



**To:** Charles McCulloch,  
Chair, City of Berkeley Design Review Committee

**From:** Mark Rhoades, AICP  
Citycentric

**Date:** December 17, 2009

**Subject:** Parker Place - DRC Comments from November 19, 2009 Meeting with  
Applicant Responses

The following are the comments provided by the DRC on November 19, 2009 relevant to 2598/2600 Shattuck Avenue. Responses are provided for each comment. We appreciate the time, effort and care that the DRC has taken with this project so far. The many meetings and comments so far have considerably improved the project, even though there may remain disagreement for some on the overall architectural approach. The project team wishes to focus on the following four areas for its presentation on December 17:

- **Ground level orientation and retail fenestration for 2598 Shattuck**
- **Plaza program for 2600 Shattuck**
- **Residential Entry for 2600 Shattuck**
- **Landscape program, paving, and groundwater retention (whole project)**

These four issues represent the bulk of the comments provided at the last meeting. The remaining comments are provided responses, below.

### **Building Program**

#### 2598 Shattuck + Macro Cottages

1. It might be better to have the residential entry off of Parker Street instead of Shattuck Avenue (Bob Allen). That long, narrow corridor is not good for women (Carrie Olson) so maybe put the service entrance on Shattuck, not Parker. (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response:** Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The project reflects a revised site layout with the main residential entry fronting Parker Street. The stair tower is now enclosed in a decorative architectural feature. The building's services will be located at

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**the former residential entry court. Also, the pad elevation has been modified to allow the elimination of the extensive ramping/steps that was shown within the mews.**

2. Need a corner "arrival statement." (David Snippen)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The main retail entry for 2598 now incorporates a chamfered corner entry, more enhanced paving and operable windows. Revised design includes the addition of awnings and retail signage.**

3. Confirm accessible parking

**Response: In progress with City Traffic Engineer.**

4. Should the south macro cottage turn to Parker? (Carrie Olson).

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The entry to the southerly macro cottage has been turned to face Parker Street with a front yard that is typical of the residential pattern and rhythm on Parker Street.**

5. Include screened transformer pad at southwest corner of lot.

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. Screened transformer pads have been located along the Parker Street sides of 2600 and 2598 per new PG&E requirements.**

### 2600 Shattuck

1. Massing is fine (Bob Allen)

2. Maybe the back (west) side of the podium should go back up a bit? (Carrie Olson and Jim Goring) Maybe 3' high wall instead of open railing. (David Snippen and Carrie Olson)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The rear wall of the podium has been extended 42" to serve as combined balcony rail and planter wall. The planter depth and landscaping will prevent residents from peering down into adjacent rear yards.**

3. Should the façade wall be retained at the plaza gap (?). Will a gate be needed at the plaza at night (Carrie Olson)?

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. A narrow band of the façade wall is now shown as retained to bridge the gap at the plaza. It appears to provide a better façade perspective and the narrowness of the piece retained will not significantly reduce the morning sun for the plaza. The project will incorporate a highly decorative**



**gate and fence combination at this location. Addition of façade piece allows for easier inclusion of rolling/stacking fence and gate.**

4. Less curb cut is good on south end, likes stairs resolution at west end of east/west axis (Chuck McCulloch)
5. Trash access could be challenging (Carrie Olson)  
**Response: The longest distance from any dwelling unit to the recycling receptacles is approximately 125 feet. The project team does not believe this to be excessive. A single, common recycling and trash location is but one of the many “neighborhood meeting place” opportunities that is provided in the project.**
6. How will you really save the wall? Look at the costs of shoring, etc. (Bob Allen)  
**Response: The project structural engineer, Peter Yu (Yu/Strandberg) has opined that there are a number of methods for retaining the façade walls. The assumptions for these are included in the basement plans previously submitted. The assumptions for the costs of construction are within the projected construction budget.**
7. Starting to like the design, long ways to go for detailing (David Snippen)
8. Plaza wall cuts don't look right (Bob Allen).  
**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. A narrow band of the façade wall is now shown as retained to bridge the gap at the plaza. It appears to provide a better façade perspective and the narrowness of the piece retained will not significantly reduce the morning sun for the plaza.**
9. Open stairs look like tenements. (Bob Allen) Take advantage of stairs as art piece. (Chuck McCulloch)  
**Response: Open stairs have been treated with a decorative architectural screen.**
10. Can't comment now, but the massing is fine. (Carrie Olson)
11. Are those big balcony notches doable in a wood frame building, especially at the corners? (Jim Goring)  
**Response: A construction detail has been provided to show the constructability of the corner balcony notches (“double cantilever”).**
12. Include screened transformer pad at northwest corner of lot.



