

Attachment D

Planning Commission Staff Report
(w/o attachments), dated March 28, 2018



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: MARCH 28, 2018

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: REVISION TO PLANNED DEVELOPMENT #35 (COLORADO HILL)
1347-1355 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD AND 39 NORTH HILL AVENUE;
1336 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission:

1. **Find** that there are no changed circumstances or new information as part of the proposed application that necessitate further environmental review beyond the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) adopted by the City Council on September 12, 2016; and
2. **Recommend approval** of the revisions to the Planned Development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The applicant, J&K Plus Investments LLC, proposes a revision to Planned Development #35 (PD-35) to modify conditionally permitted uses and approved development standards related to, permitted floor area, floor area ratio, setbacks and building height. PD-35, originally approved by the City Council on September 12, 2016, approved a Planned Development (PD) Plan to facilitate development of the properties generally located at 1347-1355 East Colorado Boulevard and 39 North Hill Avenue (north parcel) and 1336 East Colorado Boulevard (south parcel). The north parcel was approved to be developed with a 375-room hotel and ground-floor commercial uses totaling 349,090 square feet. For the south parcel, the PD prescribed a building floor area of 89,595 square feet, where 10,000 square feet would be allocated as ground-floor commercial uses. The remaining 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Single

Room Occupancy' land use restricted to student housing or residential units as part of a 'Mixed-Use Project' land use as an allowed use by right per the PD Plan. Additionally, the 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Lodging (Hotel)' land use subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

A revision to a Planned Development requires the approval of the Planning Commission. The approval of additional FAR requires approval by City Council. Staff's analysis concludes that the findings to approve the requested revision to PD #35 can be made.

BACKGROUND:

Existing Site Characteristics:

The project site is located at 1347-1355 East Colorado Boulevard and 39 North Hill Avenue (north parcel) and 1336 East Colorado Boulevard (south parcel). The north parcel is bordered by Hill Avenue on the east, Colorado Boulevard on the south, Holliston Avenue on the west, and measures approximately 2.97 acres. The north parcel contains multiple buildings and a large surface parking lot used previously for the display, sales, and service of vehicles.

The south parcel is located in the northwestern portion of the block bound by Hill Avenue to the east, Green Street to the south, Holliston Avenue to the west, and measures approximately 0.71 acres. The south parcel contains two small buildings used in conjunction with automotive sales. Both parcels have been temporarily vacant since 2008, but used periodically for temporary vehicle storage and the sale of pre-owned vehicles, and seasonally for the sale of pumpkins and holiday trees.



Figure 1 – Project Site

Adjacent Uses (Overall Site):

North: Institutional (Church)

South: Institutional (Pasadena City College); Public and Semi-Public (Hill Avenue Branch Library)

East: Institutional (Pasadena City College); Commercial

West: Institutional (Church); Commercial

Adjacent Zoning (Overall Site):

North: PS (Public and Semi-Public)

South: CG (Commercial General)

East: ECSP-CG-2 (East Colorado Specific Plan, Commercial General, College District) CG (Commercial General); PS (Public and Semi-Public)

West: ECSP-CG-1 (East Colorado Specific Plan, Commercial General, Mid-City)

The project site is located within the boundaries of the East Colorado Specific Plan and within a developed area of Pasadena on one of the City's main commercial streets, surrounded by residential, commercial and institutional land uses. More specifically, the Prism Church and Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church border the project to the north. The F. Suie One Antiques Store building (which also includes private offices and residences) is on the same block as the proposed project. Across Holliston Avenue to the west is the Holliston Avenue United Methodist Church and, to the south of the north parcel are the south parcel and a Chevron gas station. Pasadena City College is located to the southeast of the north parcel and a McDonald's restaurant is located to the southwest. To the east of the north parcel, across Hill Avenue, is a drive-through restaurant and other commercial uses. Within the same block as the south parcel is the Chevron gas station, a surface parking lot utilized by Pasadena City College students, and the Hill Avenue Branch Library.

Approved PD-35 Project Description

On September 12, 2016, The City Council approved Planned Development #35 to allow development on the north and south parcel.

The north parcel was approved to be developed with a full-service hotel (332,690 square feet) and ground-floor commercial uses (16,400 square feet). The hotel would include up to 375 guest rooms and related services (311,300 square feet), a ballroom (12,500 square feet), and conference rooms (8,890 square feet). The total square footage would be 349,090 square feet. The building would range in height from two stories up to a maximum of five stories along roadway frontages. In the interior of the site, portions of the building would be up to seven stories with a height of 78.5 feet and up to 90 feet for a rooftop pool and bar area and other appurtenances. A portion of the roof would have architectural features and a rooftop pool and bar, resulting in an overall height of 90 feet. Vehicle access to the site would be provided from multiple locations. A driveway is proposed running parallel to the north property line between Holliston Avenue and Hill Avenue, providing access to the subterranean parking. Along Colorado Boulevard, a driveway serving as the drop-off and pick-up to the hotel, as well as valet service, would be centered approximately 150 feet away from the intersection of Colorado Boulevard and Hill Avenue. Access to the subterranean parking would also be provided at this location. All existing buildings on-site would be demolished to accommodate the development, except that the existing automobile showrooms would be retained.

