



D E S I G N R E V I E W C O M M I T T E E S T A F F R E P O R T

For Committee Discussion
JANUARY 19, 2017

1050 Parker Street

Preview

Design Review #DRCP2016-0013 for the construction of a new three-story commercial building with 61,000 square feet for both research and development (in MU-LI) and medical office and quick-serve restaurant uses (in C-W). The project would include 119 vehicle parking spaces and 50 bicycle parking spaces.

I. Introduction

This project is located on the west side of San Pablo Avenue near the corner of Parker Street. The parcel spans back to Tenth Street and does meet Parker Street at the northwest corner of the project site. It is located in the West Berkeley Commercial (C-W) zoning district.

This project is before the Design Review Committee (DRC) for a Preview.

II. Background

The project is to construct a new commercial building of approximately 61,000 square foot and required surface parking on the site.

The site currently comprises three parcels, two of which are zoned Mixed Use Light Industrial (MU-LI) with the third being Commercial West Berkeley (C-W). The new structure will straddle the zoning boundary with approximately 20,000 square feet of usable space located in the C-W-zoned portion of the site and approximately 41,000 square feet of usable space located in the MU-LI portion.

The structure will be split leveled with a combination of two and three story sections. Parking will be located under the building and on on-site surface parking lots. The main building entry will be located on the ground level of the building on Tenth Street.

III. Project Setting

A. Neighborhood/Area Description:

The 68,000 square foot subject property is situated at the intersections of San Pablo Avenue, Parker Street and Tenth Street in West Berkeley. Surrounding land use include the Missouri Lounge bar and a Bank of America to the north across Parker Street; a mix of retail, restaurants, and automobile services to the east along San Pablo Avenue; retail spaces and a church to the south along San Pablo Avenue; a mixed use residential and commercial development to the west across 10th Street; and light industrial construction and electrical services to the south along 10th Street.

B. Site Conditions:

The site is currently a vacant open lot with no structures. Previously, it had been leased to the Urban Adamah project for use as an urban farm; Urban Adamah purchased its own site in North Berkeley in 2015 and left the subject site at the end of November 2016.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map

