

## ATTACHMENT C

### Zoning Consistency and Adherence to Design Guidelines Overview:

**General Plan Consistency:** The General Plan designation for the project site is the Central District Specific Plan (CDSP). The CDSP is further broken down into sub-districts, with the project site being located in particular within the RM-48 In-Town Housing sub-district. This sub-district is an established low to moderate density residential area. The objective of the sub-district is to protect the existing residential character from incompatible intrusions, including requirements for sensitive infill development based on Pasadena's "City of Gardens" standards.

**The General Plan provides the following policies that are relevant to the project:**

**Objective 5 - Character and Scale of Pasadena:** Preservation of Pasadena's character and scale, including its traditional urban design form and historic character, shall be given highest priority in the consideration of future development.

*The proposed project would be located in an area that is in the process of transitioning to predominantly multifamily housing. Adherence to the City of Gardens development standards would ensure that the proposed project would be consistent with the existing development in this area.*

**Policy 5.5 – Architectural and Design Excellence:** The City shall actively promote architectural and design excellence in buildings, open space and urban design and shall discourage poor quality development.

*The proposed project has been reviewed by the Deign Commission **four times (January, June, October, and November 2007) and was unanimously approved by the Deign Commission on November 26, 2007.***

**Policy 15.1 - Sizes and Types:** Provide a range of housing sizes and types for the many sizes and types of families in the community.

*The proposed project would provide apartments with two to three bedrooms. This type of residential product would increase the housing options for extended households or those with children.*

**Policy 15.2 – Increase Supply:** Increase the total number of market rate and affordable housing units within the City.

*On-site affordable units are encouraged to increase the total number of units available to moderate income residents of the city.*

**Policy 19.3 - Bicycles/Pedestrians:** Promote the use of non-motorized modes of transportation, such as bicycles and walking within the City.

*The proposed project is located south of the Central District/Old Pasadena. To encourage walking and the use of bicycles for short distance trips into Old Pasadena, storage and bicycle lockers or racks will be provided on the site for the convenience of the residents.*

**Specific Plan Consistency:** The Central District Specific Plan, approved by the City Council in February 2005, contains the recommended heights, setbacks, floor area ratios and residential densities of the Central District Specific Plan. Height of buildings in this area is limited to 36 ft at the highest ridgeline as specified in the "City of Gardens" development standards. As proposed, the project would be within the allowable height permitted under the specific plan.

**The maximum density allowed** on the project site is 48 units per net acre. The proposal to construct 21 dwelling units is within the allowable density of the Central District Specific Plan. In addition, the 1994 Land Use Element placed a development cap of 5,095 dwelling units in the Central District until the horizon year 2015. The cap was adopted as part of the 2004 Land Use Element update. As of March 31, 2006, there are 2,020 available dwelling units remaining. The PAC process does not reserve or entitle this project for any of the remaining units. Available units are allocated at the time a building permit is issued.

**Citywide Design Principles, Guiding Principle 3:** "Show Creativity and Imagination...while a new building should respect the surrounding character, it should avoid nostalgic misrepresentations that confuse the relationships among buildings over time. The city will benefit most from creative designs that show individual expression, richness and variety..."

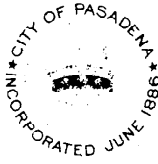
**District-Wide Guidelines: Building Design, Guideline BD1: Respect Surrounding Character:**

"...New buildings are occasionally clothed in exteriors that mimic past architectural styles. This nostalgic misrepresentation confuses the relationship between buildings over time, devaluing and questioning the authenticity of true historic structures. Pasadena emphasizes the notion of historical continuity – the relationship of built structures over time. This relationship expresses diversity within a coherent whole, reinforcing the unique and evolving historical and cultural character of the city."

**Zoning Code Section: 17.22.020**

**Multi-Family Residential, City of Gardens (RM-16, RM-32, and RM-48) district.**  
The purposes of the RM-16, RM-32, and RM-48 zoning districts are to:

- a. Provide appropriately located areas for medium and high density residential neighborhoods that are consistent with and implement the Medium Density, Medium-High Density, and High Density Residential, land use designations of the General Plan, and with the standards of public health and safety established by this Zoning Code;
- b. Promote multiple-family residential developments having maximum economic life and stability;
- c. Integrate the street and the site visually and functionally as a total environment;
- d. **Achieve an appropriate level of design quality consistent with or better than the surrounding neighborhood and the price range of the development;**
- e. **Relate new development to the existing environment in scale, material, and character so that Pasadena's inherent human scale, visual, and functional diversity may be maintained and enhanced;** and
- f. Restrict alterations to the existing grade, except for minor grading for landscaping purposes and for subterranean parking.



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
PLANNING DIVISION

November 28, 2007

Hugo Suarez  
120 West Bellevue Drive, Suite #100  
Pasadena, CA 91105

**NOTICE OF DECISION - CONSOLIDATED DESIGN REVIEW**  
**229-247 South Marengo— New Construction of a 21-unit multi-family complex**  
Case #PLN2006-00348  
Council District 6

Dear Mr. Suarez:

On November 26, 2007 at a public hearing in the Pasadena Senior Center, the Design Commission, acting under the provisions of §17.61.030 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, reviewed your application for concept design for the above-referenced project, which encompasses approximately 30,129 square feet of new construction at 229-247 South Marengo Avenue.

The submittals used for this review are two sets of plans, elevations, renderings (dated October 2007) and material boards. The design guidelines applied to this review include the Citywide Design Principles in the Land-use Element of the General Plan.

In its decision, the Design Commission:

**Environmental Determination**

1. **Acknowledged** that the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan designation, with the General Plan goals and policies for the area, and with the applicable zoning designation and regulations; and that the project site has no value as habitat for endangered or threatened species, and can be served by utilities and public services;
2. **Found** that approval of the project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality or water quality;
3. **Acknowledged** that none of the buildings on the property meets the criteria for designation as landmarks, historic monuments, or for listing in the California or National Registers;
4. **Concluded**, therefore, that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under §15332, (Class 32) "in-fill development projects."