For the south parcel, the PD approved a building floor area of 89,595 square feet, where 10,000 square feet would be allocated as ground-floor commercial uses. The remaining 79,595 square

feet could be utilized by a 'Single Room Occupancy' land use restricted to student housing or residential units as part of a 'Mixed-Use Project' land use as an allowed use by right per the PD Plan. Additionally, the 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Lodging (Hotel)' land use subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

The approval to establish the PD district included simultaneous approval of a PD Plan that set development standards for the PD zoning district including, but not limited to, mix of allowed uses and permit requirements, floor area ratio, maximum lot coverage, setbacks, height and driveway access.

Background

Design Commission

On March 22, 2016, the Design Commission reviewed the project (as proposed by the applicant, with the smaller hotel to the south). The purpose of the meeting was to review the project and advise the Planning Commission if the conceptual drawings exhibited a project that was of high quality, exhibited architectural excellence and was contextual to the surrounding neighborhood, consistent with the applicant's request for an increase in FAR.

The project site has a General Plan Land Use Designation of Medium Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR, 0-87 dwelling units per acre). Projects within the land use designation of Medium Mixed Use are subject to a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.0-2.25. The proposed FAR for the north and south parcels, at approximately 2.70 FAR and 2.90 FAR respectively, exceeded the prescribed FAR limits in the General Plan land use designation. However, General Plan Land Use Element Policy 4.13 allowed a new PD to have a FAR as high as 3.0 provided that it could be demonstrated that the architectural design of the PD was contextual and of a high quality. This is codified in the Zoning Code, where it states that a PD with a proposed increase in the FAR, shall be reviewed by the Design Commission prior to consideration by the Planning Commission. The Design Commission advises the Planning Commission and City Council, as to whether the architectural design of the proposed PD is contextual and of high-quality.

On March 22, 2016, the Design Commission found that the conceptual drawings were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Design Commission noted that the project would continue to be refined through the Design Review process, during which time the Design Commission would review the project and require appropriate modifications to ensure high quality and contextually appropriate design.

Planning Commission Hearings

The Planning Commission conducted public hearings on the original Planned Development project on April 21, 2016 and June 8, 2016 to discuss the project and potential alternatives, leading up to formal action on July 27, 2016. The applicant's original request for the PD Plan was to allow the development of two hotels. The request included developing the north parcel with a 375-room hotel with ground-floor commercial uses totaling approximately 350,000 square feet and developing the south parcel with a 150-room hotel and ground floor commercial uses totaling approximately 90,000 square feet. The Commission's discussions focused on:

- The size of the hotel proposed on the north parcel; some Planning Commission members voiced concern about the size of the proposed hotel in relation to adjacent development, and its maximum height (90'). Others did not share this concern, noting that there is no magic number in terms of reduction in scale and that the design of a project is ultimately of greater importance than its floor area ratio (FAR)
- Allowing development flexibility on the south parcel, specifically residential opportunities instead of or in addition to hotel;
- Providing exterior access to ground-floor commercial uses and creation of a lively streetscape, and
- Encourage the 'neighborhood village' feel envisioned for the East Colorado Specific Plan (ECSP) by the General Plan Land Use Element.

In order to achieve a mix of land uses or the 'neighborhood village feel', as envisioned by the ECSP for the College District sub-area, the staff recommended that in lieu of a second, smaller hotel on the south parcel, the site be developed consistent with Alternative Three (SRO housing for students with ground-floor commercial) or Alternative Four (mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial) from the Final EIR, to provide greater consistency with the Guiding Principles of the Land Use Element and its vision for the ECSP area.

On July 27, 2016, the Planning Commission recommended (6-0 vote, 3 members absent) that the City Council approve the staff recommendation to develop the north parcel with a hotel and ground-floor commercial uses (as proposed by the applicant) and develop the south parcel consistent with Alternative Three – SRO housing for students with ground-floor commercial or Alternative Four – mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial, as described in the Final EIR.

In a separate motion, the Planning Commission also recommended (5-1 vote, 3 members absent) that the PD Plan be revised to add hotel as a permitted use on the south parcel, whereas the staff recommended alternative did not allow for hotel on the south parcel.