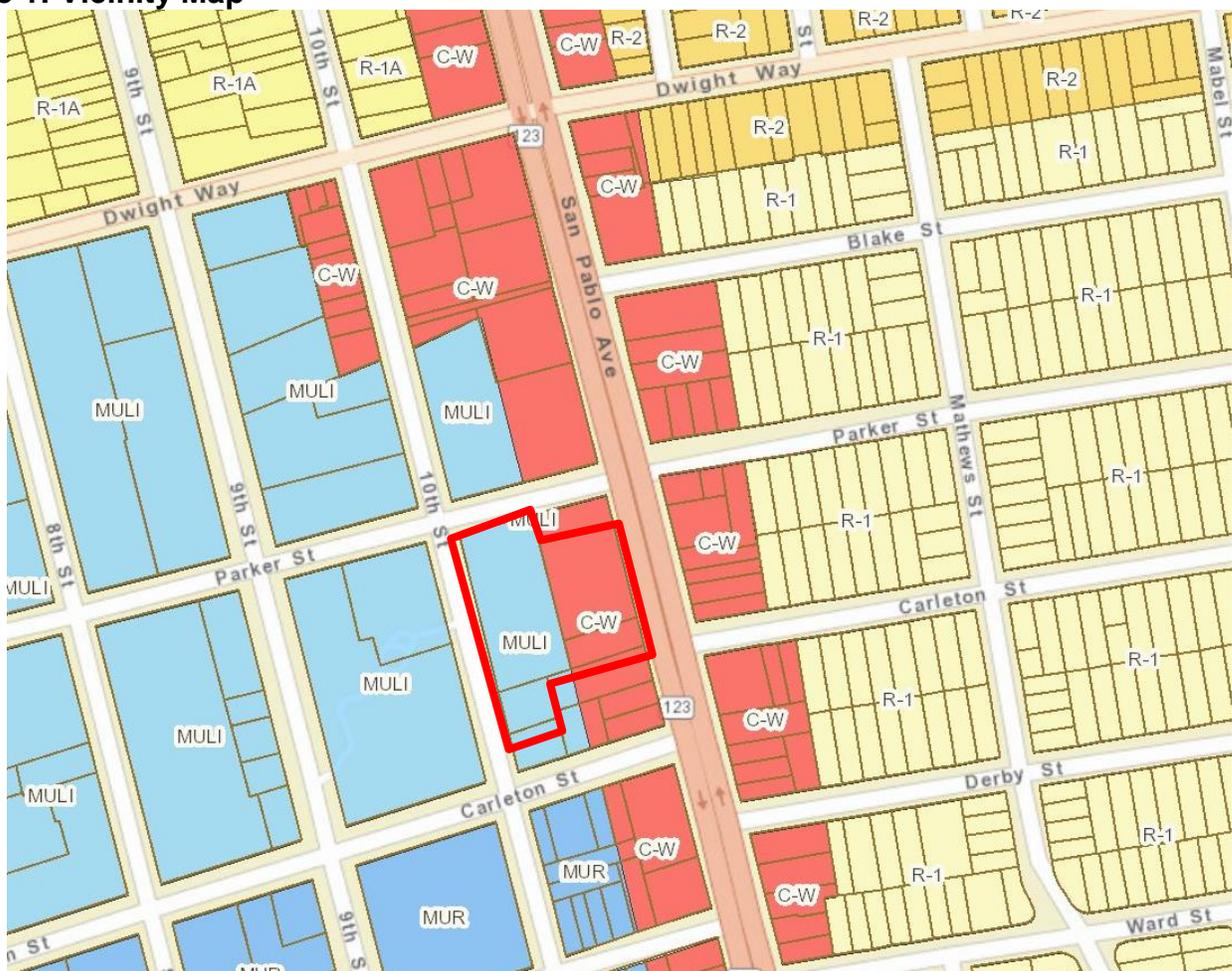


Table 1: Land Use Information

Location		Existing Use	Zoning District	General Plan Designation
Subject Property		Vacant – former Urban Adamah	MULI and CW	Manufacturing and Avenue Commercial
Surrounding Properties	North	Bar; bank	MULI and CW	Manufacturing and Avenue Commercial
	South	Retail; church; light industrial	MULI and CW	Manufacturing and Avenue Commercial
	East	Light industrial; retail; restaurant	MULI	Manufacturing
	West	Mixed-use residential/commercial	CW	Avenue Commercial

Table 4: Development Standards

Attached is the tabulation form submitted by the applicant for your reference. The Use Permit Planners are still reviewing these but will be able to confirm them for when this project returns for Preliminary Design Review.

IV. Project Description

A. Requested Use Permits

The following permits will be required for the project:

- Use Permit to allow R & D use in excess of 30,000 square feet in a MULI district (23E.80.030).
- Use Permit to allow medical office or office uses in excess of 5,000 square feet in the C- W district (23E.64.030).
- Use Permit to create more than 5,000 square feet in the C-W district (23E.64.050.B.1).
- Use Permit to allow off-street parking spaces on the ground level within 20 feet of the street side property line along the edge of the frontage of the secondary street. (23E.28.080.B)
- Administrative Use Permit for a fence greater than 6 feet in height (23E.04.040.A).
- Administrative Use Permit to allow for the substitution of bicycle or motorcycle parking spaces in place of up to 10% of the required parking spaces (23E.64.080.J).
- Zoning Certificate for retail under 3,000 square feet or quick service restaurant under 1,500 square feet in C-W district (23E.64.030).
- Administrative Use Permit for two mechanical penthouses and one elevator penthouse exceeding the district height limits (23E.040.020.C).

- B. CEQA Determination:** Anticipated categorical exemption under §15332 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (“In-Fill Development Projects”), but this is still under review with the Use Permit Planner.

