



## Planning Commission Staff Report

May 30, 2007  
Item 5.b.

- SUBJECT:** PDR-602
- APPLICANT:** Michael O'Callaghan
- PROPERTY OWNER:** Michael Periclis
- PURPOSE:** Application for design review approval to demolish the existing building (former Union Jack Pub) and construct a two-story commercial building with an attached apartment unit.
- GENERAL PLAN:** Retail, Highway, and Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices
- ZONING:** The subject property is zoned Central Commercial (C-C), Downtown Revitalization, Core Area Overlay District.
- LOCATION:** 725 Main Street
- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Exhibit "A," Proposed Plans
  2. Exhibit "B," Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval
  3. Location Map
  4. Aerial Photograph of the Project Area
  5. Photographs of the Existing Building and Property

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### I. BACKGROUND

The applicant, Michael O'Callaghan, proposes to demolish the existing building and construct a new two-story building. Design review applications of this nature are subject to review and approval by the Planning Commission. In addition, a certificate of appropriateness must also be approved by the Planning Commission to demolish the building. A proposed in-lieu parking agreement will be subject to City Council approval.

## II. SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site, measuring approximately 4,155 square feet in area, is located on the west side of Main Street (please refer to the attached location map). The property contains an approximately 2,812-square-foot, one-story building. The building is currently vacant and was last occupied by the Union Jack Pub. Two paved parking spaces are located at the rear of the building. There are no trees or other forms of vegetation on the subject site. The site topography is generally flat.



**Front of Building**



**Rear of Building**

### Adjacent Properties

The property is bordered on the south and west by the Cattelan's Antique Furniture Market building (719 Main Street) and on the north by the multi-tenant 739 Main Street commercial building and parking lot. Commercial buildings are located to the east, across Main Street.

## III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing building and construct a two-story, approximately 4,829-square-foot mixed-use commercial building with a one-bedroom apartment. The entire first floor and approximately two-thirds of the second floor of the building (approximately 3,904 square feet total) would be utilized for commercial uses. The applicant plans to lease both commercial floors to a single "upscale" restaurant use. An approximately 925-square-foot, one-bedroom apartment would occupy the rear portion of the second floor. Staff notes that the second floor hallway and elevator shaft were included in the apartment floor area. Without these areas, the apartment unit is approximately 720 square feet in area.

The building would be set back 11 feet from the eastern (front) property line, four feet from the

northern (side) property line, zero feet from the southern (side) property line, and 24 feet from the western (rear) property line. The building has been set back from the front property line in order to accommodate outdoor dining areas that would be located on both the first and second floors. A covered balcony would project 20 feet beyond the front of the building (nine feet beyond the front property line). A trash enclosure would be located at the rear of the site, adjacent to two parking spaces. As shown on the first floor plan, small planters would be located at the base of the balcony columns, adjacent to the rear door, and on the west side of the parking spaces.

The building would measure approximately 34-feet high at the top of the roof ridge. The applicant proposes stucco finish on the front wall, split-faced concrete block on the side and rear walls, and a Mission style concrete tile roof. Staff does not feel the concrete block material is appropriate for Downtown and has conditioned the project to have stucco finish on all four elevations. Wood-framed folding doors and etched- or stained-glass transom windows would be featured on the front elevation. A roofed second-floor balcony would be located across the full width of the front elevation. Due to its proximity to the side property lines and the adjacent buildings at 719 and 739 Main Street, which are built up to the property lines, the side building elevations would have limited architectural features. Wood-framed windows and doors would be used on the rear elevation. An exterior staircase would be located on the rear elevations. The applicant is proposing rust-colored stucco on the front elevation and grey- and tan-colored concrete block walls on the side and rear elevations. The applicant indicated that he is willing to change the rust-colored body to an off-white color, if desired by the Commission (please see the attached colored elevation dated "Received" May 24, 2007). Trim and accent colors would include brown, rust, grey, and dark tan. Roof tiles would have terra cotta and chocolate-brown colors. A color/material board will be available for the Commission's review at the public hearing.

The front elevation shows an eave-mounted sign on the first and second floor. Details for these signs have not been provided at this time. The project would be conditioned to have a sign program reviewed by the Planning Director.