City Council Hearing

The City Council conducted a public hearing on the original Planned Development project on September 12, 2016. The applicant's original request for the PD Plan was to allow the development of two hotels. The request included developing the north parcel with a 375-room hotel with ground-floor commercial uses totaling 349,090 square feet and developing the south parcel with a 150-room hotel and ground floor commercial uses totaling 89,595 square feet. At this hearing, the staff recommended, consistent with the Planning Commission's recommendation, that in lieu of a second, smaller hotel on the south parcel, the site be developed consistent with Alternative Three or Alternative Four from the Final EIR, to provide greater consistency with the Guiding Principles of the Land Use Element and its vision for the ECSP area.

Under Alternative Three of the Final EIR, the south parcel would be developed with up to 100 single-room occupancy (SRO housing for students) units totaling 79,595 square feet and 10,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial uses. These units would be restricted to student occupancy only. Under Alternative Four (mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial) of the Final EIR, the south parcel would be developed with up to 50 residential units totaling 79,595 square feet and 10,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial uses. Under this development scenario, the residential units would not be restricted to student occupancy. The applicant would have the flexibility to develop the south parcel with either a greater number of

small units, intended for student-only occupancy, or a smaller number of larger units, with no occupancy limitations. However, the physical development parameters (size, FAR, height, parking, etc.) and design of the staff recommended alternative were essentially the same as those proposed by the applicant for the smaller hotel.

The Council's discussion focused on:

- The size of the hotel proposed on the north parcel;
- Appropriate land uses for the south parcel, with an emphasis on providing ground-floor commercial, specifically residential opportunities instead of or in addition to hotel;
- Encourage the 'neighborhood village' feel envisioned for the East Colorado Specific Plan (ECSP) by the General Plan Land Use Element.
- The design of the project on the south parcel

During the public hearing, members of the Council expressed concerns on not having renderings or elevations related to the development on the south parcel. As discussed in the '*Background: Design Commission*' section above, the applicant was requesting an FAR of 2.9, where the maximum allowed by the land use designation of Medium Mixed Use was a maximum FAR of 0.0-2.25. General Plan Land Use Element Policy 4.13 allows a new PD to have a FAR as high as 3.0 provided that it could be demonstrated that the architectural design of the PD was contextual and of a high quality. The Design Commission advises the Planning Commission and City Council, as to whether the architectural design of the proposed PD was contextual and of high-quality. On March 22, 2016, the Design Commission found that the conceptual drawings were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. However, without plans or renderings for the south parcel, some members of the Council had concerns that they were granting additional FAR without the benefit of reviewing the architectural design.

At the conclusion of the public hearing, and after receiving public testimony, the City Council approved PD-35 to allow the north parcel to be developed with a 375-room hotel with ground-floor commercial uses totaling 349,090 square feet with an amendment to allow Alternative 3 (SRO housing for students) and Alternative 4 (mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial) on the south parcel, with a hotel use available as an option on the south parcel subject to a Conditional Use Permit.

In lieu of not having architectural renderings for the south parcel, as part of the PD approval, the Council included Condition No. 31. This condition allows the Design Commissions, through the course of their Design Review, to review and condition the project to ensure that the project is of high quality, exhibits architectural excellence, and contextual to the surrounding neighborhood. As part of the condition of approval, the Council granted authority to the Design Commission to modify the mass and height within the maximum allowed thresholds as deemed appropriate. The Design Commission would review and condition the project to ensure that the project is of high quality, exhibits architectural excellence, and contextual to the surrounding neighborhood. The Design Commission may also reduce the FAR for the south parcel below 2.9 FAR if the design excellence standards on that parcel are not met.

Design Commission:

Subsequent to the approval of PD-35, the applicant submitted for Concept Design Review of the project. The applicant submittal was for review of a 375-room hotel with ground-floor

commercial uses on the north parcel and developing the south parcel with a 150-room hotel and ground floor commercial uses.

As part of the submittal, the applicant had revised the plans so that ground-floor commercial uses on the north parcel and south parcel would be provided with access from the adjacent street frontage as required by Condition of Approval No. 13. The plans also were revised to provide continuous commercial uses on all street frontages, on the north parcel and south parcel, consisting of storefronts, arcades, recessed entries and outdoor dining areas. The plans were also revised so that the hotel use on the north parcel contain a total of 375 rooms; although the project always contemplated a 375-room hotel, the previous architectural plans presented at the Planning Commission and City Council hearings for approval were that of a hotel building with only 337 rooms. The detailed plans for a 375-room hotel resulted in an expanded fourth floor along the Holliston Avenue frontage and an expanded third floor towards the interior of the site.

