepartmental review for this project was conducted in conjunction with the Minor Conditional Use Permit (MCUP) and conditions of approval from other City departments were incorporated into that decision. As previously noted, DHP staff consulted with staff of the Current Planning Section, which verified that the project as shown in the drawings submitted for Final Design Review is consistent with the approved MCUP. A recommended condition of approval requires the project to remain consistent with this approval and the Zoning Code unless another entitlement is approved that authorizes deviations from Code requirements.

CONCLUSION:

Upon implementation of recommended conditions of approval, the project will comply with the conditions of Concept Design Review. The submitted drawings include materials specifications and architectural details that are high quality and compatible with the overall building design. Staff recommends that the Commission approve the application for Final Design Review with conditions described in this report, which will be further reviewed by staff during building plan check.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Reyes
Director of Planning & Community Development
Department
Reviewed by:

Prepared by:



Kevin Johnson, Senior Planner

Leon White, Principal Planner

Attachments:

- A. Architect's responses to Concept Design Review conditions
- B. Plans, elevations, details, materials
- C. Tree appraisal letter