



## City of Santa Barbara

Community Development Department

### Memorandum

**DATE:** April 20, 2016  
**TO:** Historic Landmarks Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Division  
**SUBJECT:** 800 SANTA BARBARA STREET (2015MST2015-00023)

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The project proposes to demolish the existing 1,965 net square foot, one-story non-residential building and construct a 20,083 square foot, three-story mixed-use building on an 18,568 square foot lot. The project consists of 1,383 square feet of commercial floor area and 23 residential units above a 12,682 square foot subterranean parking garage containing 29 parking spaces, storage, and service areas. This is an AUD Priority Housing development with proposed density of 54 dwelling units per acre (54-56 dwelling units per acre allowed at the proposed average unit size). The average unit size proposed is 779 square feet.

The subject property is located at the corner of De La Guerra and Santa Barbara Streets within El Pueblo Viejo District and immediately adjacent to El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park.

#### Background

The HLC is the decision-making body for this project. However the project was presented to the Planning Commission for conceptual review and comments only, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 28.20.080. The project was reviewed by the HLC and the Planning Commission on the following dates:

- May 6, 2015 – HLC, for initial concept review (plans dated April 6, 2015)
- May 21, 2015 – PC, for PC conceptual comments (plans dated April 6, 2015)
- August 12, 2015 – HLC, for second concept review (plans dated July 21, 2016 and August 3, 2015)
- October 8, 2015 – PC, for second PC conceptual comments (plans dated September 28, 2015)

Below is a summary of the most recent Planning Commission comments received on October 8, 2015 in their review of plans dated September 28, 2015 (refer to attached Minutes).

- *The project is heading in the right direction.*
- *Appreciative of the stepping back of the second and third stories and the reduction in the first story to break up the massing.*
- *The setbacks, the lower height, over-parked, reduced square footage, and argument for neighborhood compatibility of other uses and sizes of buildings in the neighborhood are supportable.*
- *Attention should be paid to the design of the interior unit.*

- *The mature trees are important.*
- *Statistics on number of units and the number of bedrooms should be clarified.*

### Project Review

The applicant has revised the plans to respond to comments by the HLC and the Planning Commission. Changes include a revised paseo design, including reduction of interior mass and widening of the paseo area; elimination of one residential unit; variation on balcony and roofing details; unit and room statistics added; tree plan added; visual simulations added; and updating of the landscaping plan to match the current design. Refer to the attached letter from the applicant for additional response to comments.

The HLC should review the project for concept design only, no action is to be taken on the project. Staff recommends that the HLC consider the size, design and compatibility of the proposal, in conjunction with the Planning Commission's comments, in their review of the conceptual design of the project. Applicable design guidelines for this project are the Urban Design Guidelines and Chapter 5 of the El Pueblo Viejo Design Guidelines.

#### Attachments:

1. Planning Commission Minutes, October 8, 2015
2. Applicant Letter

Chair Thompson called for a recess at 2:54 P.M. and reconvened the meeting at 3:04 P.M.

**ACTUAL TIME: 3:04 P.M.**

**B. APPLICATION OF JAN HOCHHAUSER, HOCHHAUSER BLATTER ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING FOR 800 SANTA BARBARA STREET LLC, 800 SANTA BARBARA STREET, APN 031-012-028, C-2 COMMERCIAL ZONE, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL/HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL/PRIORITY HOUSING 37-63 DU/AC (MST2015-00023)**

Conceptual review of a revised proposal to demolish the existing 1,965 net square foot, one-story non-residential building and construct a 20,083 square foot, three-story mixed-use building on an 18,568 square foot lot. The project consists of 1,383 square feet of commercial floor area and 23 residential units above a 12,682 square foot subterranean parking garage containing 27 parking spaces, storage, and service areas. This is an AUD Priority Housing development with a proposed density of 56 dwelling units per acre and with an average unit size of 775 square feet.

The subject property is located at the corner of De La Guerra and Santa Barbara Streets within El Pueblo Viejo District and immediately adjacent to El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park.

On May 14, 2015, the Planning Commission reviewed an earlier version of the design. Review by the Planning Commission was required because the lot size is more than 15,000 square feet and the project is being proposed under the Average Unit-Size Density (AUD) Incentive Program Priority Housing Overlay (SBMC §28.20.080). The applicant has requested a Planning Commission Concept Review on the revised proposal.

The purpose of the concept review was to allow the Planning Commission and the public an opportunity to review the proposed project design at a conceptual level and provide the applicant, staff, and the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) with feedback and direction regarding the proposed land use, design, and General Plan consistency. **The project was being presented to the Planning Commission for concept review and comments only. No formal action was be taken on the project.** The HLC will be the decision-making body for this project.

