



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: MAY 24, 2022

TO: DESIGN COMMISSION

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

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION OF A SIX-STORY, WITH-MEZANNINE, 93,355-SQUARE-FOOT MIXED-USE BUILDING WITH 11,617 SQUARE FEET OF COMMERCIAL SPACE INCLUDING FOUR WORK/LIVE UNITS AND 84 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AT 86 SOUTH FAIR OAKS AVENUE

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Design Commission:

Environmental Determination

Affirm that the application for Concept Design Review was subject to environmental review in the Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment approved by the City Council for the same project on April 11, 2022, and that there are no changed circumstances or new information which would require further environmental review.

Findings for Compliance with the Tree Protection Ordinance

1. Acknowledge that a tree inventory (Attachment B) identifies removal of three protected specimen trees and relocation of three protected specimen trees.
2. Find that the removal of three protected specimen trees and relocation of three protected specimen trees meets finding 6 of the Tree Protection Ordinance (PMC Section 8.52.075.A): *“the project, as defined in Section 17.12.020, includes a landscape design plan that emphasizes a tree canopy that is sustainable over the long term by adhering to the replacement matrix adopted by resolution of the city council and included in the associated administrative guidelines,”* and, therefore,
3. Approve the removal of three protected trees and relocation of three protected trees.

Findings for the Approval of Height Limit Exception through Height Averaging

1. Find that the height limits documented in the height averaging exhibit comply with the regulatory provisions in the Zoning Code (§17.30.050). These provisions limit an increase in height (to 90 feet in this case) over a maximum of 30% of the building footprint if the additional height is counterbalanced by lower heights elsewhere on a development site such that the average height does not exceed the otherwise required maximum building height (75 feet in this case).
2. Find that the request for additional height complies with the following findings for height averaging:
 - a. The additional height provides for a more sensitive transition to an adjacent historic structure and provides for a more interesting skyline;
 - b. The additional height will not be injurious to adjacent properties or uses, or detrimental to environmental quality, quality of life, or the health, safety, and welfare of the public;
 - c. The additional height will promote a superior design solution that enhances the property and its surroundings, without detrimental impacts on views and sight lines; and
 - d. The additional height is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Central District Specific Plan and the General Plan; and
3. Based on these findings, approve the request for height averaging.

Findings for Concept Design Approval

1. Find that the project, upon implementation of the conditions of approval, will comply with the purposes of design review, the design-related goals and policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Design Guidelines in the Central District Specific Plan and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; and
2. Based on these findings, approve the application for Concept Design Review subject to the conditions in Attachment A, which shall be further reviewed during Final Design Review.

BACKGROUND:

Project Overview

- General Plan Designation: High Mixed Use (0.0 – 3.0 FAR; 0-87 DU/acre)
- Zoning: CD-1 (Central District Specific Plan, Old Pasadena Subdistrict)
- Design Guidelines: The applicable design guidelines are the design-related goals and policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Design Guidelines in Central District Specific Plan and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Site: The .74-acre site is comprised of a roughly rectangular lot at the northeast corner of Fair Oaks Avenue and Dayton Street and is currently used as surface parking lot serving the Green Hotel Apartments building to the north with ancillary passive recreation space and an outdoor advertising sign. Immediately to the east of the site is the Castle Green. There are 20 trees on the project site, seven of which are protected, as well as eight public street trees along the property’s street frontages and six off-site private trees in close proximity to the project site, one of which is protected.
- Surroundings: Surrounding properties include three- to-seven-story commercial and mixed-use buildings, including the seven-story Castle Green and six-story Green Hotel Apartments. Immediately across the street to the west of the project site is a three-story mixed-use building and a parking lot and across Dayton Street to the south of the project site is Central Park. The property is within the boundaries of the Old Pasadena Historic District as well as the Hotel Green individual historical property, both listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Project Description: The project includes construction of a new six-story plus mezzanine, approximately 93,355-square-foot mixed-use building. The proposed mix of uses would include 11,617 square feet of ground-floor commercial space (4,218 square feet of retail space, 5,425 square feet for four work/live units and 1,974 square feet of restaurant space) and 84 residential units in the remaining floors above the ground floor. Retail and restaurant space is proposed to be located along the western edge of the site along South Fair Oaks Avenue and the work/live units are proposed to be located along Dayton Street. Vehicular access is proposed at the southeast corner of the site from Dayton Street. The project will include eight affordable housing units for very low income households, six affordable housing units for moderate income households, and a 35% density bonus. One concession is being requested, by utilizing the City’s Affordable Housing Concession Menu, for a reduction in the number of off-street automobile parking space requirements by up to 50% below otherwise applicable standards. The number of parking spaces proposed is 159; where the required minimum number of parking spaces is 193, an approximately 17% reduction.
- Trees: A total of 16 private trees are proposed to be removed, three of which are protected under the City’s Tree Protection Ordinance. Three private protected trees (all Palm trees) are also proposed to be relocated on-site. One protected public street tree will be relocated onto the project site. One on-site protected tree is proposed to be retained in conjunction with the project.