#### **IV. ANALYSIS**

##### **General and Downtown Specific Plan Land Use Conformity**

The General Plan designates the subject property as "Retail, Highway, and Service Commercial/Business and Professional Offices." The proposed project is consistent with this land use designation and, additionally, would provide 1,092 additional (net) square feet of commercial space to serve residents and businesses of Pleasanton and its market area, implementing Policy 4 of the General Plan's Land Use Element which calls for "the City to ensure that neighborhood, community, and commercial centers provide goods and services needed by residents and businesses of Pleasanton and its market area." Regarding the apartment

unit, residential uses in the Downtown are consistent with the property's land use designation. The project would also be consistent with General Plan Land Use Program 3.4 that states to "Encourage second-floor apartments above first-floor commercial uses in the Downtown." Additionally, the project would conform with Program 42.3 of the General Plan's Housing Element which specifies to "Encourage mixed-use developments that combine residential uses with compatible commercial uses, especially in the Downtown. Use the reduced residential development standards of the Core Area Overlay District to encourage apartments in second-story commercial spaces and behind commercial buildings in the Downtown." The Floor Area Ratio (FAR) would be approximately 116% with the proposed project, which complies with the General Plan's 200% FAR limit for Downtown commercial properties.

The subject property is also located within the Downtown Specific Plan area. The Downtown Specific Plan land use designation for the subject property is "Downtown Commercial" which allows pedestrian-oriented commercial on the ground floor and commercial, office, and residential uses on the second floor. The proposed project is consistent with this land use designation. The project would also promote Land Use Policy 12 and Economic Vitality Policy 3 of the Specific Plan that encourage housing in the upper floors of retail and office buildings. Therefore, staff believes that the project is consistent with the Downtown Specific Plan land use goals and policies.

### **Zoning and Uses**

The site is zoned Central Commercial (C-C), Downtown Revitalization, Core Area Overlay District. Apartment units and a variety of commercial uses, including restaurants, are permitted uses in this District. Therefore, no rezoning or other land use modifications to the property are necessary to allow the proposed development. The proposed 116% FAR would be consistent with the maximum 300% FAR set forth for this property by the C-C District.

### **Development Plan Conformity with Downtown Regulations**

New construction in the Downtown must be sensitive to the character of the historic downtown and, to accomplish this goal, must conform to the specialized design policies contained in the Downtown Specific Plan and Downtown Pleasanton Design Guidelines. The proposed project conforms to the applicable Downtown policies and regulations as follows:

Building Location – The Downtown Design Guidelines indicate that building façades should meet the sidewalk, except where mini-plazas are provided. The Guidelines also state that special consideration will be given to conditions where existing adjacent buildings are set back from the sidewalk. The adjacent building to the south at 719 Main St. is not set back from the property line, but does have a wide recessed entry. The adjacent building to the north at 739 Main Street is set back three feet from the front property line, except for a central enclosed staircase and wing walls that are built up to the property line. While the adjacent buildings are

not set back very far from the front property line, the applicant has proposed to recess the building façade in order to create more outdoor dining area in front of the building, which staff believes could be considered as a “mini-plaza” and meets the intent of the Guideline. The Guidelines also state that off-street parking is only allowed at the rear or interior of the lot and that pedestrian paths from Main Street to rear parking lots are encouraged. The proposed off-street parking would be located at the rear of the lot and a pedestrian path from Main Street to the rear parking lot would be located on the north side of the building. Therefore, staff believes that the building is appropriately located and complies with the Guidelines.

Building Design - The Downtown Specific Plan encourages attractive building architecture which reinforces the traditional, pedestrian-oriented design character and scale of the Downtown. In addition, the Specific Plan states that building design should be unique, not corporate, chain, or franchise standard, unless it is determined that it is in conformance with the design goals of the Downtown. The Guidelines encourages a variety of traditional architectural styles and shapes.