**Taxpayer Protection Amendment**

**Acknowledged** the parties of interest in this project listed on the attached Taxpayer Protection Amendment form (Attachment A).

## Art Plan

**Acknowledged** that an application to the Arts Commission was submitted for the concept art plan on June 18, 2006.

## Findings for Removal of Specimen Trees and Replacement Trees

1. **Acknowledged** that the new development will cause the removal of one protected tree, a Cinnamomum Camphora (camphor tree), with a 36-inch DBH (tree #6 on Sheet L-PD);
2. **Approved** the removal based on the finding that: the canopy of the replacement trees (43 new trees @ 24" box or larger—tree legend, Sheet L-PD) will result in tree canopy coverage of greater significance than the tree canopy coverage being removed within a reasonable time after completion of the project (§8.52.075 A P.M.C.)

## Findings of Consolidated Design Approval

1. **Found** that the design of the project complies with the City-wide Design Principles in the Land-use Element of the General Plan and the Design Guidelines for Windows in Multi-unit Residential Projects:

Based on these findings **approved** the revised application for consolidated Design Review with **the following conditions**, subject to final review and approval by the staff:

### **Conditions of Approval**

1. The **paving material** shall relate to the base course cast-stone veneer represented on the elevations. The base course material shall be selected with special attention to the detailing of the corners and the interface with wood and stucco elements on the building.
2. The elevation drawings shall be revised to include **wood facias on all eyebrow elements** of the building.
3. The architect shall **revise and coordinate the floor plans** to reflect the final [approved] design.
4. The cast-stone **cap detail on the balcony rail/parapet** shall be included and shall reference the base material used on the building.
5. The **corner element detail where two windows come together** shall be reevaluated. (It may be wood or clear aluminum.)
6. The **scale of the [pedestrian] entry gates** shall be reinvestigated to consider making this element more substantial. The relocation of this element farther back from the street elevation shall be considered.
7. **The dimension of the horizontal railings on the balconies** shall be reexamined to insure that they are sturdy/strong enough instead of the half-inch dimension presented in the drawings.
8. **The door selection (size and material) shall be reexamined** on the front [street-facing] elevation.

This decision becomes effective on **Friday, December 7, 2007**. Before the effective date, the City Council may call for a review of this decision. If the Council calls for a review of this decision, it becomes void, and the application will be considered as a new item. In addition, you or any person affected by this decision may appeal it to the City Council before the effective date by filing an appeal in writing with the City Clerk (room S228, City Hall, 100 N. Garfield Avenue) along with an appeal fee of \$1,364.00. The last day to file an appeal is **Thursday, December 6, 2007**. Appeals must cite a reason for objecting to a decision. Please note that

appeals and calls for review are conducted as de novo hearings, meaning that the lower decision is vacated and the entire decision is reviewed anew.

This approval expires **two years** from the effective date. The approval may be renewed for a period not to exceed one year by filing a written request with the Planning Director prior to the expiration date (along with the fee for renewal of an approval). Any **changes in the approved design** for the project, whether prior to construction or during construction, must be submitted to City staff for review and approval. The municipal code authorizes the staff to approve minor changes. Major changes, however, must be reviewed as part of a separate application for changes to the approved project (for which the filing fee is equal to one-half of the original fee).

As many as two applications for changes to the approved project may be filed during a calendar year. Major changes may be approved only if there are findings of changed circumstances that justify revisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Odell', written in a cursive style.

Mark Odell  
Senior Planner, Design and Historic Preservation Section  
ph: 626-744-710 e-mail: [modell@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:modell@cityofpasadena.net)

cc: Address file; chronological file; Tidemark; City Manager; City Council; City Clerk

**The Issues Addressed in the Final Reworking of the Design Prior to Design Commission Approval, between August and November, were:**

1. Revised proposal from architect: The architect has restudied the **canopies** over the vertically stacked fenestration units for a more logical architectural expression (i.e., those not over doorways and balconies).

*Comments from staff: The canopies (eyebrow) had been used inconsistently on the building. The more consistent use of the canopies is over doorways and balconies, while elsewhere this “eyebrow” detail appeared randomly throughout the project over singular window units. Limiting the canopies to doors and balconies has helped to simplify the structure and reference “a logic” to their usage.*

2. Revised proposal from architect: The architect has restudied the overall **coloration of the project** of the **project** to assist in the further modulation of the elevations and to enliven the original neutral, monotone quality of the color palette. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Contextual Fit: compatible scale and massing; pleasing proportions. Visual Appeal: balanced composition*

3. Revised proposal from architect: The architect has introduced **alternative materials** on portions of the exterior elevations to add more visual interest and verticality to the building and to emphasize the projecting and recessing volumes of the structure.

*Comments from staff: The introduction of alternate materials on the projecting and recessing volumes of the structure has emphasized the modulating pattern established in the overall design. Additionally, the introduction of wood siding, applied in horizontal bands that further reference the horizontality of the design, has added greater warmth and texture to the building and given the structure added verticality. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Visual Appeal: balanced composition; articulated and expressive facades*].*

4. Revised proposal from architect: The architect has restudied the design details of the **decorative metal fencing** at the main entrance, balcony railings and perimeter locations. The re-design refers more closely to the horizontality of the banding on the facades of the structure and reinforced the more streamlined design of the building [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Residential Scale: inviting entries; quality detailing*]

**ATTACHMENT E**

5. Revised proposal from architect: The architect has coordinated the detailing of the **parapet walls** to articulate in conjunction with the recessing and projecting volumes of the facades on all elevations.
6. Revised proposal from architect: The architect has modulated the **roof/eyebrow detail at the upper-most level of the building** to give greater interest at the sky level of the structure.