- Site Design: The new building proposed for the site would have a roughly L-shaped plan and house six stories with ground floor retail, residential amenities, and work/live spaces on the lower level. The remaining five floors above would contain a mix of one- and two-bedroom residential units. The proposal also includes three levels of subterranean parking accessed by a driveway on Dayton Street at the eastern end of the frontage. No setbacks are proposed along Fair Oaks Avenue or Dayton Street. However, the building is proposed to be set back approximately 10 feet from the north property line adjacent to the Green Hotel Apartments and approximately 30 feet from the west property line adjacent to the Castle Green. Landscaping, pedestrian walkways, and a pool and spa are proposed in a ground-level open space area at the northeast portion of the site, as well as a landscaped strip and pathway extending south from the open space area to Dayton Street along the eastern property line.
- Architectural Style: Contemporary with references to Moorish features drawn from the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments
- Developer: Green Hotel Apartments, L.P.
- Architects: Architectural Resources Group
- Landscape Architect: Not specified

ANALYSIS:

Design Commission Comments from Preliminary Consultation

On October 24, 2017, the Design Commission reviewed an application for Preliminary Consultation for this project. The Commission’s comments from that meeting, with excerpts from the design team’s responses, and staff’s comments, are detailed in the chart below. The design team’s full response are incorporated into the set of plans in Attachment C.

Commissioner Comments, February 14, 2017	Excerpt from Design Team Response	Staff Comments
1. Further study the massing and scale of the building to ensure that it responds to the sensitive historic context of the adjacent historic buildings. Review and draw inspiration from the massing of the original early 20 th century design for the unbuilt addition to the Green Hotel on this site, as well as from the existing Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments. In particular, study the massing of the southwest corner of the building to	“In developing this concept design, we studied the 1903 vision for the Hotel Green complex which included the addition of a rectilinear wing stretching south along Fair Oaks Avenue from the Wooster Block, connected to the Castle Green building by an arcade at the south end of the property. In plan, this concept formed a U-shaped footprint with buildings along Fair Oaks Avenue, Green Street, and Raymond Avenue, and a connecting arcade along Dayton Street. As much as possible, we	<i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i> The proposed project has been substantially modified since the Preliminary Consultation such that the overall massing and scale of the project has changed to incorporate an L-shaped building that responds to the immediately adjacent historic context through the use of height averaging, as recommended by the Commission. In this manner, the massing and scale has been revised in a manner similar to that of the massing of the original early 20 th century design for the unbuilt addition. The revised massing, scale and siting of the revised proposal

Commissioner Comments, February 14, 2017	Excerpt from Design Team Response	Staff Comments
<p>create a more iconic statement that responds to these historic buildings without mimicking them and responds to the site's location as a gateway to Old Pasadena. Overall, the project should strive for excellence, not mediocrity.</p>	<p>have used this 1903 vision to inform our concept, eliminating the north wing seen in the preliminary concept submittal and scaling the south wing down substantially. In this way, the project provides a single central courtyard in the middle of the block and pulls the mass of the new building away from the Castle Green and toward the Fair Oaks Avenue frontage..."</p>	<p>focuses massing toward the southwest corner of the site that responds to and provides a continuation of corner massing found at the Green Hotel Apartments and the Castle Green.</p>
<p>2. Further explore the Moorish influences referenced in the presentation including courtyards, embellishments, true paseos, exterior stairs to single floors, more differentiated fenestration, etc. In general, explore a more unique and less regimented design approach.</p>	<p>"The concept design draws from the Moorish and exotic designs of the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments, with varied fenestration patterns, building elevation setbacks, varied roof heights, and Moorish-inspired patterns and arched openings."</p>	<p><i>Comment to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>The revised proposal draws decorative inspiration from the Green Hotel Apartments, the Castle Green, and the unbuilt early 20th century addition in such a manner that it is not clearly differentiated from those features found in the historic context. Staff finds that the Moorish-inspired patterns and arched openings could be further refined or studied in order to provide a more simplified design aesthetic that is compatible with the historic context but reads as a modern building, to avoid confusion between the adjacent historical buildings and the new building, and has recommended a condition of approval to that effect.</p>
<p>3. Further study the massing of the west wing to provide a greater level of articulation to the building facades. Consider using height averaging to increase the height of a portion of the building (potentially at the southwest corner) and draw building mass away from the adjacent historic buildings. Study ways to relieve the repetition and</p>	<p>"In the development of this concept, height averaging was utilized to create a more prominent corner tower at the southwest corner of the property. This and other changes ensure that the mass of the new building is pulled away from the Castle Green and toward the Fair Oaks Avenue frontage. Using the aesthetic qualities of the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments for</p>	<p><i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The design has incorporated height averaging as recommended by the Design Commission to increase the height at the southwest corner. The redistribution of building volume through height averaging has allowed for a prominent southwest corner and an interesting and varied roof line. Together, the revised building volume and varied rooflines provide for additional compatibility with the Castle Green and Green</p>

