

Memorandum

To: City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission
From: Rhoades Planning Group
Date: June 30, 2015
Re: 2211 Harold Way – July 9, 2015 Landmarks Preservation Commission
Response to LPC Comments on June 4, 2015

The purpose of this memo is to describe the materials provided for the July 9, 2015 Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting in response to comments that the project team received from the Commission at its June 4, 2015, meeting. These materials are supplemental to the complete plan set submitted to the Commission for its June 4 meeting.

Additionally, at the end of this document we have provided the design team's responses to the four design-related mitigation measures in the project's EIR, CR-2(a) – (d).

- 1. Water reuse and efficiency.** Commissioners asked about water reuse and efficiency, including the potential to use greywater from the on-site cistern, as well as the possibility of sub-metering units for water. Additionally, the suggestion was made to expand the cistern down to the lower parking levels to allow for greater water storage.

Response: The cistern is intended to be primarily for storm water runoff. Based on historical data, Berkeley gets approximately 25 inches annually, therefore the cistern provides adequate storm water collection opportunity. Due to parking constraints and other utilitarian rooms required, it is not possible to accommodate a larger cistern on the lower garage levels. Greywater from the community laundry rooms will be reused for irrigation for deck landscaping, and the landscape pallet will be appropriate to utilize grey water. At his time, the project is proposing to use a central system, rather than sub-metering the units, but the project team will look into this as an option for ongoing water management during the design development phase.

- 2. Look at guidelines for tall buildings used by other cities, such as San Francisco, from the Audobon Society to avoid harm to birds.** Commissioners mentioned particular glass types that avoid harm to birds.

Response: The design team is following up on this request and will be able to provide more information at the July 9 meeting.

- 3. Vision Glass.** It was suggested to look into Vision Glass, an all-PV glass material.

Response: The Glass systems intended to be used will have a maximum assembly U-Value of .36 for fixed windows, .46 for operable windows and .41 for the curtain wall/storefront system. In general the lower the U Value the slower heat is able to transfer through performing better as an insulator. The design intent for the glazing systems regarding the Maximum Solar heat gain coefficient will be .25 for fixed windows, .22 for operable windows and .26 for curtain wall/storefront system.

- 4. Energy information.** Commissioners requested additional information on the energy produced by the photovoltaics proposed as part of the project.

Response: An analysis of the proposed energy program for the project found that 5-7% of the project's total energy use will be produced on-site. This energy production will cover all core functioning and common spaces. The design team is following up with the LEED consultant and will be able to provide further information at the July 9 meeting.

- 5. Level 17 rendering.** Commissioners noticed an error in the perspective rendering views of the 17th level, and requested the rendering be adjusted to show the precise locations of doors, windows, and garden storage.

Response: This submittal includes a revised rendering showing a bird's eye view looking down to the proposed project and its three roof top gardens. This rendering shows the 17th floor windows and doors in the appropriate locations, as shown in the floor plans. It also shows planter locations adjusted to adequate distance from the parapet railings, as described in #9, below.

- 6. Locations of air handlers and mechanical screens.** Members of the Commission raised questions about the proposed locations of air handlers and mechanical screens.

Response: Most of the utilitarian mechanical/electrical rooms have been placed in the garage to be out of sight. Some mechanical rooms are accessed from the alley that opens onto Allston Way for maintenance as the alley acts as the service corridor. On the roof top deck of the 18th floor, a mechanical room has been designed to shelter mechanical equipment. In addition any mechanical equipment on the roof top deck will be screened due to the 42" parapet.

- 7. Bedroom sizes.** A question was raised about the sizes of bedrooms on the ninth level.

Response: Units in the project have an average size of 731 square feet. Bedrooms are adequate in dimension: one bedroom units have the bedroom at 11'-0" x 11'-6" and 2 bedroom units have dimensions of 10'-1" x 11'-6" for the master and 10'-1" x 10'-6" for the secondary bedroom. These dimensions are characteristic of bedroom sizes in mixed-use buildings in urban environments such as Downtown Berkeley.

