



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

**For Committee Discussion/
Majority Recommendation**
JUNE 15, 2017

2542 DURANT AVENUE

CONTINUED PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW

Design Review #DRCP2016-0020 to demolish existing asphalt parking lot at 2542 and 2538 Durant and erect a new 5 story mixed-use building with 32 residential units and ground level commercial space.

I. Introduction

This project is located on the North side of Durant between Telegraph Ave and Bowditch St. This parcel is located in the Telegraph Commercial zoning district (C-T) and in the Commercial Subarea of the Southside Plan Area.

This project was before the Design Review Committee (DRC) last month for Preliminary Design Review where it was continued. A summary from that meeting is further on in this report for your reference. It is returning for Continued Preliminary Design Review.

II. Background

The proposed project is the construction of a new five-story mixed-use residential building. Retail space is proposed for the ground level, as well as the residential entry, and required circulation space. The upper four floors would contain thirty-two residential units. A large roof top terrace is proposed for the residents' use, space for solar panels, stair and mechanical housing, and a decorative cupola.

III. Project Setting

A. Neighborhood/Area Description:

The subject property is situated in the vibrant mixed-use Telegraph Commercial Subarea of the Southside Plan Area.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map



Note: Double-hatched shading indicates landmarked properties.

Table 1: Land Use Information

Location		Existing Use	Zoning District	General Plan Designation
Subject Property		Parking Lot (2542) / Multi-Family (2538)	C-T	Avenue Commercial
Surrounding Properties	North	Church	C-T	Avenue Commercial
	South	Student Housing	R-SMU	High Density Residential
	East	Food Service	C-T	Avenue Commercial
	West	Mixed Use Building	C-T	Avenue Commercial

Table 2: Tabulation Form

Standard BMC Sections 23E.56.070-080		Existing 2538 Durant	Existing 2542 Durant	Proposed 2542 Durant	Proposed Total	Permitted/ Required
Lot Area (sq. ft.)		6,500	6,292	---	12,792	---
Gross Floor Area (sq. ft.)		11,400	0	26,896	38,296	---
Floor Area Ratio		1.8	0	---	3	5
Total Dwelling Units		12	0	32	44	---
Building Height	Average (ft.)	40	---	65	---	35 min. 65 max. (75 w/UP)
	Maximum (ft.)	50	---	79.5	---	---
	Stories	3	---	5	---	---
Building Setbacks (ft.)	Front	0	---	0	---	0
	Rear	39	---	5	---	10 (abutting R District)
	Left Side	5	---	5	---	0
	Right Side	5	---	9	---	0
Lot Coverage (%)		58	0	---	69.3	---
Usable Open Space (sq. ft.)		1,950	0	---	2,269	1,760 (40 sq. ft. per DU)
Parking	Automobile	5	30	---	0	0
	Bicycle	0	0	---	0	---

IV. Design Review Guidelines

The project is located within the Telegraph Commercial subarea of the Berkeley South Side plan. Our Southside Design Guidelines – Mixed Use Subarea applies to this project and can be found on the City's website.

The design guidelines for this subarea are intended to ensure that new construction respects the existing architectural context of this subarea and complements the scale and character of the rest of the Southside. The design should help unify the neighborhood and create consistent architectural character within the subarea. New construction can be creative but should complement existing buildings. Additionally, large underused sites create opportunities for contemporary design that respects the historical context.

The following are several key guidelines from our commercial subarea guidelines which relate closely to this project.

Building Mass and Height

- Building heights should respect the general heights in the Commercial Subareas.
- New construction in the Telegraph Commercial Subarea should reflect the scale and massing established by the older three to five story buildings in the subarea.
- During the design phase of project development in the Commercial Subareas, evaluate impacts of proposed buildings exceeding three stories to determine wind corridor and shadow impacts on the shadow impacts on the public sidewalk.
- Maintain a continuous zero front setback at the ground floor except to provide recessed storefront entrances, a special corner feature, or usable open space.

Building Design and Facades

- The proportions, rhythm, and attention to detailing established by the facades of older historic buildings should be reflected and reinforced in new construction.
- Street facades in general and the ground-floor level in particular should include elements of pedestrian scale and interest.
- Architecturally distinguish the floors to form a defined hierarchy of base, middle, and top. Architecturally distinguish the top of the building to provide a visual termination.

