

Agenda Report

October 1, 2018

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW OF A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AT 141 SOUTH LAKE AVENUE

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is intended to provide information to the City Council; no action is required.

BACKGROUND:

The applicant, Odyssey Development Services, has submitted a Predevelopment Plan Review (PPR) application to develop the property at 141 South Lake Avenue as a mixed-use project. The project site consists of two legal lots (AINs: 5734-035-031 and 5734-035-018), with a total site size of approximately 55,405 square feet or 1.27 acres. The site is currently occupied by one, 27,220 square-foot, two-story, office building with a ground floor restaurant and associated surface parking lot. The project site is within the CD-5 (Central District Specific Plan, Lake Avenue subdistrict) zoning district.

The proposed project consists of the demolition of the existing building and surface parking lot, and the construction of a new, five-story, 127,161 square-foot, mixed-use development project with 70 residential market-rate units, 7,258 square feet of indoor restaurant floor area, 1,589 square feet of outdoor restaurant area and 5,536 square feet of second floor office. The project proposes 205 parking spaces in three levels (one level of subterranean, one level of at-grade and one level of above-grade).

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 17.60.040.C.2.a(4) (Application Preparation and Filing – Predevelopment Plan Review – Applicability), a PPR is required for projects consisting of more than 25,000 square feet of nonresidential floor area, such as proposed. The PPR process is established in Section 17.60.040.C of the City's Zoning Code as a process by which better projects can be achieved through early consultation between City staff and applicants. The process coordinates the review of projects among City staff, familiarizes applicants with the regulations and procedures that apply to the projects, and avoids significant investment in the design of a project without preliminary input from City staff. In addition, the purpose is to identify issues that may arise during review of the project, provide opportunities for discussion about the project and an exchange of information on potential issues between the City staff and the applicants, and inform the City Council and the public of proposed development projects defined in the administrative guidelines to be of communitywide significance.

A project is categorized as a project of communitywide significance if it consists of: 1) more than 50,000 square feet of gross floor area with one discretionary action; or 2) 50 or more housing

units; or 3) any project determined by the Planning Director to be of major importance to the City. Projects of communitywide significance are presented to the City Council for informational purposes. The proposed project consists of more than 50 units and more than 50,000 square feet of gross floor area with at least one discretionary action and thus qualifies as a project of communitywide significance.

This report provides a project description, identifies the anticipated entitlement and environmental review processes, and summarizes key areas of concern regarding Zoning Code and General Plan compliance.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The 55,405 square-foot subject site has street frontage along South Lake Avenue to the east and South Hudson Avenue to the west. The site is currently developed with a two-story, 27,220 square-foot office building with a ground-floor restaurant and a surface parking lot. The proposed project includes:

- Demolition of the existing commercial building and surface parking lot;
- Construction of a 127,161 square-foot, mixed-use project that is four - five stories (73 feet along Lake Avenue and 57 feet along Hudson Avenue with:
 - 70 residential market-rate units (0 inclusionary units)
 - 7,258 square feet of indoor restaurant floor area
 - 1,589 square feet of outdoor restaurant floor area
 - 5,526 square feet of office floor area
 - 205 parking spaces in one level below-grade, one level at-grade and one level above-grade

The Zoning Code defines a 'mixed-use' project as the combination of commercial and residential uses in the same structure, where the residential component is located either above (vertical mixed-use) or behind (horizontal mixed-use) the nonresidential component. The applicant's proposal locates the residential component above and behind the commercial component, consistent with the mixed-use definition. An aerial map of the existing site and the proposed site plan are provided in Figures 1 and 2.

The project site is zoned CD-5 (Central District Specific Plan, Lake Avenue subdistrict) and the uses are permitted by-right within the Specific Plan area.

