



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 16, 2012

2024 DURANT AVENUE/ 2025 CHANNING WAY PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW

Design Review #12-3000021 to construct 74 units student housing project with a mix of one, two, three, and four bedroom units and basement parking with 38 parking spaces.

I. Introduction

This project is located on a through lot between Durant Avenue and Channing Way, with the nearest cross streets being Shattuck Avenue and Milvia Street. This parcel is located in the C-DMU Downtown Mixed Use zoning district, in the buffer subarea.

It is before the Design Review Committee (DRC) for Preliminary Design Review. It was before the DRC for a Preview last month and those advisory comments are included further on in this report for your reference.

The Use Permit application includes a request to demolish the existing institutional building on the Durant side of the parcel. This is scheduled for the September meeting for the Landmarks Preservation Commission so they can review if there are any historic resource issues with that demolition.

II. Background

This project consists of two components with the taller six story structure proposed on Durant (60' height) and the four story structure located just to the south on Channing (43' height). Roof decks, as well as some ground floor open space, are proposed for both portions.

III. Project Setting

A. Neighborhood/Area Description:

This site is located in the C-DMU Downtown Mixed Use zoning district, and specifically in the Buffer subarea in what was the R-4 residential district before the Downtown Plan and subsequent Ordinance revisions were recently adopted. The Durant side of the project has apartment buildings to the west and across the street, and the parking lot of a large commercial retail building directly to the east. On the Channing side, there are apartment buildings to the east and across the street, with smaller residential structures to the west. While the project is in the C-DMU buffer subarea, the R-3 residential district is directly adjacent to the project site to the east.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map