The plans were also revised so that the hotel use on the south parcel contain a total of 150 rooms; although the project always contemplated a 150-room hotel, the previous architectural plans presented at the Planning Commission and City Council hearings for approval were that of a hotel building with approximately 95 rooms. The hotel on the south parcel was modified to provide an approximate 4,700 square-foot interior rectangular courtyard that is open to the sky; where the original plan had a smaller squared courtyard. The larger courtyard and detailed plans for a 150-room hotel resulted in an additional floor (5th floor) along the Colorado Blvd frontage.

The revised plans resulted in a project that was not within the approved PD-35 development thresholds (e.g. setbacks, height, floor area, lot coverage) and it was determined by staff that the modified plans would require revision of the approved PD-35 prior to proceeding with Concept Design Review. In addition, as required by Condition of Approval No. 31, the Design Commission is required to review and condition the project to ensure that the project is of high quality, exhibits architectural excellence, and contextual to the surrounding neighborhood. As part of the condition of approval, the Council granted authority to the Design Commission to modify the mass and height within the maximum allowed thresholds as deemed appropriate.

On September 12, 2017, the Design Commission reviewed the revised project that included both the north and south parcel. The purpose of the meeting was to review the project and advise the Planning Commission if the conceptual drawings exhibited a project that was of high quality, exhibited architectural excellence and was contextual to the surrounding neighborhood.

At this meeting, the Design Commission analyzed the following characteristics that demonstrate high architectural quality:

- Relates to the site and to its neighbors in terms of setbacks, height, massing, scale, frontage, materiality, open space, landscape, solar orientation, and topography;
- Building elevations are well articulated to provide visual interest along the street;
- Incorporates materials and finishes that express the permanence of the building and reinforce the design concept,
- If a project is located adjacent to a designated or eligible resource, measures have been employed to ensure the proposed buildings respond to or enhance the historic resource;
- Facilitates the movement and activity of pedestrians along major thoroughfares;
- Facilitates the introduction of ground-floor retail and/or restaurant uses to enhance visitor

- or pedestrian experience; and
- Project thoroughly engages the surrounding commercial and residential districts.

From an architectural perspective, the surrounding context is highly mixed and consists of small-scale commercial and auto-oriented uses as well as larger-scaled buildings on the campus of Pasadena City College (PCC), several churches and a four-story hotel. Photographs of some of these buildings, as well as of the project site, are included in the package of drawings submitted by the applicant. The proposed buildings on the north parcel are designed to maintain a compatible height and mass along the perimeter of the site and to avoid overwhelming on- and off-site historic resources, while rising to a seven-story height within the center of the site. The exterior elevation articulation results in a building that appears to exhibit visual interest and activity. The Design Commission previously determined on March 22, 2016 that the building on the north parcel exhibits the above qualities of architectural excellence and the design of this building has not changed since that time.

The building on the southern site is smaller in scale than on the north site and also employs massing strategies that break down the overall mass of the building to relate to smaller-scaled adjacent buildings. As such, the project is designed to be responsive to its context by organizing transitional building volumes to avoid adversely affecting surrounding smaller-scale buildings. The proposed design is also architecturally consistent with nearby historic resources as well as the monumental quality of the main PCC buildings along Colorado Boulevard. The project has a strong street presence that will encourage pedestrian activity. Overall, staff found the building to be responsive to its context and, from a massing and architectural perspective, to be a high-quality design. The quality of final exterior building materials would be a consideration by the Design Commission during Final Design Review. To ensure a high-quality design is implemented through the design review, plan check and construction process, staff recommended that the Design Commission provide the Planning Commission with a series of recommended PD conditions that would establish a more rigorous set of review requirements for this project and require a City-approved Executive Architect to oversee the project. This will ensure that the additional FAR that may be granted to this project results in a superior, high-quality design that is carried through to the final construction.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Design Commission found that the proposed revised plans were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Design Commission noted that the project would continue to be refined through the Design Review process, during which time the Design Commission would review the project and require appropriate modifications to ensure high quality and contextually appropriate design. The Design Commission recommended eight conditions of approval and advises the Planning Commission as follows:

1. Find that the building located at 1336 East Colorado Blvd (south parcel) illustrated in Attachment B of the PD-35 (Colorado Hill Planned Development), exhibits an architectural design that is of "high quality" and is "contextual" to the surrounding neighborhood.
2. A sub-committee of the Design Commission should be convened to review the thoroughness of the construction documents (CD's) & specifications prior to each phase of the design review process and plan check submittal.
3. The developer should be required to provide a large-scale mock-up panel of exterior materials during construction for review and approval by the subcommittee of the Design

Commission prior to installation of materials on the building.

