

Planning Commission Staff Report

May 25, 2016
Item 6.a.

SUBJECT: PUD-118

**APPLICANT/
PROPERTY OWNER:** Mike Carey

PURPOSE: Work Session to review and receive comments on applications for: (1) certificate of appropriateness to demolish all existing structures; and (2) Planned Unit Development (PUD) Rezoning and Development Plan to construct an approximately 2,032-square-foot, three-story mixed-use building with office/retail space on the first-floor and three apartments on the second- and third-floors and three, three-story, detached single-family homes.

LOCATION: 4791 Augustine Street

GENERAL PLAN: Retail/Highway/Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices

SPECIFIC PLAN: Downtown Specific Plan – Office

ZONING: O (Office), Downtown Revitalization, and Core Area Overlay District

EXHIBITS:

- A. [Planning Commission Work Session Topics](#)
- B. [Proposed Plans dated "Received April 8, 2016"](#)
- B.1. [Modified Proposed Plans dated "Received, May 17, 2016"](#)
- C. [Historic Survey dated "Received March 28, 2016"](#)
- D. [Location and Notification Map](#)
- E. [Public Comments](#)

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Mike Carey, has submitted an application to demolish the existing dwelling and accessory structures and construct one, three-story mixed-use building with office/retail space on the first-floor and three apartments on the remaining second-and third-floors, and three, three-story detached single-family homes on the subject site. After reviewing an initial application submitted on January 21, 2016, staff provided the applicant with the following feedback: (1) further assess the historical integrity of the existing home and the on-site accessory structures because questions remained about the historic status of the buildings on-site; (2) reduce the amount of residential uses and increase the square-footage of the office/retail space to be consistent with the site's Office land use designation; (3) make the

first-floor of residence 1, located closest to Old Bernal Avenue, office/retail space, to better meet the intent of the Office district; 4) orient the commercial/office building closer to the corner of Old Bernal Avenue and Augustine Street to enhance the pedestrian-orientation of the building; 5) reduce the square-footage/size of the detached single-family homes; 6) reduce the amount of metal siding, and eliminate the combination of vertical and horizontal board-and-batten wood siding to better reflect the architectural character of Downtown; and 7) meet the Pleasanton Municipal Code (PMC) parking requirements for a mixed-use building (i.e., meet the parking standards for office/retail and apartments).

On April 8, 2016, the applicant submitted a supplement to the historic resources evaluation and revised project plans that incorporated some of the requested changes to the previous submittal. The applicant: 1) redesigned the single-family homes to be consistent with the scale of the surrounding area; 2) moved the mixed-use building towards the southeast corner of the site and added a small courtyard; and 3) reduced the amount of metal siding on the building facades and eliminated the use of horizontal shiplap wood siding.

On May 17, 2016, the applicant provided staff with revised plans. Staff has not had an opportunity to fully review the plans due to the staff report publication deadline; however, the plans provide better detailing and visuals than the plans in Exhibit B. For the Commission's consideration, staff has attached the amended drawings as Exhibit B.1. Staff will review the plans in more detail and identify any noteworthy changes at the Planning Commission meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

As proposed, the project is primarily residential with ancillary office/retail space. Given the General Plan land use designation (Retail, Highway, Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices), Downtown Specific Plan land use designation (Office), and the zoning designation (Office), all of which require a major office presence on the site, the site would need General Plan and Specific Plan amendments and be rezoned to accommodate the project. Furthermore, a certificate of appropriateness to demolish the existing structures would be required and a Planned Unit Development (PUD) development plan would be necessary in order to allow flexibility in the development standards.

Prior to presenting the applications to the Planning Commission for a formal recommendation to the City Council, the proposed project is being presented to the Planning Commission at this time as a work session for the Commission's review and direction.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located on the northwest corner of Old Bernal Avenue and Augustine Street, is approximately 0.28-acre in area, generally trapezoidal in shape, and relatively flat (refer to Figure 1). The parcel is accessible from two driveways: one on the north side of Old Bernal Avenue and one on the west side of Augustine Street. There is fencing that varies in type and height along all property lines and there are three heritage-sized and three non-heritage size trees on-site.

