



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 Decision
FEBRUARY 20, 2020

**ACHESON COMMONS (1987 Shattuck Avenue, 2111-
21113 University Avenue, 2125-2145 University Avenue,
1922 & 1930 Walnut Street)
BUILDING SIGNAGE (FINAL DESIGN REVIEW MODIFICATION)**

Design Review #MODDRCF2019-0001 of exterior building signage of an approved mixed-use development consisting of three Landmarked parcels and one new development.

I. Introduction

This project is located on the north side of University Avenue, between Walnut Street and Shattuck Avenue, and is in the General Commercial (C-1) zoning district.

Final Design Review was approved on March 16, 2017. There were no conditions or recommendations related to signage from that meeting. As this project has parcels that are Landmarked, this sign program is also scheduled to be reviewed with the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) at their March 5th Meeting.

II. Background

Proposed building signage is listed below:

MacFarlane Building / Krishna (Building D)

- Two non-illuminated vertical “Modera” blade signs at the second and third floor on either side of the University/Shattuck corner;
- Horizontal tenant wall signs along the ground floor on Shattuck;
- Horizontal tenant wall signs along the ground floor on University; and
- One tenant blade sign at the ground floor on University (Krishna).
- Window signage as potential permanent signage. Would be coordinated with other tenants in same building block for similar location in storefront.

Bachenheimer

- Horizontal tenant wall signs at the ground floor on University; and
- Tenant blade signs at the ground floor on University.
- Window signage as potential permanent signage. Would be coordinated with other tenants in same building block for similar location in storefront.

Acheson Physicians Building (Building A)

- Two horizontal tenant wall signs along the ground floor on University; and
- Two tenant blade signs at the ground floor on University.
- Window signage as potential permanent signage. Would be coordinated with other tenants in same building block for similar location in storefront.

Ace Building (Building B)

- Two non-illuminated vertical “Modera” blade signs at the second and third floor on either side of the University/Walnut corner;
- One horizontal tenant wall sign along the ground floor on University.
- One horizontal tenant wall sign along the ground floor on Walnut.
- One tenant blade sign at the ground floor on University.
- One tenant blade sign at the ground floor on Walnut.
- Window signage as potential permanent signage. Would be coordinated with other tenants in same building block for similar location in storefront.

Walnut Building (Building C)

- One non-illuminated vertical “Modera” blade signs at the second and third floor on Walnut/Berkeley Way corner as an option instead of two on the University/Walnut corner;
- One rectangular wall placard and one blade sign at leasing office;
- One square wall placard, one vertical wall placard and two blade signs at parking garage entrance.

