

# Planning Commission Agenda Report

June 27, 2018  
Item 6.b.

- SUBJECT:** P18-0113
- APPLICANT:** Don Cape, Tharaldson Hospitality Development
- PROPERTY OWNER:** Johnson Drive Holdings I LLC
- PURPOSE:** Application for Design Review (DR) approval to construct two new hotels totaling 231 rooms, a drive-through coffee shop and related site improvements within the Johnson Drive Economic Development Zone (JDEDZ)
- LOCATION:** 7280 Johnson Drive
- GENERAL PLAN:** Retail/Highway/ Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices
- ZONING:** Planned Unit Development – Commercial (PUD-C) District
- EXHIBITS:**
- A. [Draft Resolution and Conditions of Approval](#)
  - B. [Revised Project Plans dated "Received June 19, 2018"](#)
  - C. [Zoning Administrator approved Project Plans dates "Received May 4, 2018"](#)
  - D. [JDEDZ Development Standards and Design Guidelines March 2017](#)
  - E. [Location and Notification Map](#)

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve DR Case No. P18-0113 subject to the draft conditions of approval in Exhibit A.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The applicant, Don Cape of Tharaldson Hospitality Development, is proposing to construct two new hotels with a total of 231 rooms, a 2,000-square-foot drive-through coffee shop and related site improvements at 7280 Johnson Drive, within the Johnson Drive Economic Development Zone (JDEDZ). As proposed, the project conforms to the General Plan and zoning requirements, as well as the JDEDZ Development Standards and Design Guidelines (Exhibit D). Additionally, staff believes the proposed design of the project, which is the first new project approved within the JDEDZ, would be a positive aesthetic change that is appropriate to the location and site. Conditions of approval have been included which will ensure all City requirements are met. This project was approved by the Zoning Administrator with conditions

of approval on June 5, 2018. Pursuant to Pleasanton Municipal Code Section 18.20.050.B., the Planning Commission may elect to review and make decisions on items acted upon by the Zoning Administrator. The Planning Commission requested such review on June 13, 2018. Accordingly, the DR application is before the Planning Commission for consideration.

## **BACKGROUND**

On December 5, 2017, the City Council approved the JDEDZ (PUD-105/Ordinance 2172). As part of this action, hotel uses up to 231 rooms and drive-through coffee shops were approved as permitted uses within the JDEDZ. The JDEDZ provides that design review of certain projects, including the future hotels and drive-through coffee shops may be approved at the staff level (unless appealed or called up). The JDEDZ approvals included adoption of Development Standards and Design Guidelines (Exhibit D), against which the hotels and other projects within the PUD are to be reviewed.

On May 4, 2018, the applicant submitted a DR application requesting review and approval of the project. On June 5, 2018, the Zoning Administrator found the project consistent with the JDEDZ Development Standards and Design Guidelines and accordingly approved the project subject to conditions of approval that included the following project specific conditions, addressing certain required design changes:

6. **BUILDING DESIGN:** With the plans submitted for a building permit, the applicant shall revise the south elevation for the Springhill Suites (Plan Sheet DR-4.1) to have a similar aesthetic/design quality to the west elevation for the Towneplace Suites (Plan Sheet DR-4.3). The revisions shall be reviewed and approved by the Director of Community Development.
7. **BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLORS:** With the plans submitted for a building permit, the applicant shall revise the paint scheme subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Development. The final building materials and colors/paint scheme shall be stated on the building permit plans.
8. **ACCENT LIGHTING:** With the plans submitted for a building permit, the applicant shall revise the building elevations for both the Springhill Suites and Towneplace Suites to include accent lighting subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Development.

On June 13, 2018, the Planning Commission elected to review the Zoning Administrator determination, citing a desire to review the project details and design. In response, staff requested that the applicant revise the project plans to address the project specific conditions of approval noted above (removed from recommended conditions in Exhibit A); those revised project plans are attached as Exhibit B. For comparison purposes, staff has also attached the Zoning Administrator approved project plans as Exhibit C. Accordingly, this application is before the Planning Commission for consideration.

## SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The project site is located at 7280 Johnson Drive and comprises two parcels (one of which does not have a separate address totaling approximately 5.06 acres. Both parcels combined are vacant, and relatively flat, and combine to form a roughly triangular shaped site, fronting on Johnson Drive. There are no existing trees on-site. Figures 1 provides an aerial photograph of the subject site. The immediately adjacent uses include an AT&T service facility immediately adjacent to the north, a FedEx distribution facility across Johnson Drive to the south, and the Dublin/San Ramon Services District (DSRSD) bio-solid facility immediately adjacent to the east.

Figure 1: Aerial photograph of project site



## PROPOSED PROJECT

### Site Plan/Layout

The project proposes to construct two new five-story-tall hotel buildings, with a total of 231 rooms, on the project site. The two hotels would be placed at a right angle from each other: Towne Place Suites would be located generally parallel to the north property line and include 110 rooms, while Springhill Suites would be located generally parallel to the east property line and include 121 rooms. Additionally, a 2,000-square-foot drive-through coffee shop (no tenant identified) would be constructed along the Johnson Drive frontage, centered between the northern and southern ends of the project site. Related site/landscaping improvements would also be constructed as part of the project, including an outdoor swimming pool to be available for use by guests at both hotels, various outdoor seating/gathering places around the hotels, a porte-cochere at each of the building entries, and a substantial landscape buffer along Johnson Drive. Please refer to Figure 2 for the site plan. Complete project plans are included in Exhibit B.

Two new driveways on Johnson Drive are proposed for access to the project site. The proposed driveways would be located to the north and south of the proposed coffee shop building and/or close to the ends of each proposed hotel building.

A total of 252 on-site parking spaces would be provided. The proposed parking would all be shared parking for the three new buildings and is located along the perimeters of both the project site and each new building, as well as within the middle part of the project site.

Three detached accessory buildings would be constructed on the project site, including a generator/storage/restroom building between the two proposed hotel buildings and adjacent to the swimming pool area, a trash enclosure at the northwest corner of the site, and a trash enclosure at the northeast corner of the site. No fencing is currently proposed.

**Figure 2: Site plan**



Regarding queueing for the proposed drive-through coffee shop, a total of 14 vehicles (five vehicles from the menu board to the pick-up window and 9 vehicles double-stacked before the menu board) would be accommodated on-site. Please note that as a permitted use, the scope of staff's review related to the drive-through coffee shop is limited to the site design, including queueing, and the exterior building design. No additional review or analysis would be conducted as part of this application. All impacts associated with the drive-through coffee shop use were previously analyzed and mitigated with the approval of the JDEDZ.

