



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

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**For Committee Discussion/  
Majority Recommendation**  
JUNE 18, 2020

## **3000 SAN PABLO AVENUE**

### **PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW**

**Design Review #DRCP2019-0013** to 1) demolish an existing two-story commercial building; and 2) construct a six-story, mixed-use building with 78 dwelling units (including seven Very Low-Income units), 1,248 square feet of commercial space, 2,320 square feet of usable open space, 52 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 43 vehicular parking spaces.

#### **I. Introduction**

This project is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Ashby Avenue. The 3000-3006 San Pablo Avenue parcel is located in the West Berkeley Commercial (C-W) zoning district, and the majority of the 1042-46 Ashby Avenue parcel is located in the Mixed Use Light Industrial (MU-LI) zoning district, with a small portion along the side property line to the east, located in the C-W zoning district.

The existing commercial building on the site would be demolished with this project. The Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) reviewed the historic evaluation for the existing structure on the site at their February 6, 2020 meeting and took no action.

This project is applying under the Housing Crisis Act, SB 330, which seeks to boost homebuilding throughout the State with a focus on urbanized zones by expediting the approval process for and suspending or eliminating restrictions on housing development. Housing development is defined as a project that is: all residential; a mixed use project with at least two-thirds of the square-footage residential; or for transitional or supportive housing.

It is scheduled for the Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB) on July 9, 2020 and is before the Design Review Committee this month for Preliminary Design Review.

## **II. Background**

The proposed 6-story mixed-use building consists of 78 residential apartments along with 1,248 square feet of commercial space. The project proposed 2,320 square feet of well-landscaped and furnished useable open space spread across all podium level private terraces, the podium garden, and the roof decks. The project provides secure indoor bicycle parking for the building tenants.

## **III. Project Setting**

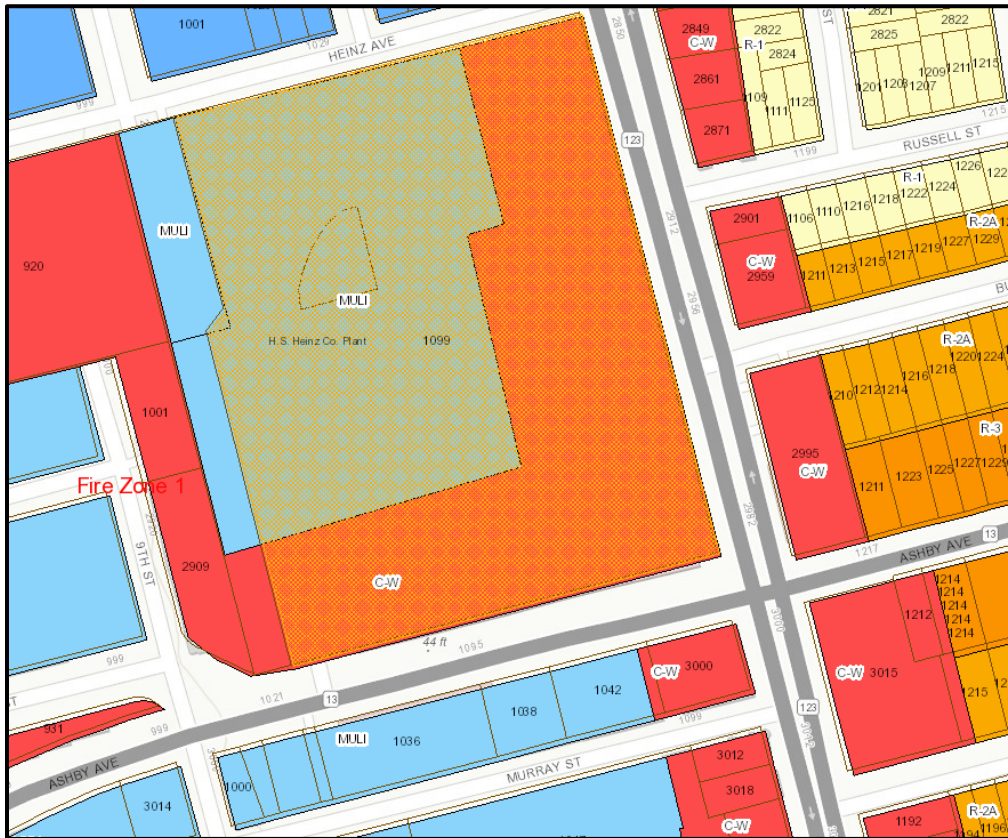
### **A. Neighborhood/Area Description:**

The site is located in West Berkeley, at the corner of San Pablo Avenue and Ashby Avenue. This portion of San Pablo generally consists of one- and two-story commercial and mixed-use buildings, and abuts a mixed use (light industrial and residential) area to the west with single story manufacturing and offices spaces. A five-story mixed-use building is on the property across the street to the East. Across Ashby to the North is the historic Heinz campus, which is a Landmarked property. Other nearby land uses are described in the table below.

### **B. Site Conditions:**

The street corner property is currently occupied by a two story commercial building and located between two streets, Ashby Avenue to the North and Murray Street to the South.

