



Architectural Review Board Report

Architectural Review Board Meeting: October 19, 2020

Agenda Item: 7.3

To: Architectural Review Board
From: Ross Fehrman, AICP, Associate Planner
CC: Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner
Subject: 20ARB-0204 to approve the design, colors, materials, and landscape plans for the construction of a new two-story, three-unit residential development totaling 5,464 square feet with one subterranean level of parking.
Address: 2425 20th Street
Applicant: Scott Myers, Empire Associates

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Architectural Review Board approve application 20ARB-0204 based upon the findings and subject to the conditions contained within this report.

Executive Summary

Proposed is a new two-story, three-unit contemporary style residential development totaling 5,464 SF with one subterranean level of parking located in the Low-Density Residential (R2) zone district. The proposed three-dimensional modular design expresses a clear concept and is comprised of high quality materials and colors that further enhance the overall design. Landscaping has been designed to provide pedestrian interaction along the public right-of-way and ground floor open space is provided for each unit.

Project / Site Information

The project site is located on the east side of 20th Street between Pearl Street and Ocean Park Boulevard. 20th street is predominately developed with multiple-unit residential ranging between one and three stories, while parcels to the east (rear) are developed with single-unit dwellings.

The following table provides a brief summary of project data:

Zoning District	Low-Density Residential (R2)
Parcel Area (SF):	6,750 SF
Parcel Dimensions:	50' x 135'
Existing On-Site Improvements (Year Built):	Single-Unit Dwelling (1928)
Historic Resource Inventory Status	Existing building is not on the HRI
CEQA	Exempt pursuant to Section 15061 (b)(3)

Adjacent Zoning & Use:	North
	R2 – One to three story multiple-unit dwellings
	South
	R2 – One to three story multiple-unit dwellings
	East
	R1 – Single-Unit Dwellings
	West
	R2 – One to three story multiple-unit dwellings

Analysis

The proposed two-story building is a contemporary style designed in a series of rectilinear volumes terminating in a flat roof. The simple design appears as if the building is one solid form that has been cut away at in systematic areas. This design concept provides a modular appearance to the structure and provides relief to the overall massing and scale of the building. At two stories and 28’ high, the proposed massing and scale are appropriate for the context of 20th Street and the single-unit residential to the rear.

The design concept is further enhanced through a consistent application of high quality materials and colors. The exterior planes of the building are sheathed in dark solid cement board with recessed (or carved out) areas finished in white painted stucco. The change in material and color make it appear that when the dark exterior is cut in to, a light interior is revealed. Not only does this provide a three-dimensional quality to the building, but the change in material brings textural interest and the simple color palette provides a sophistication to the design. Arrhythmically placed aluminum windows provide needed transparency and a break in the solidity of the design.

The proposed building footprint is situated outside of the required front, side, and rear setbacks. The front unit entrance has been carved out of the front façade to clearly identify its entry, while the two rear units enter along the south elevation. Access to the subterranean garage is taken from the alley. Individual private outdoor space is provided within the large north side setback and at the rear of the property.

The majority of landscaping will be provided within low board formed concrete planters within the front setback that provide a pedestrian oriented connection to the building. Along with other drought tolerant planting, such as *Agave parryi* var. *truncata* (Artichoke Agave) and *Aloe nobilis* (Golden Toothed Aoe), the focal point of the front landscaping will be an *Acacia stenophylla* (Shoestring Acacia). The remainder of the landscaping will largely be along the south side and rear of the parcel and will be comprised of such planting as *Chondropetalum tectorum* ‘El Campo’ (Cape Rush), *Ficus pumila* (Creeping Fig), and *Dianella tasmanica* (Little Rev Flax Lily). A *Quercus agrifolia* (Coast Live Oak Standard Trunk) is proposed at the rear of the property. The choice of plant types reinforce the strength of the overall design.

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 15061 (b)(3) in that it can be seen with certainty that the proposed project does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment in that the project involves the review of design-related issues associated with the proposed structure(s) in terms of general architectural design, proposed materials, colors, mechanical screening and/or landscape plans.

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 contemporary building is simple and expresses a clear architectural idea. Its design is further enhanced by high quality materials and simple color palette. The perceived mass is appropriately addressed through various design techniques so that it is consistent with and appropriate to the adjoining buildings and surrounding context. The building architecture is further supported by a drought tolerant plant palette that enhances the visual interest from the public right-of-way and usability of the outdoor spaces.
- 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 materials such as dark solid cement boards, anodized aluminum windows, and board formed concrete planters will be incorporated into the design 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's design is complementary to the surrounding neighborhood through the use of various design techniques, including use of colors, materials, and building form. Additionally, the mass and scale takes into consideration the surrounding context with single-unit residential to its rear.
- 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. Subject to staff review and approval, prior to the issuance of a building permit the applicant shall provide additional details where different materials meet.

2. Subject to staff review and approval, prior to the issuance of a building permit the applicant shall provide additional details of the proposed exterior façade materials, such as the texture and color of the proposed stucco and pattern of cement board.
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.

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