- 8. Exterior lighting.** Commissioners asked for additional detail on proposed exterior lighting.

Response: Detailed lighting information is provided on the new Architectural Detail Sheet. Additionally, the proposal is for exterior lighting on the plinth level to automatically shut off nightly at 10:00 p.m. to avoid bright exterior lighting adjacent to the Shattuck Hotel guest rooms. Should the Commission wish, this could be incorporated as a Condition of Approval. Further, each unit will include building mandated window shades that effectively block light when closed and that maintain a clean and consistent aesthetic across the building when in use by residents.

- 9. Railings and safety in resident open spaces.** Commissioners requested additional detail about railings in the resident open spaces, as well as the locations of landscaping planters to avoid the

possibility of individuals climbing onto planters and risking safety hazards due to adjacency to building edges.

Response: Detailed parapet and railing information is provided on the new Architectural Detail Sheet. Additionally, the revised rendering discussed in #6, above, shows planters in appropriate locations to avoid dangerous placement next to parapet walls and railings.

10. Success of planting above street level. Commissioners requested additional information about the success of plantings on roof decks above street level, and whether they will require additional water as a result of wind impacts.

Response: PGA has successfully installed roof-top landscapes on multiple projects in windy locations, including on the 16th and 17th stories in windy portions of Mission Bay, San Francisco. In places, the building will provide shelter from the wind, and in other locations a combination of appropriate species selection and mitigation from other elements on the podium will provide mitigation. PGA has also taken three projects to the UC Davis wind tunnel to test them, and has used the insight gained in this process to inform the design proposal for the courtyard areas of the proposed project.

11. Plant details, especially water. Commissioners requested additional information about specific plants, primarily the water required.

Response: PGA will provide a state of the art automated irrigation system, as it does in all of its podium projects (over 30 at this time). The design is for low but effective water use, durability, and ease of maintenance. The controller will be connected by satellite to a weather station or on-site weather sensor that controls run times. The irrigation system will use subsurface, commercial grade drip, or bubbler emitters avoiding overspray. PGA does its irrigation in-house, and provides these services for a range of other Bay Area landscape architects.

12. Trees on roof top open spaces. Commissioners requested additional information on the sizes of trees proposed on the roof top open spaces.

Response: The tree species were selected for their appropriateness in this application. When it comes to on-podium plantings, the health of trees and smaller plantings is directly proportional to the health and volume of the soil. Trees need adequate soil volume. The proposed design includes the recommended amount of soil for trees based on the size of the species selected. Trees used on the podium are medium or small, and are reflected accurately in the provided renderings.

13. Cinemas as a Community Benefit. Commissioners requested additional information on the proposed movie theaters as a significant additional community benefit, specifically about whether or not the space would remain available for community use in perpetuity. Commissioners also requested additional information about the locations of the cinemas (i.e., if they are below grade, explain how they will maintain aesthetic quality).

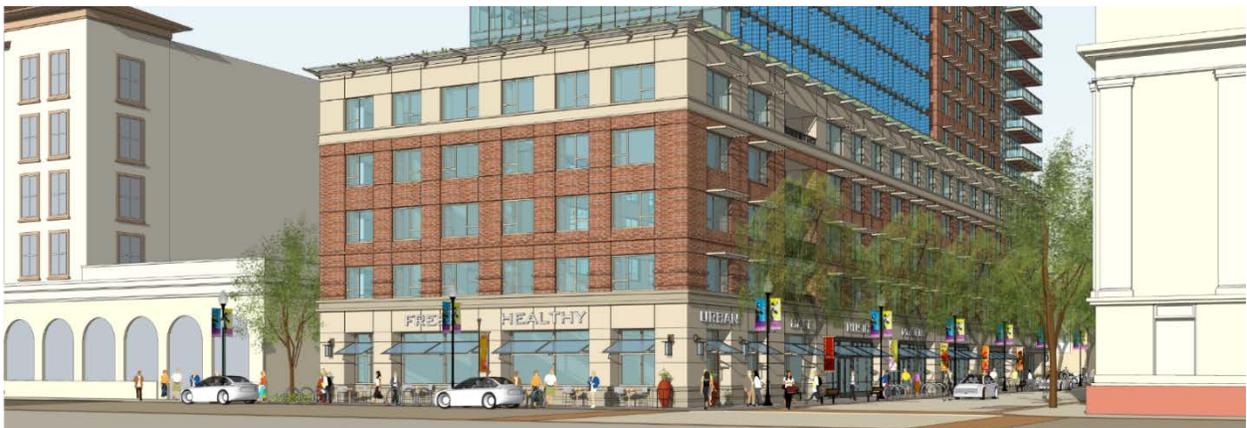
Response: The movie theaters are proposed to be rebuilt as a Significant Additional Community Benefit