4. A qualified Executive Architect (subject to City review and approval) with hospitality experience should be engaged by the applicant to oversee the CD production and construction processes to ensure implementation of high-quality design and materials and, during construction, consistency with the approved building plans.
5. A design-build CD process should be un-acceptable for projects over 10,000 sf.
6. The number of Design & Historic Preservation inspections during construction should be increased to deter field changes, conditionally releasing each floor.
7. Specifications should be written for appropriate, quality materials to lessen the ability to reduce the quality of the finish materials approved by the Design Commission. The subcommittee of the Design Commission should have enough access to the construction process, to make sure that these are followed through.
8. Value engineering that would reduce the quality of materials specifications should not be allowed for this project after design review approval is granted.

Proposed Revision

The applicant is requesting to revise the existing PD Plan by modifying the mix of allowed uses and permit requirements and modifying development standards related to floor area ratio, maximum lot coverage, setbacks and height. The revisions would apply to both the north and south parcels. Pursuant to P.M.C 17 26.020.C.3.e(6), an application for approval of a revision of a PD plan shall be considered by the Planning Commission.

ANALYSIS:

Planned Development: To revise Planned Development #35

The PD Plan is contained in Appendix A of the Pasadena Zoning Code (Planned Developments). A summary of those requirements, as they relate to the proposed revisions, are provided below.

North Parcel

Maximum Amount of New Commercial Development

Appendix PD-35.D.2 limits the amount of maximum new development on the north parcel as follows:

“There shall be a maximum of 332,690 square feet of new commercial floor area allowed on the north parcel meeting the land use classification of ‘Lodging – Hotels, motels’. There shall be a minimum of 16,400 square feet of new commercial floor area allowed on the north parcel meeting the land use classification of ‘Retail Sales’ or ‘Services Uses’. The maximum new commercial floor area, in total, allowed on the north parcel shall not exceed 349,090 square feet.”

The applicant would be modifying their project by providing only 321,187 square feet for hotel use; where the maximum is 332,690 square feet, a decrease of 11,503 square feet. The applicant would also be providing 38,209 square feet of commercial floor area; where the minimum required is 16,400 square feet, an increase of 21,809 square feet. These square footages are within their permitted minimum and maximum allowances for each land use.

However, the maximum commercial floor area, in total, is increased to 359,396 square feet and exceeds the maximum allowed of 349,090 square feet by 10,306 square feet. The applicant is proposing to revise this standard by allowing the new commercial floor area, in total, allowed on the north parcel to be 359,396 square feet. The increase floor area is driven by the siting of commercial uses on all street frontages and designing a hotel structure with 375 rooms.

Maximum Floor Area Ratio

Appendix PD-35.D.5 limits the amount of floor area ratio (FAR) as follows:

“The maximum floor area ratio on the north parcel shall not exceed 2.70.”

The request to increase the commercial floor area by 10,306 square feet, for a total of 359,396 square feet, results in additional floor area to the site. The applicant would be modifying their project by requesting a FAR of 2.77.

During the Planning Commission hearing, Commission members expressed differing views on the proposed size and massing of the hotel proposed for the north parcel. Some Planning Commission members voiced concern about the size of the proposed hotel in relation to adjacent development. Others did not share this concern, noting that there is no magic number in terms of reduction in scale and that the design of a project is ultimately of greater importance than its FAR.

The Commission was advised that although it may have been possible to design a smaller high quality and contextual project within the allowable building envelope, the high quality and creative Art Deco style design proposed as part the submittal would most likely not be able to be achieved. The deliberate breakdown of the overall massing and use of sub-volumes in the design helped to soften the impact of the project on the surrounding neighborhood, and presented a more contextually compatible and appropriate design. Limiting the height and/or square footage would not facilitate the same type of careful treatment of the building volumes.

At the conclusion of the Planning Commission hearings, on July 26, 2016, the Commission recommended that the City Council approve the north parcel with a hotel and ground-floor commercial uses with a floor area of 349,090; as was proposed by the applicant.

At the September 12, 2016 City Council hearing, members of the Council also shared similar concerns as the Planning Commission related to the size and massing of the hotel on the north parcel. The Council relied on the March 22, 2016, Design Commission finding that the conceptual drawings were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood to approve the north parcel with a hotel and ground-floor commercial uses with a floor area of 349,090; as was proposed by the applicant

On September 12, 2017, the Design Commission reviewed the revised project and found that the proposed revised plans were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Design Commission noted that

the project would continue to be refined through the Design Review process, during which time the Design Commission would review the project and require appropriate modifications to ensure high quality and contextually appropriate design.

Maximum Lot Coverage

Appendix PD-35.D.5 limits the amount of lot coverage as follows:

"The maximum lot coverage on the north parcel shall not exceed 70 percent."