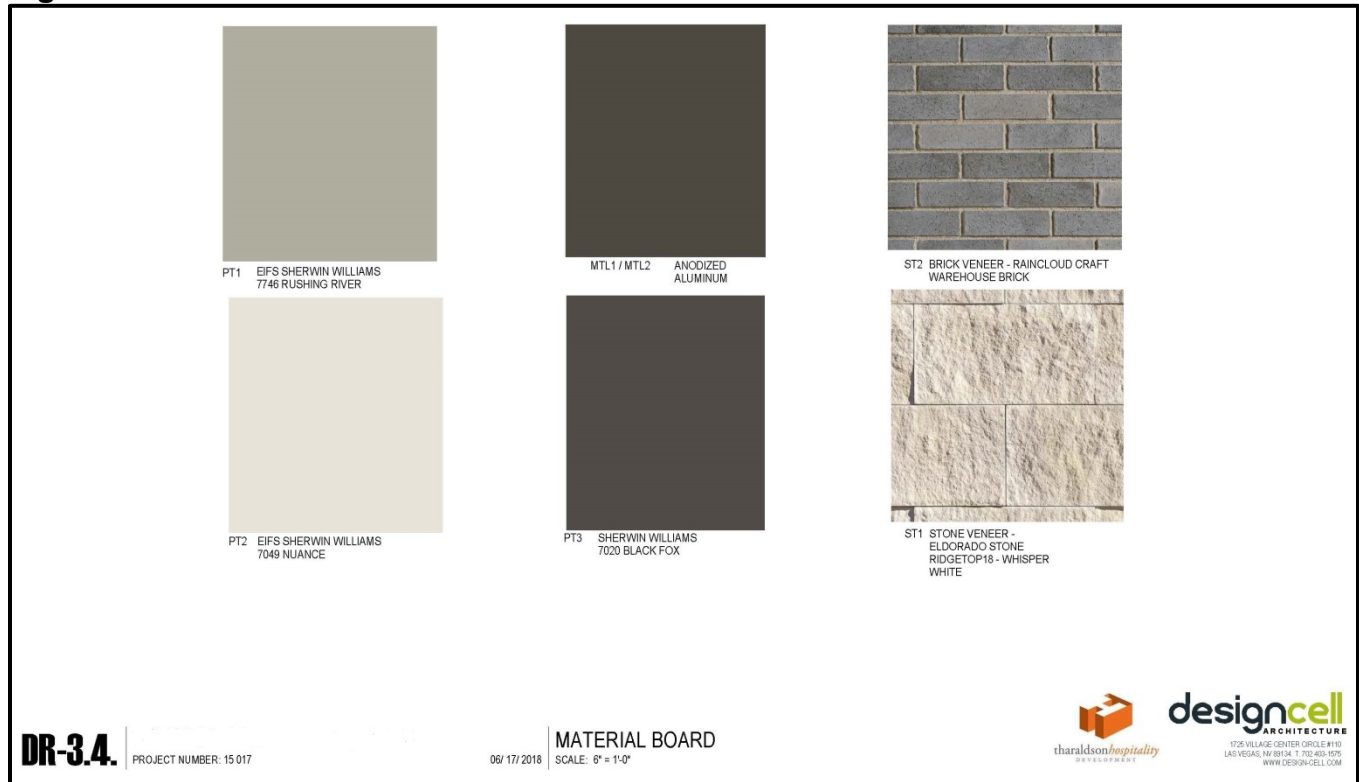
### Architecture

The architectural design for the proposed hotel buildings and accessory buildings would be contemporary in nature, and would incorporate high quality exterior finishes including two types of brick (smooth and rough finishes), smooth stucco (painted various colors), and anodized aluminum cladding. The design is typified by simplistic rectangular horizontal and vertical forms, clean lines, and flat roof elements. The massing of the two buildings would be broken up by material and color changes, wall plane articulation (wide bays and recessed elements), and score lines. Building colors would include a range of light tan, grays and dark browns, while the brick colors range from light tan to gray. Figure 3 depicts view simulations of the project from three angles while Figure 4 provides the proposed color and materials palette. A materials board will be provided at the June 27 meeting to better illustrate actual materials and colors.

**Figure 3: View simulations**



**Figure 4: Color and Material Board**



Landscaping

New interior/perimeter landscaping would be installed along the front, sides, and rear of the proposed buildings and project site, including a landscape buffer along Johnson Drive that averages 35 feet in width, and would also serve as a stormwater treatment area for the project. Landscaping would include a variety of trees, shrubs, and groundcover for the site. The landscape palette includes drought-tolerant and both native and non-native species.

Additionally, the project proposes to install one 24-inch-box-sized tree for every six parking spaces, with a total of approximately 175 trees planted throughout the site. The landscape plan includes a tree/plant palette of native and non-native species that are primarily drought tolerant, as well as some decorative hardscape features (stamped concrete most likely) within the access driveway entrances, in front of the hotel entrances and within the internal pedestrian paths of travel.

**PLAN MODIFICATIONS MADE BETWEEN THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR DETERMINATION AND THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPEAL OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR DETERMINATION**

Subsequent to the June 13, 2018 Planning Commission request to review the Zoning Administrator determination on the project, the applicant made revisions to the project plans (Exhibit B) to address project specific conditions of approval imposed by the Zoning Administrator. Those conditions are specific to building design modifications the Zoning Administrator believed would enhance the overall aesthetic and visual quality of the project. In addition to the plan modifications, the applicant provided written responses detailing the proposed modifications. Those project specific conditions of approval and the applicant’s responses are paraphrased below:

#### Condition of Approval No. 6

**BUILDING DESIGN:** With the plans submitted for a building permit, the applicant shall revise the south elevation for the Springhill Suites (Plan Sheet DR-4.1) to have a similar aesthetic/design quality to the west elevation for the Towneplace Suites (Plan Sheet DR-4.3). The revisions shall be reviewed and approved by the Director of Community Development.