*Comments from staff: Associating the projecting and recessing volumes of the building with the top of the parapet has helped to further animate the building. [source: City-wide Design Principles, Contextual Fit: compatible scale and massing; pleasing proportions. Visual Appeal: balanced composition]*

7. Revised proposal from architect: *The architect has increased the quality and/or coloration of the **paving materials**.*

*Comments from staff: The paving material now relates more harmoniously to the base course stone veneer represented on the elevations. [source: City-wide Design Principles, Residential Scale: inviting entries; quality detailing].*



LAW OFFICES

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RICHARD A. MOSS

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PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91101

TELEPHONE (626) 796-7400  
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CITY OF PASADENA

RICHARD A. MOSS  
WILLIAM C. FLEMING, JR.  
EDUARDO A. BRITO  
JERRY B. MARSHAK

MARK T. ROOHK  
OF COUNSEL

January 28, 2008

**Re: 229-247 South Marengo Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91101**

To Whom This Concerns:

As owner and occupant of the premises located at 255-253 South Marengo Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101, please accept this as my approval of the proposed South Marengo Townhomes now being developed by Prominent Victoria Corp., Helen Woo, and James Li.

If there are any questions, kindly advise.

Very truly yours,



Richard A. Moss

RAM/kg

LAW OFFICES OF  
ANN HAYES HIGGINBOTHAM  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
76 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91105

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CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

(626) 792-6741

January 24, 2008

The Honorable Bill Bogaard and City Council members  
City of Pasadena  
City Hall  
100 North Garfield  
Pasadena California 91109

Re: 229-247 South Marengo Ave.  
Case #PLN 2006 - 00348  
Agenda Item No. 6B

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Council members,

I represent Helen Woo and James Li of Prominent Victoria Corporation, applicants for consolidated design review approval for their project at 229 - 247 South Marengo Avenue. You have called the matter up for review, and it is on your January 28, 2008 agenda. My clients wanted me to send you this letter for your review prior to the hearing, so that you are fully informed about the merits of this project.

We confess that we are somewhat puzzled about why this was called up. The proposed project was unanimously approved by the Design Commission after several hearings at which our project architect, Hugo Suarez, satisfied each and every concern raised. We have not been given any guidance from any source about what the design issues are, which is somewhat unusual. Normally, we would know what the issues are so that we would be prepared to address them. We have inquired of the design staff, and they too are at a loss to know exactly which aspect of the project causes the Council concern. Our inquiries of the field representative for Councilmember Madison did not yield any information either. So we are in a position of simply pointing out that the project

conforms to each and every applicable design guideline for projects in this district. <sup>1</sup>

### **An extended family complex**

It appears that there is a general lack of awareness about my clients and their intentions, despite the fact that they have been forthcoming about this from the start. Ms. Woo has owned this property for more than 30 years and now wishes to build this 21 unit multi-family condominium project for her to move into along with her family members and Mr. Lee and his family members. It will be an extended family complex, in essence with most of the units being taken by Ms. Woo and Mr. Lee's family members. Apparently, this fact has been overlooked in the process.

### **A well designed Prairie School influenced project.**

The design for this project was inspired by the Prairie style made popular by Frank Lloyd Wright. The Design Commission specifically found that the design of the project complies with the City-wide Design Principles in the Land -use Element of the General Plan; City of Gardens Architectural Standards, and the design principles, criteria and guidelines adopted by City Council in 2002. <sup>2</sup>

The Design Commission made this finding because the project complied with the Citywide Design criteria for residential street environments by providing "highly visible street elevations". There are "at least two "Pasadena" building elements with local references in the upper loggias and roofed balconies". The Commission found that the site provided "places amenable to outdoor activity and use, and included amenities for comfortable social interaction" Of course this is important to the applicants, given the use to which the complex will be put, a place for their extended family to live. Finally, the

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<sup>1</sup> We note that one councilmember mentioned traffic when the matter was before the Council for possible call up. The traffic study which was done for the project concludes that the impact on Marengo Blvd is minimal. There will be a .2 percent increase in the number of vehicle trips on Marengo. The project will of course comply with all of the recommended conditions of approval in the traffic study. [ See attached letter from the Transportation Department] Also, this is a call up of a design review decision, and traffic is not one of the issues which is before the Council at this time.

<sup>2</sup>All references are to the staff report, which will be attached to the hard copies of this letter hand delivered to the City Council.

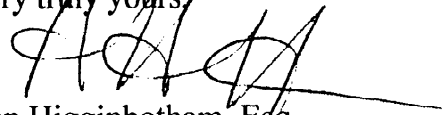
Commission found that the building entrances and orientation toward the street and public views into the courtyard conformed to the neighborly streets criterion, which seeks to makes a residential street a sociable place that offers a sense of security, with a layered transition from dwelling to street.

We have attached to the hard copies of this letter (which are being hand delivered to the City Clerk for inclusion in your packages) the staff reports which were prepared for this project's presentation to the Design Commission on August 27, 2007 and November 26, 2007 so that the Council can see for itself that the applicant has been most accommodating to design staff throughout the entire approval process. We believe that is one of the reasons that the Design Commission unanimously approved the project. As staff said in its report to the Commission, "the design architect has worked diligently to refine the overall architectural scheme for this project and the results have greatly improved the appearance of the building. ( November 26, 2007 staff report to the Design Commission)

The project architect, Hugo Suarez, will be at your hearing on Monday night, January 28, 2008 with a full power point presentation so that you can see for yourself why the Commission gave its unanimous approval to this project. Also, Ms. Woo will be present so that you can inquire of her if need be.

We are confident that the staff will present a positive staff report, and we ask that you make the findings and approve the conditions of approval they recommend so that this project can go forward.

