

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



PROJECT LOCATION
1214-1220 Donnelly Avenue

City of Burlingame

*Design Review Study for a
New Mixed Use Commercial/Residential Development*

Item No. 9d
Design Review Study

Address: 1214-1220 Donnelly Avenue

Meeting Date: October 28, 2019

Request: Design Review Study for an application for Environmental Review, Amendment to the Downtown Specific Plan and Zoning Code to allow a multi-family residential use, Conditional Use Permit for building height, Condominium Permit and Lot Merger for construction of a new three-story, 14-unit mixed use commercial/residential development.

Applicant: John Britton

APN: 029-151-150, -160 and -170

Architect: Gary Gee Architects, Inc.

Lot Area: 15,706 SF (combined lots)

Property Owner: Britton Trust

General Plan: Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan: Donnelly Avenue Area

Zoning: DAC

Adjacent Development: Public parking lot, retail and multifamily residential.

Environmental Scoping and Design Review Study Meeting (October 9, 2018): On October 9, 2018, the Planning Commission held an environmental scoping and design review study meeting to review the proposed project. Please refer to the attached October 9, 2018 Planning Commission Minutes for a complete list of comments and concerns expressed by the Planning Commission and the public.

The architect submitted a response letter dated October 22, 2019, and revised plans and materials packet date stamped October 15, 2019, to address the Commission's comments. Please refer to the applicant's letter for a detailed discussion of the changes made to the project since the initial design review study meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to review the changes made to the design of the project in response to the Commission's comments and suggestions. Because a CEQA document is being prepared for this project, it is important that any changes to the building envelope be reviewed and accepted by the Commission so that they are reflected in the environmental review.

Background: On November 23, 2013, a fire destroyed the existing structure at 1218 Donnelly Avenue (containing two residential units). In February of 2015, a demolition permit was issued to demolish the existing building at 1218 Donnelly Avenue, as well as an existing single story building (containing one residential unit) at the rear of the site. The fire also spread to a portion of the building at 1214 Donnelly Avenue (previously containing residential and office uses). The structures at 1220 Donnelly Avenue (containing three residential units in the front building and one residential unit in the rear building) were not damaged by the fire.

The structure at 1214 Donnelly Avenue (referred to as the "Gates House") was identified as a potentially historic property in the Draft Inventory of Historic Places prepared in conjunction with the Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan. A Historic Resource Evaluation was prepared for this property, which concluded that 1214 Donnelly Avenue was not architecturally significant, but that it was eligible for individual listing on the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1 (Events) for its association with early settlement patterns in the town of Burlingame, and Criterion 2 (Persons) for its association with original owner and long-time occupant George W. Gates (the third stationmaster for the Burlingame railroad station).

The structure at 1214 Donnelly Avenue remained vacant and exposed to the elements since the date of the fire, though the site was secured with a fence as required by the City. Concerned with the damage the building sustained from the fire and exposure to the elements for several years, the property owner contacted the Community Development Department to explore the possibility of demolishing the structure in advance of a new development being approved for the site.

Based on the Chief Building Official's assessment of the condition of the structure, and his finding that the structure was substandard, unsafe, contained evidence of illicit activities, and could not be reasonably rebuilt, issuance of a Demolition Permit was warranted in order to mitigate the impacts upon the public health and safety. A Demolition Permit was issued in May 2018 and the structure was demolished shortly thereafter.

Project Summary: The project site is located midblock on Donnelly Avenue between Primrose Road and Lorton Avenue. The project site consists of three separate lots (1214, 1218 and 1220 Donnelly Avenue) which would be combined into one lot for the proposed project. The site is surrounded by multifamily residential buildings to the north, retail buildings and parking lots to the south, public parking lots to the west and retail buildings to the east.

The proposal includes construction of a new three-story mixed use commercial/residential development consisting of a commercial use on the ground floor and 14 residential condominium units on the second and third floors. All existing buildings remaining on the lots would be demolished to build the proposed development. Parking for 23 vehicles will be provided in an enclosed garage located behind the commercial space.

The ground floor will consist of approximately 4,704 SF of commercial space, which can be configured as one or two tenant spaces with storefront entrances on Donnelly Avenue. The ground floor will also contain an entry court and lobby providing pedestrian access to the residential units on the second and third floors. The remainder of the ground floor will contain rooms for utilities, resident bicycle storage, trash/recycling containers and general storage.