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Suzanne Riegle, Associate Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Jan Hochhauser, Applicant, gave the Applicant presentation.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing at 4:02 P.M.

Commissioner Lodge read a letter from Kellam DeForest stating that the Pearl Chase Society objects to such a massive and inappropriately designed building that lacks sensitivity to the historic location adjacent to the Presidio and the Historical Museum.

The following people commented on the project:

1. Mary Louise Days, Trust for Historic Preservation Board Member/Citizens Planning Association, expressed concerns regarding the plan being reviewed as entirely different than what the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) saw on August 12, 2015. This project should have gone to HLC before coming to the Planning Commission and should meet the development requirements in the General Plan. The Staff Report and Agenda descriptions are inconsistent.
2. Gordon Sichi, Anacapa School Headmaster, stated that Greg Parker had not seen the latest project revision and based his letter on the prior version that had been reviewed by HLC. The corner presents development challenges as it opens up to the Presidio and the town. Would like Mr. Parker's comment letter to be considered in protecting the school during demolition and development.
3. Ed Clark thinks that this is a great location and helps meet the City's need for apartments. There are many condominiums, but few apartments in town.
4. Commissioner Michael Drury, Historic Landmarks Commission, stated that it would be inappropriate to comment on the current revision as it has not been reviewed by the HLC. He stands by the comments made by the HLC on the prior revision.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 4:12 P.M.

Commissioner's Comments:

Commissioner Jordan:

- This is a step backwards and he agrees with Mary Louise Days that the presentation is a mess. The HLC has not seen this and he does not think the documents accurately reflect what is being presented. He believes that the Planning Commission's role is to look at the bigger picture of the Applicant's presentation to HLC August 12, 2015 and offer advice. This is not the position that the Commission has been put in and he does not appreciate being put in a different role.
- He cannot comment on the architecture as it appears to be a moving target.
- The setbacks, lower height, over-parked, reduced square footage, and argument for compatibility of other uses and sizes of buildings in the neighborhood are supportable.
- This project is such a moving target and poorly presented that he is hesitant to comment on it.
- From the concept review held before the Planning Commission May 21, 2015, the Applicant has taken care of the views, been respectful of neighbors, offers a land use that is more than consistent for the location with

the City's goals, but he is not happy with how it has been presented and how it has arrived to the Planning Commission.

- If the Applicant states that he has complied with all of the HLC's requests, then he feels he should return to the HLC.

Commissioner Higgins:

- The project is heading in the right direction.
- Pay attention to the HLC comments, work with the neighbors and do what you can.
- The interior unit is an opportunity. Though it does not have views outside, it is fine and similar to developments in European communities.
- He defers the architectural design to HLC, but it appears to match up with what is on De la Guerra Street.
- The streetscape interaction with De la Guerra is fantastic. The courtyard and placita are fantastic. He would prefer to see something a little more engaging or bigger, if possible. It is a great site for housing and he would love to live there.
- He is disappointed that there are not better exhibits or statistics that show an accurate bedroom count.
- He would encourage the Applicant to free up parking, or reduce the bedroom or unit count. Parking will be challenging.
- This is not the best site for maximizing residential density. Encourages getting more support from the neighborhood. This is an uphill battle.
- The straw polls from the May 21, 2015 Planning Commission hearing, show that the Applicant has not quite gotten there in the area of historic resources.
- Land use policies need to be adhered to. Policy LG 12.2.D. Community Character and Preservation needs to be addressed. Also, review Policies HR 2.2. for compatibility and HR 2.7. for development standards.

Commissioner Schwartz:

- Defended the process that allows for Applicants to call for concept reviews in between design board reviews.
- The balancing in this area of historic resources is key. She has not heard what would satisfy the Trust for Historic Preservation, given that it opposed a prior development for this site. Would ask opposition to this project to find a solution, rather than just opposition; present an alternative.
- When looking at historic resources in the immediate neighborhood, does not see a singular model, very varied. Sees examples that reflect intimacy. If we want intimacy, then we need to learn to live and work closer together. Need to consider lines of sight, physical distance, residential to commercial, etc. There are examples downtown of some of the concerns that have been voiced that are within historic resources.
- Appreciates the stepping back of the second and third stories and the reduction in the first story to break up the massing. Referenced visual simulation in slide 25.
- Agrees with Commissioner Higgins that this project is heading in the right direction.