V. Design Review Guidelines

The City’s Design Guidelines are applicable for this project. Excerpts from the City-wide Design Review Guidelines are included below for your reference:

- **Setbacks:** The street façade of commercial streets should be respected, in order to create or maintain the sense of urban space.
- **Parking and Driveways:** Conflict with pedestrian circulation should be prevented by the proper location and design of auto entrances.
- **Harmony with Surroundings:** The proposed design should be in harmony with its surroundings through the coordination of such design elements as cornice lines, eaves, and setbacks with those of existing neighborhood buildings.
- **Articulation:** Street facades in general and the ground floor level in particular should include elements of pedestrian scale and three-dimensional interest.
- **Heights:** In general, the height of adjacent buildings especially historic structures should be respected in the design of new buildings. Abrupt changes in height may be appropriate, even desirable, in certain situations, such as the need for focal points, landmarks, and the closure of long views. Such techniques as setbacks and terraces may be used to reduce the visual impact of differing heights, if the impact is negative.
- **Lighting:** Lighting for circulation, security, building/sign identification should be non-obtrusive, except for lighting fixtures which are themselves decorative additions to the streetscape.
- **Walls and Fences:** Large, unarticulated expanses of any particular wall material that deaden the pedestrian environment should be avoided. The use of clear windows for ground floor retail projects is encouraged. Walls designed to allow sitting areas for pedestrian or space for landscaping and artwork are encouraged, especially in areas of heavy pedestrian use. Landscaping and/or art work should be maximized if large expanses of wall must be left devoid of openings.
- **Landscape and Open Space:** Sidewalk areas should include landscaping that is coordinated with the neighborhood design.
- **Building Entrances:** Entrance points should be clearly defined and easily identifiable by pedestrians by appropriate locations and by elements such as awnings, signage, artwork or changes in paving material to define the entry point.
- **Parking:** If parking is not placed underground, behind buildings, or in interior courts, it should incorporate adequate landscaping or artwork for visual screening. Parking areas should include setbacks for landscaping and/or artwork to minimize visibility of parked cars, especially from the street. Shading of at least fifty percent (50%) of the surface area.
- **Public Open Space:** The inclusion of public open spaces is encouraged as a means of providing places for people to come together for community interaction and enlivening the pedestrian environment.

VI. Issues and Analysis

A. Design Review Issues:

- **Setbacks**
 - **San Pablo** – this project does meet the sidewalk edge on San Pablo for the first two levels and then steps back. The ground floor level has only enough depth for a small quick-serve restaurant use in conjunction with publicly-accessible open space with parking located behind. An enlarged plan of this area adjacent to the sidewalk is located on Sheet A2.5.
 - **Tenth** – The building does come close this street frontage with a generous setback at the main lobby facing the Fantasy Studios Building across Tenth.
 - **Parker** – the building does step back along this frontage for some landscape, especially at the corner.

- **Massing / Height** A three-story building mass is proposed with dominant horizontal lines and step backs helping the building relate to smaller structures on San Pablo, Parker, and Tenth.

- **Vehicular Access** Driveway access to and from the site in on Parker. There is emergency access only required on San Pablo as well.

- **Parking** While much of the required parking spaces are located under the building on the ground floor, there is also a substantial amount of surface parking proposed on the south side of the parcel, as well as some along the north property line. Tree canopy coverage has been added wherever possible.

- **Open Space** Publicly-accessible open space is shown on the San Pablo frontage, as well as the corner of Parker and Tenth. Some terraces are shown on upper floors and help to break down the mass of the building.

B. Issues for Discussion:

- Setbacks
- Massing
- Building Design
- Colors and Materials
- Vehicular Access
- Open Space / Landscape Design

VII. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Committee discuss the issues outlined above and give the applicant advisory recommendations for further development of the design and how it can best fit as within the San Pablo Corridor.

Attachments:

1. Project Plans, received December 22, 2016
2. Applicant's Statement, received January 3, 2017
3. Tabulation Form, received January 3, 2017
4. LEED Project Checklist, received December 13, 2016

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