The request to increase the commercial floor area by 10,306 square feet, for a total of 359,396 square feet, and the reconfiguration of the ground floor results in additional lot coverage to the site. The existing lot coverage maximum is 70 percent, or 90,668 square feet. The applicant would be modifying their project by requesting a lot coverage of 78 percent, or 101,030 square feet; an increase of 10,362 square feet.

Setbacks

Appendix PD-35.D.7.ii provides setbacks for corner sides as follows:

"Corner Side Setback. A zero-foot minimum to five-foot maximum setback shall be provided."

The applicant is requesting to provide a setback of up to seven feet for the northerly portion of the building fronting onto Hill Avenue. The approved five-foot setbacks were established to allow for expanded sidewalk treatment and/or pedestrian areas. The applicant is requesting an additional two feet of setback to allow sufficient pedestrian access between retail store fronts and columns for an arcade.

Maximum Height

Appendix PD-35.D.8 provides maximum building height limits as follows:

"The maximum height of the structure on the north parcel shall not exceed 78.5 feet in height. A rooftop pool and bar area, and other appurtenances, as illustrated on the site plan approved as part of the PD, shall be allowed up to a maximum height of 90 feet."

The applicant is not proposing to increase the maximum height of the overall structure and would comply with the 78.5-foot height limit. The applicant is requesting to increase the height allowed for appurtenances by an additional 8.5 feet to accommodate elevator shafts, stairwells and the structural elements of the rooftop bar. The rooftop bar area measures 1,650 square feet. These areas with additional height would be located towards the center of the proposed building.

During the Planning Commission hearings, some Commission members expressed concern about the project's maximum 90' height. As previously noted, the building would range in height from two stories up to a maximum of five stories along roadway frontages. In the interior of the site, portions of the building would be up to seven stories. A portion of the roof would have architectural features and a rooftop pool and bar, that at the time resulted in an overall height of 90 feet. The applicant had indicated that, if the size or height were limited, it would result in a box-

shaped design with little to no variation in the bulk or massing, in contrast to the varied massing illustrated on the project plans.

At the September 12, 2016 City Council hearing, members of the Council also shared similar concerns as the Planning Commission related to the height of the hotel on the north parcel. The Council relied on the March 22, 2016, Design Commission finding that the conceptual drawings were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood to approve the north parcel with a hotel and ground-floor commercial uses with a height of 78.5 feet for the structure and up to 90 feet for the rooftop pool and bar area, and other appurtenances.

On September 12, 2017, the Design Commission reviewed the revised project and found that the proposed revised plans were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Design Commission noted that the project would continue to be refined through the Design Review process, during which time the Design Commission would review the project and require appropriate modifications to ensure high quality and contextually appropriate design.

South Parcel

Conditionally Permitted Uses

Appendix PD-35.E.2.i establishes land uses that are allowed with a Conditional Use Permit as follows:

“The following land uses shall be allowed with a Conditional Use Permit: ‘Lodging – Hotels, motels (land use)’ subject to the specific land use standards as required by PMC Section 17.50.150”

The applicant is request to allow a Lodging – Hotels, motels (land use) on the south parcel as a permitted use without the requirement of needing to obtain approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

During the Planning Commission hearings, staff and several Commission members expressed concern that developing the south parcel with a smaller hotel would not result in an appropriate mix of land uses or neighborhood village feel, as envisioned by the ECSP for the College District sub-area. In lieu of a second, smaller hotel on the south parcel, the staff recommended alternative would develop the south parcel consistent with Alternative 3 (SRO housing for students) or Alternative 4 (mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial) from the Final EIR, to provide greater consistency with the Guiding Principles of the Land Use Element and its vision for the ECSP area. The introduction of residential on the south parcel would bring the overall project into greater alignment with the General Plan’s vision for the ECSP area, while providing flexibility to the applicant by allowing for student housing (in the form of SRO) or residential (not limited to students) above neighborhood-serving, ground-floor commercial uses.

At the conclusion of the hearings, the Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve the staff recommendation to develop the north parcel with a hotel and ground-floor commercial uses (as proposed by the applicant) and develop the south parcel consistent with Alternative Three – SRO housing for students with ground-floor commercial or Alternative Four – mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial, as described in the Final EIR.

In a separate motion, the Planning Commission also recommended that the PD Plan be revised to add hotel as a permitted use on the south parcel, whereas the staff recommended alternative did not allow for hotel on the south parcel.

