



**PASADENA  
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CITY CLERK

18 JAN 22 10:41AM

January 19, 2018

Mayor Terry Tornek and Members of the City Council  
City of Pasadena  
100 North Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, California 91101

RE: 86 South Fair Oaks Avenue

Dear Mayor Tornek and Council Members:

On behalf of Pasadena Heritage, I am writing to express our concerns about the project proposed for 86 South Fair Oaks Avenue which will be presented to City Council on January 22 for your information.

As you may know, this project is proposed to fill in the block bounded on the north by the Green Hotel Apartments and on the east by the Castle Green and has been in development for several years. A version of the project was close to completion three years ago but never received final approval by the Design Commission. The project before you now is a new iteration of that proposal and is larger and completely redesigned.

Pasadena Heritage representatives attended the Design Commission preliminary consultation where the new project concept was introduced. We have also met informally with the project team and provided comments on each occasion. We expressed concerns about the size of the project, its impacts on the Castle Green and Green Hotel landmark buildings, impacts on views of the historic buildings, and the design approach which differs significantly from the previous version. We find that the new project needs major redesign in order to achieve compatibility with adjacent historic buildings and, more broadly, with the Old Pasadena Historic District.

We understand that the January 22<sup>nd</sup> presentation is an opportunity for the Council to become informed about the project and that no decisions will be considered. However, we ask you to please consider the serious challenges this important project presents. As stated in the staff report, the project does not comply with all applicable code requirements. We urge you to make the following requests of the development team as it moves forward:

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- Reduce the overall size of the project to provide for more design flexibility, preserve views of the adjacent historic buildings, and allow for more landscaped space within the project.
- Reduce the height of the building along Dayton Street, create a more graceful, lower-scale connection between the new project and the Castle Green and preserve more views of the Castle Green and Hotel Green from Central Park.
- Construct all of the parking underground which would remove the unfortunate large parking structure wall on the interior of the site.
- Significantly redesign the project to achieve more compatibility with the adjacent historic buildings and the Old Pasadena Historic District. Reconsider the previous design approach which evolved through an extensive design review process several years ago.

Attached are more detailed comments we presented verbally at the Design Commission and in writing to the Goldrich Kest development team at their request.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely yours,



Susan N. Mossman  
Executive Director

Attachment

**PASADENA HERITAGE**

651 S. St. John Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91105

December 27, 2017

**Project Comments -- Green Hotel site**

*These comments are based on the Design Commission Preliminary Consultation presentation and design preview meeting at Pasadena Heritage. Similar comments were given in person by Pasadena Heritage representatives present at these meetings.*

In reviewing the new version of the project proposed for the SE corner of Dayton Street and Fair Oaks, Pasadena Heritage representatives had the following observations, questions and comments.

The building might be described as having three component parts – the largest portion runs along Fair Oaks (Portion 1), a second section faces Central Park along Dayton Street (Portion 2), and the third section is a wing that runs east from Portion 1, to the north of Portion 2 in the middle of the site.

**Fair Oaks – Portion 1**

This is the largest and tallest component of the complex. It appears as a fairly simple block with uniform building elements including façade design, fenestration and recessed balconies, and roofline or parapet design at the top. The southern end of this building has a different character, facing south and described as calling attention to the corner and balancing the twin tower element of the Castle Green at its southern end.

- Storefronts along Fair Oaks pick up design elements and rhythm common in Old Pasadena including transom windows. These relate well to the general character of the District and reflect earlier design patterns common to Old Pasadena.
- Decorative elements described, including Moorish-inspired screening and window details could not be adequately seen or understood from the drawings. These elements, if done well, could provide more personality and character to the building but it is otherwise very plain and uniform along Fair Oaks. There is some visual reference to other large-scale buildings in Old Pasadena, but more definition and architectural interest in needed.
- There is no visual reference to the Wooster block at the corner at Green Street – which is quite distinctive. Some subtle connection to this building could be explored.

- Recessed balconies, especially along busy Fair Oaks, are appropriate.
- A definite building “top” or roof element should be explored.
- The southern portion of this building should indeed make a statement as seen by those coming north on Fair Oaks. This is also the logical place for a balancing element to the Castle Green towers. The expression shown in the drawings is too simple, too undefined, not notable.

### **Dayton Street - Portion 2**

This part of the project is distinctly different than Portion 1, which could be a successful approach, and was described as having been inspired by Victorian-era green houses with delicate framing and lots of glass and transparency.

