

February 24, 2020

Ms. Wendy Lao
Department of Community Development
City of San Mateo
330 West 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403-1388

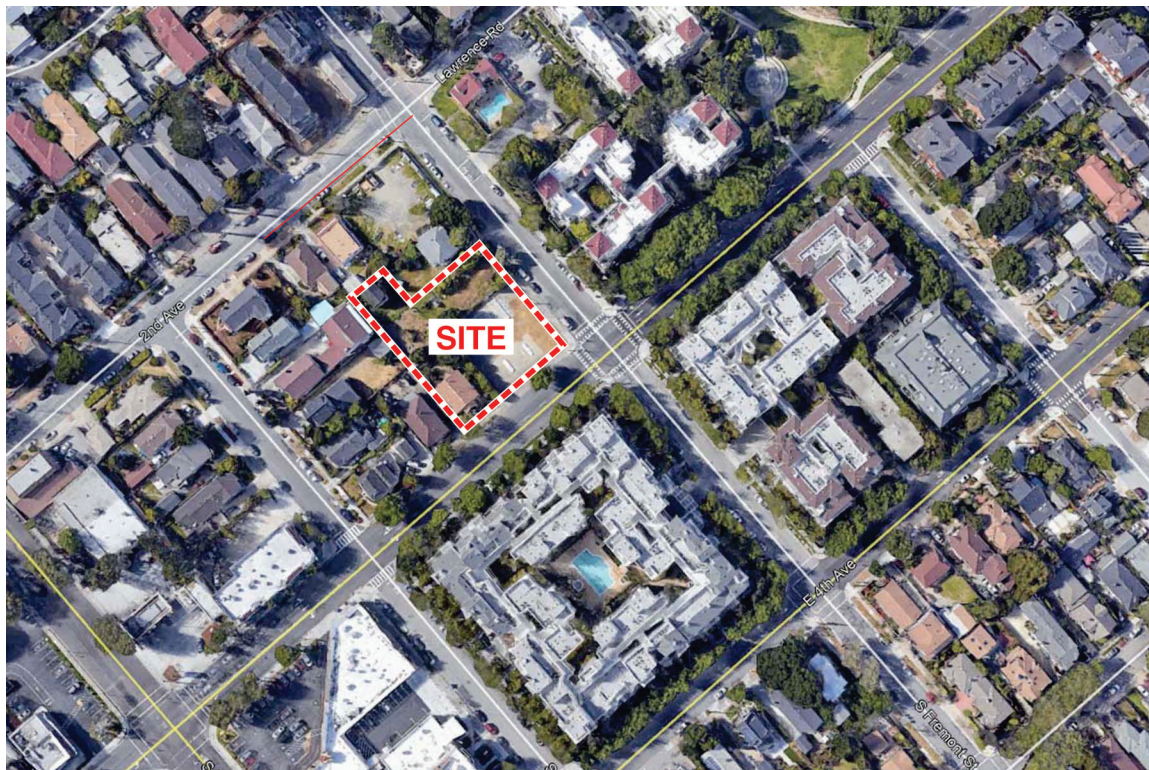
RE: 222 South Fremont Street

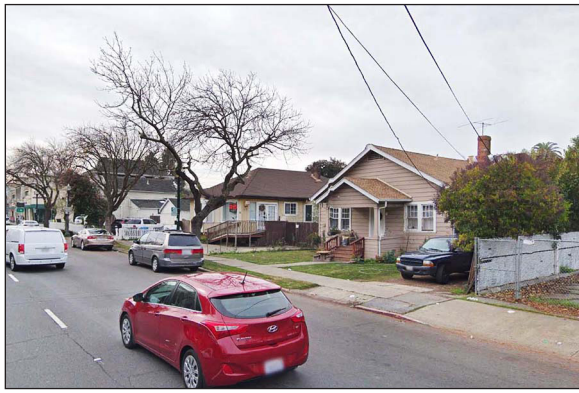
Dear Wendy:

I reviewed the drawings and evaluated the site context. I am familiar with the site through my previous reviews of the Metropolitan Apartments and, most recently, 210 Fremont Street. My comments on the plans and elevations for this project are as follows:

SITE CONTEXT

The site is located at the corner of Third Avenue and Fremont Street. The parcel is currently vacant. The site is largely surrounded by multifamily developments, but there are several single family homes immediately west of the site. Photographs of the site and surroundings are shown on the following page.