According to the applicant, the building design was based on the Spanish style of architecture, which is a traditional style of architecture. It is also one of Downtown Pleasanton’s principal architectural styles. Staff believes that the architectural style of the building is appropriate for Downtown and would complement the other existing Downtown buildings. A pedestrian-oriented storefront with folding storefront doors that would open onto an outdoor dining area has been provided on the front elevation. Therefore, staff finds that the Downtown Specific Plan’s and Design Guidelines’ design goals and policies have been met, as proposed and conditioned.

Building Height/Massing – The Guidelines state that new buildings shall generally be one to two stories high and that the height of contiguous storefronts should generally align. While the proposed two-story building would be taller than the adjacent one-story building to the south at 719 Main Street and the adjacent two-story building to the north at 739 Main Street, the building would be similar in scale to other Downtown buildings. Staff finds the building height and massing appropriate.

Building Materials, Finishes, and Colors - The stucco finish on the front elevation, wood-framed windows and doors, and wood fascia with corbels are acceptable building materials for the Downtown and would be consistent with the Specific Plan policy to use high quality building materials in new construction appropriate to the architectural style of the building. As noted earlier, staff does not feel that the proposed split-faced concrete block material is appropriate for Downtown, and has conditioned that stucco finish be applied to the block walls. The applicant has agreed to make this change. The proposed colors (including an off-white body color, if desired by the Commission) meet the Downtown Design Guidelines which states that colors should be appropriate to the architectural style of the building and that a base color be used with contrasting trim and accent colors.

Signage - The eave-mounted overhang signs on the front elevation are an appropriate sign type for the Downtown. Additional sign details must be provided, however, before the signs can be specifically approved.

**Site Plan and Density**

The site development standards of the C-C district allow structures to be built to the property lines on all sides of the subject site. The Municipal Code, which allows a maximum of one dwelling unit per 1,000 square feet of site area, would theoretically permit up to four units on a site of this size. The C-C district also allows a maximum FAR (floor area ratio) of 300%, or 12,465 square feet of building area, and a maximum height of 40 feet for this site.

The site is also within the Core Area Overlay District. The Core Overlay District was established in 1981 for the purpose of facilitating the development of smaller (10 units or less) multi-family rental housing or mixed-use multi-family rental housing/commercial and office projects in the Downtown area. The Core Area Overlay District has modified standards which relax the standard requirements for setbacks (for multiple-family zoned properties), parking, and open space in order to accomplish this objective.

As shown on the table below, the proposed development would comply with the site development standards of the C-C, Core Area Overlay District with respect to residential density, building setbacks, FAR, open space, and height limits.

<b>SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARD:</b>	<b>CITY REQUIREMENTS:</b>	<b>PROPOSED:</b>
Residential Density	4 units max. (1,000 sq. ft. min. site area per dwelling unit)	1 unit
Floor Area Ratio	300% max.	116%
Building Height	40 ft. max.  Note: Measured from the average grade covered by the structure to the mean height between the roof ridge and eave	29 ½ ft.  Note: Code defined height listed. The building has a maximum ridge height of approximately 34 ft.
Setbacks:		
Front (east) -	None required	11 ft.
South Side -	None required	0 ft.
North Side -	None required	4 ft.
Rear (west) -	None required	24 ft.
Open Space Per Dwelling Unit:		
Private -	Not required when located above a commercial use	Not proposed
Group -	None required	Not proposed

Staff believes that the four-foot wide pedestrian corridor on the north side of the building should be made attractive/inviting. For example, decorative paving, decorative pedestrian-scale lighting, decorative metal trellises or arches with planter pockets for climbing vines, small flower pots, etc. could be incorporated along this narrow corridor. A condition of approval addresses this item.

Overall, staff believes that the proposed site plan, positioning of the building, density, open space, height, and FAR are appropriate for the subject property, as conditioned.

## **Parking**

The site currently contains a two-space parking lot, which the applicant would retain. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing, approximately 2,812-square-foot building and construct approximately 3,904 square feet of commercial space and a one-bedroom apartment. The Municipal Code requires that the applicant provide 13 parking spaces for the commercial building area (one space per 300 square feet) and one parking space for the one-bedroom apartment, resulting in a total parking requirement of 14 spaces. However, the subject project would receive a parking credit for the existing, demolished building area if one of the following is met: a) the Planning Commission determines that the replacement structure would have the same architectural style as the original structure in terms of design, materials, massing, and detailing, or b) the Planning Commission determines that the replacement structure will be an architectural improvement compared to the existing structure and will preserve or enhance the overall character of the area. Staff believes that the proposed building meets the criteria in “b” above, and recommends that the applicant receive a parking credit for the 2,812 square feet of demolished area (equal to nine spaces).

