



Architectural Review Board Report

Architectural Review Board Meeting: May 21, 2018

Agenda Item: 7.4

To: Architectural Review Board
From: Elizabeth Bar-EI, AICP, Senior Planner
Cc: Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP, Design & Historic Preservation Planner
Rathar Duong, ARB Liaison

Subject: 18ARB-0102 to approve the design, colors, materials and landscape plans for the construction of a new 3-story (34.5 ft.), 15,463 square foot, mixed-use building with 15 units, approximately 2,751 square feet of ground floor commercial tenant space and 35 automobile parking spaces and secure bicycle parking within a two-level subterranean parking garage, with reduced ground floor height from 15' to 13.5'.

Address: 2225 Broadway
Applicant: Randall Reel/Patrick Tighe

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Architectural Review Board approve application 18ARB-0102 based upon the findings and subject to the conditions contained within this report.

Executive Summary

Proposed is a 3-story, mixed-use development with two levels of subterranean parking located at the northwest corner of Broadway and 23rd Street, oriented toward Broadway. The ground floor is primarily commercial space designed for retail uses. The western portion of the ground floor serves the residential uses above with a front lobby and fitness room. The driveway leading to the parking below is located along the rear of the development, along with a loading space and resource, recovery & recycling room.

The proposed building has been designed to complement a building proposed by the applicant located at 1450 Cloverfield Boulevard (see separate report for 18ARB-101). Building and landscape design, materials and details, as described in this report, are of high quality and comply with the design review findings. Staff recommends approval of the building design and landscape plans.

Project Description

This application is for design and landscape plan review for a three-story (34.5 feet) mixed-use project with 15 rental units (two deed-restricted for extremely low-income households) and 2,751 square feet of ground floor commercial space. A fitness room for tenants is located on the ground floor and outdoor living space is provided in a second floor courtyard and rooftop deck. The project includes 35 vehicle parking spaces in a two-level subterranean parking garage, with separate access for the residential vehicle parking, and bicycle storage rooms are provided for each use. The project includes eight

short-term (four commercial and four residential) and 30 long-term (four commercial and 26 residential) bicycle parking spaces.

Background

An application for building design and landscape plans for this project was filed on February 20, 2018, and was deemed complete on April 11, 2018. Staff reviewed the plans, which were revised to fully comply with the Development Review Permit project description approved by the Planning Commission.

Preliminary Design Review

On [October 2, 2017](#), the ARB conducted a preliminary conceptual review of the proposed project, considering the design both separately and as a companion project with the 1450 Cloverfield Boulevard proposal. During its preliminary discussion, the Board considered both structures as a grouping in terms of their design and compatibility with each other and with surrounding buildings. The subject property, 2225 Broadway, was termed Building “B” while 1450 Cloverfield was termed Building “A” in the ARB’s discussion.

Board members supported both project designs and were particularly complementary of the way the buildings relate to one another but are differentiated. They commented that the building elements feel sculptural and give the buildings depth, with the lightness of Building B (the subject property) contrasting with the grounded quality of Building A. The ARB noted the corner elements and recessed balconies with slightly differing rhythms on each building.

While the ARB was generally supportive of the building’s architecture, the following design comments were provided regarding open space and amenity areas, street lighting, landscaping, and the quality of light and air in the units:

- On Building B, consider whether the courtyard can open to the front to provide more light into the building.
- In both buildings, consider circulation to one side of the courtyard to maximize the openness of the courts.
- In both buildings, consider providing transparent materials for bridges through courtyards to provide additional light.
- In both buildings, consider enhancements along all street fronts through lighting and landscaping, particularly near project driveways for parking and loading.
- In both buildings, consider design solutions to provide more light and air to the bedrooms of some units, including more operable windows with obscure glass to maximize air flow.
- On Building A at the end of the hallway on the Broadway side, a planted area open to the sky works well. Consider a similar treatment on the Cloverfield side.

As both structures abut residential uses to the north, the ARB asked the applicant to pay particular attention to spaces between buildings and privacy for building residents and those living in the adjacent properties.