The existing approximately 868-square-foot, single-story dwelling unit, constructed in 1895, is located on the southeast corner of the site and an accessory structure and multi-car carport

are located on the north side of the property. Workers from the Americo Zaro Gravel Company resided in the home in the 1940s and 1950s and likely used the brick accessory structure for equipment storage and the multi-carport for large vehicle storage. Staff notes that the home was not included in the City's Historic Resource Survey since it is located in an Office Zoning District and surveys were only conducted for homes in residential zoning districts. The applicant has provided a historic resource survey and an addendum to the survey which found that none of the buildings on the site are historic resources (please refer to Exhibit C).

The properties adjacent to the subject parcel include a parcel that has an existing single-family home with three apartment units currently under construction to the north; a single-story dental office building to the east, across Augustine Street; the City's library parking lot to the south, across Old Bernal Avenue; and a two-story, single-family home to the west. The subject site is also approximately 543 feet to the east of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, measured from the tracks to the closest property line of the subject site. Figures 1 through 3 show an aerial and street-scene view of the subject site and existing structures.

Figure 1: Aerial View of Project Site

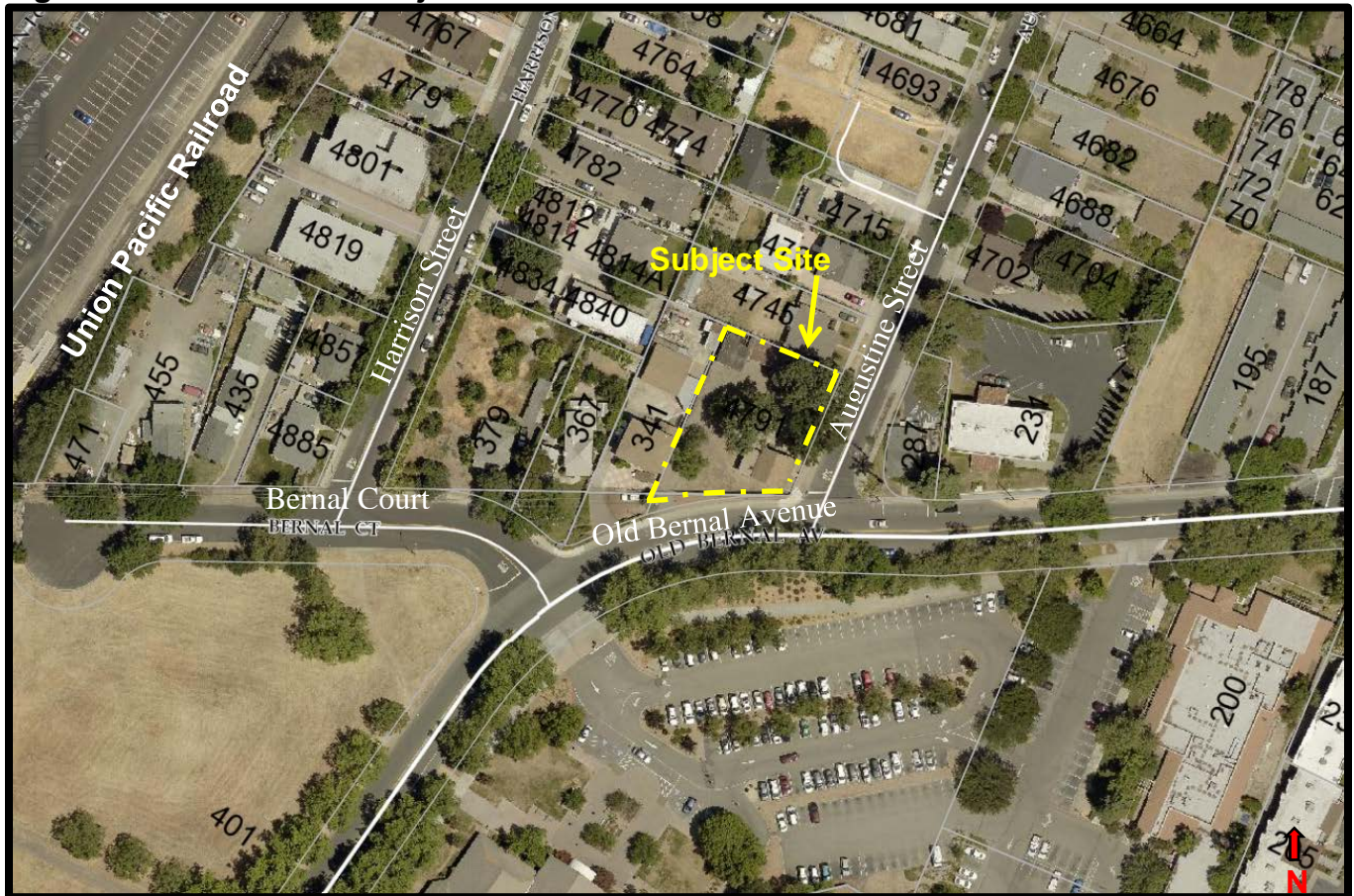


Figure 2: Street View of Project Site



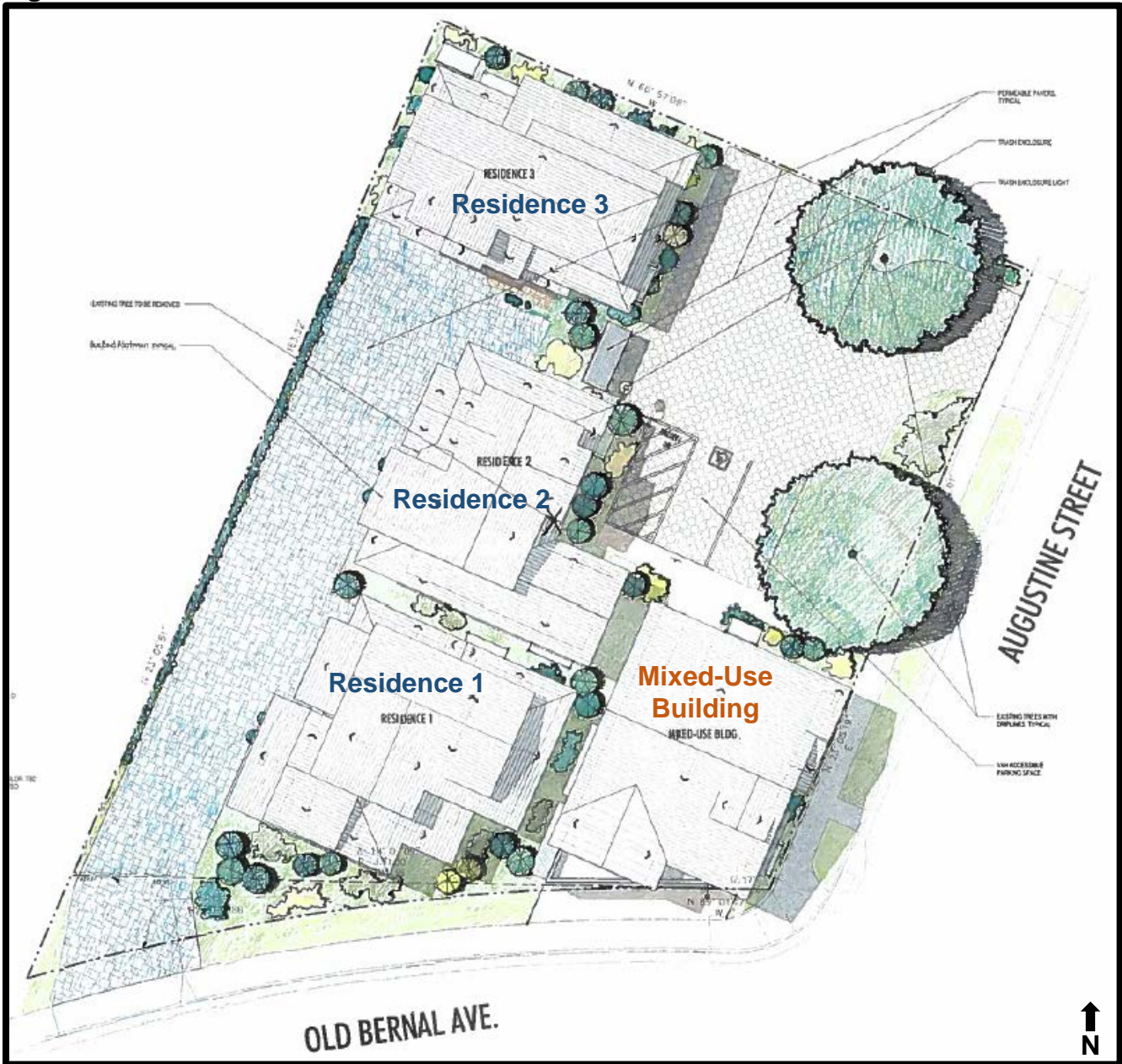
Figure 3: Accessory Structure and Carport