Single Family homes immediate to the west of the site on Third Avenue



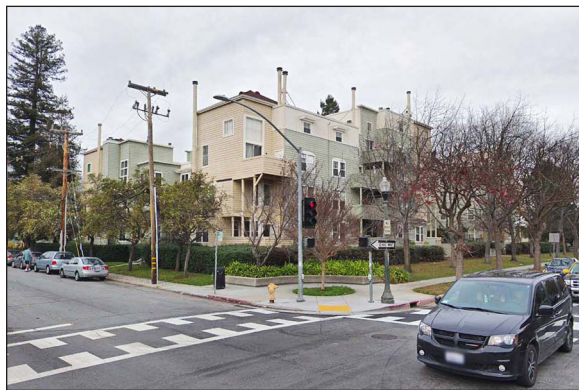
THE SITE



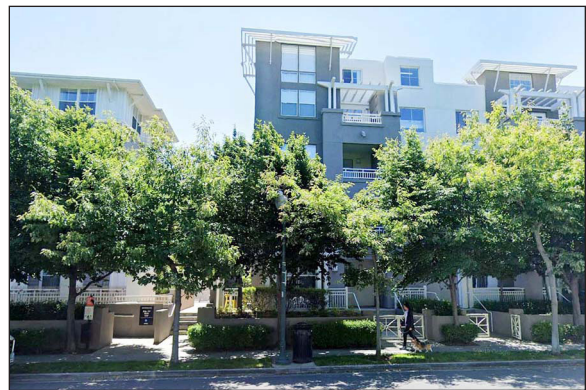
Nearby Multifamily development on Third Avenue and Fremont Street (SE corner)



Nearby Multifamily development immediately across Third Avenue



Nearby Multifamily development on Third Avenue and Fremont Street (NE corner)



Nearby Multifamily development on Third Avenue and Fremont Street (NE corner)



View east on Third Avenue

SITE CONTEXT

The project site is located in close proximity to three other multifamily developments of similar size - see aerial photo below.



The major characteristics of these nearby multifamily projects are important to the evaluation of this proposed project. Significant feature of these projects include the following:

PROJECT A



- Substantial facade articulation - horizontal and vertical
- Strong pedestrian scale and building corners
- Corner towers
- Substantial trellises at top and bottom
- Green landscaped setbacks
- Raised podium for parking
- Ground floor entry stoops
- Multiple materials
- Set back corners
- Variation in window treatments
- Subtle colors and color changes

