



Architectural Review Board Report

Architectural Review Board Meeting: August 20, 2018

Agenda Item: 7.2

To: Architectural Review Board
From: Grace Page, Senior Planner
CC: Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner

Subject: 18ARB-0126 to approve the design, colors, materials, and landscape plans for the construction of a new five-story, 50-foot high, 33,870 square foot, mixed-use building with 40 residential units, approximately 3,777 square feet of ground floor commercial space, and a three-level subterranean parking garage.

Address: 1437-43 Lincoln Boulevard
Applicant: KFA / WS Communities

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Architectural Review Board approve application 18ARB-0126 based upon the findings and subject to the conditions contained within this report.

Executive Summary

Proposed is a 5-story, mixed-use development with three levels of subterranean parking located on the east side of Lincoln Boulevard between Broadway and Santa Monica Boulevard. The ground floor consists of two commercial retail spaces, residential lobby, open spaces along each side of the site, three residential units and utility rooms. The upper levels are comprised of 37 residential units and roof deck amenity spaces.

The proposed building is intended to complement the contemporary design of mixed-use buildings currently under construction on Lincoln Boulevard. While front elevation design is expressed with interlocking tapered white frames, this design component is exclusive to the street facing façade of the building. As such, staff recommends that the project's front elevation of the project be further revised for a more cohesive appearance with the rest of the building design.

Background

Preliminary ARB Review:

On December 19, 2016, the project was presented to the ARB. Board members were generally supportive of the concept and encouraged the applicant to further develop the design for cohesion, particularly the underdeveloped rear/alley elevation of the project. Comments pertaining to the ambiguity of the ground floor ceiling and varied frame arrangement along the second floor plate were provided for further refinement. There

was additional discussion regarding the length of the double-loaded arrangement along the center of the project.

16ENT-0098: On December 13, 2017, the Planning Commission approved Development Review Permit 16ENT-0098 and Vesting Tentative Parcel Map 16EN-0142 for a Tier 2, 5-story (50 feet) mixed-use project with 40 residential rental units and approximately 3,777 square feet of ground floor commercial space.

In its approval of Development Review Permit 16ENT-0098 the Planning Commission imposed the following design conditions that relate to ARB review:

- The ARB shall pay particular attention to the upper level massing along Lincoln Boulevard and the placement/projection of landscaping along the ground floor commercial frontage to optimize the pedestrian scale and experience.

Project / Site Information

The development site consists of two parcels with an existing 12,500 square-foot, two-story commercial retail building structure at 1443 Lincoln Boulevard. 1437 Lincoln Boulevard consists of commercial structures (converted single unit dwellings) and a two-story residential building at the rear of the property. A five-story mixed-use development is located to the south with ground floor commercial/restaurant tenants and 97 residential units. Other neighboring uses include a two-story commercial building (Hi De Ho Comics) to the north and a temporary surface parking lot across Lincoln Boulevard to the west.

The following table provides a brief summary of project data:

Zoning District / Design Guidelines:	MUB, Mixed Use Boulevard (Zoning prior to adoption of Downtown Community Plan)
Parcel Areas (SF):	7,500 + 7,500 = 15,000 SF
Parcel A Dimension:	50' x 150'
Parcel B Dimension	50' x 150'
Existing On-Site Improvements (Year Built):	Single-story commercial structures (1912) Two-story multi-unit dwelling (1949) Two-story commercial (1959)
Historic Resource Inventory Status	Existing buildings are not listed on the HRI
CEQA	Exempt pursuant to Section 15061 (b)(3)
Adjacent Zoning & Use:	North: MUB (2-story commercial) East: R3 (commercial office building) South: MUB (5-story mixed-use building) West: MUB (temporary surface parking lot)

Analysis

Site Design

The project consists of building layout featuring an “I” footprint on the 15,000 square foot site, with two interior side courtyards that are open to above. The ground floor is comprised of two commercial tenant spaces and residential lobby that occupy approximately 1/3 of the depth of the lot. The building storefront is setback from the property line and is approximately 20-feet from the curb. This creates an enlarged pedestrian zone and improves the potential for programming street activation. Beyond the commercial space and lobby, there are three residential units (facing the side courtyards), and support rooms for utilities and bicycles along the alley. The upper levels contain residential units aligned along a centralized corridor that face two interior side courtyards. The “I” footprint allows access to light and air to the residential units that are located in the center of the project. The courtyard along the south property line is primarily aligned with the open area of the adjacent mixed-use building for a combined separation of approximately 38-feet between the two wall surfaces. In response to the ARB’s preliminary comments regarding the double loaded corridor condition, the design of the center corridor was modified to include two substantive light wells (approximately 6’x20’) at each end of the hallway to provide openness with access to light and air at each level.

Landscape Design

The project’s landscape plans are comprised of linear corten planters at varied heights along the street frontage that delineate the bicycle parking space areas from seating areas. The arrangement provides buffering for the elevator, storefront seating/display and bicycle rack. The planter arrangement and size is proportional to the special Lincoln Boulevard paving design of the sidewalk. Additional landscaping is also proposed on the side court yard spaces that include seating areas, stepped planters and trees (Marina Strawberry and Olive). The upper level roof deck areas are also enhanced with perimeter planters with shrubs and succulents. A small planter area is introduced at the bottom of the light well areas within the building’s central corridor. The use of Blue Glow Agave should be modified around the bench seat area on the third floor plan with a softer (without sharp edges or points) plant type. Final landscape plant selections shall be reviewed by Staff prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Building Design/Architectural Concept

The proposed building design is intended to provide a Contemporary infill project that reinforces the street wall and continuation of the activated frontage of the neighboring mixed-use building to south. The design is consistent with the goals and policies adopted for Lincoln Boulevard. The ground floor is setback providing an enhanced pedestrian area and the use of board formed concrete columns and solid band above the storefronts create a strong horizontal element at the base. The upper levels are articulated with varied planes of residential glazing and emphasized with an interlocking white frame element along the street facing façade. While the materiality of plaster, concrete, and wood siding on the building are consistent, the composition of the front facade is noticeably different from the remaining elevations. The tapered white metal framing around the balcony spaces is only utilized on Lincoln Boulevard. In an effort to further solidify the architectural design, Condition No. 1 is included to simplify the front elevation in a manner that is consistent with the remainder of the building elevations. This is

appropriate for the façade and context of the adjacent architectural articulation to lessen the overly complicated design at the street wall along this block.