Commissioner Comments, February 14, 2017	Excerpt from Design Team Response	Staff Comments
<p>relative flatness of the west elevation and create moments that will give character to the building volumes.</p>	<p>inspiration, our concept includes a wide variety of projecting and recessed balconies, projecting bays, façade setbacks, and varied roof heights to provide variety and visual interest on all of the building’s elevations. We think of the Castle Green as a “series of architectural moments,” and have aimed to emulate this in the design of our concept rather than a repetitive, regimented design approach.”</p>	<p>Hotel Apartments while also further enhancing the relief between the three buildings and the visual connections from vantage points along S. Fair Oaks Avenue.</p>
<p>4. Further study the project’s connection to Central Park as well as the progression from the street and parking structure through open areas, amenities and communal gathering spaces to the individual residential units. If retained in the design, study ways to make the paseo more inviting and meaningful as a pedestrian access point to the project. Explore ways to create a greater level of open space at the street that would extend the park onto the site as was originally conceived in the early 20th century unbuilt design. In general, explore ways to increase permeability into the site, integrate common open space areas (rather than separating them on different floors) and allow for pedestrian movements that incorporate outdoor connections.</p>	<p>“In this concept design the southern paseo has been removed by eliminating the bulk of the southern wing, while a new landscaped pedestrian path has been created to allow residents to navigate from Central Park through the site to Fair Oaks Avenue, increasing the permeability of the site while also supporting its ground planting and ground-level open space and enhanced courtyard experience.”</p>	<p><i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The location of the vehicular and loading driveway and curb cut to the Dayton Street side, along with additional pedestrian pathways and further landscaping provides a visual and physical progression from Central Park to the south up to the subject block.</p>

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<p>5. Consider ways to ensure appropriate pedestrian access and flow from the Metro Gold Line Del Mar Station, particularly related to the location of bicycle storage.</p>	<p>“The site plan now features residential access options to Fair Oaks and Dayton including a landscaped path that connects to amenity areas, promoting pedestrian and bike access as well as visual connection to the surrounding streetscape.”</p>	<p><i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The revised proposal includes updated configurations to pedestrian and bicycle paths that allow for easy access from the site to the Metro Gold Line Del Mar Station. In addition, the proposal includes bicycle storage on site, within the subterranean parking structure.</p>
<p>6. Further study the treatment of the residential lobby entry to ensure it is prominent, well-marked and articulated. Consider articulating the building and openings above the entry to further accentuate this entry point to the building.</p>	<p>“The residential lobby entrance has a prominent location near the center of the Fair Oaks elevation, and is now emphasized by a prominent arched opening in the building’s base. This arched opening will clearly mark the entrance to the building, while also providing glimpses of courtyard view through the building to passersby. Cast stone detailing above the arched opening is also articulated in such a way that the entrance is accentuated and clearly marked.”</p>	<p><i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The revised proposal has been updated to provide a prominently articulated residential lobby configuration off of South Fair Oaks Avenue.</p>
<p>7. Provide articulation and/or screening of blank wall surfaces on the east elevation at the property line, the north elevation and the east wall of the pedestrian paseo along Dayton Street. The building should be designed to ensure that the same level of quality and articulation is presented on all sides.</p>	<p>“All building elevations are treated with careful and complete articulation and consistent material quality.”</p>	<p><i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The revised proposal includes added fenestration and other architectural features at the east elevation, which further breaks up large areas of solidity and provides a balanced proportion of solid walls to openings in addition to being treated with the same care and attention to detail as the street-facing facades.</p>