PROJECT B



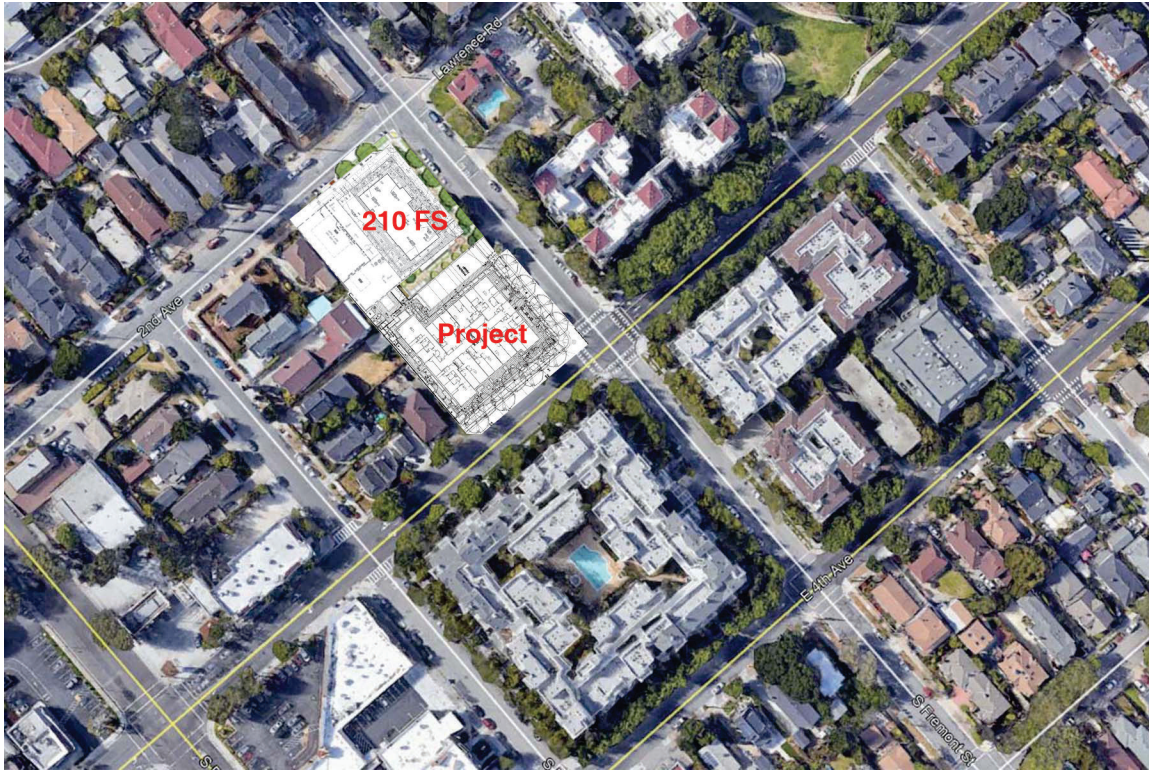
- Substantial facade articulation - horizontal and vertical
- Strong pedestrian scale
- Prominent balconies
- Articulated cornice caps
- Green landscaped setbacks
- Raised podium for parking
- Horizontal wood siding
- Variation in window treatments
- Subtle colors and color changes

PROJECT C



- Substantial facade articulation
- Strong pedestrian scale and residential character
- Ground floor entry stoops
- Prominent balconies and corner accent tower
- Prominent roof overhang with embedded top floor units
- Green landscaped setbacks
- Raised podium for parking
- Horizontal wood siding
- Substantial architectural and landscape detail

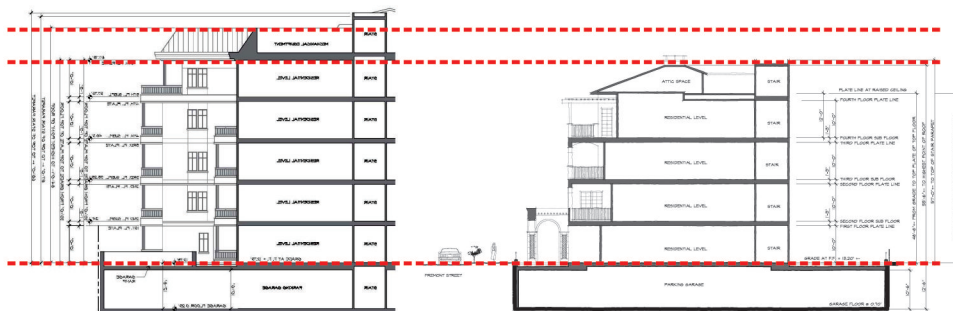
Another multifamily project by the same developer was recently approved on the adjacent parcel at 210 Fremont Street. That project is lower than the proposed project by one floor. Fremont Street elevations and building sections are shown in the illustration below.



222 FREMONT STREET



210 FREMONT STREET



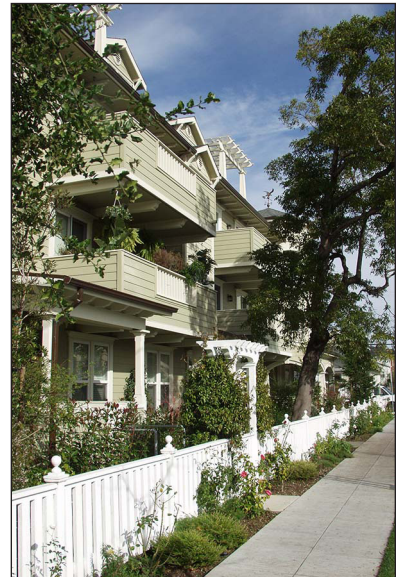
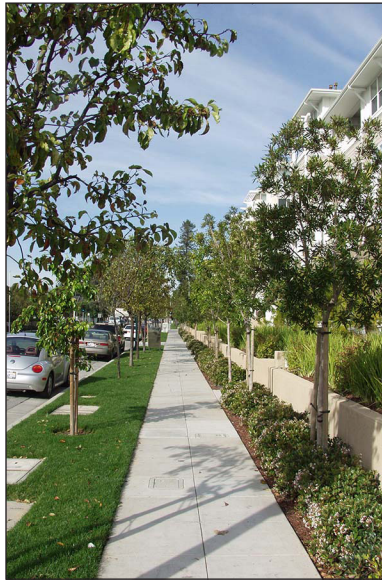
222 FREMONT STREET