- The interior unit, depending on how designed, can be a real jewel of a residential unit, depending on how it fits with the rest of the project.
- The mature trees are important. The screening with the natural environment and landscaping will be important to softening the view as you come up Santa Barbara Street. The view shed up to the mountains will remain important.
- Would like sensitivity with the third floor from blocking mountain views.
- Statistics need to be corrected before returning to HLC.
- Supports Staff's recommendation that the project complies zoning standards and is consistent with the General Plan's goals and policies for new rental housing projects.
- Urges HLC to broaden its scope of consideration while maintaining its core purview of protection, preservation and sensitive development to historic resources.

Commissioner Lodge:

- Agrees with colleagues that this project is heading in the right direction.
- It may not have been appropriate for this property to be included in the high priority AUD overlay area, but agrees that a project can be done here that is high density that does fit in the community and is sensitive to historic resources.
- Would like to see an interior unit that is livable and that one can see out from.

Commissioner Pujo:

- Reflected on her comments made during the first proposal in May 2015 and observed that some work has been done in this new proposal with the reduction of the height of the project. This has brought down the scale and introduces a new emphasis in celebrating a paseo theme. It is an interesting aspect, but not without challenges in design.
- The commercial component still falls short. Is even less than it was before.
- Need to investigate how the paseo feel will be protected as semi-public in perpetuity. She is not opposed to the approach.
- Potential conflict to the first floor units and everyday living and privacy issues in an area that is within a major intersection surrounded by historic buildings on all sides. Not sure how this can be resolved, but it is not quite there yet, especially with the units that face De la Guerra Street. Would like to see more attention to this, especially if the units remain.
- The Applicant is going in a direction that is trying to meet some of the prior concerns. Would say that the Applicant is about 25% there. The key is very serious design to accomplish what it takes at this important corner. This includes site design and connectivity to the public realm.

Commissioner Campanella:

- This is an opportunity site. The revised submission could comply with the AUD program and a priority overlay. It also shows that there are no

constraints on the site, historical or otherwise. He would like to make it an opportunity site for the historical landmark district and the Presidio.

- He would like to suggest that HLC and the Applicant try to make this the best thematic building and architecture with the Paseos with the characteristics of the historic district. Make this an example of what exists in the El Pueblo Viejo zone.
- The Applicant is getting there. Suggest that the Applicant stick with incorporating the guidelines. This could be a plus for the neighborhood.
- The rooflines are compatible with neighboring properties. Use the elevation and trees to the maximum extent possible so that people understand Santa Barbara architecture and the historic landmarks area.

Mr. Hochhauser appreciated the Commission's comments and concurred that this is an opportunity site for housing. He appreciated the guidance received before returning to HLC.

#### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

##### ACTUAL TIME: 4:53 P.M.

##### A. Committee and Liaison Reports

##### 1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

Commissioner Jordan reported on the Staff Hearing Officer meeting of September 30, 2015.

##### 2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

Commissioner Campanella reported on a joint meeting between the Downtown Parking Committee and the Transportation and Circulation Committee meeting held earlier that day.

#### V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at 4:56 P.M.

Submitted by,

  
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Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

April 11, 2016

RE: 800 Santa Barbara Street

The project was last reviewed by the HLC on August 12 2015.

The Minutes from that meeting were as follows:

1. Provide a photo simulation showing the building's view impact on the mountains specifically Montecito Peak.
2. Continue working with the neighbors.
3. The Commission is concerned with the viability and livability of the interior units.
4. The project is lacking an area for children's activity.
5. Further reduction of mass, bulk, and scale are requested.
6. Provide compatibility with the neighborhood and its historic character.
7. The Commission had positive comments regarding the landscape plan.
8. The 8 ft. separation between the balconies and the 10 ft. separation between the windows in the paseo is not acceptable.
9. Deep set windows need to be traditional.
10. The architecture is lacking charm. Provide more rustic and poetic context.
11. The challenge is to make this the best AUD project in the City.
12. The arborist report is requested to address the impact of the garage excavation on the existing trees.
13. Work at reducing the duplication of architectural elements, specifically balconies windows and roof lines.
14. The Commission supports the north elevation and finds the two story element on the north façade is appropriate to the site.
15. The architecture should align with the corner configuration.
16. Show the outline of the subterranean garage on the landscape plan.
17. The commission is incorporating the comments from the meeting dated March 15 , 2015. Requests additional input from the PC after the next HLC review.

On October 8 2015 the Planning Commission Reviewed the proposal with some changes that were made

To address comments made at the HLC at the August 12 2015 meeting.

