

Item No. 9d
Environmental Scoping & Design Review Study



PROJECT LOCATION
619-625 California Drive

City of Burlingame

*Environmental Scoping and Design Review for a
New 26-Unit Live/Work Building*

**Item No. 9d
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Design Review Study**

Address: 619-625 California Drive

Meeting Date: June 12, 2017

Request: Environmental scoping and Design Review for an application for Environmental Review, Commercial Design Review, Conditional Use Permit for building height, Condominium Permit, and Lot Merger for a new four-story, 26-unit live/work development with at-grade parking.

Applicant and Architect: Ellis A. Schoichet AIA

APN: 029-131-140, -150, and -160

Property Owner: Ed 1005 BM LLC

General Plan: Downtown Specific Plan: North California Drive Commercial District

Lot Area: 19,450 (0.45 acres)

Zoning: C-2, North California Drive Commercial District

Adjacent Development: Automobile service, multi-family residential, retail, and railroad right-of-way

Current Use: Vacant lot at 619 California Drive; automobile repair shop at 621 California Drive; two dwelling units at 625 California Drive

Proposed Use: 4-story, 26-unit live/work building

Allowable Use: Live/Work, retail, personal service, business service, hotel, office, food establishment, auto repair shops, auto sales, lots, laundry services (refer to C-2 and C-1 zoning district regulations for a full list of permitted and conditional uses).

Environmental Review: Environmental review is required because the proposed project includes a new commercial building that exceeds 10,000 SF in floor area and therefore does not qualify for an exemption from CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). As a part of preparing the Initial Study for the environmental document for this project, staff is requesting that the Planning Commission comment on any potential environmental effects which it feels should be investigated. The standard list of items investigated in an Initial Study is attached for reference. These potential environmental effects which will be considered in the CEQA document include:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Cumulative Impacts

The issues identified by the Commission will be incorporated into the environmental documents for the project. At this time, staff notes that based on preliminary analysis, it appears that the type of CEQA document required will be a Mitigated Negative Declaration. However, the type of CEQA document will be finalized during the environmental review process.

Project Summary: The project site is located at the southwest corner of California Drive and Oak Grove Avenue. The project site consists of three separate parcels which would be combined into one parcel for the proposed project. Currently, one of the parcels is vacant and the remaining two parcels are occupied by an automobile repair facility (621 California Drive) and two dwelling units (625 California Drive).

The site is surrounded by an automobile service facility to the east, three-story multifamily residential buildings to the south, a retail building to the west, and a railroad right-of-way to the north.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new four-story, 26-unit live/work building with at-grade parking. The ground floor will consist of an entrance lobby providing pedestrian access to the live/work units on the upper floor and a parking garage for 26 vehicles. The ground floor also contains work areas for Units 1 through 5 with associated living spaces on the second floor; these units measure 1,299 SF to 1,538 SF in area. The remaining units on the second, third, and fourth floors range from 959 SF to 1,210 SF in area. Each live/work unit will contain a living area, kitchen, bathroom, laundry closet, sleeping area (studio or one-bedroom), and a work area.

The Zoning Code defines live/work as “a single unit (e.g., studio, loft or one-bedroom) consisting of both a commercial/office and a residential component that is occupied by the same resident. The live/work unit shall be the primary dwelling of the occupant.” The Downtown Specific Plan allows live/work units in the following zoning districts: C-2 North California Drive Commercial District, California Drive Auto Row, Howard Mixed Use, Bayswater Mixed Use, and Myrtle Mixed Use (Conditional Use Permit required).

With the proposed project, the applicant is proposing two types of live/work units. Five of the units located on the second floor have connecting work spaces on the street level along California Drive, which have storefronts open to the sidewalk. The remaining 21 units, located on the second, third, and fourth floors, have work areas within the dwelling unit.

In his letter of explanation, dated November 7, 2016, the applicant discusses the potential businesses anticipated in the live/work units. He notes that “the units with storefronts can be imagined in use as photo, art, recording, instruction, or exercise studios, light manufacturing, internet sales with a local retail presence, professional, or health care offices. Any of the units, those with street frontage or without can be imagined as the living and working space for writers, accountants, architects, engineers, interior, graphics, and other designers, artists, artisans, attorneys, software, web, and multi-media professionals, consultants, insurance, real estate, and travel agents, repair persons, maintenance persons, and many others who would be well situated at this location”.

There will be an enclosed at-grade parking garage located behind the work spaces on the ground floor, providing access to 26 parking spaces and secured bicycle parking/storage. There is only one point of vehicular ingress and egress from the garage, which is provided off Oak Grove Avenue.

During preliminary review Planning staff identified that the following applications will be required for this project:

- Commercial Design Review for construction of a new four-story, 26-unit live/work building with at-grade parking (C.S. 25.31.045 and 25.57.010 (c) (1) and Chapter 5 of the Downtown Specific Plan);
- Conditional Use Permit for building height (51'-8" proposed where 55'-0" is the maximum allowed; Conditional Use Permit required if building exceeds 35'-0") (C.S. 25.31.060 (c));
- Condominium Permit for construction of the new building (each unit to be privately owned) (C.S. 26.30.020); and
- Lot Merger to combine three existing parcels into one parcel (Lots L, M, and N, Block 6).

