



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION

August 31, 2010

Mr. David Saeta
Senior Vice President
IDS Real Estate Group
515 S. Figueroa Street, 16th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071

NOTICE OF DECISION
Application for Concept Design Review
New Construction of a 159,829 square-foot mixed-use Building
680 E. Colorado Boulevard, Playhouse Plaza

Council District 7
PLN2009-00450

Dear Mr. Saeta;

On August 30, 2010, at a public hearing at 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 review for new construction of a mixed-use and office/retail project at 680 E. Colorado Boulevard. The submittals used for this review were site plans and elevations received on August 23, 2010. The design guidelines applied to this review are the Citywide Design Principles in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Central District Design Guidelines and specific plan. In its decision, the Commission:

Environmental Determination

Found that on November 16, 2009, the City Council approved an Environmental Impact Report, Adopting Environmental Findings, a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program along with the following entitlements—and that there are no significant changes or new information which would trigger further environmental review;

Findings for the Approval of Height Limit Exception through Height Averaging

Found that the request for a height limit exception through height averaging complies with the provisions of PMC §17.30.050, as follows:

1. The additional height provides for a **more interesting skyline**;
2. The additional height **will not be injurious** to adjacent properties or uses, or detrimental to environmental quality, quality of life, or the health, safety, and welfare of the public;
3. The additional height will promote a **superior design solution** that enhances the property and its surroundings, without detrimental impacts on views and sight lines; and
4. The additional height is **consistent with the objectives and policies** of the Central District Specific Plan and the General Plan.

Findings of Concept Design Approval

- A. Found that the project **complies** with the Citywide Design Principles in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Central District Design Guidelines and specific plan, if the project is modified to address the conditions listed below;

Approved the application for concept design review subject to the following **conditions to be considered at an advisory 50% review and at final design review** (both of which shall be conducted by the Commission):

Conditions

1. **Re-study the main, street-facing elevations of the project to achieve better symmetry and visual integration of the facades and the ratio of solid-to-void overall.** Generally, a study of the stylistic relationship of the lower and upper portions of the building to create greater architectural clarity and a more cohesive design logic is advisable. Additionally, further study (for 50% and Final Design Review) is required to **demonstrate that the "vertical-strip" windows are appropriate on the primary building module.**
2. **Restudy the corner balconies at the corner of Colorado and El Molino for greater architectural resolution with the overall design. Consider engaging the balconies more with the interior space** with the use of folding doors, etc., to give the exterior of the building a more balanced and uniform appearance at the corner. Also consider use of an articulating glass wall system or sliding window assembly in the recessed balconies that would allow them to appear as enclosed space.
3. **Restudy the ground floor canopies on the two-story building along El Molino** to reduce the heavy appearance of these design elements. Consider the possibility of adding a cornice on this elevation.
4. Continue to study (for Final Design Review) **the more heavily glazed area over the entrance to the covered paseo on El Molino** to better refine the details of this key feature of the building.
5. **Study closely the quality of the exterior plaza space** to insure this will be a successful part of the project. Look at other successful plazas in Pasadena. Consider judiciously limiting the number of steps used from the public sidewalk to the plaza area and retail storefronts on El Molino. Study the elimination of grade changes along El Molino to make the transition from the sidewalk to the plaza area and retail component as continuous or seamless as possible.
6. Continue to study (for 50% and Final Design Review) **possible shifts in materiality** to visually break-down the mass of the building and refine of the overall design premise. Materiality studies should include retail bulkheads and base course materiality as well as spandrel elements within the glazing system for the structure. In addition, **consider using a material upgrade for the entirety of the two-story base.** The two-story base on the main street-facing elevations, should have its own specialty material and refined character. Look to the neighborhood context for examples, e.g., brick, pre-cast, stucco, glass, specialty stone, terracotta tile, etc. Additionally, *insure* the specifications for glazing, finish details, bulkhead and locations for preliminary signage are well resolved for final design review. Specialty lighting should also be considered for this portion of the project.

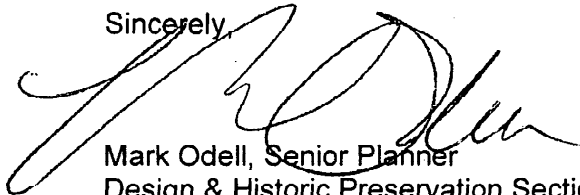
The Commission also supported the idea of allowing the architects to proceed through the next phases of design development with more flexibility and imagination as the project responds to comments and conditions from the commission and staff.

Effective Date ♦ Call for Review ♦ Appeal

This decision becomes effective on **Friday, September 10, 2010**. Before the effective date, the City Council may call for a review of this decision. If the Council calls for a review of your application, this decision 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 application for an appeal in writing with the City Clerk (room S228, City Hall, 100 N. Garfield Avenue) and paying an appeal fee of \$1,448.39. 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 decision is set aside and the entire application is reviewed as a new proposal. The last day to file an appeal is **Thursday, September 9, 2010**.