1. **View simulations were prepared to address the HLC's request.** These view simulations will be presented to the HLC at the upcoming April 20<sup>th</sup> HLC meeting. The majority of PC commissioners felt the project was moving in the right direction. Specifically, Commissioner Jordan, commented " the applicant has taken care of views". Higgins : "The streetscape interaction with De La Guerra is fantastic. The courtyard and placita are fantastic". Commissioner Schwartz: " appreciates the stepping back of the second and third stories and the reduction in the first story to break up the massing" [ while referencing visual simulation slide #25 ]. Commissioner Lodge: " Agrees with colleagues that this project is headed in the right direction"



Note the project design was revised to open up the paseo, vary roof elements and introduce contextual details for the presentation to the PC. The view simulations were prepared from several vantage points.

2. Since the HLC hearing in August, the applicant has met and presented updated design material with members from the Anacapa school, and with board members from the Trust for Historic Preservation. As of this writing, we have not received any indication of how these stakeholders feel about these revisions. A meeting is scheduled for the applicant to present the design updates to the Trust for Historic preservation this coming Wednesday.
3. With the opening up of the paseo, and the reduction of interior mass along the paseo, the “livability” of the units has been improved. Also, note the commentary from PC Commissioner Higgins about interior units. Also note the projects adherence to the Urban Design Guidelines; City Grid on Paseos. Particularly section 4.3. See 4.3.1 thru 4.3.5 and the illustration on page 53. This current design is ostensibly consistent with these guidelines and in fact is an excellent opportunity for their application.
4. This AUD project is appropriate located relative to the downtown grid and the amenities it provides. No further comment on this HLC item in the minutes. Also, see PC Commissioner’s comments [ minutes and transcript ]
5. Since the HLC last saw the project, significant mass has been removed from the project by opening up the paseo, modifying roof elements, and reducing the unit count. There are now 23 units with an average unit size of 779 sf. [ below the maximum allowed by the AUD program. At 53.5 units per acre the AUD program allows 23 units on this site with an average unit size of 901 sf. Therefore @ 779 sf avg. unit size this project is well below the threshold allowed by the program.

The City has facilitated a virtual modeling of the surrounding context with George Constantinescu of OGEO Measurement and Visualization. We have worked with George to provide accurate modeling of the current 800 Santa Barbara Street proposal which is now modeled in the larger context and available for viewing to help underwrite the project’s compatibility form a size, bulk , and scale evaluation

6. The design to be presented to the HLC is replete with detailing that is derived from the neighborhood context. El Paseo [ which was recommended by HLC board members ] and other well respected buildings around the site were utilized as sources for the detailing envisaged by the current project.
7. Landscape plan updated per the current design. Arborist report and tree plan now provided.
8. Please see item #3 above and current design drawings.

9. See current design drawings where traditional deep set windows are employed.
10. Please see revised elevations and details. A variety of balcony types, roof forms, and articulation has been incorporated to address the delivery of a contextual architecture with poetry and charm. The use of plastered adobe as the exterior finish on select building forms helps deliver direct consistency with the history of the neighborhood and detailing of buildings near the site. Note the Urban design Guidelines. Chapter 2. 2.1 Building Composition [ terracing of mass , and the PC's recognition of this in their commentary ], 2.2 reduction of Apparent Size Bulk and Scale. The concept of bifurcating the development with a paseo and other features address this policy / guideline. Note the setbacks from the street edge, the placita, and of course the pedestrian Paseo. The Urban Design Guidelines emphasize paseos and Placitas. Please see the reference illustration in section 4 of the Guidelines on page 47 , and the projects proposed commercial porch , placita along Santa Barbara Street.
11. The changes to the project contribute to the goal of making this a quality AUD project at an important downtown location.
12. An arborist report and tree preservation plan is now provided.
13. The project design has been revised to incorporate more variation in roof types and balcony types. The symmetry that was in the 2 roof forms flanking the paseo has been revised. One is now a hip roof , the other a gable.
14. The north elevation is very consistent with the previous submitted drawing.
15. The corner of the proposed structure at De la Guerra and Santa Barbara Street is significantly setback from the sidewalk. The mass has been softened and refined with the use of plastered adobe [ respectful of the Historic Museum, which has adobe exterior walls, at the southwest corner of De la Guerra and Santa Barbara across the intersection from this proposal ]
16. The outline of the subterranean garage structure is indicated on the drawings.
17. We request that the HLC also make the October 8 2016 PC minutes part of the record.

**Jan R. Hochhauser**

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