*Additional windows were added to the south elevation of the Springhill Suites (see Exhibit B, Plan Sheet DR-4.1) to add visual interest and provide a more “open” façade for the side of the building facing Johnson Drive.*

#### Condition of Approval No. 7

**BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLORS:** With the plans submitted for a building permit, the applicant shall revise the paint scheme subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Development. The final building materials and colors/paint scheme shall be stated on the building permit plans.

*After consideration of comments about facade materials, a new color scheme was developed. Please see the modified elevations in Exhibit B. The color “Copper Mountain” was removed from the Towne Place Suites scheme. Similarly, the Springhill Suites colors were adjusted (“Garden Spot” accent color removed) to ensure that both buildings complement each other.*

*Additionally, the proposed El Dorado stone material, which staff felt to be overly plain and too similar to the texture of the building stucco, were replaced. The Zen24 Nickel gray-colored stone was replaced with “Raincloud Craft Warehouse Brick” veneer. The new proposed brick veneer offers a more textured surface and of finer quality, and fits well with the building color scheme. The Zen24 Soft Light light-colored stone was replaced with “Ridgetop18-Whisper White” stone veneer. This material has a richer texture and its color and texture scale fits well with the building color scheme.*

#### Condition of Approval No. 8

**ACCENT LIGHTING:** With the plans submitted for a building permit, the applicant shall revise the building elevations for both the Springhill Suites and Towneplace Suites to include accent lighting subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Development.

*Wall sconces and building up-lights were added to both buildings to accentuate prominent building elevation spots and entrances. Downlights are also used in porte-cochere ceilings to brighten main entrance areas.*

### **SCOPE OF PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

The Design Review process is intended to preserve and enhance the city’s aesthetic values and to ensure the preservation of the public health, safety, and general welfare. Planning Commission review and approval is required for various categories of projects including multi-family residential projects in non-PUD zoning districts. PMC Section 18.20.030 outlines the scope of Design Review, indicating that the reviewing body shall review “site plans, landscape plans, building architecture, and other such plans as may be required to preserve and enhance the city’s aesthetic values and to ensure the preservation of the public health, safety, and general welfare.” Note that, even though a proposed project may comply with applicable zoning standards (e.g. setbacks, height limits) the design review process allows the reviewing body to approve conditions which may be more restrictive than normal Code standards, to

ensure that the above objectives are met. As outlined in Section 18.20.030, the reviewing body's scope of review shall include (but not be limited to) the following design criteria:

- Preservation of the natural beauty of the city and the project site's relationship to it;
- Appropriate relationship of the proposed building to its site, including transition with streetscape, public views of the buildings, and scale of buildings within its site and adjoining buildings;
- Appropriate relationship of the proposed building and its site to adjoining areas, including compatibility of architectural styles, harmony in adjoining buildings, attractive landscape transitions, and consistency with neighborhood character;
- Preservation of views enjoyed by residents, workers within the city, and passersby through the community;
- Landscaping designed to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas, provide shade, and conform to established streetscape;
- Relationship of exterior lighting to its surroundings and to the building and adjoining landscape;
- Architectural style, as a function of its quality of design and relationship to its surroundings; the relationship of building components to one another/the building's colors and materials; and the design attention given to mechanical equipment or other utility hardware on roof, ground or buildings;
- Integration of signs as part of the architectural concept; and
- Architectural concept of miscellaneous structures, street furniture, public art in relationship to the site and landscape.

## **STAFF REVIEW/ANALYSIS**

### Green Building/ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Compliance

Municipal Code Section (PMC) 17.50.030(K) defines construction of any commercial project that includes 20,000 gross square feet or more of conditioned space as a "covered project" that must meet the current minimum LEED certified rating requirements for commercial development. Recommended Condition of Approval No. 19 in Exhibit A requires the project to comply with the PMC requirements. In general, projects that meet the most recent California Building Code requirements are also able to reach LEED certified rating or better.