The applicant responded to the comments pertaining to 2225 Broadway by reconfiguring the 2nd floor outdoor living space as a more social environment through the furniture and landscaping, and by relocating the walkways above the space from the center to the side to provide more consistent access to sunlight. The roof deck was also enlarged, and remains in the front half of the property.

Planning Commission approval

On [January 10, 2018](#), the Planning Commission approved a Development Review Permit (17ENT-0095) for the project, along with a major modification for reduced (13.5') ground floor commercial height, which was requested in order to provide more height for the residential units on the two upper floors. The Commission's approval included direction to adjust unit floor plans that included interior bedrooms with no windows. These units have been redesigned, and the plans forwarded for ARB consideration comply with Planning Commission's direction.

In addition to standard review conditions, in its approval of Development Review Permit 17ENT-0095, the Planning Commission imposed the following special design conditions that relate to ARB review:

1. The ARB shall pay particular attention to the following design elements of the project:
 - a) Consistency in design and quality of the landscaping and lighting on the 23rd Street and Broadway elevations.
 - b) Design of the second floor outdoor living area for light and air circulation and configuration for practical and comfortable use.
 - c) Design of units with interior bedrooms for sufficient light and air.
 - d) Design of a landscape buffer between the project and the adjacent residential property to maintain privacy for residents of both properties.

Project / Site Information

The project is located on Broadway in a mixed-use neighborhood. The immediately adjacent property to the west contains a surface parking lot and across 23rd Street (east) is an office building proposed for demolition and replacement with the second project submitted by this applicant. That project is also three stories with ground floor commercial uses and two upper levels of residential units. The Colorado Center is located one block to the east on the south side of Broadway, in an area that is characterized by larger office complexes.

The following table provides a brief summary of project data:

Zoning District / Design Guidelines:	MUBL (Mixed Use Boulevard Low)
Parcel Area (SF):	9700 square feet
Parcel Dimensions:	100' x 97'
Existing On-Site Improvements (Year Built):	Four one story commercial buildings and parking lots. (All proposed for demolition).
Historic Resource Inventory Status	Existing buildings are not listed on the HRI

CEQA	Exempt pursuant to Section 21155.1 of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts a special class of Transit Priority Project (TPP) determined to be a Sustainable Communities Project (SCP) by the local jurisdiction.
Adjacent Zoning & Use:	North: MUBL (commercial); R3 (residence) East: MUBL (commercial building/applicant's project) South: MUBL (retail, office) West: MUBL (parking lot)

Analysis

Building Design/Architectural Concept

The proposed building is the smaller of two separate projects proposed as a visual whole that stretch across 23rd Street to Cloverfield along this mixed-use Broadway corridor. The design concept features a rhythm of solids and voids created by the residential units on the second and third floors, which relates to a vertical sculptural element on the southwestern corner surrounding an elevator shaft. A planted greenwall element at that corner opens the building to connect with an interior 2nd floor courtyard. Additional common outdoor living area is provided on a rooftop deck oriented toward the building's front (Broadway) with landscaping and clusters of seating. An area for solar panels and mechanical equipment is located in the back half of the rooftop.

The south and east elevations are street sides with transparent ground floor storefronts recessed behind diamond-shaped concrete columns, coming together with an angled corner entry. All four elevations carry through a similar pattern of siding and are articulated with balconies. The rear elevation is set back from the adjacent one-story grouping of buildings (residential structures that have been converted to commercial use) with bamboo as the primary landscaping to maintain that property's privacy.

The building design is contemporary and utilizes tapered elements that come together to create a special condition on the southeastern corner that highlights the entrance and has room for a couple of tables and chairs outside. The design also asserts itself in the southwest corner with a screened tower feature made of expanded metal mesh that surrounds the elevator shaft, and the adjacent planted greenwall element. Together, these elements call attention to the residential entrance, leading the design upward toward the residential floors. This feature includes a ground level awning with the address designed into it, further identifying the access into the residential portion of the building.

Site Design

As a corner property with significant street presence, the proposed project fits well into the neighborhood, raising the profile of the subject property, but fitting into the scale of surrounding development.

The building design creates a lively pedestrian experience on the ground floor level along both Broadway and 23rd Street. The primarily glass facades highlight interior activity, creating spaces that are appropriate for retail and food service uses to serve the residents and employees in the surrounding neighborhood. The corner entrance welcomes customers into the space, and the planters distributed along both sides soften the building's street level exterior.