Very truly yours,



Ann Higginbotham, Esq.  
Attorney for Prominent Victoria Corporation  
Helen Woo and James Li.

**(REVISED) STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Design Commission  
**FROM:** Richard J. Bruckner, Director, Planning & Development Department  
**SUBJECT:** Application for Consolidated Design Review  
 Construction of Twenty-one Multi-family units—RM-48 Development Standards  
**229-247 South Marengo Avenue**  
 Case #PLN 2006-00348 Council District 6  
**DATE:** Meeting of November 26, 2007

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The staff recommends that the Commission:

**Environmental Determination**

1. Find that the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan designation, with the General Plan goals and policies for the area, and with the applicable zoning designation and regulations; and that the project site has no value as habitat for endangered or threatened species, and can be served by utilities and public services;
2. Find that approval of the project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality or water quality;
3. Acknowledge that none of the buildings on the property meets the criteria for designation as landmarks, historic monuments, or for listing in the California or National Registers;
4. Conclude, therefore, that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under §15332, (Class 32) "in-fill development projects."

**Taxpayer Protection Amendment**

**Acknowledge** the parties of interest in this project listed on the attached Taxpayer Protection Amendment form (Attachment A).

**Art Plan**

Acknowledge that an application to the Arts Commission was submitted for the concept art plan on June 18, 2006.

**Findings for Removal of Specimen Trees and Replacement Trees**

1. **Acknowledge** that the new development will cause the removal of one protected tree, a Cinnamomum Camphora (camphor tree), with a 36-inch DBH (tree #6 on Sheet L-PD);
2. **Approve** the removal based on the finding that: the canopy of the replacement trees (43 new trees @ 24" box or larger—tree legend, Sheet L-PD) will result in tree canopy coverage of greater significance than the tree canopy coverage being removed within a reasonable time after completion of the project (§8.52.075 A P.M.C.)

**Findings of Consolidated Design Approval**

1. Find that the design of the project complies with the City-wide Design Principles in the Land-use Element of the General Plan; City of Gardens Architectural Standards, and the Design Guidelines for Windows in Multi-unit Residential Projects and includes:

229-247 South Marengo Avenue Consolidated Design Review Design Commission, November 26, 2007

\*Shaded comments were those issues addressed in a previous staff report



- highly visible street elevations (*Citywide Design Criteria, residential street environment*);
- rich visual detail and a craftsmanship feature constructed with unusual skill and care (ornamental metalwork on front fence and gate and tiled fountain) (*Pasadena Design Qualities, building design; City of Gardens, PMC 17.22.080.E*);
- at least two "Pasadena" building elements with local references (upper loggias and roofed balconies) (*City of Gardens, PMC 17.22.080.E*);
- Outdoor Rooms: A site should have places amenable to outdoor activity and use. Human Occupation: A site should include amenities for comfortable social interaction. (main garden courtyard is accessible to all residents). *Citywide Design Criteria*.
- Neighborhood Streets: A residential street should be a sociable place that offers a sense of security, with a layered transition from dwelling to street. (Building entrances and orientation toward street. Public views into courtyard). *Citywide Design Criteria*.

Based on these findings **approve** the revised application for consolidated Design Review with the following conditions, subject to final review and approval by the staff (~~strikethrough text references issues the design architect has restudied and resolved in discussions with staff~~).

1. **Study the overall coloration to assist in the further modulation of the elevations and to enliven the neutral, monotone quality of the color palette previously presented.** ~~A change in materiality in selected areas may be a more apt way of addressing this issue. [source: City-wide Design Principles, Contextual Fit: compatible scale and massing; pleasing proportions. Visual Appeal: balanced composition]~~
2. ~~Increase the quality and/or coloration of the paving materials. The extensive use of "pavers" and stamped concrete (as marked on the revised plans, contrary to the materials board presented previously) is out of keeping with the contemporary streamlined version of this project. The paving material should relate to the base course stone veneer represented on the elevations. [source: City-wide Design Principles, Residential Scale: inviting entries; quality detailing].~~
3. ~~Restudy the canopies over the vertically stacked fenestration units (i.e., those not over doorways and balconies) and consider omitting them altogether from these locations or changing them to balconies. The canopies (eyebrow) are used inconsistently on the building. The more consistent use of the canopies is over doorways and balconies, while elsewhere this "eyebrow" detail appears randomly throughout the project over singular window units. Limiting the canopies to doors and balconies would help to simplify the structure and reference a logic to their usage. The introduction of small balconies on the elevations where this detail appears may help to add consistency to the approach. The front elevations especially would gain by the introduction of balconies on the second floors of these street-facing facades.~~
4. ~~Consider introducing alternative materials on portions of the exterior elevations to add more visual interest and verticality to the building and to emphasize projecting and recessing volumes.~~

~~The extensive use of cement stucco and decorative stucco banding lacks richness and diminishes the modulating volumes of the facade. The introduction of an alternate material, on the more narrow vertical projecting volumes of the structure, or on corner projecting volumes (as at the main entry on the front elevation), would emphasize this modulating pattern established in the design. The introduction of wood siding, for example, applied in horizontal bands that reference the overall horizontality of the design, would add greater warmth and texture to the building, reference the banding implicit in the design, reinforce the concept of projecting and recessing volumes and give the structure added verticality [source: City-wide Design Principles, Visual Appeal: balanced composition; articulated and expressive facades].~~