### Traffic, Circulation and Parking

Staff has reviewed the project plans. Traffic generation from two hotels with a total of 231 rooms, and a 2,000 square foot coffee shop, was analyzed as part of the certified Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the JDEDZ. With the future traffic improvements to be constructed pursuant to the SEIR, the proposed circulation will be adequate and would not create any adverse impacts on the transportation network.

Additionally, the Traffic Engineering division has reviewed the proposed queuing for the coffee



shop, and determined in to be adequate. This conclusion was based in part on a previous queueing analysis prepared for a similarly sized drive-through Starbucks project, which required the same queueing capacity as is proposed for this project, and which was found to avoid on and off-site spillover during peak use times of the drive-through. Based on the proposed queueing capacity staff believes on-site vehicular conflicts will be minimal and no off-site conflicts are anticipated.

As indicated in Table 1 below, per the JDEDZ development standards, the project would require 251 parking spaces: 241 for the two hotels, and 10 for the coffee shop. 252 parking spaces are proposed, including 9 accessible spaces and 30 compact spaces, which would meet the PMC and JDEDZ requirements. Furthermore, the parking requirement is based on full occupancy of the hotel, which rarely occurs based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) standards that estimate hotels are generally running at approximately 85 percent capacity at any given time. Therefore, staff believes adequate parking has been provided.

Conformance with the JDEDZ Development Standards

The project site is within the JDEDZ which prescribes specific development standards. As shown in Table 1 below, the proposed project would conform to all of the applicable development standards for height, setbacks, and building separations.

**Table 1: JDEDZ Requirements vs. Proposed Project**

Site Development Standard	JDEDZ Requirements	Proposed Project
Building Height	65 ft. max.*	Approx. 20 feet (coffee shop) / Approx. 65 ft. (hotels)
Accessory Structure Height	40 ft. max.**	Approx. 20 feet (pool bldg.)
Primary Building Setbacks		
<i>Front</i>	35 ft. min.	35 ft. (coffee shop) / Approx. 80-116 ft. (hotels)
<i>Side / Aggregate Between the Two Sides</i>	10 ft. min / 20 ft. min.	Approx. 75 ft. / N/A (hotels)
<i>Rear</i>	15 ft. min.	Approx. 75 ft. (hotels)
Accessory Structure Setbacks		
<i>Side</i>	10 ft.**	N/A
<i>Rear</i>	15 ft.**	Approx. 75 ft. (pool bldg.)
Parking	Hotels: 1 space per guestroom 1 space per 2 employees  Coffee Shop: 1 space per 200 sq. ft.  251 spaces total	252 spaces
24-inch box trees	1 per every 8 parking spaces	1 per every 6 parking spaces

\*The height of a structure shall be measured vertically from the average elevation of the natural grade of the ground covered by the structure to the highest point of the structure or to the coping of a flat roof. The height of an accessory structure shall be measured from the lowest grade adjacent to the structure to the highest ridge or top of the structure.

\*\*Does not apply to trash enclosures

### Architectural Design, Materials, and Colors

The proposed buildings (hotels, coffee shop and accessory buildings) are contemporary in style and would generally use high quality and durable finishes including brick and smooth stucco. In staff's view, the applicant has provided sufficient articulation on all building elevations to break up the five-story façades and provide visual relief. Staff also believes that the revised materials and colors, along with the accent lighting are appropriate for the architectural style of the building. Overall, staff believes the designs of the proposed buildings are attractive and would complement the existing buildings in the area.

Additionally, staff believes the proposed buildings are consistent with the JDEDZ Development Standards and Design Guidelines, including, but not limited to the following:

#### Visual Interest of Façade

- To the greatest extent possible, create visual interest through the use of horizontal and vertical articulation, including plane changes, varying roof/parapet heights, recessed entries and windows, score lines, awnings, and varied materials, textures, and colors.
- Design ground floor exteriors of buildings to be "pedestrian-friendly." Specific criteria include the following:
  - Decorative wall surfaces and landscape materials between sidewalks and buildings are encouraged.
  - Muted, modular materials, such as brick and stone, are particularly desirable.
  - Windows that reveal indoor amenities and activities are encouraged.
  - To the greatest extent possible, large expanses of blank walls or mirror glass shall be prohibited.
  - Covered walks or arcades are encouraged.
- All buildings shall include a minimum of three primary exterior materials.