Balconies. As a result of the recent tragedy at Library Gardens, we have been thinking carefully about the balconies proposed as part of this project, and want to provide some information as to their proposed structure.

The balconies will be part of the floor concrete slab, therefore will be structurally superior and extremely safe. Posts on the balconies for guard rails will be embedded into the concrete slab. A detail of balcony railings is attached.

Design Mitigations. The remainder of this memo provides the Commission with the design team's responses to the four design mitigation measures included in the project's EIR.

- 1. CR-2(a) Allston Way Elevation.** "New construction on the Allston Way elevation shall incorporate horizontal façade elements that reference the roofline of the adjacent 1912 restaurant addition to the Shattuck Hotel. Specifically, new construction shall incorporate a horizontal belt course along its Allston Way façade that corresponds to the cornice and parapet of the 1912 addition. This belt course shall include a cornice element or other horizontal embellishment that projects from the face of the building. (This element could consist of a simple projecting molding, for example, that is stylistically in keeping with the contemporary design of the proposed project.) By incorporating this belt course, the proposed project, despite being considerably taller than the Shattuck Hotel, would better maintain the scale and feel of the historic building frontage along Allston Way."



Response: As currently designed, the traditional brick base is accented with pre cast panels at its top (fifth) level as well as at the ground floor. These elements create horizontal relationships that tie to the adjacent Shattuck Hotel, while remaining deferential in their design, as they are lower than the corresponding primary horizontal elements of the hotel. Additionally, horizontal band details are incorporated into the brick, above the ground floor, corresponding directly to the adjacent horizontal band of the Shattuck Hotel. Should the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Zoning Adjustments Board further horizontal embellishment, as described in CR-2(a), such direction should become a Condition for Final Design Review, which the design team would respond to at that time.

- 2. CR-2(b) Kittredge Street Elevation.** "At the Kittredge Street elevation, the proposed project includes a two-story "hyphen" that separates the Shattuck Hotel from the 12- and 18-story portions of the

project to the west. Project drawings show the Kittredge Street façade of this portion of the project as a blank wall, potentially covered in vegetation. Such wall treatment is incompatible with the historic setting. Perforations (such as a door or windows) or other architectural elements shall be incorporated into the design of this wall so as to maintain an active street frontage that is more in keeping with the ground floors of the nearby historical resources and the larger Shattuck Avenue Commercial Corridor.”

Response: The vegetated hyphen wall not only separates the historic building from the new construction, it also follows the Downtown Design Guidelines for pedestrian interest when perforations are infeasible. The ‘hyphen’ wall represents a relatively small portion of the Kittredge-facing façade of the proposed project. This wall encloses one of the proposed movie theater spaces, and therefore windows and entrances are not feasible. As analyzed on pages 4.1-30-31 of the Draft EIR, CR-2b is drawn



from Design Guideline 8, page 28 of the Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines, which states that display windows, store entrances, and upper windows are encouraged on side and rear facades in order to articulate those facades in a manner compatible with the design of front facades. The Design Guideline goes on to state, “When this is not feasible, consider the use of ornament, murals, or landscaping along large blank walls.” In response to this guideline, the ‘hyphen’ wall is proposed with landscaping (a green wall), and is ornamented with movie posters and signage relating to the proposed movie theaters, allowing passersby to have an understanding of the use on the other side of the wall, and therefore creating an element of transparency even when openings are not feasible. The ‘hyphen’ wall signage is located to respond to the horizontal courses in the adjacent Shattuck Hotel building. As such, the proposal clearly meets the Design Guideline related to maintaining an active street frontage by using ornamentation and landscaping when perforations are not feasible.