- The green house reference does not come through in the drawings. The delicacy or intricacy of a Victorian structure is not evident.
- Portion 2 can, we believe, be successfully differentiated from the Portion 1 building, but they should be related and have common elements or materials or linkages so that they still look connected. We don't see this relationship in the drawings.

### **Interior Wing - Portion 3**

This is the least attractive or successful part of the design in our opinion. It does not appear related to the other two in any cohesive or attractive way.

- The extended balconies are too large and appear foreign to the rest of the design.

### **Organization of Open Space**

- There was little detail showing the ground-level courtyard between Portion 2 and Portion 3. Will this courtyard ever have sunlight? Is it large enough to provide meaningful open space for the residents?
- The pool is located on top of the parking deck – what will this area look like? Many of the units will look down on this open space so it should be especially attractive and appealing. How will residents access the pool area?
- The driveway locations are problematic due to the narrowness of Dayton Street for the primary access point. Are there alternatives to the proposed location of the driveway?

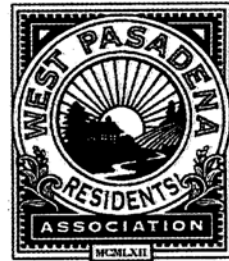
- It seems awkward to have the loading area and its entry on Fair Oaks Avenue. The loading area will not be an attractive site feature for residents. What are the options for locating a loading area?
- There was mention of unusual set-back requirements being imposed by the City – we would like to understand that issue better and the reasons for it, if true, and learn how it will affect project design.

**Previous Design Should be Reconsidered**

Pasadena Heritage representatives and others commented that the previous project design had achieved a level of compatibility and acceptability that was far superior to this new design. We asked, and some Design Commissioners also requested, that the earlier design be revisited and reconsidered as a design approach.

CITY CLERK

18 JAN 22 01:32PM



January 21, 2018

Mr. Kevin Johnson  
Senior Planner, DHP  
Planning and Community Development  
175 Garfield St.  
Pasadena, CA 91101

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment regarding the design and configuration of the new construction at 86 South Fair Oaks Avenue.

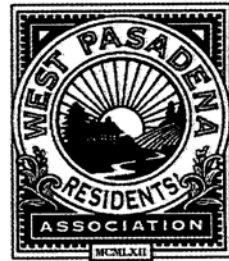
WPRA respects the right of the owners to develop their parcel, and submits the following observations in the spirit of providing constructive feedback. The following comments and questions are in response to the Applicant's presentation at Preliminary Design Review.

As we understand it, the building planned for the NE corner of Fair Oaks Ave. and Dayton Street will be a 6-7 story 96,550 square feet mixed-use building with 16,780 square feet of commercial space and 87 residential units, exercising 35% density bonus.

- ♦ Massing and scale of proposed new building does not respond to the sensitive historic context: across from Central Park, adjacent to Hotel Green apartments and Castle Green, and within Old Pasadena National Register District.
- ♦ Was the original unbuilt design plan considered and studied for the new construction? Were Hotel Green Apartments and Castle Green considered as stylistic guidelines? Should not the above cited iconic buildings provide the visual and aesthetic guidelines to how the new construction blends in? There are no references to the Moorish influences—courtyards, arches, recessed fenestration, etc. in the new design. Examples drawn from North Raymond Avenue and the current and proposed Parsons/Lincoln project seem incongruent for the project's design alternatives.
- ♦ Is height averaging being considered to create a more visually appealing, more contextual, and less monolithic structure?
- ♦ The Fair Oaks façade—and the Dayton, to some extent—present a monotonous and flat rectangular block. There is no articulation, decoration, or visual interest.
- ♦ How does the proposed design relate to Central Park and its open space?

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- ♦ Of 36 existing trees on the parcel, the developer calls for the removal of 21, 7 of which are protected species, and 14 of which were given a health grade of "A" by the reviewing arborist. Trees are precious resources and ecologically valuable, and their preservation should be a priority.
- ♦ Use of the massive glass areas and stairwells in the design seem to clash with Hotel Green Apartments' and Castle Green's visual sensibilities.
- ♦ The added-on "wing" parallel to Dayton Street seems a separate and a visually incompatible afterthought. An arched arcade, deep punched windows, and a more restrained driveway entry may improve the connection to Castle Green.

Overall, the design is disappointing and demonstrates a design aesthetic in conflict with the historic context. Although the narrative professes to take cues from the historic buildings and spaces surrounding it, no demonstration of this is apparent. The design as presented projects an imitation warehouse box that serves to maximize interior space in order to pack as many units within as possible, without consideration of a contextual and quality design befitting its location in a National Register District.

