



City of Alameda

Staff Report

File Number:2019-7107

Planning Board

Agenda Date: 7/22/2019

File Type: Regular Agenda Item

Agenda Number: 7-B

Final architectural elevations, landscape plan, and lighting plan for a five-story hotel with 172 guest rooms, a freestanding restaurant and coffee shop in the Harbor Bay Business Park adjacent to the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal. The property is located within the C-M-PD, Commercial Manufacturing - Planned Development zoning district

To: Honorable President and
Members of the Planning Board

From: Henry Dong, Planner III

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 4, 2019, the City Council upheld the Planning Board's December 10, 2018 decision to approve the subject hotel and restaurant in the Harbor Bay Business Park next to the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal. The Planning Board's resolution of approval required that the applicant prepare and submit revised final architectural plans, landscape plans, and lighting plans for final Planning Board approval. Since February, the applicant has been working with staff and the neighbors to revise and improve the plans for final Planning Board review. The revised plans are included as Exhibit 1.

The December 10, 2018 plans are available for comparison purposes on the Major Projects page of the City of Alameda website at:

<https://www.alamedaca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building-and-Transportation/Planning-Division/Major-Planning-Projects>.

The draft resolution and conditions of approval are included as Exhibit 2. The draft resolution is designed to supplement previously approved Planning Board Resolution PB-18-23. Staff is recommending that the Planning Board review and approve the revised plans and draft resolution.

BACKGROUND

The proposed hotel and restaurant is located on the vacant 5.5 acre portion of the Esplanade development site within the Harbor Bay Business Park. The site is approximately 400 feet west of the corner of Harbor Bay Parkway and Bay Edge Road and immediately east of the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal. The property is zoned Commercial Manufacturing (CM)/Planned Development (PD). The hotel includes 172 rooms, dining room with a lounge, meeting room, swimming pool, outdoor patio areas, and approximately parking spaces for daily use

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by the Harbor Bay Ferry commuters.

On December 10, 2018, the Planning Board held a public hearing, approved the environmental determinations for the project consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the proposed hotel and restaurant development plan and design review applications. The Planning Board resolution (PB-18-23) required that the applicant return to the Board with final architectural elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, and parking plan.

On December 18, 2018, Brian Tremper filed an appeal of the Planning Board decision. On December 19, 2019, Laborers International Union of North America, Local Union 304 filed a separate appeal of the Planning Board decision.

On February 5, 2019, the City Council held a public hearing on the two appeals and upheld the December 10, 2018 Planning Board decision. The Council also asked the Planning Board to consider increasing the building setback from Shoreline Park by an additional 10 to 15-feet.

On February 8, 2019, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission Board of Commissioners determined that the project was consistent with existing BCDP approvals for the site and that the Planning Board's approved plan and setback provided maximum feasible public waterfront access for the project.

On February 16, 2019 and May 11, 2019, staff and the applicant held a community meetings with the Harbor Bay residents to discuss the building setback, elevations and landscape plan.

On May 28, 2019, the Planning Board reviewed revised architectural elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, and parking plan. The Board re-affirmed the building setback and size as appropriate, but directed the applicant to continue to refine the architectural elevations, landscape plan, and lighting plan.

Although the plans approved by the Planning Board on May 28th re-affirmed the hotel setback (the hotel is setback 40 feet from the park and approximately 75 feet from the top of the rip rap), the footprint of the hotel and restaurant differed slightly from the dimensions approved in December 2018. To accommodate some additional "back of house" support space on the ground floor of the hotel and allow for better architectural design (described later in this report), the current plans differ from the December plans as follows:

- The first floor footprint increased from 23,310 square feet to 24,627 square feet to accommodate the additional "back of house" space. As the result of the 1,317 square feet, the ground floor is slightly longer by approximately 25 feet. Internally, the back of house space increased and the conference room space was reduced to make room for a gym.
- The second floor increased in size by 867 square feet.
- The third, fourth and fifth floors decreased in size by about 776 square feet each, for a total reduction in floor area of 2,298 square feet on the top three floors.
- The total floor area of the hotel (all floors) reduced by 114 square feet from 112,990 to 112,876.
- The restaurant floor area was reduced by 355 square feet from 7,000 to 6,645 square feet.

On June 5, 2019, the City received a second appeal from Brian Tremper. The appeal requests that the City Council overturn the Planning Board's May 28, 2019 decision to approve the location of the building on the site. The appeal also claims the Planning Board approved the final design for the hotel. The appeal is

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scheduled for a September 3, 2019 City Council hearing.

On July 1, 2019 and July 8, 2019, staff held additional meetings with the neighbors to review revised designs with the project landscape architect and project architect.

DISCUSSION

Since February, the applicant has been working with staff and the neighbors to revise and improve the plans for final Planning Board review. The revised plans are included as Exhibit 1. The major changes to the plans since December are described below.

Revised Landscape and Lighting Plan: The landscape and lighting plan has been revised in consultation with the neighborhood to improve the plant pallet, improve the pedestrian paths through the parking lot to the waterfront Bay Trail, and improve the screening of the cars and car headlights from view from the Bay Trail and from the adjacent neighborhood. Specific changes shown on the plans include:

- Providing more evergreen trees and shrubs on the north side of the site and along lagoon pathway to improve the appearance of the project from the neighborhood, block vehicle headlights, and provide protective habitat for rabbits.
- Providing shrubs at the top of the three-foot berm along the south side of the parking lot to screen vehicle headlights from the Shoreline Park.
- Providing paths to the Bay trail from the east parking lot for ferry riders.
- Adding public access signs on the plans.
- Lowering the backlit halo Marriot sign that faces the neighborhood from the top floor to the porte cochere on the first floor.
- Reducing the number of lights on the building and in the parking lot to minimize night time illumination for the neighbors.