At the September 12, 2016 City Council hearing, members of the Council also shared similar concerns as the Planning Commission related to the development of a hotel on the south parcel. Staff expressed concern that developing the south parcel with a smaller hotel would not result in an appropriate mix of land uses or neighborhood village feel, as envisioned by the ECSP for the College District sub-area. In lieu of a second, smaller hotel on the south parcel, the staff recommended alternative would develop the south parcel consistent with Alternative 3 (SRO housing for students) or Alternative 4 (mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial) from the Final EIR, to provide greater consistency with the Guiding Principles of the Land Use Element and its vision for the ECSP area.

At the conclusion of the public hearing, and after receiving public testimony, the City Council approved PD-35 to allow the north parcel to be developed with a 375-room hotel with ground-floor commercial uses totaling 349,090 square feet with an amendment to allow Alternative 3 (SRO housing for students) and Alternative 4 (mixed-use residential with ground-floor commercial) on the south parcel, with a hotel use available as an option on the south parcel subject to a Conditional Use Permit.

Maximum Amount of New Commercial Development

Appendix PD-35.E.3 limits the amount of maximum new development on the south parcel for a Lodging – Hotels, motels (land use) as follows.

“Should the developer alternatively proceed with a project meeting the land use classification of ‘Lodging – Hotels, motels (land use)’, there shall be a maximum of 89,595 square feet of new commercial floor area, where a maximum 79,595 square feet is dedicated to a hotel use and 10,000 square feet of meets the land use classification of ‘Retail Sales’ or ‘Services Uses’ as described above. A ‘Lodging – Hotels, motels’ land use shall be allowed only upon issuance of a Conditional Use Permit.”

The applicant would be proposing a hotel use with a maximum of 83,497 square feet of new commercial area; where the maximum permitted is 89,595, a decrease of 6,098 square feet. The applicant would be proposing 80,595 square feet of floor area dedicated to a hotel use; where the maximum permitted for hotel use is 79,595 square feet, an increase of 1,000 square feet. The applicant would be reducing the amount commercial floor area to 2,902 square feet; where the minimum required is 10,000 square feet, a reduction of 7,098 square feet.

During the Planning Commission and City Council hearing, staff expressed concern that the south parcel be developed with an appropriate mix of land uses to achieve a neighborhood village feel, as envisioned by the ECSP for the College District sub-area. The provision of 10,000 square feet of ‘Retail Sales’ or ‘Services Uses’ contributed to achieve an appropriate mix of land uses to achieve a neighborhood village feel. All options (SRO, mixed-use, hotel) recommended for consideration by the Planning Commission, and ultimately approved by the City Council, incorporated 10,000 square feet of ‘Retail Sales’ or ‘Services Uses’.

Setbacks

Appendix PD-35.E.9 provides setbacks for the south parcel as follows:

- i. "Front Setback. A zero-foot minimum to five-foot maximum setback shall be provided.
- ii. Corner Side Setback. A five-foot minimum to ten-foot maximum setback shall be provided.
- iii. Side Setback. A five-foot minimum setback shall be provided.
- iv. Rear Setback. A five-foot minimum setback shall be provided."

The applicant is requesting to modify the setbacks as follow, changes underlined:

- i. "Front Setback. A zero-foot minimum to ten-foot maximum setback shall be provided.
- ii. Corner Side Setback. A zero-foot minimum to ten-foot maximum setback shall be provided.
- iii. Side Setback. A zero-foot minimum to ten-foot maximum setback shall be provided.
- iv. Rear Setback. A zero-foot minimum to five-foot maximum setback shall be provided."

The proposed modifications would bring portions of the building volume closer to the street property lines and the increased street side setbacks would create areas for outdoor dining closer to the street property lines. The revised side setback would allow northern portion of the building, adjacent to Colorado Blvd., to be built to the east property line while also creating outdoor garden/courtyard area for the ground floor units along the east property line. The revised rear setback along the south property line, abutting an alley, would allow hotel service areas and stairwells to be built closer to the rear property line. Beyond the alley, directly to the south, is a surface parking lot serving Pasadena City College students.

Maximum Lot Coverage

Appendix PD-35.E.8 limits the amount of lot coverage as follows:

"The maximum lot coverage on the south parcel shall not exceed 75 percent."

The request to modify the setbacks results in an increased footprint that increases the lot coverage to the site. The existing lot coverage maximum is 75 percent, or 23,171 square feet. The applicant would be modifying their project by requesting a lot coverage of 76 percent, or 23,480 square feet; an increase of 309 square feet.

Maximum Height

Appendix PD-35.E.10 provides a maximum building height limits as follows:

"The maximum height of the structure shall not exceed 48 feet in height. See Section 17.40.060 for height measurement and exceptions to height limits."

