



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD RECORD OF DECISION

Meeting Date June 8, 2017 DRB Case No. PDR 1704638

Address 1815-1821 South Brand Blvd.

Applicant Bahram Badiyi
 (McClellan Badiyi & Associates)

PROPOSAL: To demolish the existing buildings and to construct a new six-story mixed-use development, consisting of 38 rental apartment units on the upper five floors, approximately 850 square feet of commercial office or retail space on the ground floor fronting South Brand Boulevard, and a total of 95 parking spaces located on the ground floor and within the three-level subterranean garage, on a 16,820 SF lot, zoned SFMU (Commercial/Residential Mixed Use).

DESIGN REVIEW

Board Member	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Charchian	X		X			
Benlian		X	X			
Malekian			X			
Simonian					X	
Totals			3			
DRB Decision		Approved with conditions				

Conditions:

1. Revise design of areas behind vertical "carpet" at front façade to eliminate the proposed void spaces and create a stronger visual relationship between the elevator lobbies, the curtain walls that enclose them, and the "carpet" structure.
2. Redesign the windows and railing glass at the openings in the metal-clad horizontal "ribbon" along the top of the west (front) and north façades to allow them to conform to the curved wall in which they are set.
3. Delete brick veneer from the proposal and incorporate smooth-finished stucco with a scoring pattern that relates to the adjoining façade geometries.
4. Delete the sinuous paint scheme at the rear façade. Redesign the entire façade to better relate to the visual character of the building's other façades.
5. Redesign the window openings located in the horizontal "ribbon" at the two upper floors of the front façade to have them relate to the adjacent windows within this feature rather than the windows in the flat wall below.
6. Create an opening in the "ribbon" roof at the area above the roof deck landscaping.

7. Redesign the rooftop deck and landscaped areas to allow for greater interaction between them and enhanced usable space.
8. Match the color of the vertical shaft toward the west side of the north façade with that of the stucco walls at the lower floors.
9. Provide a color contrast between the "carpet" and the base of the building.
10. Delete the sconce lights proposed at the lower portion of the north façade.
11. Relocate trash room door at the rear façade to be flush with the building wall.
12. Consider the recommendations proposed for Interior Noise Levels, as noted in the Environmental Noise Study and Recommendations, prepared by Henderson Engineers, Inc., dated September 16, 2016.
13. Provide plans showing all ventilation ductwork and venting on the elevations for staff review and approval prior to plan check submittal. The ventilation ductwork shall terminate at the roof unless related vent hoods and/or louvers can be effectively incorporated into the design of the facades.

Analysis

Site Planning: The proposed site planning is appropriate to the site and its surroundings, as modified by any conditions, for the following reasons:

- The mixed-use building essentially spans the length and width of the 16,820 SF lot. There are no street front or interior setbacks in the SFMU zone.
- By providing a total open space area of 9,128 SF of common and private open space area (not including the enclosed rooms), the project far exceeds the 5,320 SF minimum required by Code (140 SF per unit). The project includes a substantial roof deck, gym, community room, and balconies.
- The at-grade parking level will be effectively screened from view by the building lobby and commercial unit.
- The project exceeds the minimum landscaping requirement of 1,682 SF (1,734 SF provided). All landscaping is drought tolerant and complementary to the contemporary design.
- All equipment and trash is screened from view. The trash/recycling room is located on the first floor fronting the alley; trash shoots are provided on each residential floor. The project features integrated downspouts, so no roof drains/gutters will be visible on the elevations.

Mass and Scale: The proposed mass and scale are appropriate to the site and its surroundings, as modified by any conditions, for the following reasons:

- The 6-story, 75-foot high building complies with the maximum height standard for development in the SFMU zone not adjacent to single- or multi-family residential zones. All surrounding properties have the same zoning and building envelope potential.
- Though the new mixed use development is larger in size and mass than the adjacent 4- and 5-story affordable housing projects, a variety of architectural strategies are used to express and break up the massing of the building: unusual architectural elements, slight variations in building height/parapet, recessed openings along elevations, and interior building setbacks for the residential portion above the commercial level.
- The building is broken down into different elements: the ground floor establishes the base of the building, with a storefront system fronting the street and brick cladding along the sides of the building, while the top of the building features the undulating "ribbon" parapet and individual mezzanine roof forms to add variety and break up what could have been a boxy building outline/roof.

Building Design and Detailing: The proposed building design and detailing are appropriate to the site, as modified by any conditions, and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The contemporary project was specifically designed with eye-catching architectural elements to stand out among the boxier high-density affordable residential housing projects on adjacent sites, and to provide a focal point at the southern gateway of the City. As the applicant describes the element in his architectural write-up, the "flowing banner/ribbon element [signals] the entry to the city", while the red color stems from the intention of "rolling out the red carpet".
- As conditioned, the building will be stylistically consistent on all four elevations, recognizing that all elevations will be visible from Brand Boulevard, San Fernando Road, or the rear alley.

- The proposed materials include a variety of finishes (horizontal, narrow metal panels on the "flowing banner/ribbon" element, metal and glass curtain wall, stucco accent walls, brick veneer) that reinforce the overall building design. The materials and the vibrant colors on the "flowing banner/ribbon" ("carpet") element on the front façade and the wrapping upper floor banding ("ribbon") along the Brand and northerly elevations create an juxtaposition of color to maintain human interest and grab the attention of those leaving or arriving at the south end of the City on Brand Boulevard. The variety of materials on the building facades enhances the overall design, creating visual interest, as recommended by the Design Guidelines.

The Design Review Board approves the design of projects only. Approval of a project by the Design Review Board does not constitute an approval of compliance with the Zoning Code and/or Building Code requirements.

If an appeal is not filed within the 15-day appeal period of the Design Review Board decision, plans may be submitted for Building and Safety Division plan check. **Prior** to Building and Safety Division plan check submittal, Design Review Board approved plans must be stamped approved by Design Review Board staff. **Any** changes to the approved plans may constitute returning to the Design Review Board for approval. **Prior** to Building and Safety Division plan check submittal, **all** changes in substantial conformance with approved plans by the Design Review Board must be on file with the Planning Division.

Please make an appointment with the case planner for DRB stamp/sign-off prior to submitting for Building plan check.

DRB Staff Member: Vilia Zemaitaitis, AICP, Senior Planner 