



Architectural Review Board Report

Architectural Review Board Meeting: May 6, 2019

Agenda Item: 7.6

To: Architectural Review Board
From: Ross Fehrman, Associate Planner
CC: Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner
Subject: 19ARB-0162 to approve the design, colors, materials, and landscape plans for the construction of a four-story, 37-unit, 100% affordable housing project totaling 28,230 square feet with one level of subterranean parking.
Address: 2120 Lincoln Boulevard
Applicant: Community Corporation of Santa Monica

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Architectural Review Board approve application 19ARB-0162 based upon the findings and subject to the conditions contained within this report.

Executive Summary

Proposed is a four-story, 37-unit, 100% affordable housing project totaling 28,230 square feet with one level of subterranean parking located at 2120 Lincoln Boulevard at the corner of Pacific Street. The building has been designed around an internal courtyard with the ground floor frontage along Lincoln Boulevard largely consisting of a community room and commercial tenant space. The project has a clear contemporary design concept that is further enhanced with the use of materials, colors, and structural architectural elements.

Project / Site Information

The project site is comprised of two parcels located on Lincoln Boulevard at the corner of Pacific Street with the zone classification of General Commercial. The site is currently developed as a gas station, which is to be demolished, and surrounded by one-story commercial buildings to the north, south, and east, and one- and two-story multi-unit residential located directly behind to the west.

The following table provides a brief summary of project data:

Zoning District / Design Guidelines:	General Commercial (GC)
Parcel Area (SF):	14,160 SF
Parcel Dimensions:	145' x 100' (approximately)
Existing On-Site Improvements (Year Built):	Gas station to be demolished (1960)
Historic Resource Inventory Status	Existing building is not on the HRI

CEQA	Ministerial; Exempt pursuant to Section 15268 of the State Guidelines
Adjacent Zoning & Use:	North GC – One-story commercial South GC – One-story commercial East GC – One-story commercial West OP2 – One- and two-story multi-unit dwellings

Analysis

Site Design

The project design is a four-story courtyard building with a mixed-use ground floor, three upper floors of residential, and one level of subterranean parking. The ground floor has been pulled back from the property line along Lincoln Boulevard and at the corner of Pacific Street which enhances the pedestrian experience and provides a larger width along the Public Right-of-Way. This recessed area will be covered by the cantilever of the upper floors and will be in front of the community room and commercial tenant space that spans the majority of the street frontage along Lincoln Boulevard. The rear elevation adjacent to residential has also been setback 10’ to provide a buffer between the two properties. The entrance to the subterranean parking is located off of Pacific Street and all other existing curb cuts will be closed. The majority of the bicycle parking is located in the subterranean level, with some short term bicycle parking located along Lincoln Boulevard. A trash staging area is located along Pacific Street and a condition has been included to require this area to be screened if possible. Ample open space has been provided by individual private balconies and common open space located within the open-air courtyard at the ground floor and at the fourth floor.

Building Design/Architectural Concept

The building is organized around an internal courtyard with an understated sculptural exterior. The sculptural wrapper provides a three-dimensional quality to the building with angular design elements towards the roof and ground floor that provide visual interest and layering to the façade. While the wrapper extends to the ground, it does so only at certain limited points in order to expose the majority of the ground floor glazing. The ground floor frontage will be set back from the property line and above will be the cantilever of the upper floors, supported by angled steel columns. This design feature gives the building a sense of lightness as if it is lifted off of the ground and will give the building different facade depths. To break up the solid appearance, the façade is punctuated by recessed balconies with exposed interior coloring, vertical façade breaks, and exterior circulation shafts on each street facing façade. Both the vertical breaks and circulation openings help break up the massing of the building. At the corner, the sculptural wrapper appears as if it being peeled back to expose the underlying metal paneling that matches the circulation tower on the Lincoln Boulevard façade and provides a strong architectural statement.

Mass and Scale

While a large amount of the mass and scale has been reduced by the interior courtyard, exterior features such as the set back ground floor along the street elevations, recessed balconies, vertical façade breaks, and exterior circulation openings reduce the perceived

massing of what can be seen from the Public Right-of-Way. These exterior elements provide visual relief, breaking up the massing. In addition, exposing the ground floor glazing allows the building to feel lighter and as if it is lifted off of the ground. As the building moves back to the rear of the property towards the adjacent residential, the massing is stepped back slightly above the third floor. The proposed massing and scale of the building is appropriate for a commercial property along a major boulevard.