Commissioner Comments, February 14, 2017	Excerpt from Design Team Response	Staff Comments
<p>8. Further study the integration of the glass-enclosed stairwells into the overall design of the building. These elements do not communicate the stated intention of being compatible with the Green Hotel/Castle Green buildings.</p>	<p>“Glass-enclosed stairwells have been removed from the design. Stair towers are now more integrated into the overall design of the building with architectural features and projections that evoke the terminology of the surrounding historic buildings.”</p>	<p><i>Comment to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>While the materiality and overall design character of the stair towers has been made more consistent with the project architecture, staff finds that their proportions and locations at the east edge of the building are somewhat incongruent with the design and interrupt the character of the east façade. Staff recommends a condition requiring exploration of the possibility of incorporating the stairs into the taller building mass to the west, rather than within separate towers. This will minimize the prominence of the towers at the east side of the building and allow the main building volume to continue to stand out.</p>
<p>9. Study the detailing and articulation of the building overall to bring a greater sense of richness to the design and reflect the design ideas presented. In general, the inspiration imagery and statements in the presentation should be more clearly demonstrated in the design and the focus of the inspiration for the project should be from the immediate surrounding context rather than buildings further afield.</p>	<p>“Our study of the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments included sketches and documentation of existing design features (window openings, roof features, balconies, etc.), materials, colors, and more. With this information, we developed a concept design that draws from the Moorish and exotic designs of the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments, with varied fenestration patterns, building elevation setbacks, varied roof heights, and Moorish-inspired patterns and arched openings.”</p>	<p><i>Comment to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>Overall, the project has been redesigned to create a stronger relationship to the surrounding historic context. However, as noted previously, staff has recommended a condition requiring further refinement to be studied in order to illustrate the building as a modern development while maintaining a compatible relationship to the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments.</p>

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<p>10. Study the creation of a more iconic and distinct roofline; reconsider the 7th floor step-back that hides the building's roof.</p>	<p>"The varied rooflines of the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments were studied in the design of our concept. A prominent, hipped roof tower anchors the site at the south end of the Fair Oaks Avenue frontage, and the rest of the roof is punctuated by towers and projecting bays."</p>	<p><i>Comment to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>The revised proposal includes varying heights utilized for different portions of the building that are finished with varying roof sizes and configurations. The southwest corner articulates a prominent hipped roof that accentuates the corner location. As noted above, staff recommends a condition requiring additional studies to be provided for the stair towers at the east elevation to incorporate the stairs into the building volume and eliminate the towers, which would create a more integrated roof configuration for the main volumes of the building.</p>
<p>11. Provide additional massing studies for the project. In particular, study a massing strategy that responds to the "U"-shaped early 20th century design with the building set on the western edge of the site and landscaping open to the street at the eastern end, possibly integrated with landscaping on the Castle Green site to the east. A double-loaded corridor configuration, with a smaller building along Dayton Street may help to achieve this. Further explain the progression from the previous to the current design.</p>	<p>"In developing our concept design, we studied the 1903 vision for the Hotel Green complex which included the addition of a rectilinear wing stretching south along Fair Oaks Avenue from the Wooster Block, connected to the Castle Green building by an arcade at the south end of the property. In plan, this concept formed a U-shaped footprint with buildings along Fair Oaks Avenue, Green Street, and Raymond Avenue, and a connecting arcade along Dayton Street. As much as possible, we have used this 1903 vision to create a double-loaded corridor to enable the elimination of the north wing seen in the preliminary concept submittal and reduction of the south wing. This approach has also allowed a landscape plan that features in-ground planting along the eastern edge of the site and a</p>	<p><i>Comment satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p>The U-shaped plan previously proposed has been modified into an L-shaped plan that is allocated toward the southwest corner of the site. Given this change, the east end of the site has been further refined to allow for additional landscaping and further setbacks from the Castle Green to provide a smooth visual transition between the proposed new construction and the adjacent historic resources. In addition, the new landscaped areas at the east side provide further visual continuation of greenery from Central Park across the street.</p>