III. Project Setting

A. Neighborhood/Area Description:

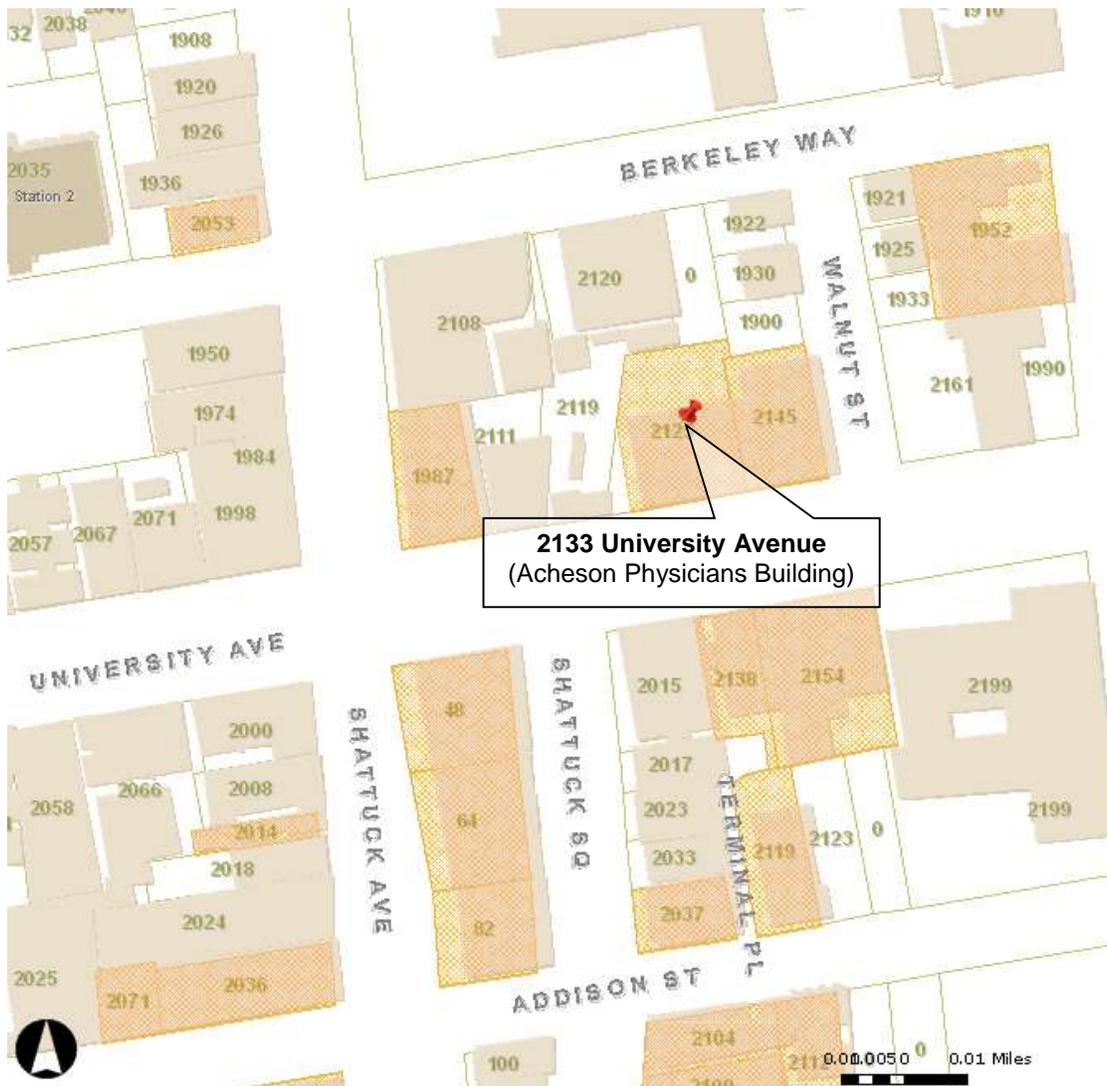
This parcel is in the Downtown Mixed-Use (C-DMU) zoning district, Outer Core Subarea, consistent with the parcels to the north, east and west. The Downtown Mixed-Use (C-DMU) zoning district, Core Subarea is located just to the south of the parcel. See Land Use table further below for more information.

Table 1: Land Use Information

Location	Existing Use	Zoning District	General Plan Designation
Subject Property	Ground floor restaurant/retail; offices above	C-DMU Downtown Mixed-Use (Outer Core)	Downtown (DT)