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to demolish all existing site improvements, including the 868-square-foot single-story home and accessory structures, all hardscape, the fences along the Old Bernal Avenue and Augustine Street property lines, three non-heritage sized trees, and one heritage-sized tree. The site would be developed with an approximately 2,032-square-foot, three-story mixed-use building with first-floor office-retail space and three apartment units on the remaining two-floors of the building, in addition to three detached three-story, single-family homes. Please refer to Figure 4 for the site layout.

Figure 4: Site Plan



Mixed-Use Building

The building's first-floor would be approximately 948 square feet in area and would be designed to accommodate up to two office/retail tenant spaces. The second- and third-floors would have three apartment units ranging in size from 353 to 367 square feet. Two of the units would have lofts on the third-floor that are included in the square-footage of each unit. Entrances to the office/retail space would be provided from the north, east, and south sides of the building and the entrance to the apartment units would be accessible from exterior stairs located on the west side of the building. Two of the apartment units would have private open space in the form of a balcony and the northern unit would have a Juliet-style balcony (i.e., a balcony with only a small protrusion into the outdoors).

Single-Family Homes

The three, three-story detached single-family homes would range in size from approximately 1,787 to 1,918 square feet in area, and would each have three bedrooms, a living room and kitchen space, and a two-car garage. A small front porch and a deck/balcony would be provided for each unit. Additional private open space could be provided for residence 1 on the south side of the residence. However, given the proximity of the new parking lot and location of other on-site structures/improvements, it is unlikely that residences 2 and 3 would have usable ground-level private open space.

Circulation and Parking

Access to the parking lot would be from a decorative concrete paver drive aisle, north of the mixed-use building, on Augustine Street. The applicant is proposing to have the apartment tenants share the six parking spaces with the office/retail tenant(s). Access to the detached homes would be from a decorative concrete paver drive aisle on the north side of Old Bernal Avenue that also provides access to the individual garages in each home. No guest parking would be provided for the residential units.

Architecture

The applicant is proposing traditional architecture with modern elements. This “modern farmhouse” style is characterized by wood and metal siding, front porches, prominent porch supports, knee braces, and a gable roof. The roof designs include both side and front gable roofs, which create more variety in the design and break up the massing. The buildings would have a combination of grey-colored standing seam metal roofs and weathered wood (dark brown with green undertones) composition roofs. Architectural elements would feature a combination of white wood board-and-batten siding and stucco, grey metal siding, and black accents (windows, doors, garages, and exterior lighting fixtures).

The massing of the buildings is broken up by the use of balconies and projected or recessed building walls, and dormer windows which provide variation in the wall planes. Large storefront doors and windows are used on street-facing elevations (north and east, on Augustine Street, and south, on Old Bernal Avenue) of the mixed-use building. Transom windows are also incorporated over the glass doors on the south and north elevation to further distinguish the office/retail space. Please refer to Figures 5 and 6 and Exhibit B.