Commercial Design Review: Commercial Design Review is required for new commercial and mixed use buildings pursuant to Code Sections 25.31.045 and 25.57.010(c)(1). Design Review was instituted for commercial projects in 2001 with the adoption of the Commercial Design Guidebook. The project is located within the boundaries of the *Burlingame Downtown Special Plan* and therefore subject to Chapter 5 of the Downtown Specific Plan (Design & Character). Section 5.2 (pages 5-3 through 5-12) provides design

guidelines specifically for commercial and mixed use areas within the Downtown Specific Plan area. Section 5.4 (pages 5-22 through 5-26) provides more general design guidelines that apply to all areas of the downtown. The relevant pages of the plan have been included as an attachment for convenience of commissioners.

The proposed exterior facades will include a variety of materials including solid composite panels, aluminum framed windows, metal fascia and coping, and aluminum and glass guardrails. Architectural concrete planters and wood benches are proposed at the front corner of the site. The applicant provided renderings of the proposed project from various view points along California Drive and Oak Grove Avenue.

The following design review criteria for commercial development projects are outlined in the zoning code:

- (1) Support of the pattern of diverse architectural styles that characterize the city's commercial, industrial and mixed use areas; and
- (2) Respect and promotion of pedestrian activity by placement of buildings to maximize commercial use of the street frontage, off-street public spaces, and by locating parking so that it does not dominate street frontages; and
- (3) On visually prominent and gateway sites, whether the design fits the site and is compatible with the surrounding development; and
- (4) Compatibility of the architecture with the mass, bulk, scale, and existing materials of existing development and compatibility with transitions where changes in land use occur nearby; and
- (5) Architectural design consistency by using a single architectural style on the site that is consistent among primary elements of the structure, restores or retains existing or significant original architectural features, and is compatible in mass and bulk with other structures in the immediate area; and
- (6) Provision of site features such as fencing, landscaping, and pedestrian circulation that enriches the existing opportunities of the commercial neighborhood.

Off-Street Parking: Because the live/work project is located within a commercial district and is proposed as a condominium, the commercial condominium parking regulations would apply. Based on parking requirements for commercial condominiums found in Code Section 26.30.070 (a), unistall parking spaces are permitted (8'-6" x 18'-0" allowed and proposed) and an area for a delivery/service vehicle is not required (not provided with this project; only required for residential condominiums).

However, regarding the number of parking spaces required, it was determined that the residential parking regulations would be most appropriate for the proposed project. The subject property is located within the boundaries of the plan area for the Downtown Specific Plan. Therefore, the project qualifies for the reduced residential parking requirements for Downtown, as per Code Section 25.70.032. Based on the number of bedrooms per unit proposed for this project (all units are studio or 1-bedroom units), the Zoning Code requires a total of 26 off-street parking spaces (1 parking space per studio/1-bedroom unit required).

The project includes a total of 26 at-grade parking spaces (25 unistall space and 1 accessible space), located behind the work spaces on the ground floor. There is no guest parking required on-site for properties located within the Downtown Specific Plan area (no guest parking provided). The at-grade parking will be accessed from a 14-foot wide driveway along Oak Grove Avenue. The proposed project complies with the zoning code which requires a minimum of a 12-foot wide driveway for parking areas with not more 30 vehicles.

Bicycle parking is provided for both the residents and visitors. A bicycle rack for visitors is located near the entrance lobby. Resident bicycle storage for 52 bicycles (two per unit), is provided in the secured parking garage.

Landscaping/Private and Common Open Space: Although there are no landscaping requirements in the C-2, North California Drive Commercial District, landscaping is proposed throughout the site as shown on the Landscape Plan, sheet L1. Concept images of the proposed landscaping, planters, and seating areas at the front corner of the site are shown on sheet L3. Please refer to the Landscape Plan for detailed description of the various plants and trees proposed throughout the site. Two existing street trees along California Drive will be replaced with two new street trees (London Plane trees). The two existing street trees along Oak Grove Avenue are proposed to remain.

There are no requirements for private and common open space for commercial condominiums. However, the proposed project includes private terraces for the live/work units on the fourth floor (565 to 625 SF in size); a common terrace (725 SF), accessible by all residents, is provided on the fourth floor. The common terrace will contain various planters and seating areas (see Terrace Plan on sheet L2). Common open spaces are provided throughout the site (see Landscape Plan on sheet L1).