Figure 1: Existing Surroundings



Figure 2: Proposed Building Footprint in Existing Surroundings

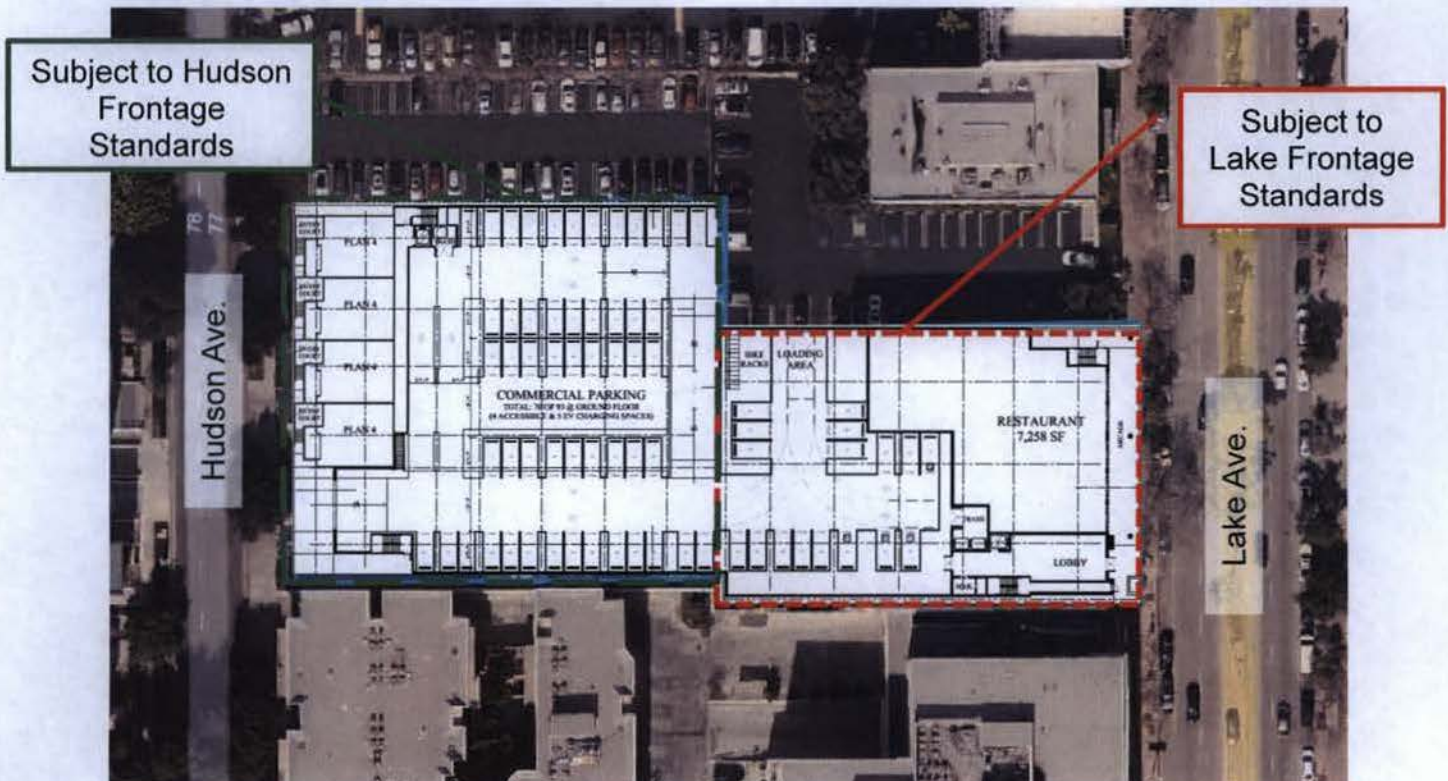


Figure 3: Ground Floor Plan

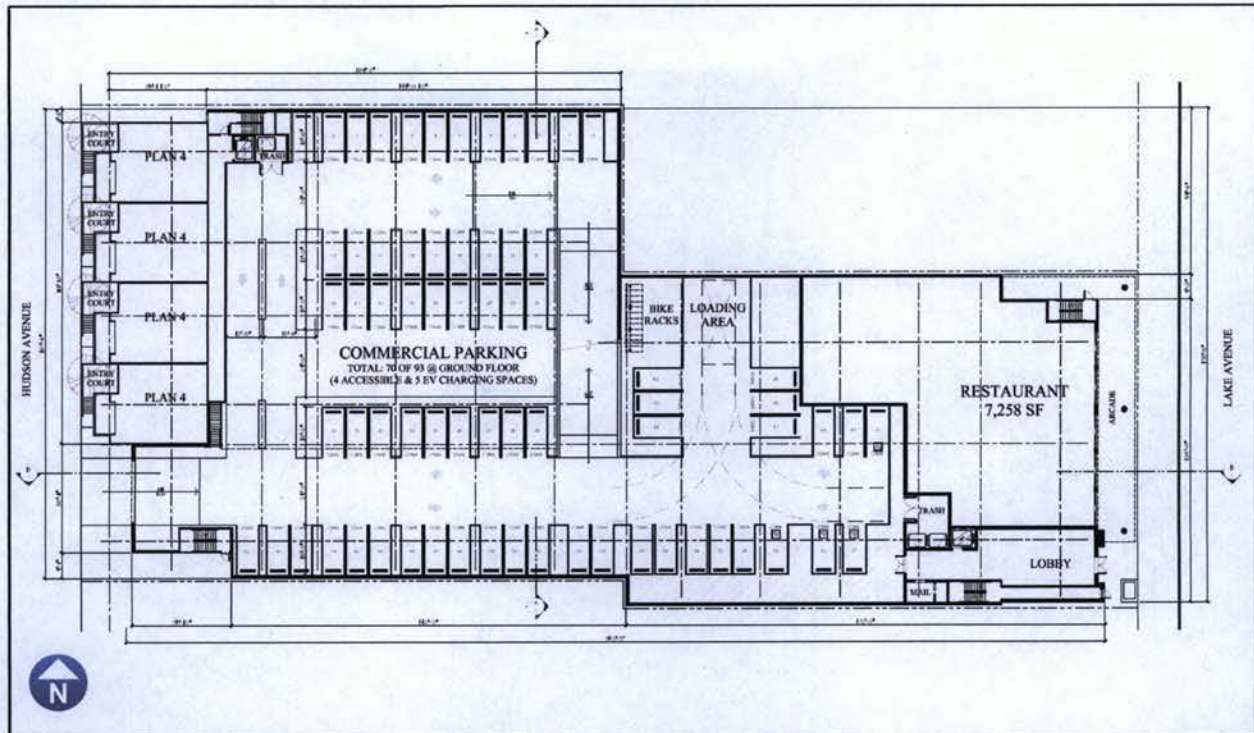


Figure 4: Elevations



Table 1: Project Characteristics

Zoning Designation		
Central District 5, Lake Avenue subdistrict, Central District Specific Plan (CD-5)		
General Plan Land Use Designation		
High Mixed-Use		
Assessor Identification Numbers:		
5734-035-031 and 5734-035-018		
Lot Size		
Total Site: 55,405 square feet (1.27 acres)		
Lake Frontage: 22,224 sf		
Hudson Frontage: 33,181 sf		
Density		
	Maximum Permitted	Proposed
Total Site:	70 units	70 units
Lake Frontage:	24 units (48 units per acre)	24 units
Hudson Frontage:	46 units (60 units per acre)	46 units
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)		
	Maximum Permitted	Proposed
Total Site:	--	2.3
Lake Frontage:	2.75	2.74
Hudson Frontage:	2	1.99
Building Size (Gross Square Feet)		
	Maximum Permitted	Proposed
Total Site:	127,478 sf	127,161 sf
Lake Frontage:	61,116 sf	60,986 sf
Hudson Frontage:	66,362 sf	66,175 sf
Ground Floor Housing		
	Permitted	Proposed
Lake Frontage:	Not permitted	None
Hudson Frontage:	Permitted	Yes
Lake Avenue Percentage of Building Floor Area – Non-Residential		
	Required	Proposed
	At least 50% of Floor Area (30,493 sf)	21% of Floor Area (12,794 sf)
Pedestrian Oriented Use		
	Required	Proposed
Lake Avenue Frontage:	50% of Building Frontage	Undetermined