Figure 5: Mixed-Use Building

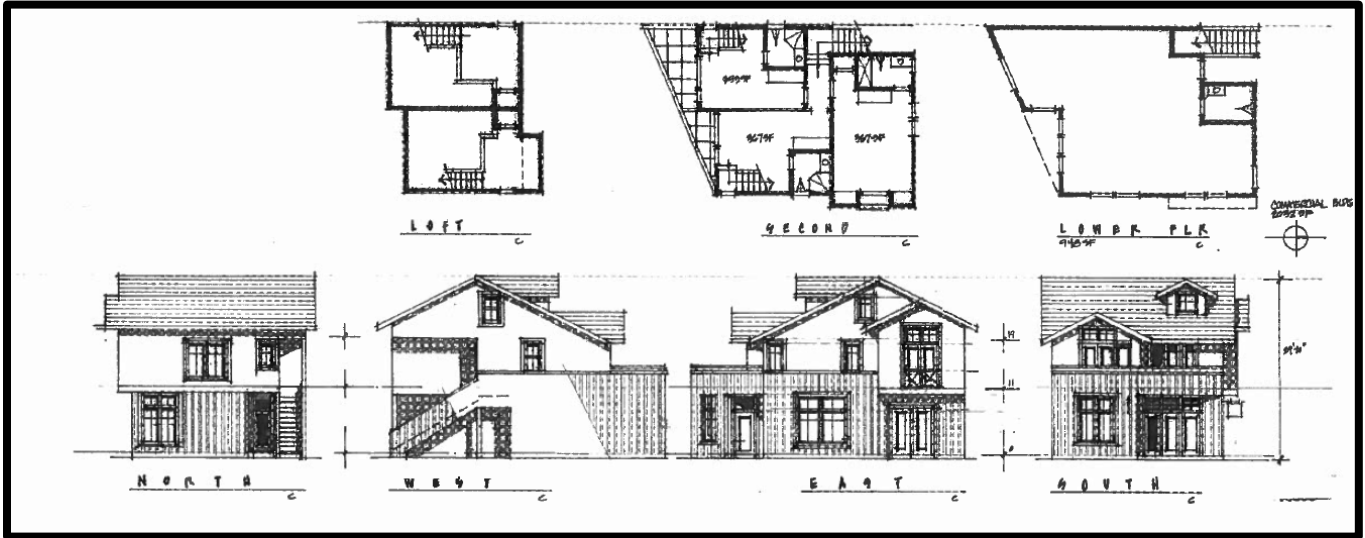
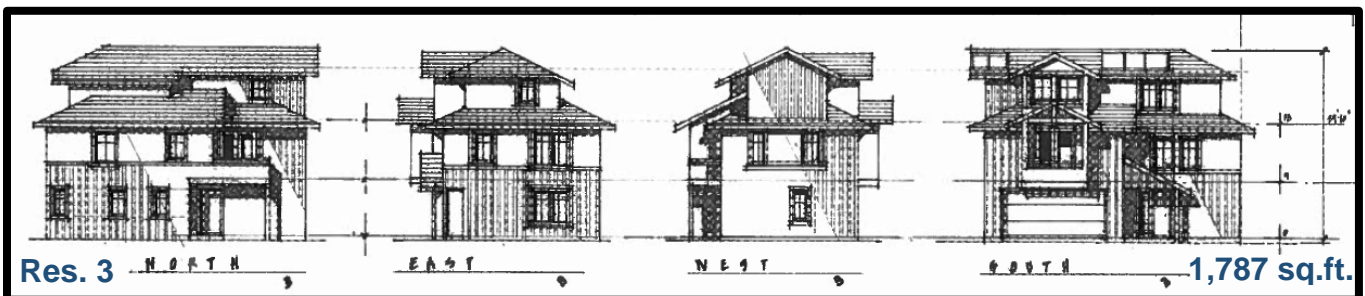
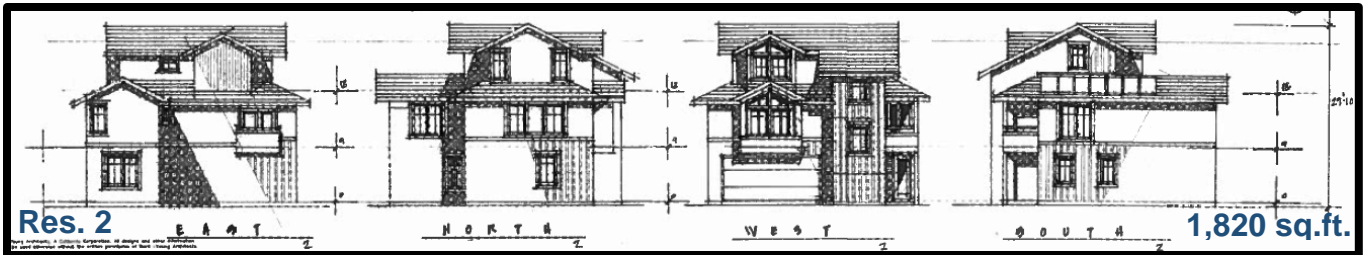