WPRA intends to keep an open mind regarding this project, and looks forward to forthcoming design responses and alternatives that may better align with Old Pasadena's historic context and Castle Green adjacencies.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments and concerns.

Respectfully,

Kenyon Harbison

Mic Hansen

Kenyon Harbison  
WPRA President

Mic Hansen  
WPRA Land Use and Planning Chair

cc: Mayor Tornek and Members of the City Council  
Takako Suzuki, Field Representative to Councilman Madison  
Sue Mossman, Executive Director, Pasadena Heritage  
David Reyes, Director of Planning  
Leon White, Principal Planner, DHP

**WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**  
**POST OFFICE BOX 50252 • PASADENA, CA 91115**



January 22, 2018

City Council Members  
Pasadena City Hall  
100 North Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, California 91101

Re: City Council Agenda Item 14, Predevelopment Plan of Proposed Central Park  
Apartments at 86 South Fair Oaks Avenue

Dear Council Members:

The Maryland Homeowners Association opposes the current design of the proposed Central Park Apartments project at 86 South Fair Oaks Avenue, located next to the Castle Green.

Sizable development next to the Castle Green may be inevitable, but it should still make every resident of Pasadena nervous. Maintaining the Castle requires extraordinary dedication—in terms of money and time—of its owners. Any development that blocks the Castle Green's views, as this one would, and may make the Castle less appealing to future owners, threatens the level of dedication the Castle demands of its stewards. Any sizable development thus needs to be especially sensitive to the Castle in other respects, including its design. This proposed project fails to do so.

While most design objections may focus on architectural problems conspicuous from the street views—the project's visual massiveness; the severe, undecorated upper portion of the Fair Oaks façade that looks more like a warehouse than an apartment building in an historic neighborhood; the unintegrated structures that simply abut each other on Dayton Street—the most serious architectural problems are on the proposed building's courtyard sides.

The project fails to respect the historic spacing of the Castle and Hotel Green. The project presses too close to the historic structures with what the plans call an "upper courtyard"—an elevated pool deck above a driveway to underground parking. The Castle Green's open space will be abruptly cut off by an approximately 55-foot long wall created by the driveway and upper courtyard. The applicant should find another location



for the driveway to avoid a wall, perhaps by locating the driveway between the proposed structures on Dayton.

The courtyard-facing facades are particularly objectionable. The courtyard-side of the Fair Oaks building presents Castle Green with 6-story blank walls flanking what looks like the protruding back of a warehouse-district building. The building's balconies are incompatible with the surrounding architecture and will inevitably present a junky-looking backside to the Castle. The motel-style exterior stairways and entrances on the courtyard-side of the Dayton Street building is totally out-of-keeping with its neighboring historic structures.

The applicant should rework its plans to, at a minimum:

- Avoid a wall abruptly cutting off the Castle Green's open space;
- Avoid courtyard-facing blank walls;
- Avoid courtyard-facing balconies;
- Avoid motel-style exterior stairways and entrances.

These changes are in addition to substantial revisions required on the street-sides of the proposed buildings.

The Castle Green is an architectural gem and a symbol of Pasadena. The Maryland hopes the City Council requires the applicant to reconceive its plan and disallows such a poorly designed monolith to be built in this historically sensitive location.

Sincerely,



Stefan Fauble,

President, The Maryland Homeowners Association

Mike Salazar, Architect  
Property Owner at 99 S. Raymond/Castle Green

CITY CLERK

18 JAN 22 03:16PM

PASADENA CITY COUNCIL  
RE: 86 S. FAIR OAKS/HISTORIC HOTEL GREEN BLOCK

January 21, 2018

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

In 2008, a horribly oversized and inappropriate design was submitted for the 86 S. Fair Oaks parcel on the national Register-listed historic Hotel Green block in Old Pasadena. Ignoring the parcels significance, this oversized 85,000 s.f. apartment complex was unanimously rejected and send back to the drawing boards.

A slightly revised design was soon presented, but made no significant reductions in impacts. Then in 2014 a wisely *reduced-size* project came forth in 2014, but it to failed to remedy significant 'controversies' or to garner commission or public support.

Fast-forward 10 years later, and we've gone 360-degrees to nowhere, with the Applicant once again presenting a 90,000 s.f. monster project overwhelming this most historic block and the adjacent landmarks.

As is the political climate today, this Applicant is *doubling down* on a bad project, preferring that you ignore history, stakeholders and the public.