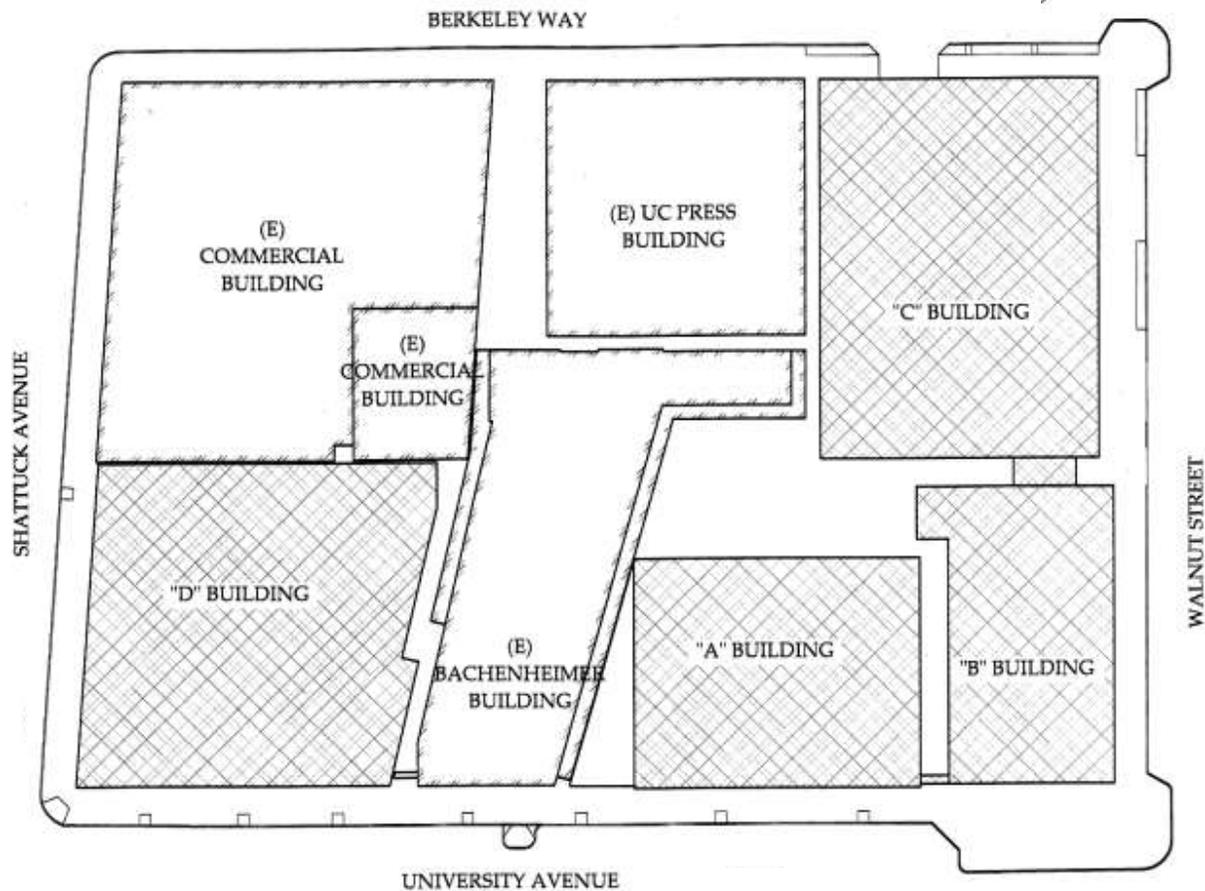
Surrounding Properties	North	UC Press/ UC Helios	C-DMU Downtown Mixed-Use (Outer Core)	Downtown (DT)
	South	Restaurant/retail/office	C-DMU Downtown Mixed-Use (Core)	Downtown (DT)
	East	Retail	C-DMU Downtown Mixed-Use (Outer Core)	Downtown (DT)
	West	Restaurant/retail	C-DMU Downtown Mixed-Use (Outer Core)	Downtown (DT)

Figure 1: Vicinity Map



Note: Double-hatched shading indicates landmarked properties.

Figure 2: Site Plan



IV. Consistency with Sign Ordinance and Downtown Design Guidelines

The plans submitted for this proposed sign program include excerpts from our City of Berkeley Sign Ordinance, Title 20, and from our Downtown Design Guidelines that apply to this project. This proposed sign program is consistent with the number and size of signs proposed, as well as with our design guidelines.

Below are several key guidelines which relate closely to this project. Refer to the Appendix at the end of the attached plans for the ordinance and design guideline excerpts referenced above.

- Signs should be an integral part of the design of storefront alterations and new construction. Signs should not obscure architectural elements.
- The size of signs and sign letters should be in scale and proportional to the space in which they are located, with letters typically between 6 and 16 inches high.

- Signs should reflect the character of the building and its use.
- Coordinate the design and alignment of signs on multiple use buildings in order to achieve a unified appearance rather than visual confusion.
- Sign lighting, if any, should utilize spot-lighting, halo lighting, or exposed neon.
- Storefront window signs encourage pedestrian interest. Window signs should not exceed 15% of the window area so that visibility into and out of the window is not obstructed.

V. Design Review Analysis

Building Blade Signs Both primary and secondary locations have been proposed for the Building ID signage. While the applicant did proposed two blade signs on both the southwest and southeast corners of the project, at Staff's request, they have also submitted alternate locations which do not have the same visual impact on these two corners. See pages 28 – 33 in the plan set that locate and render several different blade sign locations.

Staff recommends four blade signs that are spaced around the project (pages 32 & 33) for the same amount of signage originally proposed but in locations that are more consistent with the overall building design. The design alternate that proposed only two blade signs total for the whole project (pages 28 & 29) would also be appropriate but does not achieve the same signage as originally proposed.

Tenant Signage Options for tenant signage has been carefully designed to work with the unique aspects of each individual building in the project. While window signage is illustrated in each tenant space, the window sign location (whether at the bottom of the storefront window or in the center) would be coordinated among the tenants in each specific building.

VI. Recommendation

As this proposed signs program is consistent with the City's Sign Ordinance and our Downtown Design Guidelines, Staff recommends that the DRC approve this Final Design Review Modification for Signage on the structures that are not Landmarked and forward a favorable recommendation on to LPC for their review of the Landmarked structures in the project.

Attachments:

1. Project Plans, received February 6. 2020
2. Applicant Statement, received February 6. 2020

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