210 FREMONT STREET

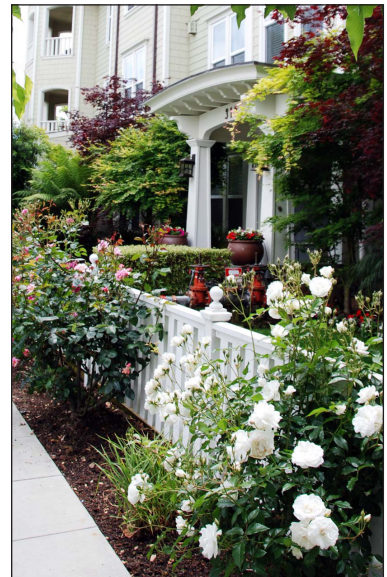
MULTIFAMILY SETBACK AND GROUND FLOOR EXAMPLES NEARBY



Green landscape setbacks on Third Avenue (looking east)



Depth of landscape planter immediately across Third Avenue



CURRENTLY PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



Proposed Fremont Street Elevation



Proposed Third Avenue Elevation



Proposed North Elevation



Proposed West Elevation

2. The building is very “boxy”, and has minimal and insubstantial architectural details. In this regard, it would appear to be non-responsive to the San Mateo Multifamily Guidelines.
3. Overall, the elevations are rather bland and lacking in detail and visual interest.
4. The west elevation next to the single family homes fronting on Third Avenue is rather flat and uninteresting.
5. Metal roofing seems out of character with surrounding buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

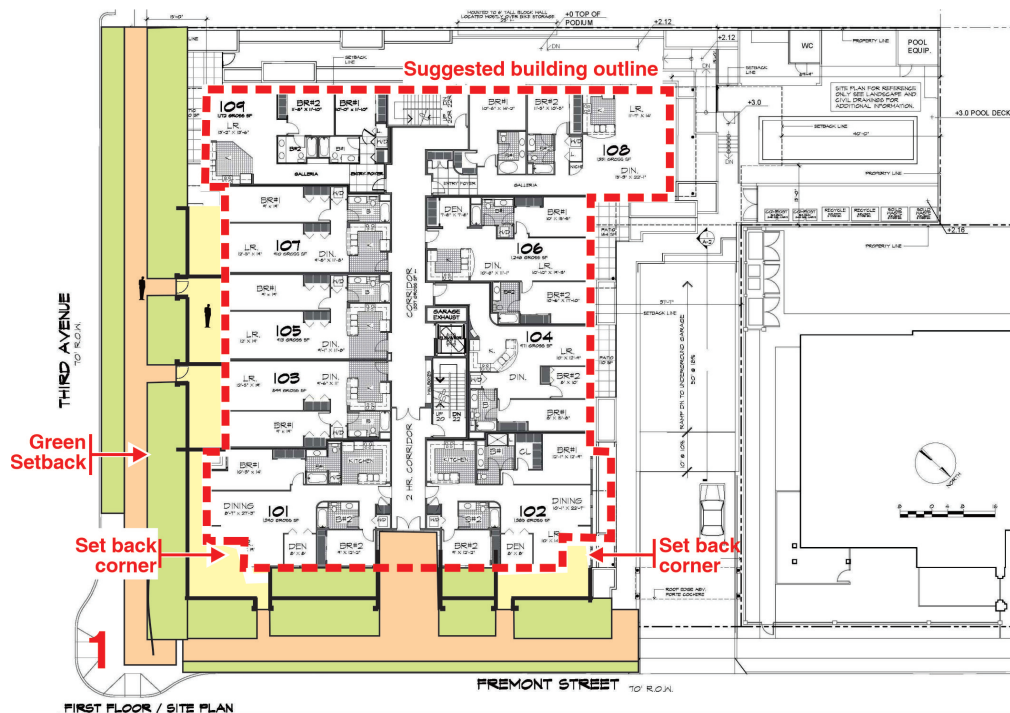
There are a number of ways to modify the plans and facades in order to be more compatible with the other multifamily development along the Third Avenue *Gateway* corridor by utilizing some of the substantial character-giving features of the nearby multifamily developments. Important ones could include some combination of the following:

- Substantial facade articulation - horizontal and vertical
- Strong pedestrian scale and building corners
- Strong trellises at top and bottom
- Green landscaped setbacks
- Enhanced ground floor entry stoops
- Multiple materials
- Articulated cornice caps
- Set back corners
- Prominent balconies
- Variation in window treatments
- Subtle colors and color changes

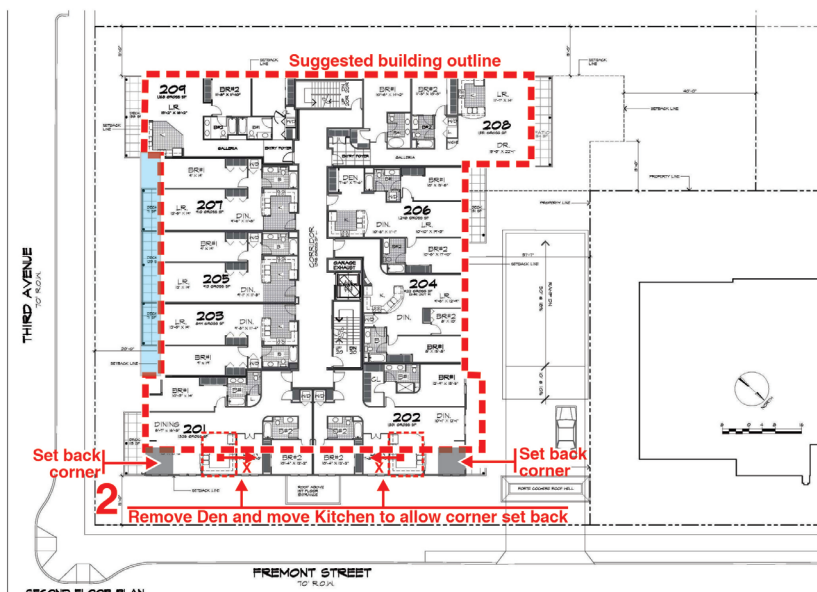
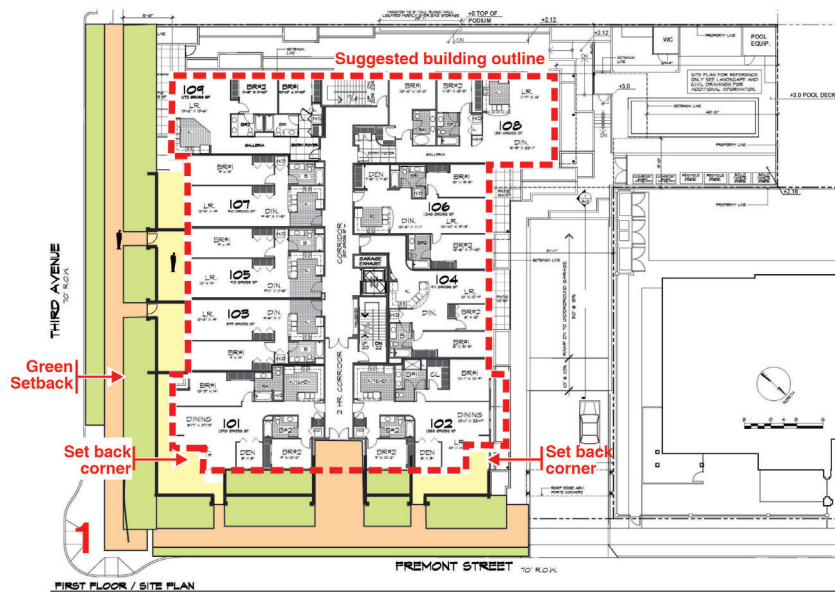
I looked at one approach which was constrained by the size of the floor plans within the allowable building envelope - very limited floor plan changes are assumed in this study. The approach below incorporates only a few of the elements noted above. The applicant would have a great deal more flexibility in modifying the floor plans and elevations in improving the design for neighborhood compatibility