The site plan indicates three street trees along Broadway and two on 23rd Street. Landscaping plans show three existing Red Flowering Gum (*Eucalyptus Ficifolia*) trees to remain, with modified tree wells. Other existing street trees will be removed to accommodate the project's access needs. The project will result in removal of a curb cut on Broadway, providing an opportunity for additional street tree(s). The City's Urban Forest Administrator will determine whether additional street trees will be required, and if so, the required species.

Landscape Design

The project provides landscaping on the ground level, second floor and rooftop. The third floor has an open lightwell overlooking the second floor courtyard. On the ground level, small planters containing Lobster Flower (*plectranthus Neochilus*) and Little River Wattle, (*acacia cognata*) are interspersed with decorative integral color accent paving along both street fronts. Weaver's Bamboo (*Bamboo Textilis*) separates the rear driveway and buffers the back corner from its neighboring multi-family residence in the rear setback area. An ornamental grass (Matt rush, or *Lomandra 'Breeze'*) is proposed to fill in the west side setback adjacent to the residential entrance. The transformer serving the property sits in the middle of this grassy area.

The second floor landscaping is located within a courtyard, which provides a common open space with built-in seating in front of planters containing Weeping Fig (*Ficus Benjamina*), Mahonia 'Soft Caress' and Platter Leaf (*cocculus laurifolius*). The courtyard area is differentiated within the system of outside corridors on this floor by integral color accent paving.

The rooftop deck surface utilizes the same decorative paving with integral color, and contains a system of planters around dining tables, lounge seating and outdoor cooking facilities. The plants proposed on this level include Australian willow (*geijerga parviflora*), woolly bush (*adenanthos sericeus*), ruby grass (*melinis nerviglumis*), creeping rosemary (*rosmarinus prostratus*) and platter leaf (*Madagascar senecio*)

Mass and Scale

The massing of this three-story structure is broken up through extensive articulation on all four building elevations, through the residential balconies, inset windows and ground floor features, such as the columns and planters.

An important design element is the repeating pattern of wide and narrow windows on all building elevations breaking down the scale of the building. The distinctive pattern of solid and void characterizes the building design with a singular design concept.

The variety of windows creates interest for both the exterior and interiors of the residential units as well as abundant light for residents. Second and third floor landscaped openings on the street-facing sides of the building provide additional light and air into the building's interior walkways and second floor courtyard. The second and third floors benefit from light coming through the large light well above the courtyard.

The building complies with Zoning Code requirements for a rear yard setback and a diagonal plane from the property line that maintains light and air to the adjacent residential property. Consistency with these standards assures compatibility of massing and scale with this residential district.

Design and Detailing

The concept for this building uses a relatively light material palette as shown below. Smooth concrete is the dominant building material for the building façade, along with steel-troweled stucco and a light gray metal cladding. Other primary materials include aluminum-framed dual-paned insulated glass windows and doors. Balcony railings are composed of galvanized metal grate infill panels.

The address lettering is proposed in orange steel panel. A vertical green wall rises at the southwest corner of the building where an opening in the building extends from the street to the courtyard.

DESIGN ELEMENTS	PROPOSED EXTERIOR MATERIAL, FINISH AND COLOR
Façade	smooth concrete (natural) Cement fiber board (granite) Steel-troweled stucco. (integral gray) Metal panels (flat, Kynar finish, gray and white) Green wall (landscape)
Windows	Aluminum frame Clear, dual pane insulated glass
Doors	Aluminum frame, dual pane insulated glass
Balcony railings	Metal grate guard rails
Roof	Flat
Mechanical Screening	The ground-mounted transformer in the southwest corner is placed within a planter area. Rooftop mechanical is screened with a 42” wire mesh parapet
Refuse Screening	RRR is provided in a room of suitable dimensions and access.
Lighting	Recessed down lights, in-ground LED uplights, directional wall lights,

Compliance with Special Conditions related to design

Some of the units in the initial plans presented preliminarily to the ARB contained interior bedrooms without windows. In order to be consistent with the Planning Commission’s approval, the revised plans eliminate these bedrooms. All units now contain bedrooms with exterior walls including operable windows.

