



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD RECORD OF DECISION

Meeting Date February 24, 2022

DRB Case No. PDR 2118187

Address 3450 N. Verdugo Road

Applicant Hamlet Zohrabians

Project Summary:

To construct a new 3-story, 25,141 square-foot mixed-use project containing new office and retail uses (total of 3,031 square feet) at the first floor and 22 residential units at the upper two floors, featuring four (4) affordable units restricted to very-low income households (PDBP 2011751). The two existing, one-story commercial buildings (built in 1923/1940/1979) will be demolished. The 21,000 square-foot project site is located in the C3-I Zone (Commercial Service - Height District I). The project provides a total of 61 parking spaces: 18 commercial parking spaces on the ground floor and 43 residential parking spaces within a new one-level subterranean parking garage.

Design Review:

Board Member	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Lockareff		X	X			
Minas					X	
Simonian					X	
Tchaghayan	X		X			
Welch			X			
Totals			3	0	2	
DRB Decision	Approved with Conditions.					

Conditions:

1. Redesign residential entry to eliminate the railing at the second floor and provide a consistent height for the entry surround.

2. Remove the light fixtures from the second floor above the residential entry and relocate to the first floor flanking the entry doors.
3. Revise drawings to show decorative permeable paving at driveways and entryways that related to the design concept and colors.

Determination of Compatibility: Site Planning

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

- The site planning of the proposed building is appropriate to the site and its neighboring properties, because it follows established pattern in the neighborhood.
- The project provides a total of 61 parking spaces, of which 18 parking spaces are located at grade level (for commercial uses) and 43 parking spaces located within a new one-level subterranean parking garage (for 22 residential units). A two-way vehicular access to the on-grade commercial parking will be on Verdugo Road and a two-way vehicular access to the one-level semi-subterranean parking garage will be off Chiquita Place. The primary pedestrian access (elevator and staircase) to the on-grade parking garage and semi-subterranean parking garage are from entrance lobby on Chiquita Place, appropriately integrated into the overall design of the building. A secondary pedestrian access (staircase) is also incorporated into the design.
- The outdoor common space located at the east (facing the alley) and northeast side of the building is well integrated into the site planning and is accessible easily from all units. Seating and amenities are provided in the common outdoor space allowing for multiple users. The project provides adequate private open spaces as private balconies and rooftop decks.
- The project meets the required landscape open space and the landscape plan is complementary to the building design and includes drought tolerant landscaping. In order to satisfy City Forestry requirements, the project will provide four (4) new street trees (Red oak) adjacent to the project site, along Chiquita Place in the City right-of-way.
- The project proposes a perimeter stucco finish wall, painted to match the building walls with metal railing on top along east property line (facing alley). Concrete block wall is proposed along north property line, adjacent to the neighboring site. Landscaping is proposed in front of the perimeter walls to provide visual buffer and help soften the transition between the proposed building abutting the public alley and neighboring property.
- The proposed rooftop equipment is appropriately integrated into the design and adequately screened from public view.
- The trash bins and recycling containers are located in the new semi-subterranean parking garage and are not visible from the street.
- The project will have external gutters and downspouts, shown on appropriate locations on the façades.

- The proposed location of light fixtures on the front and side façades are appropriate and avoids light spillover onto the adjacent property. However, a condition of approval is added to remove the light fixtures from the second floor above the residential entry and relocate to the first floor flanking the entry doors.

Determination of Compatibility: Mass and Scale

The massing and scale are appropriate, as modified by conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The mass and scale of the proposed three-story mixed-use project are consistent with the existing and under construction development in the neighborhood consisting of one- to three-story commercial, residential and mixed-use buildings.
- The project provides appropriate setbacks along the street front, street side, and interior property lines. The building articulations and setbacks at the upper floors break up the mass and help to provide an appropriate transition to the adjoining properties and help the building relate well to the neighborhood context. The design also appropriately addresses the change in site topography.
- The proposed three-story mixed-use building with overall height of 41 feet meets maximum height limit of 41 feet for properties having a minimum pitch of three (3) feet in twelve (12) feet in R-1250 zone.
- The proposed building stepbacks, recessed volumes, appropriate articulations especially at the upper floors; and location of entries, placement of storefronts, the use of varied exterior wall finish materials and colors, and architectural details help to avoid overbearing forms.
- The combination of hipped roofs and flat rooftop decks (flat roof) is appropriate to the context and reinforces the architectural design concept.

Determination of Compatibility: Design and Detailing

The design and detailing are appropriate, as modified by conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The proposed design, architectural details, and colors are stylistically consistent on all four elevations consisting of smooth cement plaster finish, horizontal limestone tiles, brick tile veneer, metal roof, cornice and eave details, solid steel bar railings, precast exterior steps, formed concrete planter walls, garage door, aluminum framed storefronts, and fiberglass windows. The design and details reinforce the proposed architectural style and is consistent with the neighborhood context of various architectural styles.
- The entryways to the commercial units are off from Verdugo Road (west façade) and primary entryway to the residential unit is off from Chiquita Place (south façade). The entryways are well designed and integrated into the design with residential entry to be a focal point. A condition of approval is added to redesign residential entry to eliminate the railing at the second floor and provide a consistent height for the entry surround.

- All new windows will be fiberglass (dark bronze color), recessed within the walls with precast concrete sill and without exterior frame with combination of single casement and horizontal sliding operation, compatible with the proposed architectural style.
- The proposed drawings do not depict the finish materials of driveways and walkways. A condition of approval is recommended to revise drawings to show decorative permeable paving at driveways and entryways, related to the design concept and colors.

DRB Staff Member Aileen Babakhani, Planner

Notes:

Contact the case planner for an appointment for a DRB stamp prior to submittal for plan check.

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 approved for Building Division plan check. Prior to Building Division plan check submittal, Design Review Board approved plans must be stamped approved by the Design Review staff.

Any changes to the approved plans may constitute returning to the Design Review Board for approval. Prior to Building 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.