

City of Burlingame

Update of a Previously Approved Five-Level Parking Garage

Item No. 6a
Study Item

Address: 160 Lorton Avenue (Parking Lot N)

Meeting Date: September 9, 2019

Request: Update of previously approved five-level parking garage.

Applicant: Chris Grant, The Pacific Companies

APN: 029-231-060 and 029-231-240

Property Owner: City of Burlingame

Lot Area: 33,750 SF

Architect: Pacific West Architecture

General Plan: R-4 Incentive District

Zoning: R-4 Incentive District Subarea

Adjacent Development: Multifamily Residential and Commercial Uses

Current Use: Public Parking Lot (Lot N) with 109 stalls

July 8, 2019 Study Meeting: At the study meeting on July 8, 2019, the Planning Commission noted the items below and requested that they be addressed and return to the Commission as an FYI item. Please also refer to the attached July 8, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

- Show the number of shape of panels on the parking garage façade and on the stairway enclosures.
- Show how panels will abut and be connected to one another.
- Need to provide more specific information on how the screening will be built and put together.
- Scale of screen is beautiful and elegant, however the 6x8 horizontal members are large and chunky, so there is a big scale difference between these components. Don't know what mediates between those two elements. Did see that there are details that show an L-bracket and a capture, so that it appears that the screen is hanging from the L-bracket at the top, but don't know what happens in between, unless it's captured in an edge capture strung between two L-brackets, and how it's kept tight.
- Would help to see photographs installations.

The applicant submitted a response letter, dated August 28, 2019, and revised plans, date stamped August 29, 2019, in response to the Commission's comments. Please refer to the response letter and revised plans for details on how the architectural screening will be installed.

In addition to the photographs of similar installations of the architectural screening provided in the letter, the architect notes that the parking garage for Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City contains this screening. Sequoia Hospital is located at 170 Alameda de las Pulgas, Redwood City.

The following changes have also been made since the study meeting:

- A meeting was held with the applicant, Planning Division and Facilities Maintenance Division (Facilities) to discuss maintenance of the proposed architectural screening. Facilities did not have any concerns with the architectural screening material, however they did express concerns regarding the butted joints at each of the angled panels surrounding the curved stairway on the Highland Avenue façade (a rectangular enclosure was approved on the Lorton Avenue façade), noting safety concerns with pedestrians using the stairway. In order to reduce the number of butted joints, the applicant has revised the configuration of the stairway on the Highland Avenue façade to be rectangular, which would match the configuration the Lorton Avenue façade. Planning staff thought this solution addressed the concerns expressed by Facilities while being consistent with the massing and architecture of the garage.

There was also discussion regarding whether the screening should be brought down to the curb or terminated at the stair landing. The architect considered this option, but notes that the design would not look clean (would see bottom of stairway and debris could collect at the base of the stairway) and would be complicated to install.

- The project was originally approved with Greenscreens along the north and south sides of the garage. The purpose of the Greenscreens is to encourage vines or similar vegetation to grow on the building.

The Facilities Maintenance Division expressed maintenance concerns with vegetation growing on the garage. To address their concerns, the Greenscreens have been eliminated along the North Elevation and reduced along the South Elevation. The north side of the garage will be screened by existing buildings along Howard Avenue, so they would not be visible; the south side of the garage will be screened by a proposed development at 128 Lorton Avenue.

Summary: On December 10, 2018, the Planning Commission approved an application for Design Review and Lot Merger for construction of a new five-level parking garage at 160 Lorton Avenue (Public Parking Lot N), zoned R-4 Incentive District Subarea (see attached December 10, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes). A copy of the project staff report reviewed by the Commission is attached for reference. A building permit for the project has not yet been issued.

At that hearing, the Planning Commission voted to approve the project based upon the following direction being reviewed by the Commission as an “FYI” item prior to issuance of a building permit:

- *Review of the details of the architectural screening and a detail of the sub-frame showing how the architectural screening is supported/attached to the parking structure.*

In order to ensure that the direction provided by the Commission is reviewed in a timely manner, staff is bringing these items forward directly as a study item (rather than an FYI) in case the Commission has any questions.

Planning Commission Action: Since this is an informational item, which includes implementation of the Commission’s direction for a previously approved project, there is no action required by the Planning Commission. In their discussion with the applicant, the Commission may ask for additional clarifications to the information provided, but there is not a decision required since the revisions do not affect the projects’ compliance with objective standards, design review standards, and conditions of approval.

Planning staff would note that State of California Government Code Section 65589.5 limits the ability of municipalities to deny a multifamily residential project that complies with applicable, objective general plan, zoning, and subdivision standards and criteria, including design review standards, in effect at the time that the application is determined to be complete.

Ruben Hurin
Planning Manager

c. Chris Grant, The Pacific Companies, applicant

Attachments:

- July 8, 2019 Planning Commission Minutes
- Applicant’s Explanation Letter, dated August 28, 2019
- Applicant’s Explanation Letter, dated July 3, 2019
- Architectural Screening Specifications
- December 10, 2018 Planning Commission Minutes
- December 10, 2018 Project Staff Report