**#1 PROBLEM: ZONING is too dense for this most-historic parcel and block.**

Three examples of current ZONING mistakes come to mind, forcing smaller projects at considerable time and cost to all involved:

- **IDS/Playhouse Project:** Current Zoning was just too much for the historic Playhouse District site. Too big as proposed, it took a successful lawsuit to force the City and Applicant to accept a smaller, less impactful project.
- **KIMPTON Hotel/YWCA Project:** Current zoning density was just too much for the historic Civic Center, as well as excessive heights adjacent to our National Register City Hall.
- **906 E. Green Street project:** Current Zoning density and heights were just too big for this sensitive site, forcing the Applicant back to the drawing board for a smaller and less impactful project.

**For 86 S. Fair Oaks,** back in 1994 as the new General Plan was being finalized, I specifically noted this parcel should NOT be a TOD/3.0FAR, as it would likely not be appropriate for the Hotel Green National Register block. Yet it remained so, and now we have a problem.

**Look at all parcels to the north, west and south** that have 40' limits on heights for good reason. Why would we ever allow equivalent 6-story heights on the same block as the 6-story Green Hotel Apartments (1903) and the Castle Green (1898)? Once again the Secretary of Interior Standards *must trump excessive zoning regulations.*

**No building setback on Dayton Street.** The Castle Green setback 12 feet at the ground, and 30-feet above ground floor from Dayton Street. This is critical to lessen the proposed wall on Dayton Street from this project. Small setbacks proposed will do little. While zoning precludes setbacks, you should direct staff and Applicant to consider further setbacks per Sec. of Interior Standards as mitigation to density and massing impacts, as well as for required "compatibility and subservience" to existing historic buildings.

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Mike Salazar, Architect  
Property Owner at 99 S. Raymond/Castle Green

## **#2 STREET IMPACTS & Increased traffic from project implementation.**

In 2014, of significant concern were the 639 new daily trips to be generated from this Project. Now with this oversized project, about 8-900 daily car trips will clog tiny Dayton Street, and overwhelm the unsignalled and unsafe Dayton/Fair Oaks & Dayton/Raymond intersections.

Let's remember that an omitted "crosswalk" in the IDS/Playhouse project that was overturned in court for being excluded in the project design. And the Dayton/Raymond intersection is also unsignalled, so this raises increased impacts. In 2014, both Dayton/Fair Oaks and Dayton/Raymond intersections were declared inadequate, so that will be significantly worse with an oversized proposal.

**Ingress/Egress along Dayton Street.** 8-900 new daily trips could be generated from this Project. Why is there only ONE driveway access from narrow Dayton Street? Why weren't two driveways studied to reduce burden on Dayton Street and the two unsafe Dayton intersections. In 2015, City Staff dismissed the Fair Oaks driveway entrance, despite there being one currently, and the narrow width of Dayton.

**Fire Safety and emergency access along Dayton Street.** The Project places too much traffic on this small street, requiring removal of all parking & loading spaces on north side of Dayton. This monster project now cuts off all fire access to the Green Hotel Apartments from the south. The ONLY fire access for the Castle Green is on Dayton Street, added to the fire access required for the existing and new Apartments; it is a recipe for disaster at AM & PM peak hours. How will this huge project impact the Fire Station Control Signal immediately south of Dayton Street, without an intersection redesign as part of this massive project?

In 2014, there was an internal fire access path in the project. Now it is gone, relying on only the Castle Green access. In 2014, the Fire Department only addressed *access road width*, and failed to address the need to remove parking on Dayton and intersection concerns stated above. Emergency access concerns spill over to both Dayton/Fair Oaks & Dayton Raymond intersections - both noted as inadequate for the SMALLER 2014 PROJECT. Further making a large project of concern, Dayton Street is the ONLY existing non-impacted eastward access route for the adjacent Fire Station, yet total traffic generated by a large Project may prevent peak-time emergency vehicle response time given queuing projected and increased project volume.

**With this oversized project, the Applicant is doubling down on negatively impacting the most historic parcel outside of City Hall. The City Council tonight must say "enough," and raise these and other serious reservations not just about this huge impact, but about the fact that this Applicant has lead the City and residents and stakeholders in chasing our tails for ten years to get a bad project, then one slightly better, then one somewhat better and then 360-degrees back to a bad project.**

**The stakeholders, of which I am one as an owner at the Castle Green are tired of this Applicant and its successors dealing in bad faith with our City, its residents and our historic landmarks.**

**Mike Salazar, Architect  
Owner at Castle Green, Santa Monica resident.**