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	connection to adjacent Central Park.”	
<p>12. The portion of the building along Dayton Street should better relate to the park to the south. Reconsider the solid base and top and consider landscaping or an arcade at the front of the building. Also reconsider the gabled roof forms. In general, further study the idea of the greenhouse and provide further explanation and refinement of this concept.</p>	<p>“The Dayton Street façade features an arcaded base, facing Central Park that both refers to the arcade in the 1903 concept for the Hotel Green complex and provides ample fenestration facing the park. The greenhouse concept from the preliminary consultation has been eliminated. The Dayton Street wing is now reduced in width and height, and is pulled away from the Castle Green in order to provide more courtyard space and a connection to Central Park that is itself landscaped and features a clear pedestrian pathway.”</p>	<p><i>Comment to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>The revised base of the Dayton Street façade provides an arcaded articulation to the work/live spaces at this location, but can be further refined based on additional comments provided in Comment 1 above regarding enhancing the modern articulation. In addition, staff finds that the arcaded metal awning/trellis at the second floor facing Dayton Street should be further refined to allow for a smoother transition from this feature to the adjacent facades, and has recommended a condition to this effect.</p>
<p>13. Further study the locations of driveway and commercial loading access, working closely with the Department of Transportation to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety. The adjacency to the small one-story commercial building to the north may provide an opportunity for a pedestrian connection to open space areas rather than to a loading zone.</p>	<p>“Loading and vehicular site access will be located on Dayton Street, based upon Department of Transportation feedback, and with consideration for loading and trash service to support the Green Hotel Apartments as well as replacement parking for that building. A pedestrian pathway will be provided from Dayton as well as from Fair Oaks via a path between the new building and the one-story commercial building to the north, ensuring safe pedestrian connection to the site, building, and interior courtyard.”</p>	<p><i>Comment to be addressed through a condition of approval.</i></p> <p>The loading and vehicle access configuration off of Dayton Street has been revised to eliminate at-grade, tuck-under parking that was previously proposed and to place loading in a location where it will not be visible from the street. However, the vehicular access remains open to the sky, which is uncharacteristic of new developments in the City, which typically incorporate vehicular access into a portal with the building volume. In this case; however, maintaining distance from and view corridors to the rear facades of the adjacent historic resources is an important consideration for compatibility of the project with its surrounding context. In that vein, staff recommends a condition requiring additional details of the driveway/ramp configuration as viewed from the street and softening of the driveway as much as possible with specialty materials and landscaping that would ensure</p>

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		consistency with the surrounding area. It should also be noted that a pedestrian pathway from Fair Oaks Avenue to the northeast corner open space area is now proposed as recommended by the Commission.

Programming and Circulation

The project proposes siting of the new building at the southwest portion of the site, fronting S. Fair Oaks Avenue and Dayton Street. The massing of the proposed building is allocated to the west and south sides adjoining its street frontages, with setbacks from the northerly Green Hotel Apartments and from the easterly Castle Green along the property’s interior property lines. No setback is proposed for the building frontage along N. Fair Oaks Avenue. The building frontage along Dayton Street is proposed to include a minor setback from the southern property line, but only for the proposed work/live spaces at the ground floor. The open space between the buildings would be generally mid-block and enhanced with landscaping, pedestrian walkways connecting to the two street frontages, and a pool and spa facility for the proposed residences. A 20’ wide driveway is proposed to be located at the southeast corner of the site to allow access to a loading area and to the three floors of subgrade parking below the proposed building. The parking entry is shown flanked by landscaping.

The ground floor programming includes retail spaces fronting S. Fair Oaks Avenue, a lobby foyer for the residences above, and leasing and amenity spaces for the residential uses. Four work/live spaces are proposed along Dayton Street. A centralized stair and elevators are incorporated near the center of the site, along with storage and trash facilities. The northern part of the site includes bicycle parking and storage, mechanical and electrical rooms, and a secondary stair at the northwest corner. Another secondary stair is located near the southern portion of the site and is accessible via the outdoor space at the parking entry. A mezzanine space within the double-height ground floor is proposed to contain additional amenity spaces for the residences including a gym, community lounge, and bathrooms. A roof deck is proposed adjacent to the community lounge. The ground floor work/live spaces are also proposed to contain mezzanine levels.

The floors above the ground floor are proposed to include a mix of studio, one- and two-bedroom residential units, each with outdoor space incorporated in the form of balconies. The sixth floor mezzanine level is proposed to include extensions of some units below, three roof decks, and mechanical equipment (HVAC). Additional roof decks are proposed at the southern portion of the building at the second and third floors.

Overall, the programming of the building and site is consistent with the applicable design guidelines and responsive to the Commission’s Preliminary Consultation comments. The originally submitted design for Preliminary Consultation proposed a U-shaped plan sited mostly at the southwest side of the site with similar programming that is proposed in the updated project. The parking entry path and ramp down to the garage was originally situated along the east side of the property line for its entirety and included publicly visible tuck-under surface parking. The proposed building plan has since been reconfigured to provide for more uniformly sited frontages

along S. Fair Oaks Avenue and Dayton Street and includes a parking entry and ramp situated toward the southeastern corner of the building and site.