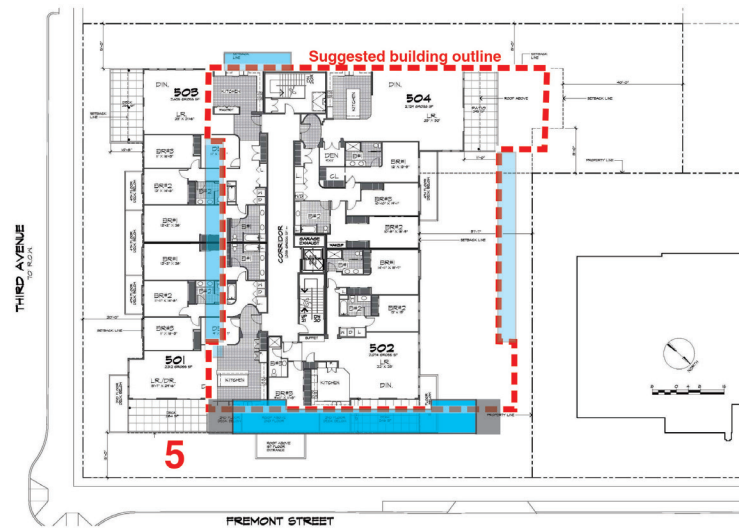
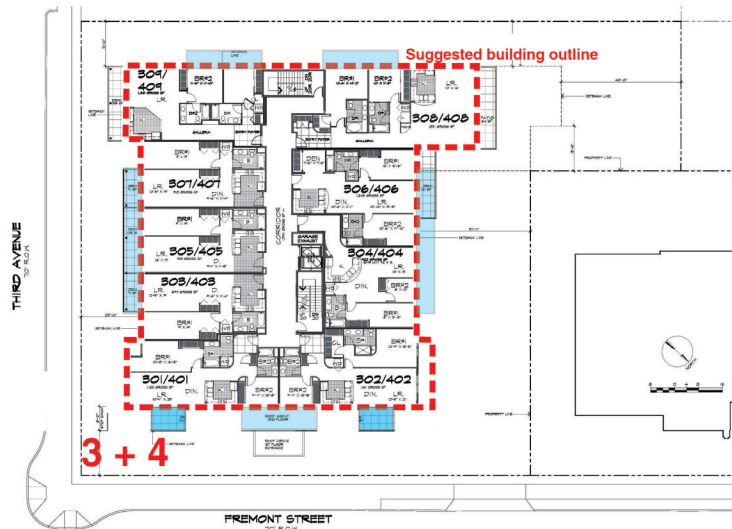
Major elements of the study include the following:

1. Provide more landscaping along the street frontages, and substantial enhance the ground floor patios similar to other nearby multifamily developments with emphasized entries.



2. Provide setbacks at the building corners to decrease the boxiness of the building forms - see example photo below from the nearby Metropolitan Apartments project.







Proposed Fremont Street Elevation



Proposed Third Avenue Elevation

CURRENTLY PROPOSED
ELEVATIONS FOR
COMPARISON PURPOSES



FREMONT STREET ELEVATION



THIRD AVENUE ELEVATION

3. Enhance building corners with trellis elements - see Metropolitan Apartments example below.



4. Provide wider roof overhangs, and select roofing material that is more traditional in lieu of the metal.
5. Provide a stronger top floor treatment. and change wall material.
6. Provide a stronger entry treatment.
7. Provide more substantial balconies.
8. Draw on the Fremont Street and Third Avenue facade elements for the north and west facades.

Wendy, please let me know if you have any questions, or if there are specific issues of concern that I did not address.

Sincerely,

CANNON DESIGN GROUP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry L. Cannon".

Larry L. Cannon