



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

Agenda Number: 1

Section Name: {{section.name}}

File ID: {{item.tracking_number}}

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Sailesh Mehra

PREPARED BY: Community Development Department

MEETING DATE: January 26, 2021

SUBJECT:

44 E. 3rd Ave. Draper University Pre-Application – Study Session/Design Charrette (PA-2018-054)

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss and provide feedback on the proposed design.

BACKGROUND:

On December 8, 2020, the Planning Commission held a Study Session for the Draper University Pre-Application PA-2018-054. The subject pre-application proposes the addition of an elevator and staircase enclosure in a historic building located at 44 E. 3rd Ave. The subject pre-application also proposes a change of use from residential dormitories to office on the 7th, 8th, and penthouse floors. Many members of the Planning Commission expressed concerns about the proposed building design, which would primarily alter the rear exterior of the historic building from the ground to the penthouse floor. While the rear and sides of a building are typically where additions are recommended for historic buildings, and generally acceptable by the Secretary of Interior Standards, many Planning Commissioners noted that this historic building is unique in that portions of the building are substantially visible from all four sides around the neighborhood. The existing building is 103 feet and 4 inches in height, which is significantly taller than many of the one- and two-story buildings in the immediate proximity, primarily due to the latest zoning code height limit of 55 feet. The proposed project would require a municipal code amendment in order to be approved due to the height limit.

The concern regarding the affected building exterior led to several Planning Commissioners inquiring extensively about alternative design options. As a result, staff offered continuing the discussion at a study session/design charrette. The purpose of the design charrette was intended for the applicant to discuss design ideas with the Planning Commission and members of the public in a collaborative meeting. After the December 8, 2020 meeting, the applicant's team indicated that they were not interested in entirely redesigning their proposal; therefore, this study session will resume the discussion, with the applicant's team explaining how they arrived at this design and their experience relating to adding onto historic and potentially historic buildings.

The Agenda Report for the December 8, 2020 Planning Commission Study Session is included as [Attachment 1](#), and the project plans are included as [Attachment 2](#).

NEXT STEPS:

At this time, staff is seeking Planning Commission comments and input on the location of a new elevator and staircase enclosure. Following this meeting, the applicant will have the opportunity to revise their plans prior to their formal Planning Application submittal.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21065, a study session/design charrette under the review of a pre-

application is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the Planning Commission is not taking action at this time. An environmental review will be conducted as part of the formal planning application in conformance with CEQA.

NOTICE PROVIDED

In accordance with the Government Code Section 65091 and the City's Municipal Code noticing requirements, this study session/design charette was noticed to the following parties more than ten days in advance of the neighborhood and Planning Commission meetings:

- Property owners, residential tenants and business tenants within 1,000 feet of the project site;
- The City's "900 List" which contains nearly 100 Homeowner Associations, Neighborhood Associations, local utilities, media, and other organizations interested in citywide planning projects;
- The City's Planning "Notify Me" email list; and,
- The interested parties list, which includes interested individuals who contacted the City and requested to be added to the project notification list.

ATTACHMENTS

Att 1 – Planning Commission Study Session Agenda Report (December 8, 2020)

Att 2 – Project Plans

Att 3 – Historic Resources Evaluation – Appendix C Removed

Att 4 - Location Map

Att 5 – Applicable General Plan Elements and Policies

Att 6 – Project Data Sheet

Att 7 – Secretary of Interior Standards Historic Evaluation

Att 8 – Sample Findings for Project Approvals and Denials

Att 9 – Neighborhood Meeting Minutes

Att 10 – Public Comments

Att 11 -Public Comments received post agenda publishing

STAFF CONTACT

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