Table 1 - Compliance with C-2, North California Drive Commercial District Regulations

Lot Area: 19,450 SF

Plans date stamped: March 23, 2017

	Proposed	Allowed/Required
Land Use:	26 live/work units above the first floor; five commercial spaces associated with live/work units located on first floor	live/work units permitted above the first floor only
Minimum Lot Size & Street Frontage:	19,450 SF lot size 149.36 feet along California Dr 120 feet along Oak Grove Ave	5,000 SF lot size 50 feet of street frontage
Floor Area Ratio:	2.52 FAR (49,064 SF)	3.0 FAR (58,350 SF)
Lot Coverage:	73% (14,214 SF)	75% (14,587 SF)
Setbacks		
Front (California Drive):	1'-8¾"	no minimum required
Exterior Side (Oak Grove Ave):	2'-2"	no minimum required
Interior Side:	6'-1"	no minimum required
Rear:	10'-0"	10'-0"
Building Height:	51'-8" to top of building roof ¹	55'-0" maximum CUP required if over 35'-0"
Off-Street Parking:	26 spaces	26 spaces (1 space per unit)

¹ Conditional Use Permit required for building height (51'-8" proposed where 55'-0" is the maximum allowed; Conditional Use Permit required if building exceeds 35'-0").

General Plan and Zoning: In 2010 the City Council adopted the Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan, which serves as an element of the General Plan. The subject property is located within the boundaries of the planning area for the Downtown Specific Plan, specifically in the North California Drive Commercial District which is described as follows:

The North California Drive Commercial District is the area along the west side of California Drive north of Bellevue Avenue to Oak Grove Avenue. Service Commercial uses dominate in this area. Retail or hotel uses are permitted on the ground floor whereas offices or hotel uses can be allowed on upper floors.

Conditional Use Permit Request for Building Height: The C-2, North California Drive Commercial District states that no building shall exceed a height of 55'-0". A conditional use permit is required for any building which exceeds 35'-0" in height. The proposed height, measured to the top of the roof, will be 51'-8" (from average top of curb). The elevator and stair enclosures on the roof make up less than 5% of the roof area and do not extend more than 10'-0" above the top of parapet, therefore these enclosures are not counted as part of the building height. In order to grant approval of a Conditional Use Permit the following findings must be made by the Planning Commission:

- (a) The proposed use, at the proposed location, will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, general welfare or convenience;
- (b) The proposed use will be located and conducted in a manner in accord with the Burlingame general plan and the purposes of this title;
- (c) The planning commission may impose such reasonable conditions or restrictions as it deems necessary to secure the purposes of this title and to assure operation of the use in a manner compatible with the aesthetics, mass, bulk and character of existing and potential uses on adjoining properties in the general vicinity.

Public Facilities Impact Fee: The purpose of public facilities impact fees is to provide funding for necessary maintenance and improvements created by development projects. Public facilities impact fees are based on the uses, the number of dwelling units, and the amount of square footage to be located on the property after completion of the development project. New development that, through demolition or conversion, will eliminate existing development is entitled to a fee credit offset if the existing development is a lawful use under this title, including a nonconforming use.

Based on the proposed live/work building and providing a credit for the existing commercial building and two dwelling units, the required public facilities impact fee for this development project is \$118,650.40. One-half of the public facilities impact fees payment will be required prior to issuance of a building permit issuance; the second half of the payment will be required before the final framing inspection.

Staff Comments: See attached comments from the Building, Parks, Engineering, Fire and Stormwater Divisions.

Planning Commission Action:

1. **Environmental Scoping:** As the first discussion item, the Planning Commission should review and take public comment on the proposed project and the areas of potential environmental effects as listed in the staff report. The Commission should add any additional effects of the project that it believes should be addressed in the CEQA document. The areas of investigation for environmental evaluation as defined by CEQA are listed in the attached Initial Study Checklist for your reference.

2. Design Review Study: As the second discussion item, the Commission should comment on the design of the project as required by Chapter 25.57 of the Zoning Ordinance, Design Review, and to the following design criteria for commercial projects:

- a. Support of the pattern of diverse architectural styles that characterize the city's commercial, industrial and mixed use areas; and
- b. Respect and promotion of pedestrian activity by placement of buildings to maximize commercial use of the street frontage, off-street public spaces, and by locating parking so that it does not dominate street frontages; and
- c. On visually prominent and gateway sites, whether the design fits the site and is compatible with the surrounding development; and
- d. Compatibility of the architecture with the mass, bulk, scale, and existing materials of existing development and compatibility with transitions where changes in land use occur nearby; and
- e. Architectural design consistency by using a single architectural style on the site that is consistent among primary elements of the structure, restores or retains existing or significant original architectural features, and is compatible in mass and bulk with other structures in the immediate area; and
- f. Provision of site features such as fencing, landscaping, and pedestrian circulation that enriches the existing opportunities of the commercial neighborhood.

Because a CEQA document is being prepared for this project, it is important that any changes to the building envelope be made early enough in the process so that any changes are reflected in the environmental review.

Ruben Hurin
Senior Planner

- c. Ellis A. Schoichet AIA, applicant and architect
Ed 1005 BM LLC, property owner

Attachments:

Application to the Planning Commission
Project Description, submitted by the applicant, dated November 7, 2016
Environmental Information Form, submitted by the applicant, date stamped November 7, 2016
Conditional Use Permit Application
Commercial Application
Staff Comments
Environmental Checklist from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines
Downtown Specific Plan Applicable Design Guidelines
Notice of Public Hearing – Mailed June 2, 2017
Aerial Photo