Figure 6: Single-Family Homes



The landscape plan (found in Exhibit B) includes a tree/plant palette of native and non-native species that are primarily drought tolerant, as well as some hardscape features, including pervious concrete paver driveways. A joint-use trash enclosure for the tenants of the mixed-

use building is also proposed along the western side of the parking lot, between residences 2 and 3. The enclosure would be designed to architecturally complement the proposed buildings.

Please see the attached project plans (Exhibit B and B.1) for additional information on the subject proposal, including signage criteria for the proposed mixed-use building and exterior lighting for all buildings.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WORK SESSION

Staff is presenting the Commission with conceptual plans (Exhibit B and B.1) for consideration and comments. This work session will allow the Planning Commission the opportunity to provide direction to the applicant and staff regarding any design changes it wishes to be addressed prior to a formal recommendation to the City Council. The areas noted below are where staff would find the Commission’s input most helpful.

Historic Resources

The historic resource evaluation for the existing home states that the structure was constructed in a Vernacular Queen Anne style that has been highly modified throughout the years with additions to the front, right (north), and rear elevations. The brick accessory structure and wood-framed carport were found to not be distinctive or an outstanding example of design, use of materials, or construction method. Furthermore, the property was not significantly associated with any historic events or persons. The report concluded that the additions to the home have removed the historic integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association from the circa-1895 building. Therefore, the existing home and accessory structures are not considered historic resources.

The Downtown Specific Plan’s Historic Resources Policy No. 3 prohibits the demolition of any residential building in a commercial or office zoning district found to be a historic resource unless the building is determined to be unsafe or dangerous, and if no other reasonable means of rehabilitation or relocation can be achieved. The home is located in an office zoning district and the historic evaluation determined the house and accessory structures would not be historic resources and could be demolished.

Discussion Point

A. *Does the Planning Commission support demolishing the home and related accessory structures?*

Land Use Consistency

The General Plan land use designation of this site is “Retail, Highway, Service Commercial; Business and Professional Offices” and the Downtown Specific Plan land use designation is “Office.” The Downtown Specific Plan has language that encourages and/or allows above ground-floor multi-family housing under the Office designation provided that all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are met. The site is located in an office zoning district, which is intended to provide opportunities for offices to locate outside of retail districts. Residential uses are not allowed (i.e., not permitted or conditionally permitted) on sites zoned Office, but in this case the General Plan and Specific Plan would govern any inconsistency in land uses. Therefore, staff believes that upper-floor residential uses, or ground-floor residential uses behind a strong

street-front office presence would be consistent with the Downtown Specific Plan Office land use designation.

The mixed-use building would contain 948 square-feet of ground-level office/retail space and three apartment units that would have a combined total of 1,084 square-feet of area on the upper levels. In addition, three single-family detached homes would also be constructed on-site and would have a combined area of 5,525 square-feet. As proposed, 7.8% of the project site footprint would be dedicated to office/retail uses and 54.2% would be dedicated to residential uses (the remaining 38.6% of the site would be dedicated to site improvements – two drive aisles, parking lot, landscaping, walkways, etc.).