Parking		
	Required	Proposed
Total	205 min (223 max)	205
Residential:	112 min (130 max)	112
Restaurant:	80	80
Office:	13	13
Loading Spaces		
	Required	Proposed
12 feet by 30 feet	1 space	1 space
Bike Parking Spaces		
	Required	Proposed
Class 1	16 spaces	Undetermined
Building Height [allowed height with height averaging]		
	Maximum Permitted	Proposed
Lake Frontage:	75 [90] feet	73 feet
Hudson Frontage:	50 [65] feet	57 feet
Setback Requirements		
	Required	Proposed
Lake (Front)	0 – 5 feet	More than 5 feet
Hudson (Front)	10 feet	0 feet
Interior Sides	None required	0 feet
Open Space Requirement		
	Required	Proposed
Total:	10,650 sf	16,852 sf
Common:	7,455 sf	13,125 sf
Private:	3,150 sf	3,727 sf
Lake Avenue Ground Floor Commercial Frontage and Façade Standards		
	Required	Proposed
Height:	15 feet	21 feet
Depth:	50 feet	Undetermined
Driveway Regulations		
	Required	Proposed
Number:	Undetermined	1
Driveway Visibility:	50 feet	Less than 50 feet
Sidewalk Width		
	Required	Proposed
Lake:	15 feet	Undetermined
Hudson:	10 feet	Undetermined

PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY:

Staff from applicable departments reviewed the PPR application. Complete comments from all departments are provided in Attachment A. Planning staff met with the applicant to clarify code requirements and discuss the proposal. A summary of notable staff comments is included below.

Zoning Code Compatibility

Several development standards were determined to be inconsistent with the existing development regulations for the CD-5 (Lake Avenue subdistrict) (Table 1: Project Characteristics). As proposed, the project would require the following discretionary approvals:

- Minor Variance to permit a height of 57 feet, in lieu of 50 feet on Hudson Avenue
- Minor Variance to permit a 0-foot front yard setback, in lieu of 10 feet along Hudson Avenue
- Variance to permit less than 50% of the floor area in the portion fronting on Lake Avenue as Nonresidential uses
- Variance to provide more private open space than permitted
- Variance to have less than 50 feet of driveway visibility along Hudson Avenue.

Additional information will be required in the final project submittal to verify compliance with all applicable standards, including: percentage of pedestrian oriented uses on Lake Avenue, bicycle parking, depth of commercial tenancy on Lake Avenue and sidewalk widths.

Discretionary Entitlements:

Mixed-use projects consisting of residential and nonresidential uses (restaurants, retail, office) are permitted by right at the subject site. It's anticipated that any discretionary entitlements filed by the applicant would apply specifically to development standards and the overall project design, and not the use of the property. The proposal currently includes characteristics that do not comply with applicable development standards and subject the project to a discretionary review through the Variance process with review and approval by the Hearing Officer.

1. Preliminary Consultation-Design Review: This project was reviewed through the Preliminary Consultation process for preliminary advisory comments on June 12, 2018.
2. Approval of Variances: The Hearing Officer must review and approve requested deviations from the Zoning Code that require a Variance. The Hearing Officer will also review the subdivision request. The project site consists of two separate parcels. Development of the project across the two parcels requires consolidation into a single parcel. Consolidation may be granted through a Certificate of Exception (lot line adjustment) or Tentative Parcel Map (TPM) application.
3. Concept & Final-Design Review: This project must be reviewed by the Design Commission through the Concept and Final Design Review process.

General Plan Consistency:

The General Plan designation of 141 South Lake Avenue is High Mixed Use (0.0 – 3.0 FAR, 0-87 DU/acre). The proposed project involves the demolition of the existing 27,220 square-foot commercial structure and the construction of a new, mixed-use building, consisting of 70 residential units, 12,794 square feet of non-residential space, and 205 parking spaces.

