



Architectural Review Board Report

Architectural Review Board Meeting: May 18, 2020

Agenda Item: 7.1

To: Architectural Review Board
From: James Combs, Associate Planner
CC: Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner
Subject: 20ARB-0115 to approve the building design, colors, materials, and landscape for the construction of new Advanced Water Treatment Facility (AWTF) to treat stormwater and municipal wastewater.
Address: 1771 Main Street
Applicant: Selim Eren, City of Santa Monica Civil Engineering Division

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) approve application 20ARB-0115 based upon the findings and subject to the conditions contained within this report.

Executive Summary

The proposed Advanced Water Treatment Facility (AWTF) proposed in the current location of the Civic Center surface parking lot is capable of processing 1 million gallons of sewage per day and is one element of the larger Sustainable Water Infrastructure Project (SWIP). The AWTF is spans most of existing surface lot, and two stairway/elevator access buildings measuring less than 600 square feet are the only structures visible above ground. The project site is currently developed with the Civic Center parking lot between the Courthouse and the Civic Auditorium.

Background

February 3, 2020 Notice of Construction and parking closure at the Civic Center parking lot. Excavation of the site begins.

September 10, 2019 Council authorized the construction phase of the SWIP, awarding the Guaranteed Maximum Contract for construction.

January 26, 2016 Initial grant and funding applications applied for from the State.

Project / Site Information

The project will replace a portion of the Civic Center surface parking lot between the Civic Center Auditorium (a designated local landmark), and the Santa Monica (County) Courthouse. The Early Childhood Development Center and Civic Center Sports Field are immediately east of the site in what was also a portion of the parking lot. The Chain Reaction sculpture is immediately to the west along Main Street. The only structures of

the proposed AWTF that will be visible above ground are the two proposed access buildings towards the north of the site and some screened mechanical equipment adjacent to the Auditorium on the Pico Boulevard side of the site.

Zoning District / Design Guidelines:	OS – Open Space
Existing On-Site Improvements (Year Built):	Surface level parking lot and solar canopy.
Project height / area / FAR	One story, 565 SF of across two buildings dedicated almost entirely to stairs and elevators which are exempt from floor area calculations.
Historic Resource Inventory Status	Affected areas are not listed on the Historic Resource Inventory. Neighboring Civic Auditorium is listed as a local landmark.
CEQA	Subject to Mitigated Negative Declaration approved by City Council September 27, 2016
Adjacent Zoning & Use:	North GC – General Commercial – Two Story County Courthouse South PL – Institutional / Public Lands - Civic Auditorium East OS – Open Space – Early Childhood Development Center & Civic Center Sports Field West GC - 5 story office building (Rand Corporation)

Analysis

Site Design

The proposal for the AWTF includes reconfiguring and landscaping a portion of the existing Civic Center parking lot, the construction of two access buildings, and an above ground, screened, equipment area. The vast majority (15,000 SF) of the AWTF will be in three underground levels beneath the parking lot. In order to educate the public about the facility a mural will be painted on one of the access facilities in the parking lot and a plaque will be located closer to Pico Boulevard.

The parking lot and bicycle path layout have been reviewed and approved by the mobility division.

Landscape Design

The plant palette consists of a variety of drought tolerant species including decorative and shade trees, shrubs, and ground cover. The parking stalls will be separated with a solid planter running the length of each drive aisle and planted with shrubs and *Chilopsis linearis* (Desert Willow) to provide shade and color. The furthest north of these planters will be wider at approximately 9'-0", roughly the width of the narrower of the two access

buildings. to provide shade and color. Along the existing lawn near Main Street and the “Chain Reaction” sculpture larger *Metrosideroa excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas Tree) are proposed which will provide color and shade as the trees mature. The Chain Reaction sculpture and landscaping around it will remain with a 20-foot diameter protection zone provided around during construction. Proposed shrubs and smaller plants consist of *Anigozanthos*, *Carissa macrocarpa*, *Dietes grandiflora*, and *Callistemon viminalis*. A proposed plant called *Limonium perezii* (Sea Lavender) has been identified as potentially invasive. The applicant should consider an alternative species.

Building Design/Architectural Concept

The proposed building design is a simple structure of stucco, metal louvers vents, and glass. The buildings are minimal, sized only to accommodate the stairways and an elevator to access the subterranean facility. The larger of the two buildings will have a roof element project beyond the primary wall and anchored a few feet further west with a secondary wall creating a pass through. The exposed western wall is proposed to feature an educational mural of the facilities operations.

Mass and Scale

The two proposed buildings are limited in both in size and materials. At approximately 12 feet tall and less than 300 square feet each amid a landscaped parking field the proposed buildings have appropriate massing for the pedestrian orientation necessary for the revised parking lot.

Design, Details and Materials

The project will primarily be clad in plaster with a smooth finish on all exterior walls. While the base color will be white, a mural with bright green and yellow is proposed to activate the building. An educational mural detailing the operation of the water treatment facility is proposed along the western wall of the larger building as detailed in the renderings. A condition of approval requires the final design to be reviewed by ARB staff to ensure the mural will not constitute signage. Windows are proposed to be clear, however staff encourages the applicant to explore if fogged or otherwise translucent glass would be appropriate given the limited use and non-public nature of the stairwell. Windows will be in an aluminum store front system. The proposed elevator door for the western building will be accessed from the stainless steel elevator door.

Above-ground electrical equipment will be located along the Civic Auditorium near Pico Boulevard. A perforated metal fence system is proposed to replace the existing chain-link fencing and vertical slats for screening the equipment.

Proposed are 25’ tall aluminum LED light poles located into proposed landscape areas.

DESIGN ELEMENTS	PROPOSED EXTERIOR MATERIAL, FINISH AND COLOR
Façade	Smooth plaster painted white with a proposed mural.
Windows	Aluminum / glass clear anodized
Doors	Aluminum / glass clear anodized
Mechanical Screening	Metal panels (grey)

Refuse Screening	Metal panels, painted (grey)
Conceptual Lighting Plan	Parking lot light poles, approximately 25' tall.

Impact on Historic Resources

The subject property is an existing parking lot and not listed on the City’s Historic Resources Inventory. The adjacent Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is a designated but will not be disturbed as part of this project.

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 subject to a Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted by City Council on September 27, 2016.

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 design is a modern design seeking to update the existing parking field along Main Street and accommodate a water treatment facility.
- 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, smooth stucco and an aluminum storefront system 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 mass, scale, configuration, and landscape are all complementary to the adjacent buildings.
- 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 building permit submittal the proposed murals shall be reviewed and approved by Architectural Review Board staff.
2. Prior to building permit submittal, details and cut sheets for the proposed light poles shall be submitted to ARB staff for approval.
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, or 30 months if in the Coastal Zone unless appealed.
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.
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

8. No building permit shall be issued for the project until the developer complies with the requirements of Chapter 9.72 of the Santa Monica Municipal Code, the Child Care Linkage Program.

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