As proposed, the project is not consistent with the General Plan and Downtown Specific Plan land use designations. The General Plan and Downtown Specific Plan encourage multi-family housing above ground-floor office space(s). The majority of the project comprises detached, for sale single-family homes, which would make the subject project inconsistent with its respective Office land use designations. In staff's opinion, the project has a small amount of office/retail space and would not be consistent with the intent of the Office designation. A building consistent with the Office designation would include ground floor office space with multi-family units above.

Updating the Downtown Specific Plan is a City Council priority and staff is in the early stages of preparing a scope of work for the update. The scope of work would likely include re-evaluation of the Office land use district in the Specific Plan. In addition, the City is currently formulating a Civic Center Master Plan, which will have a major influence on the land use composition and activity level of the southern portion of Downtown. Staff is concerned that undertaking a Specific Plan amendment for the 4791 Augustine Street site in advance of the comprehensive Specific Plan update and completion of the Civic Center Master Plan would presuppose the future land use disposition of those properties with a Specific Plan designation of Office. Therefore, staff recommends that the project be revised to include more prominent office space to be consistent with the existing Office land use designation.

Affordable Housing and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

The City's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) requires new single-family residential projects of fifteen units or more to provide at least 20% of the dwelling units as units affordable to very low, low, and/or moderate income households. The proposed project includes three new single-family detached residences and three apartment units, none of which are required to be affordable. The applicant intends to sell the detached homes and rent the apartments at market rate.

The City has already met its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligation to zone land to meet the anticipated housing demand for the 2015-2023 planning period. Although the proposed rezoning would increase the City's supply of market-rate housing, rezoning additional land within the City for housing would not be necessary to meet current RHNA requirements. In addition, staff notes that the existing Office land use designation of the site allows for a significant amount of housing to be developed on the site, although housing units may need to be smaller than currently proposed and on upper floors of proposed buildings.

Discussion Points

B. Should the project be revised to conform to the existing Downtown Specific Plan Office designation (office on ground-floors and multi-family on the upper-levels)?

C. If not, does the Planning Commission support site specific amendments to the General Plan and Downtown Specific Plan (and zoning district for this site)?

Parking Standards

Single-family homes are required to have two parking spaces per unit, with at least one of the spaces covered in a garage or carport. The applicant is proposing to provide two covered spaces in two-car garages for each detached, single-family home.

The PMC parking requirements for a mixed-use building would be nine on-site spaces (i.e., two spaces for each apartment unit and three spaces for the office/retail space based on a 1 space/300 sq. ft. parking ratio). There are six on-site parking spaces proposed for the mixed-use building and the applicant is proposing to have the apartment and office/retail tenants share the six parking spaces. Although the applicant is proposing shared parking, three additional parking spaces are still required by Code. In-lieu parking fees may be requested for Downtown projects that do not meet the parking requirements of the PMC. The applicant could be required to pay for three in-lieu parking spaces (the difference of the nine required for the mixed-use building) pursuant to PMC Section 18.88.120. Although shared parking is not a means permitted in the PMC to reduce parking requirements, and could add additional demand to Downtown parking supplies, staff notes that the small rental apartment units are likely to have reduced parking demand compared to typical residential units and are located in close proximity to transit facilities (the ACE train station, located on Pleasanton Avenue, and Wheels bus stop along Old Bernal Avenue). In addition, shared parking has other benefits that may be considered – including the potential to reduce housing costs, enhance urban design, and make more effective use of scarce Downtown land.

Guest Parking

Detached, single-family homes are not required to provide guest parking; however, the City normally requires some guest parking for single-family home projects when such parking isn't provided on-site.

Guest parking for apartments is required at a ratio of one parking space per seven units. Since there are only three apartment units, the PMC does not require on-site guest parking.

Staff notes that on small development sites in Downtown, guest parking can be difficult to accommodate while also providing two parking spaces per unit and meeting objectives regarding building height and urban design. However, other recent Downtown projects have successfully incorporated guest parking (including the recently approved 273 Spring Street project).