**Response:** Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. Screened transformer pads have been located along the Parker Street sides of 2600 and 2598 per new PG&E requirements.

## Materials and Fenestration

### 2598 Shattuck + Macro Cottages

1. Building looks cheap, hardiboard looks paper thin and execution depends on quality of materials. Rear building meets ground differently. Too important a location for this design. (Bob Allen) Share Bob's concern re: materials, Maybe it needs a material with more profile, needs more of a sense of quality. Look at materials more critically (Jim Goring)

**Response:** Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. Exterior material has been changed to stucco.

2. How will the ground floor be able to have so much glazing from a structural perspective? Agree with Bob on design + glass storefronts are more difficult to change over time, needs to be flexible, and needs to say "WOW!" Not sure about so much glazing (David Snippen)(Carrie Olson) (Bob Allen). Glass storefronts can be great - look at Crate and Barrel in Cambridge, maybe have some of that picked up on 2600. (Jim Goring)

**Response:** Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. Pillars have been incorporated into the ground floor store front glass to provide future retail flexibility and façade detailing (similar to Manville Hall).

3. Don't understand Bob's comments, design looks exciting, will enliven the street, different is not a bad thing particularly in this location (Terry Doran)

4. Proportion of windows v. solid areas is confusing, top of building is too heavy (David Snippen, Chuck McCulloch).

**Response:** Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The design team agrees that the parapet seems too heavy. It has been reduced in height and a rail added to the top for further definition.



2600 Shattuck

1. Skin quality will be important, windows will be important, detailing and texture will be important. (Jim Goring)

**Landscape Program**

2598 Shattuck + Macro Cottages

1. Look at how to make crosswalks/speed table as obvious as possible (Napa Lights?) (Carrie Olson). Opportunity for integrated design, sidewalks, setbacks, bulbs, etc... look at unified paving and treatment. (Chuck McCulloch) Streetscape is as important as everything else. (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The project is hoping for strong recommendations from the ZAB and the DRC in order to assist with the Public Works approval process because the extent of the proposed public improvements and community amenities are well outside their typical standards.**

2. Catch rainwater where possible, label all water infiltration areas, need detailed storm water plan (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation.**

3. Mews are nice. (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. The mews now benefit from a reduced pad elevation for the building to the east. The large area devoted to steps and ramps are no longer needed.**

4. Look at privacy between macro cottages and adjacent multi-family. (Carrie Olson)

**Response: We have reviewed the privacy issue carefully. There will be a 6' fence at the property line, with landscaping on the east side, including new tree plantings. The privacy between the new project and the westerly apartment building will be typical of the rest of the neighborhood.**

2600 Shattuck

1. Inset (stagger) a part of the residential entry fence. (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. Landscaping and a public bench have been added to the residential entry yard near the entry gate.**



2. Who will use the "Spanish Steps?" (Bob Allen) Steps need more detail, are we sure we won't have an ADA issue? (David Snippen) Likes LS concept, especially the plaza's "Spanish Steps" (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation. There was no ADA issue, but the steps have been removed for other reasons including that the project team does not want any potential of unequal treatment (ADA v. not) relevant to the project's program.**

3. Label all water infiltration areas, need detailed storm water plan (Chuck McCulloch)

**Response: Subject of 12/17/09 presentation.**

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