The second and third floors will contain 12, 2-bedroom units and 2, 1-bedroom units for a total of 14 residential units. Each unit will contain a living/dining area, kitchen, one or two bathrooms, laundry closet and one or two bedrooms. The residential units range from 528 SF to 1,040 SF in area, with an average unit size of 913 SF. In the zoning districts within the Downtown Specific Plan, the average maximum unit size permitted is 1,250 SF. The common open space required for the residential units is provided on the podium level (second floor) above the garage at the rear of the site.

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

- Amendment to the Downtown Specific Plan (Donnelly Avenue) and Donnelly Avenue Commercial District to allow residential use above the first floor on properties located north of Donnelly Avenue that have sole frontage on Donnelly Avenue;
- Design Review for construction of a new three-story, mixed use commercial/residential building with at-grade parking (C.S. 25.36.045, 25.57.010 (c)(1) and Chapter 5 of the Downtown Specific Plan);
- Conditional Use Permit for building height (43'-10" to top of parapet and 54'-3" to top of stairway enclosure proposed, where a Conditional Use Permit is required for any building exceed 35'-0"; 55'-0" maximum building height allowed) (C.S. 25.36.055);
- Condominium Permit for 14 residential condominium units (each unit to be privately owned) (C.S. 26.30.020); and
- Lot Merger to combine three existing lots into one lot.

Design Review: Design Review is required for new mixed use building pursuant to Code Sections 25.36.045 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 consist of a variety of materials including cement plaster siding (smooth steel troweled finish), Hardie "Reveal" panel system and trim (along blind wall on east elevation), smooth lap siding and exposed concrete or concrete block at the blind walls, decorative metal guardrails, decorative foam relief panels, and metal clad wood windows with simulated true divided lites on the upper floor residential units. The ground floor treatment will include aluminum window sashes, painted wood entry doors, canvas awnings and a painted metal garage door. The upper edge of the building will consist of varying architectural elements, including Spanish barrel clay roof tiles with foam eave brackets/corbels, a wood trellis along the front façade, and articulated parapets with ornamental metal trim. Details of the architectural elements are provided on sheet A3.1a, as well as in the materials binder (separate attachment).

Building Height: The Donnelly Avenue Commercial District states that no building shall exceed a height of 55'-0" and that a Conditional Use Permit is required for any building which exceeds 35'-0" in height. As measured from average top of curb level, the proposed height will be 43'-10" to the top of the building parapet and 54'-3" to the top of the stairway enclosure (the stair enclosure on the roof extends more than 10'-0" above the top of parapet and therefore is counted as part of the building height).

Off-Street Parking: The proposed project consists of 4,704 SF of commercial space on the ground floor and 14 residential units on the second and third floors. Retail, personal service and food establishment uses located on the ground floor within the parking sector of the Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan are exempt from vehicle parking requirements as set forth in code section 25.70.090 (a). The subject property is located within the parking sector; therefore no additional off-street parking is required for the proposed commercial use on the ground floor. The commercial tenant has not yet been determined.

Off-street parking is required for the residential units on the upper floors. For residential uses within the Downtown Specific Plan, the proposed project is required to provide 20 parking spaces for the residents of the units (1.5 spaces for each two-bedroom unit and 1 space for each 1-bedroom unit) and an area for a service/delivery vehicle, for a total of 21 parking spaces. There is no guest parking required on-site for properties located within the Downtown Specific Plan. The at-grade garage, located behind the commercial space, provides a total of 23 parking spaces (21 spaces in a puzzle stacker, one disabled-accessible space and one service/delivery vehicle space). Access to the garage would be from Donnelly Avenue by way of an 18'-0" wide driveway at the west end of the property.

Twenty-one parking spaces would be provided by way of a puzzle car stacker system. A puzzle stacker is a mechanical parking option that provides independent access to all cars parked on the system. The puzzle stacker to be installed is a KlausTrendVario 4200 (see attached specifications) and is able to accommodate passenger cars and medium size vans and SUVs.

The Municipal Code does not include specifications for parking lift systems, so the City currently does not have a standard mechanism for review and approval. However, as a policy the Downtown Specific Plan encourages "creative approaches" to providing on-site parking including vehicle puzzle stackers. Puzzle stackers could be considered "creative approaches" to providing the required on-site parking, and therefore be consistent with the Downtown Specific Plan. To date, the City has approved several commercial and residential projects with parking lift systems including puzzle stackers.

Common and Private Open Space: There is a total of 2,695 SF (192.5 SF/unit) of common open space proposed for the residential condominium units where 1,400 SF (100 SF/unit) is required. The common open space is provided on the podium level at the rear of the building. Of the required common open space, a minimum of 50% must be in soft landscaping (700 SF); 817 SF of the provided common open space is proposed to be landscaped and therefore is in compliance. There is 87 SF to 338 SF in private open space per unit (75 SF/unit is the minimum required) provided in balconies.