5. ~~Reconsider the design details of the decorative metal fencing at the main entrance, balcony railings and perimeter locations. The re-design should refer more closely to the horizontality of the banding on the facades of the structure or it should be an alternate treatment (e.g., translucent or opaque glass panels for balconies and entrance gate area and decorative metal for the perimeter fencing) to reinforce the more streamlined design of the building [source: City-wide Design Principles, Residential Scale: inviting entries; quality detailing].<sup>1</sup>~~
6. ~~Coordinate the detailing of the parapet walls to articulate in conjunction with the recessing and projecting volumes of the facades on all elevations (as illustrated on the rendering for the front elevation).~~
7. ~~Modulate the roof/eyebrow detail at the upper-most level of the building to give greater interest at the sky level of the structure.~~

~~Possibly associating the projecting volumes of the building with the top of the parapet and the recessing volumes with the current location of the eyebrow detail would help to further animate the building. [source: City-wide Design Principles, Contextual Fit: compatible scale and massing; pleasing proportions. Visual Appeal: balanced composition]~~

## **BACKGROUND**

The design architect has worked diligently to refine the overall architectural scheme for this project and the results have greatly improved the appearance of the building. Redwood siding has been applied in a logical manner on all elevations of the building to create greater interest and to further modulate the facades. The articulation of the parapet and eyebrow detail now coincide with these recessing and projecting volumes on each elevation and aid in creating greater interest at sky level.

In addition, the architect has realigned the fenestration units on all elevations to create a more streamlined building. The further refinement of the light divisions on all fenestration units has also helped the overall design of the project to be more cohesive. Revisions have also been made to the quality of the paving materials and cladding on the base course to enhance the overall aesthetic of the building. Finally, the architect has refined the design of the pedestrian entry gate to the complex and associated this design with the design logic of

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<sup>1</sup> The main entry gate and other decorative iron features are new elements of this project. The main entry gate is no longer an art component.

the building itself. This new features subtly references the recessing and projecting volumes of the facade in its fabrication.

The Commission first reviewed the application for consolidated design in January 2007. At that time, citing concerns about the scale and massing of the building, it referred the project to a three-person subcommittee. Working with the subcommittee, the architect revised the materials, proportions, and modulation of the building. The Commission reviewed a modified design at its meeting on June 11<sup>th</sup> and continued a decision on the application for a second time to allow time for the architect to work on the design issues raised at this meeting. The commission reviewed this project again at its meeting of August 27, 2007 and also continued its decision to allow the architect to resolve design issues raised at this meeting. Since this time, staff has met with the design architect on several occasions to help facilitate the revisions to this project based on staff concerns and comments issued by the commission.

The new construction is a 21-unit courtyard-style condominium with subterranean parking. The project, which is replacing 18 existing units on two parcels, is on a half-acre site on the west side of South Marengo Avenue—south of Cordova Street. A two-story multi-unit Colonial Revival complex (1953, architect unknown, eligible for landmark designation) and a four-story residential building (under construction) are north of the site. A two-story Queen Anne style building (1893, Thomas Fellows/J.H. Bradbeer, listed in the National Register, borders the site to the south. A collection of bungalows, traditional style buildings, and 1980s-era townhouses are east of the site.

The new building has two three-story wings set back 25 feet from the property line and organized around a rectangular interior garden. With flat roofs, protruding canopies, horizontal groupings of windows, and plaster-coated walls, it has references, according to the design architect, to Prairie Style antecedents. Designed to comply with the development standards for a RM-48 zoning district, the building has three entrances facing the street. It also has a 15-foot outdoor entrance area, screened by an ornamental gate, with views into the interior garden. Perimeter walkways surround the garden, which lead to unit entrances for the rest of the building.

The subterranean parking level extends the development to the property lines of the site. The concrete deck within the front yard setback is depressed 24-inches below the sidewalk elevation (as required by code) to afford adequate soil depth to accommodate landscape requirements. A 13-foot wide driveway allows access into the subterranean parking garage from the northern most edge of the site along South Marengo Avenue.

Two private elevators lead to two penthouse-level units. These units as well as two street-facing units (#101 and #118) are accessible to people with disabilities. Several elevation changes occur in the courtyard. An accessible route through the main garden occurs along the south walkway and provides access to both elevators (see Sheets A1 and L-PD).

### **Finish Materials**

Finish materials include:

- 7/8" stucco with silica-sand finish coat and elastomeric paint
- 1/2" wide channel stucco reveals
- Redwood tongue and groove siding material (sample to be provided)
- Entry doors are framed in clear anodized aluminum
- Windows and balcony doors framed in clear anodized aluminum with low-E glass

229-247 South Marengo Avenue Consolidated Design Review Design Commission, November 26, 2007

\*Shaded comments were those issues addressed in a previous staff report



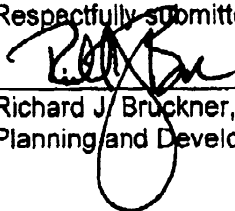
**Site Utilities**

The electrical vault, in the front setback, is adequately landscaped to minimize its visual impact. Gas and electric meters are located in the basement. The exhaust ventilation for the parking garage is adjacent to the elevator shafts and exists to the roof.

**Landscaping**

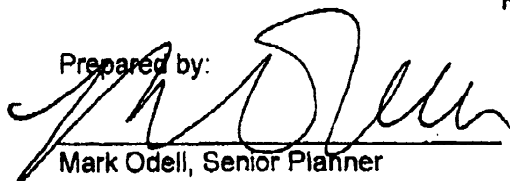
The landscaped courtyard is a viewing garden with a wall fountain. Three (of the six) 36-inch box California Sycamores are planted in tree wells, allowing the trees to fully mature. The landscape plan also indicates planting areas for trees, turf and shrubs within the front setback and provides a green buffer appropriate for this location. Much of the landscaping is in planters over a concrete podium that extends to the property line. Three 36" and four 24" box trees in this location will not fully mature above the podium deck.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard J. Bruckner, Director  
Planning and Development Department

Prepared by:



Mark Odell, Senior Planner  
Design & Historic Preservation Section

Reviewed by:

  
Jeff Cronin, Principal Planner

Attachments:

- A) Application & Taxpayer Protection Amendment Form
- B) Site Plans, Elevations, and Material Board

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Design Commission  
**FROM:** Richard J. Bruckner, Director, Planning & Development Department  
**SUBJECT:** Application for Consolidated Design Approval  
 Construction of Twenty-one Multi-family units—RM-48 Development Standards  
**229-247 South Marengo Avenue**  
 Case #PLN 2006-00348 Council District 7  
**DATE:** Meeting of August 27, 2007

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The staff recommends that the Commission:

**Environmental Determination**

1. Find that the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan designation, with the General Plan goals and policies for the area, and with the applicable zoning designation and regulations; and that the project site has no value as habitat for endangered or threatened species, and can be served by utilities and public services;
2. Find that approval of the project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality or water quality;
3. Acknowledge that none of the buildings on the property meets the criteria for designation as landmarks, historic monuments, or for listing in the California or National Registers;
4. Conclude, therefore, that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under §15332, (Class 32) "in-fill development projects."

**Taxpayer Protection Amendment**

**Acknowledge** the parties of interest in this project listed on the attached Taxpayer Protection Amendment form (Attachment A).

**Art Plan**

Acknowledge that an application to the Arts Commission was submitted for the concept art plan on June 18, 2006.

**Findings for Removal of Specimen Trees and Replacement Trees**

1. **Acknowledge** that the new development will cause the removal of one protected tree, a *Cinnamomum camphora* (camphor tree), with a 36-inch DBH (tree #6 on Sheet L-PD);
2. **Approve** the removal based on the finding that: the canopy of the replacement trees (43 new trees @ 24" box or larger—tree legend, Sheet L-PD) will result in tree canopy coverage of greater significance than the tree canopy coverage being removed within a reasonable time after completion of the project (§8.52.075 A P.M.C.)

**Findings of Consolidated Design Approval**

1. Find that the design of the project complies with the City-wide Design Principles in the Land-use Element of the General Plan; City of Gardens Architectural Standards, and the Design Guidelines for Windows in Multi-unit Residential Projects and includes:
  - highly visible street elevations (*Citywide Design Criteria, residential street environment*);

- rich visual detail and a craftsmanship feature constructed with unusual skill and care (ornamental metalwork on front fence and gate and tiled fountain) (*Pasadena Design Qualities, building design; City of Gardens, PMC 17.22.080.E*);
  - at least two "Pasadena" building elements with local references (upper loggias and roofed balconies (*City of Gardens, PMC 17.22.080.E*);
  - Outdoor Rooms: A site should have places amenable to outdoor activity and use. Human Occupation: A site should include amenities for comfortable social interaction. (main garden courtyard is accessible to all residents). *Citywide Design Criteria*.
  - Neighborhood Streets: A residential street should be a sociable place that offers a sense of security, with a layered transition from dwelling to street. (Building entrances and orientation toward street. Public views into courtyard). *Citywide Design Criteria*.
2. Based on these findings approve the revised application for consolidated Design Review with the following conditions to be submitted to the staff for final review and approval before the City issues a building permit for the new construction:
1. Refine further the **scale and proportions of the entry pavilions and shading canopies** on the front elevation and the courtyard elevations so they are more harmonious with the architectural design of the building. The proportions of the **pylons**—especially on the street-facing elevation—shall be included in this restudy. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Contextual Fit: compatible scale and massing; pleasing proportions. Visual Appeal: balanced composition*]
  2. To improve the visual integration of the courtyard elevations with the front elevations, add more glazing to the **recessed third-story walls facing the main garden and courtyard**. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Visual Appeal: balanced composition; articulated and expressive facades*]
  3. The painted cement-plaster coating of the exterior walls shall extend to the sidewalls of the **driveway ramp to the subterranean garage**. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Visual Appeal: balanced composition; articulated and expressive facades*]
  4. The window and door assemblies shall have **dimensional surface-mounted muntins** mounted to the exterior surfaces of the glazing. Notes confirming this condition shall be added to the window and door schedule in the drawings submitted for plan check. [source: *Design Guidelines for Windows in Multi-unit Projects*]
  5. Details of the **perimeter fencing** with "decorative iron" in the front-yard setback (notes on Sheet L-PD) and **address numerals** facing the street shall be submitted for review and approval.
  6. To add more texture and richness to the elevations, the **raised base**—on the street-facing modules and courtyard elevations—shall be of a different material (e.g. pre-cast concrete, glass-fiber reinforced concrete, stone veneer) than the cement-plaster walls. Similarly, the **curb wall of the tiled fountain**—a major feature of the main courtyard—shall be faced in a more durable material than cement plaster. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Residential Scale: inviting entries; quality detailing*]
  7. To improve the quality of the paving materials and add more uniformity to the open spaces, use more of the **slate pavers**—especially in common areas—in place of

stamped concrete. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Residential Scale: inviting entries; quality detailing*]

8. Add **benches**, seat walls, and similar features in the Main Garden to promote passive and active uses. [source: *City-wide Design Principles, Outdoor Rooms: A site should have places amenable to outdoor activity and use.*]

## **BACKGROUND**

The new construction is a 21-unit courtyard-style condominium with subterranean parking. The project, which replacing 18 existing units on two parcels, is on a half-acre site on the west side of South Marengo Avenue—south of Cordova Street. A two-story multi-unit Colonial Revival complex (1953, architect unknown, eligible for landmark designation) and a four-story residential building (under construction) are north of the site. A two-story Queen Anne style building (1893, Thomas Fellows/J.H. Bradbeer, listed in the National Register) borders the site to the south, and a collection of bungalows, traditional style buildings, and 1980s-era townhouses are east of the site.