Mass and Scale

The infill development's design reinforces the street wall expressed by the adjacent 5-story mixed-use project. This street wall formation is consistent with the goals and policies envisioned for Lincoln Boulevard. The proportions of the project is in keeping with the recent developments and the 5 and 6-story projects under construction at Lincoln Boulevard and Colorado Avenue. The façade is articulated with white frame projections and with balcony areas that extend from the wall plane and others that are recessed. Massing within the site is articulated along the sides by providing large courtyard spaces along the side property lines. At the rear, the project incorporates a standard application of upper level stepbacks for a tiered appearance. The building form is adequately articulated in large moves to relieve massing along all sides of the project.

Design Materials

DESIGN ELEMENTS	PROPOSED EXTERIOR MATERIAL, FINISH AND COLOR
Façade	Plaster, smooth (white) Plaster, light sand finish (grey) Metal panel, smooth (white) Concrete, board formed (grey) Wood siding, stained (unspecified)
Windows	Aluminum storefront frames (grey) Clear glazing
Doors	Aluminum storefront frames (grey) Clear glazing
Roof	Flat roof with roof deck areas
Mechanical Screening	Roof parapet walls
Refuse Screening	A room for refuse/recycling bins is provided off the alley
Railing	Glass, clear
Other	Corten steel planters

Compliance with Special Conditions

During the ARB concept review, the white frame element varied with placement above and below the second floor line along Lincoln Boulevard. The design was modified to create a stronger distinction by including a horizontal concrete band across the storefront and lobby. Despite this modified design, the Planning Commission commented on the juxtaposition of the ground plane and upper levels and deferred to the ARB by including the specific condition related to the upper level massing. The design of the upper level massing presented to the Planning Commission has not been modified and is submitted for the ARB's consideration.

Impact on Historic Resources

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

Code Compliance

This application has been preliminarily reviewed for compliance with the base district's development standards which address aspects of the plan that could result in significant changes to the project's design. A complete code-compliance review will not occur until 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 proposed five-story mixed-use building 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.

Moreover, the project, including the property and any existing improvements have been reviewed, and for the purposes of CEQA, determined not to be a significant historic resource. Notwithstanding this CEQA determination, because the existing structure(s) proposed for demolition is/are over 40 years old, a permit to demolish the existing improvements will not be issued until the Landmarks Commission reviews the demolition permit application and all requirements of SMMC Chapter 9.25 are met. The City's Landmarks Commission retains jurisdiction to review the demolition permit application and to nominate the improvement as a City Landmark or Structure of Merit pursuant to the designation criteria and procedures contained in SMMC Chapter 9.56.

Summary

In conclusion, the proposed design for this five-story, mixed-use infill building follows through on the formation of an activated street wall and, as conditioned, creates a building design that is appropriate for an interior site that is harmonious with the boulevard. The building form creates commercial space that enhances the pedestrian experience and residential units with quality outdoor spaces and access to light and air on all sides of the project. 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 its design is expressed through a strong and pedestrian-oriented ground floor commercial space and articulated areas with side yard spaces that are open to above. 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 high quality material such as aluminum storefront

window systems, glass railing, and wood siding and as detailed in the application submittal and as presented to the Architectural Review Board will be used.

- C. The proposed design of the building or structure is compatible with developments on land in the general area it is similar in height and massing to other area developments and is consistent with the design and use objectives articulated in the Land Use & Circulation Element (LUCE) for the Mixed-Use Boulevard 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. Prior to the plancheck submittal, the front façade shall be revised and simplified in a manner that is consistent with the remainder of the building elevations. The revisions are to be reviewed and approved by Staff.
- 2. 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, or 30 months if in the Coastal Zone unless appealed.
- 3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall revise project drawings or provide additional and/or supplemental drawings and/or details to provide details of the proposed glass railing and fascia subject to staff review and approval.
- 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 a hydrozone matrix shall be included in the landscape and irrigation plans that describes for each hydrozone the following: the square footage, percentage of total landscaped area, plant type and plant form, hydrozone basis, hydrozone description, exposure or micro-climate, irrigation method, irrigation devices (including manufacturer, make and model), zone pressure, precipitation rates, zone gallons per minute and controller station numbers. Final plant material selection shall be subject to staff review and approval.

6. 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.
7. No building permit shall be issued for the project until the developer complies with the requirements of the Santa Monica Municipal Code with respect to applicable fees. No building permit shall be issued for the project until the developer complies with the requirements of Part 9.30.040 of the Santa Monica Municipal Code, Private Developer Cultural Arts Requirement.

If the developer elects to comply with these requirements by providing on-site public art work or cultural facilities, no final City approval shall be granted until such time as the Director of the Community and Cultural Services Department issues a notice of compliance in accordance with Part 9.30.050

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 Section 9.61.100.

Attachments

- A. Applicant's Submittal Material

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