Discussion Points

D. Does the Planning Commission support parking facilities that are shared by the office/retail space and upper apartment units?

E. If not, would the Planning Commission support having the applicant/developer pay in-lieu fees or would the Planning Commission prefer that the parking requirements be met on-site?

Architecture and Design

Staff initially had concerns that the proposed architecture was not compatible with the design character of the Downtown. The initial application proposed vertical and horizontal board-and-batten and shiplap siding, metal siding, stucco, and a combination of standing seam metal and composition roof materials. The applicant revised the plans to improve the materials being used by eliminating the horizontal shiplap siding and reducing the amount of metal siding. Staff notes that the changes are not reflected on the color and material sheet in Exhibit B.

The mixed-use building would provide an at-grade entrance to the office/retail space and provide display windows that would provide a pedestrian friendly storefront element. The storefront windows and the use of a variety of façade materials, including stucco, wood, and metal would add to the architectural variety of the Downtown.

The project incorporates acceptable building materials for the Downtown and would be consistent with the Specific Plan policy to use high quality building materials appropriate to the architectural style of the building. The plans incorporate articulation in the wall planes, balconies, traditional design features (porches, knee braces, gable roof), and a combination of light colored materials. The proposed building colors meet the Downtown Design Guidelines, which state that colors should be appropriate to the architectural style of the building.

The Downtown Specific Plan has the following policies.

Land Use Policy No. 15

Initiate an amendment to Municipal Code Section 18.84 to limit building height in all residential zoning districts in the Downtown (including future Planned Unit Development Districts) to not more than two stories and not more than 30 feet.

Historic Preservation Policy No. 6

New residential building design, including the design of replacement buildings for buildings constructed before 1942 which are approved for demolition, should draw upon the primary exterior features of the Downtown's traditional design character in terms of materials, colors, details of construction, and setbacks and should utilize or be based on one of the following architectural styles found in Downtown dating from pre-1942: Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian (Queen Anne, Stick, and Folk), Bay Tradition, Craftsman, Prairie, Mission Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Minimal Traditional, Vernacular Forms, and FHA Minimum House.

The height of the buildings would not exceed 30 feet in height, which is considered acceptable in most residential zones within the City. Staff notes that a PMC amendment for limiting height and stories of structures in the Downtown has not yet been initiated and the intent of this policy

is to limit development to two stories. However, staff believes the proposal would be consistent with a reasonable interpretation of the Downtown Specific Plan Land Use policy in the absence of an amendment to the PMC relating to building height. Furthermore, if the project is revised to be consistent with the Office district (as suggested by staff), Policy 15 would not apply.

The applicant is proposing traditional architecture with modern elements. The materials, colors, and details of construction are based upon a “modern farmhouse” style that is characterized by wood and metal siding, front porches, prominent porch supports, knee braces, and gable roof. These details are also found in Craftsman and Minimal Traditional architecture. Although the use of metal siding and standing seam metal roofs are not consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines, staff believes the materials are high-quality and appropriately used in a way that is sensitive to the historic design quality of Downtown.

Discussion Points

F. Are the proposed building designs, area, massing, number of stories, heights, and colors and materials acceptable and compatible with the Downtown and surrounding area?

Additional Discussion Point

G. What other information would assist the Planning Commission in its decision on the proposal?

PLEASANTON DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION

The Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA) Vitality Committee reviewed the plans and is not opposed to the inclusion of residential units as part of the proposed project. Furthermore, the PDA expressed support for amending the Downtown Specific Plan Office designation to allow limited retail uses and encourage vitality in the southwest area of downtown.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Notices for this work session were sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the site. Staff has provided the location and noticing maps as Exhibit D for reference. Staff has received comments of support for the project and comments expressing concerns with parking, traffic, and development in the downtown. The public comments are attached in Exhibit E for the Commission’s consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Since the Planning Commission will take no formal action on the project at the work session, no environmental document accompanies this work session report.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission review the proposal, hear all public testimony, and provide comments to staff and the applicant.

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