Impact on Historic Resources

The subject property is not listed on the City’s Historic Resources Inventory.

Code Compliance

In the processing of the project’s development review permit, staff conducted extensive preliminary review for compliance with the Zoning Code, including the base district’s

development standards, mixed-use design standards and Tier 2 requirements. There do not appear to be outstanding issues that could potentially affect the plans and result in significant changes to the project's design. A complete code-compliance review will occur when the application is submitted for plan check. Any significant changes to the design subsequent to any ARB approval will require Board approval.

CEQA Status

The Planning Commission determined that this project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21155.1 of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts a special class of Transit Priority Project (TPP) determined to be a Sustainable Communities Project (SCP) by the local jurisdiction.

The proposed project meets all of the necessary requirements set forth in Section 21155.1 as a Sustainable Communities Project and, therefore, is exempt from CEQA.

Summary

In conclusion, the proposed design for this three-story, mixed-use building follows through on a consistent concept that creates a structure that will become an asset to the neighborhood and the City's building inventory. The proposal employs high quality materials that coexist in harmony. The building form creates commercial space that enhances the pedestrian experience and residential units with high quality amenities to serve the residents, including attractive and usable outdoor living area. The proposed design is consistent with the City's criteria for design and landscape plan review and findings for approval are made below.

FINDINGS:

- A. The plan for the proposed building or structure is expressive of good taste, good design, and in general contributes to the image of Santa Monica as a place of beauty, creativity and individuality in that its design is a complete architectural concept expressed through patterns of solid and void, differing window sizes, and pedestrian-oriented ground floor commercial space. The design employs a palette of high quality materials and varying forms that are appropriate for the mix of commercial and residential uses.
- B. The proposed building or structure is not of inferior quality such as to cause the nature of the local neighborhood or environment to materially depreciate in appearance and value in that the building will use high quality material such as smooth concrete and stucco, planters, dual pane insulated glass, a decorative metal mesh feature, a "green wall" and outdoor living area that exceeds minimum standards, as detailed in the application submittal and as presented to the Architectural Review Board.
- C. The proposed design of the building or structure is compatible with developments on land in the general area in that it is similar in height and massing to other area developments, and has been designed as one of two adjacent developments of similar concept but differing design along Broadway. The building is consistent with the design and use objectives articulated in the Land Use & Circulation Element (LUCE) for the mixed-use boulevard low district in which it is located.

- D. The proposed development conforms to the effective guidelines and standards adopted pursuant to Chapter 9.55 – *Architectural Review Board*, and all other applicable ordinances insofar as the location and appearance of the buildings and structures are involved. Specifically, the location and appearance of the buildings and structures comply with required findings set forth in Chapter 9.55, as documented by the Architectural Review Board, and as conditioned, the plans will fully comply with all applicable regulations prior to the issuance of a building permit.

CONDITIONS:

1. Provide details of all corner conditions and where materials meet for review and approval by planning staff prior to issuance of a building permit.
2. Review lighting plan and reduce number of fixtures as necessary to ensure the project is not overlit for approval by planning staff prior to issuance of a building permit.
3. This approval shall expire when the administrative or discretionary entitlements, not including any Subdivision Map approvals, previously granted for the project have lapsed. If no such entitlements have been granted, this approval shall expire 24 months from its effective date.
4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall demonstrate landscape and irrigation plan compliance with the City’s Green Building Ordinance standards (SMMC 8.108) subject to staff approval. Modifications to the landscape plan that effect less than 150 square feet of area may be reviewed and approved by the Staff Liaison to the Board.
5. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall demonstrate that the plans comply with all applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Significant changes to a project’s design shall require review and approval of the Architectural Review Board. Minor changes may be approved administratively pursuant to all applicable guidelines.

The Architectural Review Board’s approval, conditions of approval, or denial of this application may be appealed to the Planning Commission if the appeal is filed with the Zoning Administrator within ten consecutive days following the date of the Architectural Review Board’s determination in the manner provided in SMMC 9.61.100.

Attachments

- A. Applicant’s Submittal Material
- B. Attachment B (Preliminary Submittal)