In addition, the siting, massing and volumes of the revised proposal are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as follows:

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The proposal does not include any scope that physically interacts with the immediately adjacent Castle Green or Green Hotel Apartments, both of which are historic resources. The proposal is situated on an existing parking lot and will be sited near the southwest corner of the parcel and provides sufficient space and detachment from the historic resources such that if the new building were to be removed in the future, the context and environment of the historic resources would remain unimpaired and they would still be able to convey their significance.

Orientation

The proposed new building is oriented toward the southwest portion of the site. Windows, balconies, and sun-shading devices are arranged in clear and regularized patterns on all sides. The residential lobby entrance and retail spaces at the ground floor will front S. Fair Oaks Avenue, contributing to the continuation of retail spaces along this corridor and the lobby entry is architecturally enhanced to reflect its importance. The setback provided at the north creates separation between the new construction and the Green Hotel Apartments and one-story extension at the south side of its S. Fair Oaks Avenue façade. The east side of the project site incorporates a large setback between the proposed project and the Castle Green. Both combined setbacks create a centralized landscaped and hardscaped area between all three buildings which provide for a physical and visual transition from Central Park up to the three buildings and a linear line of sight from the park.

Height, Massing and Modulation

The height limit at this location is 75', measured from the lowest point of existing grade, or 90' utilizing height averaging. The drawings submitted show a proposed project that utilizes height averaging, resulting in areas up to 90' in height amounting up to a maximum of 30% of the building's proposed footprint. The project accurately utilizes height averaging and, in general, the height proposed is compatible with existing development immediately surrounding the site which ranges from six to seven stories. Importantly, the varying masses of the building are lower in height than the corresponding masses of the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments buildings, ensuring that they are deferential to these important adjacent historic buildings.

The elevation drawings depict the building masses being modulated by the creation of articulated sub-volumes, which are appropriate and responsive to the design guidelines and previous comments from the Commission.

Height Averaging

A height averaging exhibit has been provided on page 5 of the submitted drawings, which depicts varying-height volumes on the building. The provisions of height averaging in §17.30.050.B of the Zoning Code, along with staff's analysis of the project's compliance, are as follows:

Extent of height averaging allowed:

- a. Additional building height is permitted over no more than 30 percent of the building footprint on a development parcel, provided that the average height over the entire footprint does not exceed the otherwise required maximum building height.

The portions of the 20,742-square-foot building footprint that are proposed to exceed the 75' height limit are as follows: 2,561.50 square feet at 90', 251.54 square feet at 88', and 3,009.04 square feet at 84', which is approximately 28.07% of the total footprint area. The height averaging exhibit submitted demonstrates that the average height of the building on the development site will be 69 feet, which is lower than the maximum 75' average height allowed, and staff has verified this calculation to be accurate.

- b. Height averaging shall not be applied to parking and/or accessory structures.

The project is not proposing to use height averaging for separate parking or accessory structures.

- c. The additional height allowed by this Subsection B. through height averaging shall require Design Commission approval.

This review constitutes the required Design Commission review.

Required findings:

- a. The additional height allows for preservation of vistas and view corridors, and/or a more sensitive transition to an adjacent historic structure, and/or provides for a more interesting skyline;

The additional height at the western end of the development site allows for provision of a new mixed-use project in a manner that creates a more sensitive transition to surrounding historic structures by setting the additional height back from the Green Hotel Apartments to the north and the Castle Green to the east. The additional setbacks will allow for a view corridor from Central Park across the street to these historic resources. As noted earlier, the previous proposal included a U-shaped building with a larger setback from the Green Hotel Apartments to the north and a smaller setback from the Castle Green to the east. However, the modified proposal now allocates the building in a generally L-shaped plan toward the southwest corner of the site with generous setbacks to the north and east. The additional heights proposed for the L-shaped building and stepped or lower building heights closer to the historic resources will not only create a more

interesting skyline but will also provide visual continuity with the historic development of the larger site.

- b. The additional height will not be injurious to adjacent properties or uses, or detrimental to environmental quality, quality of life, or the health, safety, and welfare of the public;

As noted above, the additional height is designed in a manner that ensures it is set back from the surrounding historic resources and will, thereby avoid negative impacts on quality of life or health, safety and welfare of the buildings.

- c. The additional height will promote a superior design solution that enhances the property and its surroundings, without detrimental impacts on views and sight lines; and

The additional height will improve the roofline variation of the overall project and will not create detrimental impacts on views and sight lines.

- d. The additional height is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Central District Specific Plan and the General Plan.

The proposed additional height allows for the development of a new mixed-use project in the Central District and in close proximity to transit, as encouraged in the Central District Specific Plan and General Plan, while ensuring that the design is not detrimental to surrounding buildings and is consistent with the sensitive context of Old Pasadena.