The new building has two three-story wings set back 25 feet from the property line and organized around a rectangular interior garden. With flat roofs, protruding canopies, horizontal groupings of windows, and plaster-coated walls, it has references to International Style and Prairie Style antecedents. Designed to comply with the development standards for a RM-48 zoning district, the building has three entrances facing the street. It also has a 15-foot opening, screened by an ornamental gate, with views into the interior garden. Perimeter walkways surround the garden, which lead to unit entrances for the rest of the building.

The subterranean parking level extends developed to the property lines of the site. The concrete deck within the front yard setback is depressed 24-inches below the sidewalk elevation (as required by code) to afford adequate soil depth to accommodate landscape requirements. A 13-foot wide driveway allows access into the subterranean parking garage from the northern most edge of the site along South Marengo Avenue.

Two private elevators lead to two penthouse-level units. These units as well as two street-facing units (#101 and #118) are accessible to people with disabilities. Several elevation changes occur in the courtyard. An accessible route through the main garden occurs along the south walkway and provides access to both elevators (see Sheets A1 and L-PD).

The Commission first reviewed the application for consolidated design in January 2007. At that time, citing concerns about the scale and massing of the building, it referred the project to a three-person subcommittee. Working with the subcommittee, the architect revised in places the materials, proportions, and modulation of the building. The Commission reviewed a modified design at its meeting on June 11<sup>th</sup> and continued a decision on the application for a second time to allow time for the architect to work on the issues summarized in the following table.

**COMMENTS FROM DESIGN COMMISSION  
JUNE 11, 2007**

The new design has come along way; however, in many ways it appears that the old design was just melded with the new design.

The south building module is blocky and clumsy. The entry pavilions are awkward.

Commission suggested that the exterior surface be steel-troweled plaster not [sand-float finish] stucco.

Entry porticoes on north side are more successful than on the south side.

Is there a code reason for the lintel that connects the two building wings? The lintel looks awkward and out of shape and it may be better to eliminate it altogether.

**RESPONSE FROM ARCHITECT; STAFF  
ANALYSIS—AUGUST 27, 2007**

Response from architect (7/6/07): design has evolved.

Response from architect (7/6/07): Entry pavilions have been modified on the south elevation. The farthest pavilion to the south was narrowed, and the one closer to the main building entry was lowered to match the heights of the other.

*Staff comment: As redesigned, the entry pavilions are more organized and they now unify the two street-facing modules. Nevertheless, they remain "blocky" with too much solidity for the architectural styling of the building. The protruding shading canopies also appear to be overscaled; as drawn, these canopies (on the front elevation and the courtyard elevations) match in section the flooring for functional balconies. These canopies might be more successful if they were more attenuated in scale and detailed differently than the balcony decks.*

Response from architect (7/6/07): The intent of the design has been to use a silica sand stucco finish to obtain a smooth surface.

*Staff comment: The building would have more visual interest if some accent features, such as the shade canopies, the base, the vertical pylons on the front elevation, had a steel-troweled finish (instead of fine sand float).*

Response from architect (7/6/07): Entry porticos on the south side have been modified.

*Staff comment: Proportions and scale of entry porticoes could still be refined further.*

Response from architect (7/6/07): Entry lintel has been removed.

*Staff comment: Front elevation appears lighter without overhead structure.*

**COMMENTS FROM DESIGN COMMISSION  
JUNE 11, 2007**

The plans don't show the **lintel over the main entry**, and do not indicate a side opening for the entry pavilions.

On the new plans, the **interior courtyard** elevations have not improved but have rather worsened. The vertical piers between **balconies** appear to be stick-like, and balcony railings are rather linear. Balcony railings could use a more detailed treatment, similar to those of the entry gates, and in general the interior court should receive the same attention as the front.

Consider using 6" studs on windows to provide for deeper recess of windows/window frames.

**RESPONSE FROM ARCHITECT; STAFF  
ANALYSIS—AUGUST 27, 2007**

Response from architect (7/6/07): Entry lintel has been removed.

*Staff comment: Elevations (Sheet A7) illustrate opening in return walls of porticoes.*

Response from architect (7/6/07): Two alternatives were developed for the interior courtyard elevation. They both have a more solid base at the first and second levels and a lighter, recessed third floor with generous continuous roof overhangs. The thin vertical elements were removed, except in one area to balance to horizontal roof line.

*Staff comment: Redesign responds to comments from the Commission. The reorganization of the elevations into a two-story volume with a recessed third level is more successful. It also carries—to an extent—the glazed third-floor treatment of the street-facing elevations into the courtyards, and the courtyard elevations are more interesting with fewer vertical pylons and narrower balconies with more detailed railings. As with the front elevation, the proportions of the entry surrounds and protruding canopies should be refined further.*

Response from architect (7/6/07): Window details on Sheet AD-3 indicate the windows have a 3½" recess.

*Staff comment: Recess shown in the window section complies with design guidelines for windows in multi-unit residential projects.*

**COMMENTS FROM DESIGN COMMISSION  
JUNE 11, 2007**

Project has come a long way; however, the front entrance is a problem. The decorative **entry gates** are beautiful but are almost too detailed, too ornate for the design of the building.

**Art element** is primarily limited to the entry gate, which is a functional element. This is generally not preferred by the Arts Commission. Commissioner Bautista suggests the art component should be more fully integrated into the project design.

There appears to be a general feeling in the community that residential projects don't incorporate **high-quality materials**.

Think about **craftsmanship elements** of the most detailed parts of the building.

Commission asked the applicant to return with **properly coordinated plans**, and will then formulate conditions.

Finish Materials

Finish materials include:

- 7/8" stucco with silica-sand finish coat and elastomeric paint

**RESPONSE FROM ARCHITECT; STAFF  
ANALYSIS—AUGUST 27, 2007**

Response from architect (7/6/07): We will simplify the entry gate design and explore options to use the same detail in balcony railings and other places.