The High Mixed Use designation is intended to support the development of multi-story mixed-use buildings with a variety of compatible commercial (retail and office) and residential uses. Development is characterized by shared open space, extensive landscaping, and small to minimal separations between buildings, and shared driveways and parking. Sites may be exclusively commercial, but not exclusively residential. Mixed-use development projects containing housing shall incorporate amenities contributing to a quality living environment for residents including courtyards, recreation facilities, and similar elements. Where buildings face the street frontage, they shall be designed to enhance pedestrian activity with transparent facades for retail uses and distinctive entries for housing. Parking shall be located below or to the rear of the street. Projects constructed at High Mixed Use densities may be required to develop pedestrian-oriented streetscape amenities along their primary street frontages, consistent with the improvement concepts and plans defined by the City.

After review of the General Plan's Land Use Element Goals, Objectives and Policies, the proposed project appears to be generally consistent with the intent of the General Plan's High Mixed Use designation and continued collaboration with Zoning and Design and Historic Preservation is recommended.

PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION COMMENTS:

The project was first reviewed by the Design Commission through the Preliminary Consultation process on June 12, 2018. The Commission provided the initial comments below on the preliminary design:

- The current design does not clearly or distinctly respond to the surrounding context and appears to be a generic design that can be found in many different contexts. The design should reflect a more Pasadena specific identity. Consider taking more inspiration from the curtain wall (of glass or concrete) design of early Modern design. The proposed design should also take into consideration the Modern historic resources in the general vicinity of the project site, including the National Register eligible historic resource directly to the north, at 123 South Lake Avenue. There should be a more harmonious transition between the scale, massing, and materials of the proposed building and eligible historic resource at 123 South Lake Avenue. On the east elevation facing South Lake Avenue, provide a clear pattern of building openings; fenestration should unify a building's street wall and add considerably to a facade's three-dimensional quality paying particular attention to regulating lines on the east elevation to promote contextual harmony, solidify the relationship between new and old buildings, and lead the eye down the street.
- Significant and pedestrian friendly entries and lobbies on both the Lake Avenue and Hudson Avenue elevations should be included in the overall design. There is no residential entrance or lobby on the west elevation facing Hudson Avenue, and one should be provided. Main building entrances should be prominent in terms of size,

articulation, and use of materials. The primary easterly residential lobby appears to be submerged behind the projecting second story office and its relationship to the rest of the primary elevation should be further studied and refined. Consider differentiating/emphasizing this space architecturally from the remainder of the building.

- Provide more detailed information about bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular circulation to and from as well as within the site and clarify how residents will access the building from both Hudson Avenue and Lake Avenue as well as access and engage with the split-level courtyard. Clarify how the different commercial users will access the commercial spaces from the parking areas. Clarify if there will be any short term vs. long term bicycle parking. The internal circulation and ground floor relationships, including a lack of pedestrian access to Hudson Avenue, is currently misguided.
- Consider further differentiating, or more clearly explaining how the architectural character of the residential portion of the project is distinguished from the commercial portions, particularly as viewed from South Lake Avenue and refine the treatment of style and materials for each use. The ground floor commercial uses should be visually distinct from the residential space above; residential entrances should read differently from entrances to ground floor commercial uses. The residential portions should have more consistency in design, currently there appear to be too many competing patterns. It would also be appropriate to treat the Hudson facing elevation differently, as it is distinct from Lake Avenue and not visually connected.
- Provide interior elevations that better explain the relationship of units to the proposed courtyards. Ensure that the communal open spaces for the project include amenities that will allow for their active use by the residents of the project.
- The lightly supported mass of the second story office space and the balcony above appears to inappropriately dominate the primary elevation rather than enhance or compliment other significant building features. Explore ways to better integrate this feature into the overall design concept of the building. The use of recessed windows that create shadow lines and suggest solidity is strongly encouraged. Reconsider what users will have access to the large balcony above the second story projected mass of the office space. The current scheme of limiting it for the private use of only a few units is not appropriate, as this significant and prominent open space and should be programmed for common use. In addition, the visual transition between this space, the balcony of Plan 4A, and the residential lobby volume should also be further studied to ensure a more harmonious transition in materials and function.
- Study ways to better engage the outdoor dining and the projecting mass of the second floor office space on the east elevation with the rest of the building design and further explain how the outdoor dining relates to the adjacent properties and the street continuity in the immediate context. The outdoor dining component should incorporate additional features to make the space more human scaled and inviting as it does not appear to be fully integrated with the overall architectural design of the building and the large unadorned support columns should relate better to the upper portions of the building. In general, the elements of verticality on the east elevation need further refinement and the solid-to-void proportions of the larger articulated tower element at the northeast corner of the building appears to be imbalanced.

