

ATTACHMENT B
PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION DESIGN REVIEW COMMENTS



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION

November 19, 2020

Brad McCoy
100 West California Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91105

Via email: brad.mccoy@huntingtonhospital.com

NOTICE OF DESIGN COMMISSION COMMENTS

Application for Preliminary Consultation

758 – 766 South Fair Oaks Avenue

Case #: DHP2020-10070

Council District 6

Dear Mr. McCoy,

On November 17, 2020, at a virtual public meeting, the Design Commission, acting under the provisions of Section 17.61.030 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, reviewed your application for Preliminary Consultation of a 100,000 square-foot medical office building with two levels of subterranean parking. The design guidelines applied to this review were the design-related goals and policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Design Guidelines for the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan and the Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines. The Commission generally agreed with the comments in the staff report and provided additional comments on the preliminary design, which are listed below:

1. The proposed site plan is arranged around a passenger-loading zone at the South Fair Oaks Avenue frontage and the northeast corner of the site. The overall organization of the site is not convincing and needs improvement, as the design inappropriately over-emphasizes a type of circulation and access that is not consistent with the applicable guidelines or vision for the Specific Plan area. Further, the circulation to and from the site is problematic, as most visitors will most likely be coming from the north. Future submittals shall more clearly explain the anticipated user behaviors and patterns and how this relates to the site design.
2. The entrance to the development should be relocated to Fillmore Street, and doing so could enhance Fillmore Street as an East/West entrance to the overall Huntington Hospital campus. Reconsider and further study the design depicted on page 32 of the Design Review Submittal, which utilizes the adjacent alley as an access point for a sheltered passenger drop-off area. This design more successfully engages the corner and de-emphasizes the vehicular access to the site. This design needs to be more closely studied and greater efforts need to be taken to ensure that this option, or a similar more refined option, are carried forward.

3. Future submittals shall more clearly demonstrate how the proposed design is compatible with the more recent development patterns and new construction found elsewhere in the specific plan area. The building typology and site design diverges from the other successful developments in the context, which have drop-off and parking located at the rear of the sites, not adjacent to Fair Oaks Avenue.
4. If the alley width is currently problematic, consider that the location of the site at the corner of Fillmore Street and Edmonson Alley provides opportunities for the alley to be widened along the width of the project site so that it could become more functional. Consider flipping the concept of the site design and widening the alley for improved circulation, rather than setting the building back from and creating a passenger drop off along Fair Oaks Avenue.
5. The emphasis on the large roof gardens is not a significant benefit to this design, as they elevated far above the street, and few people are likely to enjoy them. These amenities should be focused on the ground floor to provide a better public benefit and enhance the design. Further, reconsider the location and coordination of the building entries and the required open spaces and private nodes. The South Fair Oaks Specific Plan emphasizes the coordinated integration of private nodes and open space into projects in order to humanize the built environment. The design depicted on page 32 of the Design Review Submittal more successfully incorporates the required nodes into a design that celebrates the corner and street frontages and creates a more welcoming environment.
6. The proposed design creates a pedestrian “island” at the northwest corner of the site that is disconnected from the rest of the building. Due to the fast moving traffic along South Fair Oaks Avenue, this area is likely to be a hostile pedestrian environment. Although the drawings depict that the “island” would be programmed with seating and a fountain, it lacks shade due to its location at the intersection and will most likely not be significantly used. Reconsider the programming and design of the “island” and incorporate additional design measures to create an environment that feels safer and more comfortable for pedestrian use.
7. The site design and architectural design appears more appropriate for a suburban setting, rather than Pasadena. Once a more contextual site design is developed, an appropriate architectural style of the building will become more apparent. Reconsider the extensive use of glazing on the west elevation. Consider breaking up some of the larger areas of glazing by expressing the major horizontal or vertical structural supports on the exterior façade.

NEXT STEPS

This completes the Preliminary Consultation process. As your project moves forward to Concept Design Review, the overall design and the application should endeavor to address and respond, in writing and/or graphically, to the comments above. If the comments are not satisfactorily addressed, revisions to the submitted plans may be required and the approval process for your project may be delayed.

Brad McCoy
758-766 South Fair Oaks Avenue (DHP2020-10070)
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Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,



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cc: Energov; Address file