



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/
Majority Recommendation**
AUGUST 17, 2017

2542 DURANT AVENUE

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 is before the Design Review Committee (DRC) for 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 – June 15, 2017

Preliminary Design Review was continued with the following recommendations: MOTION (Kahn, Edwards) VOTE (5-0-0-2) Pink, Clarke – absent.

Recommendations:

Main Residential Entry

- *Entry and lobby sequence not resolved; entrance should be protected / covered.*
- *Outdoor lobby is innovative and could work, but should be special. Consider an additional art opportunity.*
- *Look at making an entry 'place', possibly for mailboxes.*
- *Retail space could have windows into the entry space.*
- *West façade is still too blank at entrance and also further back under the corridors above; there is an opportunity for some detail; consider another art opportunity, bench, tile elements.*
- *Although there was some discussion that the entrance in between the buildings won't work and should have an inside lobby, it was also noted that with significant development it may work.*
- *Entrance may still be too dark, since facing north.*

Building Design

- *There needs to be some additional details to break up the facade, especially on east elevation; consider an upper band or a second shingle pattern to help break up the building mass.*
- *Should be more articulation of ground floor elements on the street façade. Needs further development.*
- *Look carefully at how the shingles transition to the base on Durant.*
- *Look again at the windows on the 'tail'; larger windows are recommended.*
- *Details should mesh better on this wood building.*
- *One member preferred stucco finish material with this building massing, but did acknowledge that with more articulation to break up the mass, shingles could be appropriate as well. (minority)*
- *Wood railings on west elevation would be more consistent with shingles. (minority)*

Unit Plans

- *Layout of units still could be further developed; bathroom shouldn't open directly to the living room.*
- *Show furniture in unit layouts.*

VII. Issues and Analysis

A. Changes since the Previous Submittal:

Refer to the attached applicant's response to the DRC's recommendations.

- **Main Residential Entry** Art locations added along the residential entry sequence; mailboxes, concrete and tile bench and windows added. Additional detailed drawings of outdoor entry sequence and interior entry stair included.
- **Durant Elevation** Decorative light fixtures added.
- **East Elevation** Decorative trim added around windows and water table added on upper windows.
- **North Elevation** Size of hallway windows increased.
- **South Elevation** Full length doors and Juliette balconies added to main south facing rooms on the upper two floors.
- **Unit Layouts** Furniture added to unit layouts.

B. Issues for Discussion:

- Building Design / Details
- Main Entry 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 August 9, 2017
2. Applicant Response, received August 9, 2017

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