Conditions of approval require and specify that:

- The project shall be responsible for maintaining the landscape as approved.
- The construction drawings shall provide a 4.5-foot tall barrier along the north edge of the parking lot to screen vehicle headlights from nearby residents.
- The parking lot lighting shall not exceed one-half (1/2) foot candles. The light standards shall not exceed 16 feet in height, and the parking lot lighting shall include automatic dimmers to reduce the need for lighting after midnight, and the lighting fixtures shall provide warm lighting in Kelvin measurements (2600K - 2800K).

Revised Architectural Elevations: The architectural plans have been revised to provide a more attractive design that is better integrated with the adjacent McGuire Hester office building and the neighborhood to the north of the site. The specific changes include:

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- *Additional wall projections and recesses.* Since the December 2018 version of the design, the architectural elevations have been improved by providing additional wall projections and recesses along the face of the building. These additional “ins and outs” along the north and south elevations create a more attractive composition of building masses and additional shadow lines that will vary at different times of day.
- *Improved composition of building elements.* The revised elevations provide a better composition of building elements and masses. The revised plans establish a clear and consistent base to the building, center the entry at the center of the building, and provide a more balanced composition of massing on the upper floors.
- *Better articulated ground floor.* The overall appearance of the building has improved since December 2018 as the result of a better articulated ground floor. The ground floor of the building increased slightly (as described above), which allows the upper floors on the front of the building to be set in slightly. By stepping back, the upper floors of the hotel appear lighter at the top while providing a stronger foundation at the base of the building. The upper floor setback allows for the introduction of landscape plantings on the second floor which will serve to soften the appearance of the building from the neighborhood. The architectural design for the ground floor was further improved by introducing an El Dorado Stone, Tundra-brick, Ashland color selected as a preferred material and color by the representatives of the adjacent neighborhood. The darker stone material provides a pleasing contrast to the upper floors of the building and provides a complementary material and color to the neighboring McGuire and Hester Building office building. Lastly, ground floor decorative metal awnings are provided along the base of the building over larger “storefront style” ground floor windows further improve the appearance of the ground floor portion of the building.
- *Window Details.* In addition to providing a generous 4 inch inset reveal, the revised plans include awnings over all the south facing waterfront windows and on selective windows on the north east facing elevation to provide additional architectural detailing, additional shadow lines and sun screens along the waterfront facing and neighborhood facing elevations of the building.
- *A revised color scheme.* The applicant worked closely with the neighbors and staff to identify preferred color schemes for the building. The applicant is proposing a color scheme that is comprised of a greyish brown “tundra” brick material accented by black aluminum window frames and metal canopies. The upper stories of the building will be a light greyish white cement plaster accented by black window frames. The central portion of the building accenting the front entry will be done with a “gun smoke” grey cement siding material. At some of the neighbor’s request, the applicant also provided an alternative which replaces the gun smoke grey accent material with a blue accent material over the front entrances. The alternate color scheme is shown in Exhibit 1 between pages A3 and A4. The Planning Board may choose whichever scheme it prefers. The applicant prefers the color scheme without the blue.
- *Signs:* The applicant revised the sign program to provide a halo back lit sign above the front entrance and a halo back lit sign on the waterfront side of the building. No signs will be located on the sides of the building.

Conditions of approval require and specify that:

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- Clear story glazing shall be provided above all ground floor canopies, unless venting louvers are needed for internal ventilation of the interior space.
- An increase in the width of the roof cornice to 24 inches in width.
- A four (4) inch window recess on all windows.
- Public art approved by the City of Alameda Public Art Commission. The cost of the art installation shall be a minimum of 1% of the construction costs.
- Garbage truck access and garbage pick-up limited to the daylight hours after 7 AM to minimize potential noise impacts for residential neighbors.

Conclusion: In conclusion, staff believes the revisions to the landscape plan, lighting plan and architectural elevations are a significant improvement over the plans presented in December. In December, staff was unable to recommend the proposed architectural design, materials and colors. With the revised plans, staff is able to make a recommendation for approval. A draft resolution of approval is attached for Planning Board consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

On December 10, 2018, the Planning Board made the necessary findings to determine that no further environmental review was necessary under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the project. The City Council held a de novo public hearing on February 5, 2019 to consider an appeal of Planning Board decision to approve Resolution PB-18-23, which includes the Planning Board's CEQA findings regarding the project, and after considering all of the information on the record and hearing from the appellants, upheld Planning Board Resolution No. PB-18-23. The proposed revisions to the architectural plans, landscape plans, lighting plans, and parking plans do not create any new environmental impacts or increase the severity of any impacts previously disclosed that were not previously considered in the December 10, 2018 resolution. In addition, no further environmental review is necessary pursuant to *McCorkle Eastside Neighborhood Group v. City of St. Helena* (2018) 31 Cal.App.5th 80, which found that design review for by right projects is a ministerial decision under Public Resources Code section 21080. No further environmental review is required.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Board approve the draft resolution (Exhibit 2) approving the final architectural elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, and parking plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry Dong, Planner III

Exhibits:

1. July 22, 2019 Project Plans with preferred color scheme

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2. Draft Resolution of Approval