If credit is given for the demolished floor area, then five parking spaces are required for the project. The applicant would provide two on-site parking spaces, resulting in a deficit of three spaces. Since there is no room on the property to add more parking, the applicant is requesting an in-lieu parking agreement for the deficient parking spaces as allowed by the Municipal Code. The applicant would be required to pay in-lieu parking fees totaling \$42,000 (using the surface parking rate of \$14,000 per space). Furthermore, because less than 85% of the required parking for this development would be provided on site, the in-lieu parking agreement would be subject to approval by the City Council.

The in-lieu parking fees would be used to construct public parking lots in the Downtown. The Downtown Specific Plan has an objective of creating 400 new parking spaces in the Downtown by build-out, consisting of both public and private parking. The cornerstone of the City’s public parking lot strategy is the acquisition and improvement of the Alameda County Transportation Corridor (ACTC), which is owned by Alameda County. Staff is presently negotiating with the County to purchase the ACTC Downtown, which would be used to construct public parking. This parking project is one of the City’s “highest” priorities as determined by the City Council.

Staff notes that the above parking calculations are based on the floor areas listed on the plans. It appears that the existing patio on the rear of the building was included in this measurement, which staff notes would not receive a parking credit. In order to confirm the size of the existing building and to accurately calculate the number of required parking spaces for the project, staff has included a condition of approval requiring the applicant to provide a scaleable floor plan of the existing building before the in-lieu parking agreement is brought before Council.

Staff recommends that one of the two proposed parking spaces be designated for the exclusive use of the apartment unit and that the applicant sign and stripe the space accordingly. A condition of approval addresses this item.

### **Traffic/Circulation**

Due to the small scale of the development and the fact that the General Plan exempts Downtown development from meeting Level of Service (LOS) standards, a traffic study does not accompany this project.

Access to the two parking spaces and trash enclosure at the rear of the site would be provided by existing driveways and drive aisles on the adjacent parcels at 739 and 749 Main Street (please see “Site Vehicular Access” on Sheet 2 of the proposed plans). The applicant has indicated that there are currently access easements in place with these adjacent properties.

### **Building Design**

As proposed and conditioned, staff believes that the building has been designed with appropriate scale and mass for Downtown Pleasanton and believes that it will fit in and complement the existing character and architecture found in the Downtown. The applicant has worked closely with staff on the design. In staff's opinion, the building will be a positive addition to this Downtown site.

Since not all of the building details have been provided (e.g., window and window treatments, paving color and material between the City sidewalk and building, roof color pattern, stucco finish, awning color, rear staircase color and material, etc.) and since the plans contain several inconsistencies (e.g., the roof plan doesn't match the elevations, the side elevations do not accurately show the side parapets, the floor plans and side elevations are not consistent with respect to the location of the side walls adjacent to the outdoor dining areas, etc.), staff has added conditions of approval requiring that these details and corrections be submitted for review and approval by the Planning Director prior to issuance of a building permit for the project. The Planning Director would ensure that the design and materials are compatible with the building architecture and Downtown.

The City requires that mechanical equipment be fully screened from off-site views with



materials architecturally compatible with the building. As currently designed, a parapet would be located along the rear and portions of the side elevations. Staff does not feel that the proposed parapet would adequately screen the roof top equipment shown on the second floor plan, which would be located east of the proposed parapet wall. In addition, a single mechanical unit is shown on the proposed plans. Staff believes that additional roof-top equipment would be required for the commercial and apartment uses, particularly if a restaurant use occupies the commercial portion of the building. Therefore, a condition of approval requires the applicant to show all of the proposed mechanical units, blowers, make-up air units, etc. on the building permit plans and that these units be fully screen from off-site views with materials architecturally compatible with the building.