The applicant is proposing to increase the maximum height of the structure to 48 feet in height. The plans were revised so that the hotel use on the south parcel contain a total of 150 rooms; although the project always contemplated a 150-room hotel, the previous architectural plans

presented at the Planning Commission and City Council hearings for approval were that of a hotel building with approximately 95 rooms. The hotel on the south parcel was modified to provide an approximate 4,700 square-foot interior rectangular courtyard that is open to the sky; where the original plan had a smaller squared courtyard. The larger courtyard and detailed plans for a 150-room hotel resulted in an additional floor (5th floor) along the Colorado Blvd frontage resulting in a requested height of 58 feet for a portion of the building.

On September 12, 2017, the Design Commission reviewed the revised project plans for the south parcel and found that the proposed revised plans were of high quality and appropriately massed and sited to be contextually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Design Commission noted that the project would continue to be refined through the Design Review process, during which time the Design Commission would review the project and require appropriate modifications to ensure high quality and contextually appropriate design.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

General Plan Land Use Element Guiding Principles

The General Plan Land Use Element includes eight Guiding Principles. With the proposed revisions, the consistency of the project (as proposed by the applicant) with these principles is described below:

- *Guiding Principle 1. Growth will be targeted to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.* Development of the proposed project will revitalize an underutilized site located on one of the City's main commercial corridors, providing visitor-serving uses in proximity to a mix of existing commercial, residential, and institutional uses.
- *Guiding Principle 2. Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved.* The development plan and mitigation requirements for the project includes preservation, restoration, and adaptive reuse of the historic former auto showrooms and the "Welcome" sign, as well as the provision of an on-site interpretive sign or display that presents a history of the site and the significance of the International Style of architecture to the automobile-related industry of Pasadena.
- *Guiding Principle 3. Pasadena will be an economically vital city by providing jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities.* The proposed project has all of those features, providing many new jobs, hotel and commercial retail uses and services, revenue to the City, and visitor-serving opportunities to the City, all of which will occur on a site that is largely vacant and highly underutilized.
- *Guiding Principle 4. Pasadena will be a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable community.* The proposed project will provide a development use that is complimentary to a mix of existing uses within the City, and will revitalize an otherwise dormant site.
- *Guiding Principle 5. Pasadena will be a city where people can circulate without cars.* The project site is located within a High Quality Transit Area, with good access to public transit, thereby helping to reduce dependence on cars.

- *Guiding Principle 6. Pasadena will be a cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and education center for the region.* The proposed project is designed to provide high-quality hotel and commercial uses that complement the overall mix of existing uses in the City.
- *Guiding Principle 7. Community Participation will be a permanent part of achieving a greater city.* Citizen involvement in the CEQA review process, as well as in public hearings for the project, provides opportunities for public input to help guide and shape the final development plans for the project.
- *Guiding Principle 8. Pasadena is committed to public education and a diverse educational system responsive to the broad needs of the community.* Although not directly involved in the educational system, the proposed project could indirectly support ongoing education through the provision of new employment opportunities in close proximity to Pasadena City College.

Based on the analysis provided above, the proposed project (as proposed by the applicant and the staff recommended alternative) would be consistent with the Guiding Principles of the City's General Plan Land Use Element.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

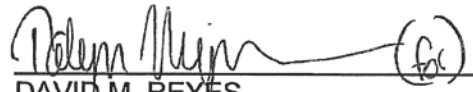
It is recommended that the Planning Commission find that the revisions are consistent with the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the overall project approved by the City Council on September 16, 2016. Substantial changes have not occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the original project was undertaken and the proposed changes are minor in nature and would not require major revisions of the previous EIR due to the involvement of any new significant environmental effect or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects that were mitigated to less than significant levels. It has further been determined that there has been no new information that would warrant subsequent environmental analysis.

The FEIR analyzed the following environmental topics: Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Greenhouse Gases, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning; Noise and Vibration; Public Services (Fire), Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems. The FEIR identified potentially significant effects related to the following topics: Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise and Vibration; and Transportation and Traffic. With the incorporation of mitigation measures in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), the FEIR determined that all potentially significant effects would be reduced to a less than significant level.

CONCLUSION

Although the revised project is generally consistent with the approved PD-35, the requested revisions to the mix of allowed uses and development standards is required to obtain a recommendation by the Planning Commission and, subsequently an approval by the City Council. Staff believes that the findings to revise the PD Plan can be made and recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the revision to the PD Plan to City Council.

Respectfully Submitted,



DAVID M. REYES
Director of Planning & Community
Development

Prepared by:



Luis Rocha
Senior Planner

Reviewed by:



Talyn Mirzakhani
Acting Principal Planner/Zoning
Administrator

Attachments.

- Attachment A: Proposed Revised PD Plan Development Standards (Strikeout Version)
- Attachment B: Project Plans
- Attachment C: Original Conditions of Approval