Landscaping: Proposed landscaping throughout the site is shown on the Planting Plans (see sheets L1.1 through L2.2). A variety of plants and shrubs are proposed along the front of the building, as well as on the podium level at the rear of the building within the common open space. Permeable and brick pavers along the building frontage provide walkways to the commercial and residential components of the building and seating areas for the ground floor commercial spaces.

Four existing trees, located at the front of the property at 1214 Donnelly Avenue, are proposed to be removed. One of the three trees, a 20-inch diameter Brisbane box, qualifies as a protected size tree. The applicant will be required to apply for and obtain a Protected Tree Removal Permit from the Parks Division in order to remove this tree. The applicant provided a Tree Survey, prepared by SBCA Tree Consulting and dated April 1, 2016, to identify the trees within the project property that are subject to the City's Reforestation Ordinance (see attached). The survey provides tree protection measures for the existing street tree which was to remain at the time the survey was prepared. However, in consultation with the City Arborist it was determined that this street tree should be replaced (see below).

There is one existing street tree, a Sycamore/London plane tree, along Donnelly Avenue in front of the project property. The Parks Division is requiring that this existing street tree be replaced by five new 36-inch box street trees to achieve uniformity along the project frontage (see Planting Plan, sheet L1.1).

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Table 1 - Compliance with DAC Regulations

Lot Area: 15,706 SF

Plans date stamped: October 15, 2019

	Proposed	Allowed/Required
Land Use:	4,704 SF commercial space on ground floor 14 residential units on upper floors ¹	commercial use allowed as a permitted use
Lot Size:	15,706 SF (combined)	5,000 SF minimum
Street Frontage:	146.94 feet	50'-0" minimum
Setbacks and Build-to-line: Front (Donnelly Avenue):	varies from 3'-5" to 11'-11" 75% of the of building is located within 10' of the front property line)	no minimum required at least 60% of building must be located at front property line or no more than 10' from the front property line)
Left Side Setback:	0'-0"	no minimum required
Right Side Setback:	0'-0"	no minimum required
Rear Setback:	0'-0"	no minimum required
Building Height:	43'-10" to top of parapet ² 54'-3" to top of stair enclosure ²	55'-0" maximum >35'-0" with CUP
Ground Floor Ceiling Height:	15'-0"	15'-0" minimum
Off-Street Parking:	21 spaces in puzzle stacker 1 disabled-accessible space <u>1 service/delivery space</u> 23 spaces	12, 2 bdrm units x 1.5 = 18 spaces 2, 1 bdrm units x 1 = 2 spaces <u>service/delivery space = 1</u> 21 spaces
Private Open Space:	87 SF – 338 SF/unit	75 SF per unit
Common Open Space: SF Landscaped:	2,695 SF 817 SF (58.3% of required)	1,400 SF 700 SF (50% of required)

¹ Amendment to the Downtown Specific Plan (Donnelly Avenue) and Donnelly Avenue Commercial District to allow residential use above the first floor on properties located north of Donnelly Avenue that have sole frontage on Donnelly Avenue

² Conditional Use Permit for building height (43'-10" to top of parapet and 54'-3" to top of stairway enclosure proposed, where a Conditional Use Permit is required for any building exceed 35'-0").

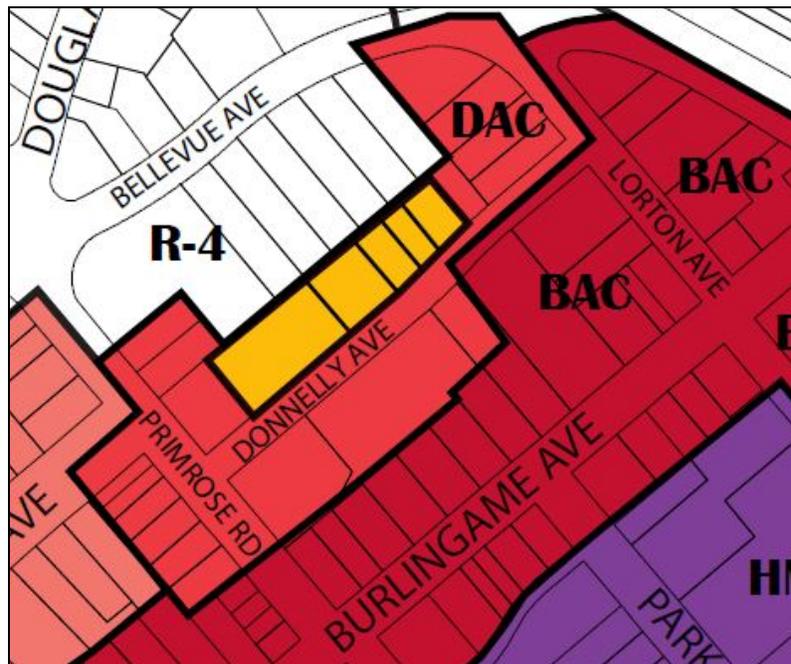
General Plan and Zoning: The General Plan designates the site as *Downtown Specific Plan*. In 2010 the City Council adopted the Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan, which serves as an element of the General Plan. Within the Downtown Specific Plan, the site is located in the Donnelly Avenue Area and is described as follows:

The Donnelly Avenue area consists of properties on either side of Donnelly Avenue between Primrose Road and Lorton Avenue. Ground floor retail use is allowed but not required. Existing residential uses may remain and be improved, but new residential uses are not allowed.

Currently, the Donnelly Avenue Area within the Downtown Specific Plan and the Donnelly Avenue Commercial (DAC) zoning regulations do not permit residential uses of any type.

With this application, the applicant is requesting that the Planning Commission consider amending the Downtown Specific Plan and DAC zoning regulations to allow residential use above the first floor, only on those properties within the DAC zone that lie north of Donnelly Avenue that have sole frontage on Donnelly Avenue (see highlighted properties in the map below). This would include the project site (three lots) and two public parking lots. One rationale for this rather limited amendment is that the Donnelly Avenue facing properties are adjacent to primarily multifamily residential land uses to the rear on the north side of that block (facing Bellevue Avenue), and as such would be compatible with the adjacent residential uses. The property at 1210-1212 Donnelly Avenue was not included because based on its substandard lot size (4,132 SF) and lot width (41.29'), it would be difficult to develop the site with a mixed use residential building given that parking for residential uses is required to be provided onsite (whereas commercial and office uses are either exempt or may be provided through payment of in-lieu fees).

The Downtown Specific Plan includes various Goals and Policies to guide growth and development in Downtown Burlingame. The proposed mixed use development, which includes residential units above ground floor commercial space, is consistent with Policy LU-6.1, which encourages allowing housing in the Howard Avenue area as well as on the periphery of Downtown.



Staff Comments: None.

Affordable (Below-Market Rate) Units: The City's previous Inclusionary Housing Ordinance has been replaced by a Density Bonus Ordinance consistent with State Law. The Density Bonus Ordinance is discretionary, and projects are not obligated to provide affordable units unless they seek to utilize development standard incentives offered by the ordinance. The applicant has not chosen to apply any of the development standard incentives offered by the Density Bonus Ordinance and therefore is not providing any affordable units as part of the project.

Commercial and Residential Linkage Fees: Commercial linkage fees are required for those projects that contain more than 5,000 SF of commercial space. Because the proposed project contains 4,704 SF of commercial space, payment of the commercial linkage fees are not required for this project.

Since this application was deemed complete prior to adoption of the residential linkage fees, payment of these fees are not required for this project.

Public Facilities Impact Fee: The purpose of public facilities impact fee 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 mixed use commercial/residential development (4,704 SF of commercial space and 14 residential units) and providing a credit for the existing 9,500 SF of office and seven residential units, payment of the public facilities impact fee is not required since the amount for the proposed project was calculated to be less than the amount for the existing uses.

Environmental Scoping: Environmental review is required for this project because it includes a General Plan Amendment, Rezoning and a building that exceeds 10,000 SF in floor area, and therefore does not qualify for an exemption from CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act).

At the October 9, 2019 environmental scoping and design review study meeting, the Planning Commission identified environmental issues to be incorporated into the initial study for the project. An environmental consultant has been chosen and is currently preparing the environmental document.

Planning Commission Action: The Planning 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, industrial and mixed use 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.

Ruben Hurin
Planning Manager

- c. John Britton, applicant
Gary Gee Architects, Inc., architect

Attachments:

October 9, 2018 Planning Commission Minutes
Applicant's Response Letter, dated October 22, 2019
Letter Submitted by Jennifer Pfaff, dated October 9, 2018
Application to the Planning Commission
Letters of Explanation, dated March 8, 2016 and April 11, 2016
Conditional Use Permit Application
Klaus TrendVario 4200 Specifications
Tree Survey, prepared by SBCA Tree Consulting, dated April 1, 2016
Downtown Specific Plan Applicable Design Guidelines
Notice of Public Hearing – Mailed October 18, 2019
Area Map

Separate Attachments:

Materials Binder