**Figure 1: Vicinity Map**



**Table 1: Land Use Information**

Location		Existing Use	Zoning District	General Plan Designation
Subject Property		Commercial, Discount Fabric Retail	C-W	Avenue Commercial
Surrounding Properties	North	Ashby Plaza	C-W	Avenue Commercial
	South	Retail – Liquor Store	C-W	Avenue Commercial
	East	Residential	C-W	Avenue Commercial
	West	Warehouse	MU-LI	Avenue Commercial

**Table 2: Development Standards**

<u>C-W Standards</u> <b>BMC Sections 23E.64.070-.080</b>		<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Permitted/Required</b>
Lot Area (sq. ft.)		14,000	No change	n/a
Gross Floor Area (sq. ft.)		10,734	56,075	42,000 max.
Residential		0	54,827	
Commercial		10,734	1,248	
FAR		0.76	4.01	3.0 max.
Dwelling Units	Total	0	78	---
	Affordable (VLI)	0	7	7 VLI for 35% bonus
Building Height	Average	30'-0"	69'-0"	---
	Maximum	31'-0"	69'-0" *79'-0" at Top of Stair and Elevator	50' max.
	Stories	2	6	---
Building Setbacks	Front (San Pablo)	0'-0"	0'-0"	0'
	Rear	0'-0"	0'-0"	0'
	Right Street Side (Ashby Avenue)	0'-0"	4'-6"	0'
	Left Street Side (Murray Street)	0'-0"	1'-6"	0'
Lot Coverage (%)		76.3%	86.3%	---
Usable Open Space (sq. ft.)		---	2,320	3,120 min. (40 sq. ft. per dwelling unit)
Parking	Commercial (1,125 sq. ft.)	0	2	2
	Residential	n/a	41	43
	Total	0	43	45
	Bicycle	0	52/12 (long term/short term)	2
<p>█ = Waiver or Concession, pursuant to State Density Bonus Law, requested to modify the district standard.                      * AUP requested to allow architectural elements to exceed the height limit in a commercial district, pursuant to BMC Section 23E.04.020.C</p>				

## IV. Project Description

### A. Requested Use Permits

- Use Permit for construction of a new mixed use building, per BMC 23E.64.030
- Additional Use Permit for demolition of a non-residential building, per BMC Sec. 23C.08.050;
- Administrative Use Permit to allow certain architectural features over the maximum height limit, per BMC 23E.04.020.C, for the mechanical penthouse on the roof

### B. CEQA Recommendation

Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines.

### C. Density Bonus Waiver/Concession Information

- Waiver of BMC Section 23E.56.070.B.2 to exceed height, to be 70'-0", where 50' is the limit;
- Waiver of BMC Section 23E.56.070.A.3 to exceed the maximum floor area ratio (FAR), to be 4.05, where 3.0 is the limit;
- Concession to decrease the required parking to 43, where 45 parking spaces are required.
- Concession to decrease the usable open space requirement in the Proposed Project by eliminating the roof deck where a roof deck is provided in the Base Project, providing 2,320 square feet of usable open space where 3,120 is the minimum.

## 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.
- **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.

## VI. Issues and Analysis

### A. Design Review Issues:

- **Neighborhood Context** This project is at the intersection of two important corridors in Berkeley, San Pablo Avenue and Ashby Avenue. It abuts a mixed use - light industrial zoning district to the west with single story manufacturing and offices spaces. A five-story mixed-use building is located across San Pablo to the East. Across Ashby to the North is the historic Heinz campus, which is a Landmarked property.
- **Setbacks** The project is setback 4'6" from the North property line to allow more pedestrian space, consistent with the mixed-use building across San Pablo. It also sets back 6'8" on the San Pablo side of the corner for a generous seating space in front of the commercial suite and flow-thru planters in front of the residential entry.
- **Massing** This six story structure is oriented towards Ashby and San Pablo. The massing steps back at the podium level on the North. The West and South facades allow for private patios and stormwater planters. The sixth floor pushes back to allow for roof decks at the Northeast and Northwest corners overlooking Ashby.
- **Ground Floor Design** The main lobby entrance is located at the Southeast corner of the property on the San Pablo frontage with the commercial space located at the Northeast corner at the Ashby San Pablo intersection. A trash room and bicycle storage room are located directly behind the residential lobby that opens out into the parking garage. An egress hallway connects the retail space to the trash room through the garage.
- **Parking** Garage space is accessed from Murray Street.

- **Open Space** Two sixth-floor deck spaces are proposed for residents, and both are programmed for a variety of seating areas. Overhead shade is proposed.
- **Streetscape** New street trees are proposed on both Ashby and San Pablo. The applicant will coordinate with Urban Forestry, Public Works, and Caltrans before Final Design Review for more detailed information.
- **Colors and Materials** Material palette is included in the drawing set and illustrates brick, integral color stucco, corrugated metal panels, and metal infill panels.

**B. Issues for Discussion:**

- Massing
- Building Design
- Building Entrances / Storefront Design
- Colors and Materials
- Landscape Plan

**VII. Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Committee discuss the issues outlined above and forward a favorable recommendation on to ZAB with specific direction for Final Design Review.

**Attachments:**

1. Project Plans, received April 6, 2020
2. Applicant Statement, received September 27, 2019

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