Architectural Style and Detailing

The proposed new building is of a contemporary design with heavy references to the Moorish, Victorian, and Romanesque styled buildings surrounding the site. The building incorporates a combination of flat roofs and hipped roof forms at various locations. The ground floor gives the appearance of a double height, consistent with other buildings in the Old Pasadena Historic District, as it incorporates a mezzanine level and is designed at the street frontages with arcaded windows along Dayton Street and more simple traditional storefronts along S. Fair Oaks Avenue. The floors above are designed to incorporate uniformed stacked punched rectangular and arched window openings with additional applied features such as balconies and/or awnings. Window operations will be a combination of double hung and casement. The overall building materials proposed include cast stone cladding spanning the base of the building to approximately 20 feet above grade; balcony fronts are also proposed to incorporate cast stone ornament. The remainder of the building will be clad in painted plaster. All storefronts are proposed to be painted metal along with all ornamental metal grilles, balcony and terrace railings, and ornamental cladding at the penthouse level and all associated balcony structural features. The penthouse levels are proposed to further incorporate larger expanses of glazing fronting S. Fair Oaks Avenue in comparison to fenestration adjacent and below. Hipped roofs are proposed to be finished in barrel-shaped clay tiles.

References to Moorish architecture are reflected in the balconies, fenestration configurations, ornamentation and roof materials and forms of the new building. References to Victorian and

Romanesque architecture are reflected in the intricate metalwork and heavily arched or arched entrances at the ground floor. Staff has reviewed the revised proposal and assessed the responses to the Commission's previous comments and is satisfied that they have been addressed and that the proposed building responds well to its surrounding context. Staff finds the proposed design to be cohesive and appropriately responsive to the Castle Green and Green Hotel Apartments, both of which are historic resources. The new building reflects a modern addition to the larger block that maintains a high level of referential compatibility that brings a new development while still allowing the historic resources to stand out. As noted previously, staff recommends that the detailing be refined and simplified to ensure that the building is differentiated from the historic resources to avoid confusing the history of the area, as recommended in Secretary's Standard 9. Staff finds that, in general, the concept of the proposed changes is consistent with the design guidelines and will defer to Final Design Review for additional specifications and details of the proposed new materials.

Compatibility

The proposed new building will be compatible with its immediate surroundings, which include the Green Hotel Apartments and the Castle Green, particularly in terms of its height, massing, and materials. The revised design submitted for this review relates better to both existing historic buildings and maintains a high level of compatibility with these buildings while incorporating a modern aesthetic. However, further refinement should be undertaken to ensure the project is consistent with the National Park Service Preservation Brief 14, which provides guidance on new construction that should be undertaken in a compatible but differentiated manner. The revised proposal provides a strong architectural relationship to the Castle Green, Green Hotel Apartments, and the un-built 1903 design for the hotel addition. The revised design should provide further distinction as a modern development while providing appropriate references to the surrounding historic context. The proposal should not convey a false sense of historical development. A compatible but differentiated approach should be further developed.

In addition, the proposed project should be further refined in order to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as follows:

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The proposed project will not physically alter, modify or destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the Castle Green or the Green Hotel Apartments. However, the design of the proposed building should be further distinguished as new construction while providing compatible materials and features that provide a strong relationship without being conveyed as a false sense of historical development.

Conceptual Landscape Design

The landscape plan provided outlines an intricate blend of pedestrian walkways or alleys with landscaping that will provide a network of pathways and open spaces within the project site. This includes a pedestrian walkway at the north edge of the site, and a large landscaped zone at the northeast portion of the site that incorporates a pool terrace and various winding walkways and

green zones that relate or otherwise visually lead to the Castle Green to the east. A path is proposed along the driveway that will extend the landscape features located mid-site to Dayton Street and will connect with the open space on the site to Central Park across the street. Several roof terraces are proposed at the second floor, third floor, and roof levels (facing onto the open space below and Castle Green to the east) that will integrate planters. As proposed, the landscape plan allows for integrated visual transitions between the three buildings on the block and their respective landscape and circulation designs in a relatable and integrated manner. In addition, the proposed landscape plan will further enhance the relationship of the three buildings and their respective landscaping to Central Park.

Protected Tree Removals

The application includes a tree inventory that identifies removal of three protected specimen trees, all of which are *Camphor/Cinnamomum camphora* (#18, #19, and #20). Three additional protected specimen trees are proposed for relocation on site, identified as two California fan palms/*Washingtonia fillifera* (#23 and #31) and one Canary Island date palm/*Phoenix canariensis* (#26).