Design, Details, and Materials

The main shell of the building is comprised of a three-dimensional sculptural wrapper that strengthens the overall design and consists of light grey cement composite panels, light grey colored fine sand acrylic plaster, and grey steel colored smooth steel cement plaster. The cement panels will clad the Lincoln Boulevard and Pacific Street corner portion of the design, with the blue grey cement plaster framing the rest of the street facing facades. The light grey plaster will cover the interior side and rear elevations. The majority of the ground floor is comprised of black extruded aluminum storefront glazing, which allows for the cantilevered upper stories to appear as if they are floating with angled steel column supports. The interior of the recessed balconies will provide accent colors to the building with blue interiors on the corner façade elevations clad in light grey panels and orange interiors corresponding with the elevations with the grey steel troweled stucco. Where the structural wrapper is peeled back at the corner architectural element, grey metal paneling will be exposed which will correlate to the circulation tower along Lincoln Boulevard. Corrugated metal panels and metal picket guardrails help add additional texture to the building.

DESIGN ELEMENTS	PROPOSED EXTERIOR MATERIAL, FINISH AND COLOR
Façade	Cement composite panels – light grey Fine sand acrylic plaster – light grey Smooth steel cement plaster – grey steel Metal panels – dark bronze, light grey, medium grey
Windows	Anodized bronze aluminum storefront Black extruded aluminum frame
Doors	Black extruded aluminum frame
Roof	Flat
Mechanical Screening	3’-6” parapet extension of building facade
Refuse Screening	Located in subterranean level
Railing	Steel tube guardrail with vertical steel pickets – light grey Steel tube guardrail with corrugated perforated panel – light grey
Other	Steel Column supports

Landscape Design

Landscaping has been fully integrated in the building design, providing screening and softening at the building perimeter, and creating a sense of place in the courtyard. Along the Lincoln Boulevard and Pacific Street elevations, raised concrete planters will contain Muhlenbergia rigens (Deer Grass), Agave desmettiana ‘Variagata’ (Dwarf Century Plant), and Sedum ‘Purple Emperor; (Upright Sedum) that will provide texture and color to the building’s edge. Similarly, landscaping comprised of Podocarpus elongates (Breede River

Yellowwood) will border the rear elevation adjacent the neighboring residential to help further provide a buffer between the two properties. A condition has been added to ensure this hedge is maintained at the maximum 12 feet. Starting at the ground floor and continuing on the upper levels, planters have been integrated at the vertical façade breaks and circulation shafts also to soften the façade and bring texture into the cutouts of the building. These planters will be comprised of *Solanum jasminoides* (Potato Vine), *Distictis rivers* (Royal Trumpet Vine), *Juncus patens* (Ca. Grey Rush), and *Trachelopsermum jasminoides/asiaticum* (Star Jasmine). The main landscaped area will be an interior ground floor courtyard that is open to the sky that will provide a common open space with an arrangement of tables, chairs, and rubber mat play area. The main planting within the courtyard will be incorporated into varying planter heights with built-in seating comprised of *Chondropetalum tectorum* (Cape Rush) and *Bambusa oldhamii* (Oldham Bamboo). In addition to the courtyard, a common open space area is provided at the fourth floor. This area will have tables, chairs, and planters with built-in seating. The main planting focus will be an *Arbutus 'Marina'* (Strawberry Tree) with *Senecio rowleyanus* (String-of-Pearls), *Juncus patens* (Ca. Grey Rush), and *Bougainvillea 'Imperial Delight'* (Bougainvillea).

Concealed façade detail lighting will be provided along the ground floor of the exterior of the building, as well as balcony sconces on the upper floors. Within the courtyard, concealed under-bench lighting, scones, pendants, and both recessed downlights and wall washers will be incorporated. At the interior entrance, an oval shape pendant light along with recessed downlights and wall washers will be provided. On the upper floors, walkways will be comprised of unit scones and additional recessed lighting. The fourth floor common open space will be specially lit by stake-mounted tree uplights to showcase the Strawberry Tree as well as concealed under-bench lighting and catenary-mounted pendants overhead.

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 project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15268 of the State Guidelines in that the proposed project is ministerial.

Summary

The proposed four-story, 37-unit 100% affordable housing project has a clear architectural concept with a well-developed and adequately programmed courtyard that will enhance the quality of life for the residents. High quality materials are being proposed along with ample outdoor space for the tenants. While the building maximizes the parcel's potential along a main commercial boulevard, it is respectful to the neighboring uses.

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 the project is designed with a clear architectural concept, a fully developed courtyard, landscape design, and high quality materials. The building is also appropriately scaled for its location along a main commercial boulevard.
- 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 and finishes such as cement panels, fine/smooth stucco, aluminum storefront, and steel columns, 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 in that the project design is appropriate for the context along a major commercial boulevard with its massing and configuration, three-dimensional façade design, and material selection.
- 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. If possible, provided screening or gate at the trash staging area.
- 2. The rear hedge shall not exceed a maximum height of 12 feet.
- 3. Prior to building permit submittal, details regarding the design of the metal paneling for the corner architectural element shall be reviewed and approved by staff.
- 4. 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.
- 5. 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.

6. 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.
7. 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 SMMC9.61.100.

Attachments

- A. Applicant's Submittal Material

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