*Staff comment: Simplified design responds to comment from the Commission. Both designs, however, are appropriate for the architectural styling of the building. The mica insert is an imaginative addition to the design (detail B, Sheet AD1).*

Response from architect (7/6/07): Because of the change in approach by the Arts & Culture Commission, the artist involved in the project is exploring other art options.

Response from architect (7/6/07): The project has a level of quality of materials that exceeds other similar residential projects approved by the Design Commission.

*Staff comment: On the whole, the proposed materials are consistent with similar-sized projects approved by the Commission. There are opportunities to enrich the material palette by using pre-cast/GFRC/fossil stone cladding on the base and by upgrading some of the stamped-concrete paving in the common areas.*

Response from architect (7/6/07): We will explore options; comment is vague.

*Staff comments: Metal entry gates (detail B, Sheet AD1) and tiled fountain in main garden (detail E, Sheet AD2) are the two craftsmanship elements.*

Response from architect (7/6/07): Revised and corrected plans and elevations submitted for Aug. 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- ½" wide channel stucco reveals
- Entry doors are framed in clear anodized aluminum
- Windows and balcony doors framed in clear anodized aluminum with low-E glass

#### Site Utilities

The electrical vault, in the the front setback, is adequately landscaped to minimize its visual impact. Gas and electric meters are located in the basement. The exhaust ventilation for the parking garage is adjacent to the elevator shafts and exists to the roof.

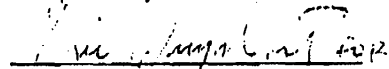
#### Landscaping

The landscaped courtyard is a viewing garden with a wall fountain. Three (of the six) 36-inch box California Sycamores are planted in tree wells, allowing the trees to fully mature. The landscape plan also indicates planting areas for trees, turf and shrubs within the front setback and provides a green buffer appropriate for this location. Much of the landscaping is in planters over a concrete podium that extends to the property line. Three 36" and four 24" box trees in this location will not fully mature above the podium deck.

#### Conclusion

At this juncture, the project has been through three redesigns. Each time time the architect has addressed issues raised by the Commission or the subcommittee. Notwithstanding this interaction between the architect and the Commission, fundamental portions of the project— notably the scale of the entry pavilions and the proportions of the canopies and vertical piers— still require additional study and refinement. By requiring further work by the architect on these issues, the conditions of approval presented in this report should lead to improvements in the design. The Commission has, of course, the options of appointing one member to work with the staff in a fourth evaluation of the design, or it may continue a decision on the application to a future meeting.

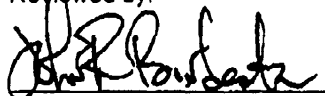
Respectfully submitted,

  
Richard J. Bruckner, Director  
Planning and Development Department

Prepared by:

  
Jeff Cronin, Principal Planner  
Design & Historic Preservation Section

Reviewed by:

  
John R. Poindexter, Planning Manager

Attachments:

- A) Application & Taxpayer Protection Amendment Form
- B) Site Plans & Elevations May 2007





## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 25, 2006

Mr. Hugo Suarez  
120 W Bellevue Drive Suite 100  
Pasadena, CA 91105

**RE: Approval of Traffic Assessment**  
**CASE: 229 - 247 South Marengo Avenue, Pasadena**

Dear Hugo:

The Traffic Assessment for the proposed project located at 229 – 247 South Marengo Avenue has been prepared by W.G. Zimmerman Engineering, INC. in accordance with the City's guidelines (dated July 25, 2006). The study found that the project will generate approximately 22 daily trips, resulting in a 0.2 percent increase in traffic on Marengo Avenue. In order to minimize the effects of the increase in traffic, the project shall comply with the following conditions:

1. The project shall participate in the Citywide Traffic Performance Monitoring Network project. This project is included in the City's Capital Improvement Program and is intended to address the community's particular concerns on traffic attributed by new developments in the amount of \$5,000. Funding must be received prior to the issuance of a building permit.
2. The project shall contribute \$5,000 toward the installation of pedestrian count-down signals at the intersection of Marengo Avenue and Cordova Street prior to the issuance of a building permit.
3. A circulation plan for the parking areas must be reviewed and approved by the Department of Transportation. The plan shall be drawn to a 1"=20' or 1"=40' scale. The plan shall include the proposed striping/configuration of parking spaces to ensure that vehicles can safely enter and exit the parking area.
4. The location(s) of bicycle parking shall be shown on the plans and approved by the Department of Transportation prior to the issuance of a building permit.
5. If proposed, the location of a new driveway gate shall be setback a minimum of 20 feet from the property line. The specific location shall be included on the site plan and reviewed and approved by the Department of Transportation prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Mr. Hugo Sanchez  
July 25, 2006  
229 - 247 S. Marengo Avenue  
Page 2 of 2

6. Any changes to the location of the driveway and/or driveway gate shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Transportation prior to the issuance of a building permit.
7. To minimize future on-street parking impacts, the City will not issue overnight parking permits to the future residents of this project. It is the developer's responsibility to disclose this restriction to future residents.
8. The project is not subject to the City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM)/Trip Reduction Ordinance (TRO) requirements.

This study is based on the project scope contained in the Traffic and Parking Assessment Report (dated July 25, 2006). Should a significant change be made to the project scope during the approval process, the applicant may be requested to prepare an updated circulation study.

Should the project become subject to a pending transportation impact fee, condition number two (2) above will not be applicable as it will be part of the fee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (626) 744-7424 or via e-mail: [jhayes@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:jhayes@cityofpasadena.net).

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOLENE M. HAYES  
Senior Transportation Planner

CC: Joyce Y. Amerson, Director of Transportation  
Eric C. Shen, Transportation Planning & Development Manager  
Sean Singletary, Department of Public Works  
Ariel Socarras, Planning Department