3. CR-2(C) Glazed Aluminum Window Wall Systems. While the glazed aluminum window wall systems proposed for much of the project would clearly differentiate the proposed project from nearby historical resources, the design of these wall systems needs to be modified to make them more compatible with those resources. The proportion and pattern of void to wall in the wall treatments of the proposed project shall be modified to more closely match that exhibited in the Shattuck Hotel, the Public Library, the former Elks Lodge and the former Armstrong College building. Potential ways to achieve this include replacing the window wall systems with punched curtain wall systems similar to those used elsewhere in the project, or breaking up the window wall systems with windowless bays.

Response: The current design is in response to the majority vote from the Design Review Committee and the recommendation from Staff to use glazing on the east elevation. Additionally, the analysis from architecture + history submitted to the Commission dated April 7, 2015, found that the differentiation between the shoulder elements and the tower element maintain a diversity of massing and scale that is typical of construction in Downtown Berkeley. This differentiation would be lost if the east elevation was expressed in brick mass with punched windows. Additionally, the Staff Report for the May 7 meeting noted that, while the LPC may recommend design modifications to replace the glazing with a punched wall system, they may also find that the current design includes articulation, fenestration patterns, and shading devices to break up the massing and curtain wall system consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines. While we understand some individuals may prefer a punched wall system, we believe the current design is responsive to design comments received and provides a more simple and distinct neighbor to the Shattuck Hotel.

Design Guideline 13, page 29, states “Windows should comprise 25-50% of upper facades visible from public areas, and should reflect the rhythm, scale, proportion, and detailing of upper windows of landmark and significant buildings.” While the project design proposes use of glass on the shoulder portions, there are significant portions of the building, including the traditional base and the primary tower element, that use a more traditional approach with brick facades with punched windows. On the portions of the building that use glazing instead of punched windows, the use of panels, mullions and sunshades create rhythm and emulate shadows of more traditional building styles. It is also worth noting that, while some Downtown Berkeley Design Guidelines focus on compatibility with existing landmark and significant buildings, it also provides guidance for the enhancement of the downtown with contemporary architecture, such as Downtown Area Plan Mitigation Measure Cul-2, which encourages creative contemporary design. Therefore the Design Guidelines, and their implementation in this project, must represent a balancing of these two design goals.

For these reasons, the project team urges the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Zoning Adjustments Board to find the project design appropriate and prepare a Statement of Overriding Considerations to allow approval of the DRC Alternative, based on a finding that the current design includes articulation, fenestration patterns, and shading devices to break up the massing and curtain wall system.

Should the Commission recommend implementing Mitigation Measure CR-2(c) to replace portions of the glazing with more solid spandrels to reduce the portion of the elevations expressed as glass, this could be a Condition of Final Design Review Approval to implement Mitigation Measure CR-2(c).

4. **CR-2(d) – Recessed Entry Plaza.** “The recessed entry plaza at the corner of Harold Way and Kittredge Street shall be replaced with an entry design that maintains the zero lot-line setback characteristic of the nearby historical resources and the larger Shattuck Avenue Commercial Corridor.”

Response: The DRC Recommended Alternative includes a redesign of the corner at Harold Way and Kittredge Street, which previously included a recessed corner plaza. Instead, the plaza size has been revised to provide a smaller plaza with restaurant space proposed in the corner of the building. As a result, the building edge is much closer to the lot line. Additionally, differentiated paving is used in the

remaining plaza area to provide the impression of the footprint of the previous building. Therefore, as noted in the Addition to the Final EIR, dated June 2015, CR-2(d) is no longer necessary.