This approval expires **one year** from the effective date. The approval period may be extended once—for a second and final year—by filing a written request with the Planning Director before the expiration of the two-year effective date (along with the fee for renewal of an approval). Any changes in the approved design for the project, whether before construction or during construction, must be submitted to City staff for review and approval. The municipal code authorizes the staff to approve minor changes to the project including the conditions of approval. Major changes, however, must be reviewed as part of a separate application for changes to an approved project. Two applications for changes to an approved project may be filed during a calendar year. Major changes may be approved only if there are findings of changed circumstances that justify the revisions.

Sincerely,



Mark Odell, Senior Planner
Design & Historic Preservation Section
Tel 626-744-7101; fax 626-396-7457
Email: Modell@cityofpasadena.net

cc: City Clerk; Address file; chronological file; Tidemark; City Council; Council Rep. District 7



PASADENA PERMIT CENTER
www.cityofpasadena.net/permitcenter

RECEIVED

'10 SEP 8 03:32 REQUEST FOR APPEAL

CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Project Address: 680 E. Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, CA

Case Type (MCUP, TTM, etc.) and Number: Concept Design Review; PLN2009-00450

Hearing Date: August 30, 2010

Appeal Deadline: September 9, 2010

APPELLANT INFORMATION

APPELLANT: Pasadena Heritage & Pasadenans For A Livable City

Telephone: [626] 441-6333

Address: c/o 651 S. St. John Ave., Pasadena, CA 91105

Fax: [626] 441-2917

City: Pasadena State: CA Zip: 91105

Email: srossman@

APPLICANT (IF DIFFERENT): IDS Real Estate Group

pasadenaheritage.org *or*

mr.chomsky@pasd.com

I hereby appeal the decision of the:

Hearing Officer

Zoning Administrator

Design Commission

Director of Planning and Development

Historic Preservation

Film Liaison

REASON FOR APPEAL

The decision maker failed to comply with the provisions of the Zoning Code, General Plan or other applicable plans in the following manner (use additional sheets if necessary):

See Attachment, attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

PASADENA HERITAGE PASADENANS FOR A LIVABLE CITY

B. Rossman
Signature of Appellant

By Kim Chomsky

SEPT. 8, 2010
Date

* OFFICE USE ONLY

PLN # 2009-00450

CASE # _____

PRJ # _____

DESCRIPTION Appeal of Design Commission Decision - Concept Design Review 680 E. Colorado Blvd

DATE APPEAL RECEIVED: 9/8/10

APPEAL FEES: \$ 1,448.59

RECEIVED BY: *Mark Treasler*

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
CURRENT PLANNING SECTION

175 NORTH GARFIELD AVENUE
PASADENA, CA 91101

T 626-744-4009
F 626-744-4785

**ATTACHMENT TO
REQUEST FOR APPEAL FROM DESIGN COMMISSION
680 E. COLORADO BLVD. – CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW
PLN2009-00450**

REASONS FOR APPEAL

1. Environmental Determination: There are significant changes to the project or new information which would trigger further environmental review.
2. Height Findings: All of the Findings of the Design Commission concerning Approval of the Height Limit Exception through Height Averaging are in error, and, cannot be made. The applicant's request for a height limit exception through height averaging does not comply with the provisions of PMC Section 17.30.050.
3. Concept Design Approval Finding: The Finding of the Design Commission concerning Concept Design Approval is in error, and cannot be made. The project does not comply with the Citywide Design Principles in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, or the Central District Design Guidelines and Specific Plan, irrespective of the Conditions adopted by the Design Commission and listed in the Decision Letter. In addition, the project overwhelms, and is out of context with, adjacent historic resources.
4. Height Averaging: The Planning Director and the Design Commission both improperly applied all applicable "Height Averaging" City rules to the project. In addition, the subject parcel is not unique.
5. Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The Planning Director and the Design Commission both improperly applied all applicable "Floor Area Ratio" City rules to the project. In addition, the Central District Specific Plan provides that the allowed amount of square footage may be exceeded only upon approval which is initiated at the Planning Commission, and, therefore, the Design Commission exceeded its jurisdiction in approving additional square footage in Zone 1 over the amount allowed in the Specific Plan.
6. "Minor" Modification to Approved Adjustment Permit for Height and FAR: The modification of the project building massing approved by the Design Commission, which the Decision Letter asserts was directed by the City Council at its June 7, 2010, Hearing and by the Design Commission subcommittee, is not a "minor" modification within the meaning of the provisions of PMC Section 17.64.050 (specifically section B.), and, therefore, cannot be delegated for approval to the Planning Director. Such delegation is, or would be, improper. The modification is a "major" modification within the meaning of said Code provisions, and, therefore, can only be approved by the applicable review authority through a new permit application.