- If height averaging continues to be proposed, additional details will be necessary to fully evaluate the request. The initial drawings appear to show the design disproportionately skews the height of the interior, non-publicly visible volumes, and a request to approve this design will be difficult to grant as there will be no public perception of the difference in heights.
- Further resolve the architectural detailing on all elevations and ensure the same level of quality and detailing is reflected on all visible portions of the building. When there is vertical circulation inside the building, this should be expressed on the exterior elevations. There also appear to be too many unnecessary two-story framed elements that do not reflect the function and programming of interior spaces.
- Reconsider the connection between the internal circulation within the building and the exterior elevations, especially the north and south elevations. Explore ways to provide daylight to the internal corridors, via nodes by elevators or at the end of the corridors or other means as appropriate which would provide additional openings to the exterior.
- The design of the north elevation is unresolved and should be further studied and refined to include a full array of architectural features and detailing that appropriately responds to the adjacent eligible historic resource. Further study the composition of significant architectural elements of the primary elevation facing South Lake Avenue, such as the entryway, ground floor restaurant storefront, fenestration and mullion patterns, covered dining patio, cantilevered second floor office space, large glass balcony, and the tower like feature at the northeast corner of the building and, further refine the arrangement of these elements in a more harmonious composition with a clearly established hierarchy of significance with a base, middle and top. The use of exterior cladding materials should also follow a clearly established and logical hierarchy of significance. In addition, the predominant use of stucco is problematic; the material choices should be of a higher quality.
- Further study the design and location of the access to the parking garage off of South Hudson Avenue to ensure it is well integrated into the project design and will avoid the appearance of a large open tunnel from the street. Further study the scale of the parking entrance to determine if it can better relate to the scale of other openings along the street, including the large parking entrance directly to the south of the property.
- Further study the grade difference between the sidewalk and the unit entryways along South Hudson Avenue to ensure an appropriate and gradual transition. Sunken entryways are strongly discouraged. The combination of above and below street access is not desirable. Above grade access is preferable to sunken entries.
- The provided elevations should show the actual elevations of adjacent building, not just shadows in order to provide additional context and allow the Design Commission to better understand how the proposed building relates to the surrounding environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an environmental review of the project will occur to analyze the project's potential environmental impacts, as identified by State and local environmental guidelines. At this time, it is not known

what level of review will be required.

NEXT STEPS:

Public hearings before the Hearing Officer and the Design Commission are necessary in order to carry out the proposed project. The following identifies the steps in the review process:

- Conduct environmental review per CEQA;
- Conduct a noticed public hearing before the Hearing Officer for (1) applicable Variances and Minor Variances if the project is not revised to comply with the Zoning Code; Certificate of Exception or Tentative Parcel Map; and (2) consideration of adoption of the environmental determination; and
- Return to Design Commission for Concept/Final design approvals.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This report is for information only and will not result in any fiscal impact.

Respectfully submitted,



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Concurred by:



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Principal Planner/Zoning Administrator

Approved by:



STEVE MERMELL
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Attachments: (2)

- Attachment A – Predevelopment Plan Review Comments to Applicant
- Attachment B – Predevelopment Plan Review Plans