Storefronts

- Reflect the traditional storefront rhythm and proportion found throughout the Commercial Subareas. Emulate traditional elements such as large display windows of clear glass, bulkheads below the storefront windows and clerestory windows above, recessed front entries, and appropriate locations for signs and awnings.
- Clearly distinguish entrances to upper floors from storefront entrances through differentiated architectural treatment and materials.

Roof Shape and Lines

- On new buildings, there should be some form of articulation or detailing where the roof meets the wall.

Materials

- Utilize materials that provide a sense of continuity with the existing area structures, such as brick, smooth-faced cement plaster, finished concrete, tile and stone.
- Use high quality durable materials that convey a sense of permanence, are easily cleaned, and cannot be permanently damaged by graffiti or heavy cleaning.

The complete Southside Design Guidelines can be found online at:

[http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/uploadedFiles/Planning_\(new_site_map_walk-through\)/Level_3_-_General/04-11%20Southside%20Plan%20Design%20Guidelines%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/uploadedFiles/Planning_(new_site_map_walk-through)/Level_3_-_General/04-11%20Southside%20Plan%20Design%20Guidelines%20-%20FINAL.pdf)

V. Project Description

A. Requested Use Permits

- Use Permit for construction of a new mixed use building, per BMC 23E.56.030;
- Variance from 23E.54.070.F to allow dwellings on the ground floor of a mixed-use building;
- Use Permit for construction of more than 1,500 square feet of new floor area, per BMC 23E.56.050.A.2;
- Use Permit to decrease the 15-foot rear yard, per BMC 23E.04.050.E;
- Use Permit to reduce existing parking spaces for main buildings, per BMC 23E.56.080.C;
- Administrative Use Permit to allow architectural projections (e.g. elevator enclosures) to exceed the height limit (23E.04.020.C);
- Use Permit to exceed the 65' height limit, per 23E.56.070.B.3.

B. Density Bonus Information

No Density Bonus is being requested for this project.

C. CEQA Determination: Anticipated categorical exemption under §15332 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (“In-Fill Development Projects”).

VI. Previous DRC Summary – May 18, 2017

Preliminary Design Review was continued with the following recommendations: MOTION (Edwards, Pink) VOTE (5-0-0-1) Kahn – absent.

***Recommendations:
Massing / Site Plan***

- Overall, massing and scale look good.
- Rear section may not be the best configuration for the back units. Would support a reduction in setback to get a more cohesive plan for those units.
- Look at the back portion of the project and see if design and massing could be more resolved.

Main Residential Entry

- Entrance to the residences above is a concern. Consider plan shift that allows more activity and visibility for the entrance.
- Recommend entering through the front elevation. However, if the side entrance was more invigorated, that could make a difference.
- Relocate trash so that it doesn't interfere with the main residential entrance.
- Not enough 'eyes on the street' for the residential entrance.
- Strongly recommend a place where someone could wait to get picked up.

Building Design

- Elevations should be further developed for more resolution between the shingles and the base.
- Look carefully at the relationship of the columns on the west elevation to doors and windows behind.
- Recommend bigger windows where possible, project-wide.
- Show details, including railings and trim elements. More of the elevations are visible because of lower adjacent structures, and could use more detail.
- Consider wood balustrades on the west elevation instead of metal railings.
- Look carefully at the shed roof at the rear of the building. There may be a roof configuration that works better with the other roof forms proposed.

Unit Plans

- Back units appear to be too long, and not the most useful layout.
- Some members were fine with the long units at the rear, but look carefully at the light coming in. Could be more generous, even if only a hallway.
- Provide furnished unit plans that demonstrate the usability of the space.
- Look carefully for the best layout, such as access to the bathroom.

Landscape Plan

- Be careful with water use on the proposed plant palette.
- Check the space available for the proposed eucalyptus. It gets very large.

VII. Issues and Analysis

A. Changes since the Previous Submittal:

Trash Rooms Relocated Both the commercial and residential trash rooms have been relocated to the east side of the site. The architect will present an updated west elevation (Sheet A3.02) at the meeting.

Main Residential Entrance The main entrance to the elevator lobby and residential units above is still in between the new and existing buildings but an ornamental gate has been added to the renderings.

B. Issues for Discussion:

- Building Design / Details
- Colors and Materials
- Open Space / Landscape Design

VIII. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the DRC discuss the above issues and forward a favorable recommendation to ZAB with any conditions if necessary and specific direction for Final Design Review.

Attachments:

1. Project Plans, received June 6, 2017

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