#### Massing, Scale, Form, and Details

- Consider breaking very large buildings into modules or sub-parts to reduce perceived scale.
- Design buildings to step back and step down to help break up mass.
- Terracing, articulated structural elements, or changing building materials.
- Vary the height of the roof to identify distinct elements.

#### Entrances

- Primary pedestrian entrances should be easily identifiable and attractive to pedestrians.
- Design main entrances to be clearly identifiable as seen from primary driveways and drop-offs.

#### Color and Materials Palette

- Use wall materials that are muted in color and have texture. Specific criteria include the following:
  - Natural matte textures and earth tone colors are encouraged. Textured, colored concrete may also be considered.
  - The use of fine textured materials, such as brick, cast stone, tile, and textured block are encouraged. Horizontally textured concrete, stucco and dark metal panels or glass spandrel panels may be suitable if used at a scale visually related to pedestrians.

- Reserve the use of strongly contrasting materials and colors for accents, such as building entrances, railings, stairs, etc. Avoid an excessive variety of façade materials.

### Colors

Building colors should blend in with the natural surroundings.

- Study the landscape for cues. A predominance of earth tone colors that relate to the surrounding area, such as light, neutral tans, and browns is encouraged.
- Use darker colors or earth tones (neutral browns, darker buffs, tans, ochres) for expanses of walls, with brighter accents or white for trim.

### Landscaping and Trees

A landscape plan has been provided which includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and groundcover for the site that includes drought-tolerant and both native and non-native species. The landscape plan would assist in softening the appearance of the proposed building and provide an attractive streetscape. Moreover, the project has met or exceeded the requirements of the JDEDZ Development Standards and Design Guidelines; specifically, the project: (1) provides a substantial landscape buffer along Johnson Drive that averages 35 feet in width and is as wide as 41 feet in some areas; (2) provides one 24-inch-box-sized tree for every six parking spaces where one for every eight parking spaces is required; and (3) provides a combination of evergreen trees and large-growing shrubs with a minimum of 50 percent of the trees would be evergreen.

### Grading and Drainage

Minor grading would be needed to prepare the new building pads and associated site improvements. As proposed, stormwater would be treated on-site with landscaped bioswales and then conveyed into the local stormdrain system per City requirements. Accordingly, the project would meet the City's grading, drainage and stormwater requirements.

### Signs

Although signage is shown on the project plans (Exhibit B), signage is not under review with this Design Review application. All new signs would be required to obtain Sign Design Review approval under a separate application per recommended condition of approval No. 8.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

As previously noted, staff recommends the Planning Commission approve the project, as proposed, subject to conditions of approval. However, the Planning Commission could consider the following alternative:

1. Direct modifications to the project design, to be incorporated as further conditions of approval or, or that would be brought back to the Planning Commission for review at a continued public hearing. Note that the size, orientation, and location of the hotels and coffee shop were approved as part of the JDEDZ PUD, and due to the unique programming and functional needs of the hotels associated with those parameters, it would be difficult to substantially modify the overall size or massing of the proposed buildings without substantially revising the floor plans. Therefore, staff suggests the scope of Planning Commission modifications, if any, focus on the design-related elements of the project, including materials, colors, exterior finishes, glazing and detailing, roof forms, lighting and landscape.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS**

Notices of this application were sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the site. Staff has provided the location and noticing map as Exhibit E for reference. At the time this report was published, staff had not received any public comments regarding the project.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

This project is consistent with the analysis, findings and required mitigation measures of the certified SEIR for the JDEDZ. Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

## **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

The project would improve an underutilized project site within the JDEDZ with two new hotels and a drive-through coffee-shop. The project would not adversely affect surrounding uses and would enhance the site's appearance from the public right-of-way and adjacent properties. Additionally, the project will provide a hotel use in an underserved market. Staff supports the project and recommends the Planning Commission approve the project as proposed.

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