The application states that Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO) findings #4 and #5 are proposed to allow the removal and relocation of the protected trees. These findings state, “There is a substantial hardship to the property owner in the enjoyment and use of the real property if the injury or removal of the private tree is not permitted” and “to not permit injury to or removal of a tree would constitute a taking of the underlying real property,” respectively. Staff disagrees that these findings would apply to the proposed tree removals because the property could continue to be used for its current purpose, as well as other purposes allowed by the Zoning Code, while retaining the protected trees proposed for removal and relocation. However, the project includes a landscape plan which includes the proposed planting of 17 new 36-inch-box or larger new trees and 21 new 24-inch-box trees; therefore, staff finds that the proposed tree removals may be allowed using Finding #6, which states, “the project...includes a landscape design plan that emphasizes a tree canopy that is sustainable over the long term by adhering to the replacement matrix adopted by resolution of the city council and included in the associated administrative guidelines.” The table below outlines the number of trees that would be required to be planted to comply with the Tree Replacement Matrix (note that the sizes of these multi-trunk trees were determined by staff by calculating the combined area of the trunks, as required by the Tree Protection Ordinance):

Tree #	Type	Size	15-gal replacement	24" box replacement	36" box replacement	Replacement Species
18	Non-palm; specimen	42"	N/A	12	8	Specimen or Native lists
19	Non-palm; specimen	23"	N/A	8	4	Specimen or Native lists
20	Non-palm; specimen	30"	N/A	8	4	Specimen or Native lists

As noted in the table, the project proposes to plant 16 36-inch-box or larger trees on the site, which is in compliance with the minimum 16 36-inch-box trees required by the Tree Replacement Matrix, as shown in the table above. Proposed species of trees that are 36-inch-box or larger in size include Fruitless Olive (*Olea europaea*) and Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), both of which are listed on the Specimen Tree List. Therefore, the proposal is in compliance with the Tree Replacement Matrix and Finding #6 may be used to allow the removal of the three protected trees proposed to be removed. The majority of new trees proposed to be planted are shown within the northeast corner open space area. It should be noted that the subterranean parking structure is shown set back approximately 34' from the east property line at this location, allowing new trees within this area to be planted in natural soil. For Final Design Review, staff recommends that areas of natural soil be clearly indicated on the landscape plan and that, to the greatest extent feasible, the required 16 replacement trees, the three private protected trees proposed to be relocated on-site and the one public protected tree proposed to be relocated on-site (see discussion of relocated trees below) be planted in natural soil.

In addition, three private protected palm trees are proposed for on-site relocation and their new proposed locations are shown on the landscape plan. Since these trees would be reinstalled on the site at the same size as existing, this finding may also be used to allow these trees to be relocated.

The project also proposes relocation of a public street tree (tree # ST7, also a palm tree) onto the project site. This proposal is subject to separate review and recommendation by the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee and approval by the City Manager. This review has not yet occurred; therefore, staff recommends a condition of approval requiring this review to be conducted prior to submittal of an application for Final Design Review. An additional condition recommended by the Department of Public Works requires submittal of a Tree Protection Plan to ensure adequate protection during construction of existing street trees to be retained. Should the applicant be unable to demonstrate adequate street tree protection, any necessary modifications to the project design may require review of an application for Changes to an Approved Project.

Finally, the project proposes retention of one on-site protected tree. As such, staff recommends a condition requiring submittal of a Tree Protection Plan for review during Final Design Review.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

Staff routed the project for comment to several City departments, as well as other divisions of the Planning & Community Development Department, including the Public Works, Transportation, Fire and Housing Departments and the Building, Current Planning and Cultural Affairs Divisions of the Planning & Community Development Department. Recommended conditions of approval from responding departments are included in Attachment A.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

On April 11, 2022, the City Council adopted a Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA) for the project. Since the adoption of the SCEA, there have been no changes to the project scope that would require additional environmental review; therefore, staff recommends that the Commission affirm that the application for Concept Design Review was subject to environmental review in the Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment

approved by the City Council for the same project on April 11, 2022, and that there are no changed circumstances or new information which would require further environmental review.

CONCLUSION:

The project design has satisfactorily addressed the comments provided during Preliminary Consultation and, upon implementation of the recommended conditions of approval, will be consistent with the design guidelines in the Central District Specific Plan and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff recommends approval of the application for Concept Design Review for the project with conditions described in this report and included in Attachment A.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Attachments:

- A. Recommended conditions of approval
- B. Tree inventory and exhibit; Private Tree Removal Applications
- C. Current plans