### **Certificate of Appropriateness**

Demolition of buildings in the Downtown requires that a certificate of appropriateness be approved by the Planning Commission. The Downtown Specific Plan contains policies encouraging the preservation of buildings over 50-years old, especially those considered heritage buildings or buildings of historical importance. The Specific Plan prohibits the demolition of buildings of historical significance unless those buildings are considered to be unsafe or dangerous and if no other means of rehabilitation can be achieved. The Downtown Design Guidelines indicate that demolition of buildings over 50 years of age is generally discouraged and that remodeling is encouraged over replacement.

While portions of the existing building are approximately 109-years old, the building has been significantly altered over time. The building is not identified as an “historic building” in the General Plan. In addition, the City did not designate the building as a building of “primary” or “secondary” historical and design significance. Furthermore, as part of the City’s research for the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the City’s cultural resource preservation consultant, Architectural Resources Group, determined in 2002 that the building lacked sufficient integrity for “landmark” status. The applicant has also noted that the existing building is in poor condition and would need extensive repairs to make it usable again.

Staff does not feel that the existing building is exceptional in terms of architecture or historical interest and recommends that the applicant be allowed to demolish it, particularly since a well-designed building will replace it. Therefore, staff believes that granting a certificate of appropriateness to demolish the building is appropriate for this site.

### **Landscaping**

Being a Downtown project site where maximum building coverage is encouraged, only minimal landscaping would be included with the project. Staff believes that the proposed planter locations shown at the rear of the site are acceptable, but feels that the planters at the base of the balcony columns be removed and replaced with hanging flower baskets supported by wrought

iron brackets on the front balcony support posts. Staff believes that the hanging flower baskets would look more attractive than groundcover, vines, or small shrubs planted at the base of the columns, particularly if some of the plants were to die, leaving an unsightly dirt base around the balcony columns. Also, at the northernmost balcony column, the planter would result in an approximately 4-foot clearance between the proposed planter area and the existing City street tree grate. While this meets ADA requirements, staff would prefer a larger clearance. In addition, as discussed earlier, staff recommends that small planter pots or planter pockets with climbing vines be added along the pedestrian corridor on north side of the building. Conditions of approval address these recommendations. Furthermore, since plant species, sizes, and spacing were not shown on the plans, a condition of approval requires these details be shown on the building permit landscape plan.

### **Signage**

As indicated earlier, the applicant has provided conceptual sign locations for two eave-mounted overhang signs on the front of the building. In general, the proposed sign locations and type comply with the Municipal Code and Downtown Design Guidelines. Since sign details have not been provided (e.g., colors, materials, illumination, etc.), a condition has been included that requires a comprehensive sign program be submitted for review and approval by the Planning Director prior to installation of any signs.

## **V. PLEASANTON DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION**

The Design and Beautification Committee of the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA) reviewed the proposed plans on March 20, 2007. The PDA unanimously supported the proposed project.

## **VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Notices regarding the proposed design review application and related public hearing were mailed to property owners and tenants within 1,000 ft. of the subject property. At the writing of this report, staff has not received any comments from any of the adjacent property owners or tenants.

## **VII. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

In urbanized areas, the construction of a new commercial building of 10,000 square feet or less in area is categorically exempt (Section 15303, Class 3) from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

In staff's opinion, the proposed project will be an improvement to this Downtown site. The proposed building meets all applicable requirements of the Pleasanton Municipal Code, Downtown Specific Plan, and Downtown Design Guidelines, as conditioned. Furthermore, the project will increase the amount of housing within walking distance of the Downtown to provide more patronage of retail stores, services, and restaurants. The architectural style of the proposed building would be compatible with the traditional architectural character of Downtown, and, in staff's opinion, the building will fit in very well with Pleasanton's historic downtown.

## **IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Case PDR-602, an application for a certificate of appropriateness and design review approval, subject to the conditions shown in Exhibit B.

For questions or comments about this proposal, please contact: Steve Otto, Associate Planner (925) 931-5608, [sotto@ci.pleasanton.ca.us](mailto:sotto@ci.pleasanton.ca.us)