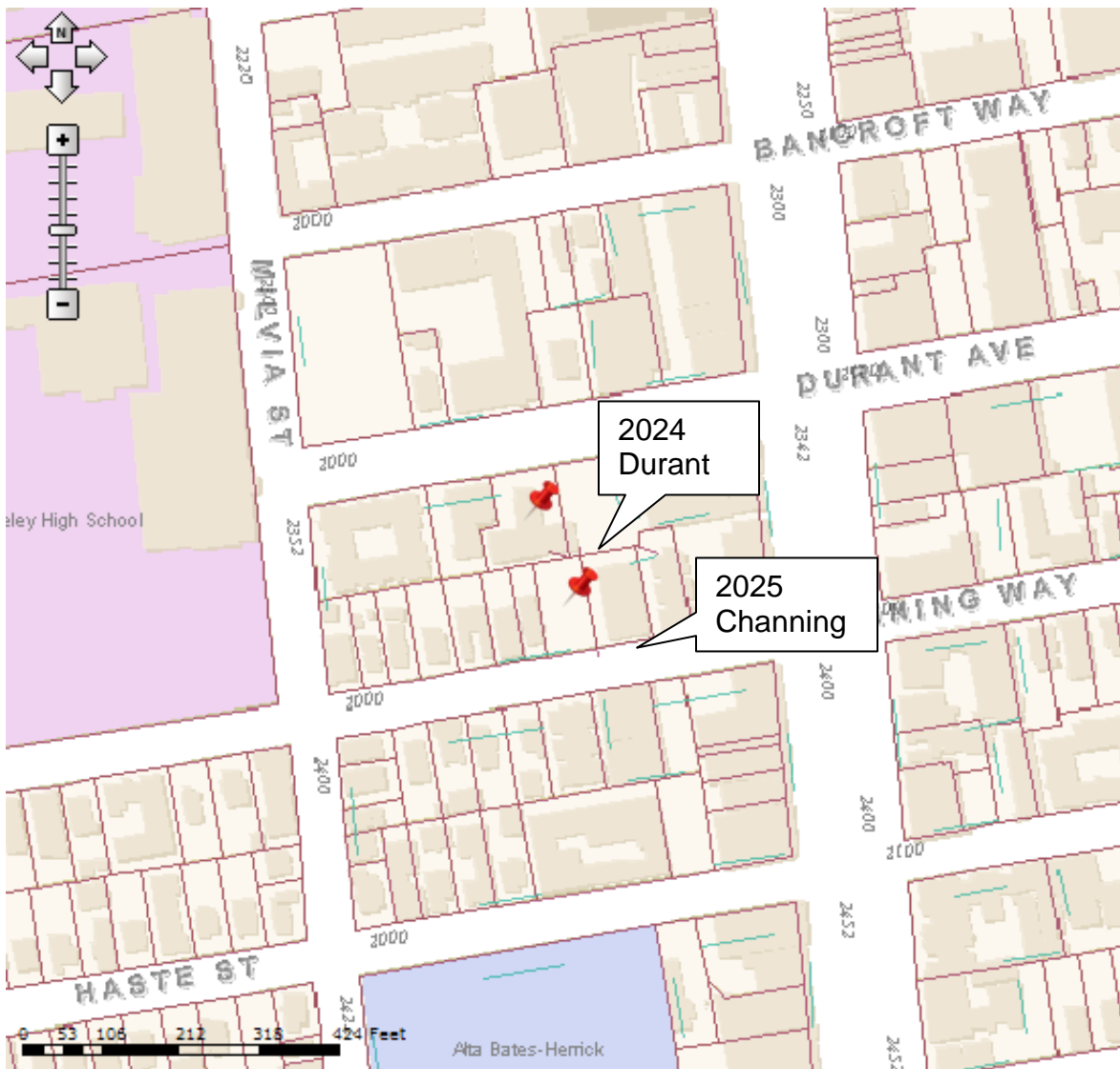


Table 1: Land Use Information

Location		Existing Use	Zoning District	General Plan Designation
Subject Property		Institutional	C-DMU Buffer	HDR (High Density Residential)
Surrounding Properties	North	Residential	C-DMU Buffer	HDR
	South	Residential	C-DMU Buffer / R-3	HDR
	East	Commercial	C-DMU Corridor	Commercial
	West	Residential	R-3	HDR

Table 2: Tabulation Form

Standard BMC Sections 23(click and enter #).070-080		Proposed Total	Permitted/ Required
Lot Area (sq. ft.)		22,679	na
Gross Floor Area (sq. ft.)		92,725	na
Floor Area Ratio		4.09	na
Dwelling Units	Total	74	na
	Affordable	*	*
Building Height	Average (ft.)	na	na
	Maximum (ft.)	42'6" & 60'	60'
	Stories	4 & 6	na
Building Setbacks (ft.)	Front (Durant)	15'	5' max
	Front (Channing)	15'	5' max
	West Side	5'	20'
	East Side	5'	0
Lot Coverage (%)		61%	na
Usable Open Space (sq. ft.)		6,872	5,920
Parking	Automobile	38	25
	Bicycle	15	na

IV. Design Review Summary from July 19, 2012

Advisory Comments:

General Building Design/Neighborhood Context:

- Design is good as well as the 6 – 4 floor split.
- Show model and include adjacent buildings.
- Street level should be more vibrant, but not necessarily more noisy.
- Design balconies carefully so they look attractive, as well as safe.
- Balconies may not be needed or used by students.

Open Space/Landscape Plan:

- Not sure that both roof decks are needed. Look at smaller spaces that are well-designed.
- Design Roof decks carefully for noise impact and safety.
- Reduce open space so there is more definition and less impact on adjacent buildings.
- Relook at roof gardens and pool as well. Reflecting pool will use too much water with evaporation.
- Rethink planting plan. Recommend hearty plants, wind screens, and more shade structures on the roof.
- Show how ground floor open space interfaces with adjacent senior housing. Design to mitigation noise.

Interior Plan / ZAB Issues:

- Develop the floor plan so that every bedroom has a window.
- Show bedroom dimensions. Some look tight.

V. Design Review Guidelines

Downtown design guidelines have recently been revised and updated in conjunction with the Downtown Plan and Ordinance revisions. While recent revisions added new information on architectural styles, site planning, building massing and open space, much of the previous guidelines on facades, roof design, storefronts and entrances, and materials have been retained and continue to be pertinent information. Following are several key guidelines which relate closely to this project.

- Windows should comprise 25-50% of upper facades visible from public areas
- Provide a terminus at the top of the building

- Clearly express ground floor entrances and include generous lobbies that can be seen from the street
- Use high quality, durable materials which convey a sense of permanence

A complete set of the downtown guidelines can be found on-line at:
<http://www.cityofberkeley.info/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=14260>

VI. Project Description

A. Zoning Information

The following Use Permits are being requested for this project:

- Level 2 Use Permit for construction of a new main building with dwelling units (23E.68.030)
- Use Permit for demolition of a non-residential dwelling unit (23E.23C.08.050.A);
- Use Permit to allow a maximum height greater than 50 feet up to a maximum of 60 feet (23E.68.070.A);
- Use Permit to allow a front yard setback of greater than five feet (23E.58.070.C);
- Administrative Use Permit to allow architectural projections (e.g. elevator enclosures) to exceed the height limit (23E.04.020.C);
- Use Permit to reduce the required 20-foot setback where the building exceeds 45 feet, on an interior side or rear lot line that abuts a residentially zoned lot (23E.58.070.C.2).

B. Density Bonus No density bonus is being requested.

VII. Issues and Analysis

A. Current Submittal

- While the basic building footprint remains unchanged, interior plans have been reconfigured so that all bedrooms have windows on exterior walls.
- Rooftop open space has been reduced in size and more definition added. Trellis structures, as well as the reflecting pool, have been removed from the design and green screens have been added as wind breaks.
- Ground floor open space has been further developed with an open air trellis with canopy and vertical screen with a sound deflector. See section shown on Sheet L1. Water feature has been reconfigured to be a stronger design element and will also help with sound masking.
- Entrance canopy on the Channing elevation has been further developed to add additional steel for more visual interest on that street elevation.
- While specific room sizes are not included in floor plans, each plan does have a graphic scale. The architect will bring specific information to the meeting.

B. Issues for Discussion:

- Elevation design
- Entrance design/signage
- Roof design
- Building materials
- Open space / landscape plans

VIII. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Committee discuss the proposed design changes since last month and forward a positive recommendation to ZAB with specific direction for Final Design Review for building details and open space design.

Attachments:

1. Revised Drawings, dated 08-02-12

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