

## Planning Commission Staff Report

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April 22, 2015  
Item 6.a.

**SUBJECT:** P15-0142

**APPLICANTS/  
PROPERTY**

**OWNERS:** Robert and Larry Dondero

**PROPOSAL:** Application for Design Review approval to construct an approximately 4,503-square-foot, two-story commercial building.

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

**SPECIFIC PLAN:** Downtown Specific Plan – Downtown Commercial Land Use Designation

**ZONING:** Central-Commercial (C-C), Downtown Revitalization, Core Area Overlay District.

**EXHIBITS:** [A. Draft Conditions of Approval](#)  
[B. Project Plans, dated "Received February 25, 2015"](#)  
[C. Color and Material Booklet](#)  
[D. Union Jack Pub Photo](#)  
[E. Location and Noticing Map](#)

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### BACKGROUND

On May 30, 2007, the Planning Commission approved applications for a certificate of appropriateness and Design Review to demolish the existing building at 725 Main Street and construct a new, approximately 4,829-square-foot mixed-use commercial building with a one-bedroom apartment on the second-floor, filed as Case No. PDR-602. A demolition permit to demolish the existing building was issued on July 11, 2007, and the building was demolished shortly thereafter. A building permit was issued on January 16, 2009, but construction was never pursued and the site has remained vacant since that time.

The property has changed ownership and the new owners have filed a Design Review application to construct a new two-story commercial building on the vacant lot. Design

Review applications of this nature are subject to review and approval by the Planning Commission.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION AND ADJACENT PROPERTIES**

The subject site is a vacant lot located on the west side of Main Street and is approximately 4,155 square feet in area (please refer to Image 1 below). The property is bordered on the south and west by the J'aime Bridal and Rick's Picks building (719 Main Street) and on the north by a multi-tenant commercial building (739 Main Street) and parking lot. Commercial buildings are located to the east, across Main Street.

**Image 1: Location Map**

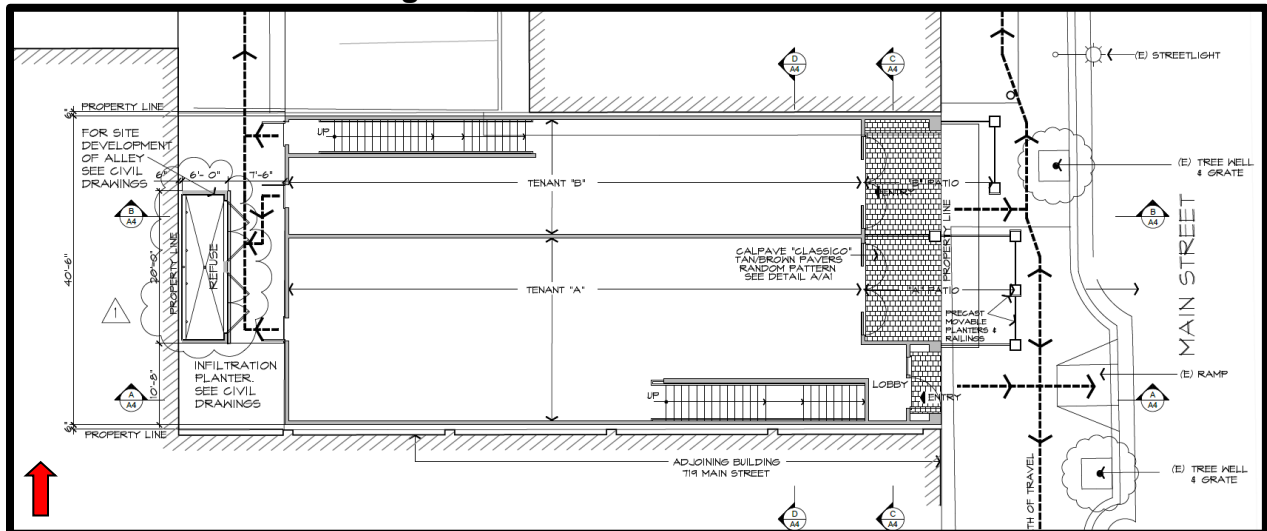


### **Project Description**

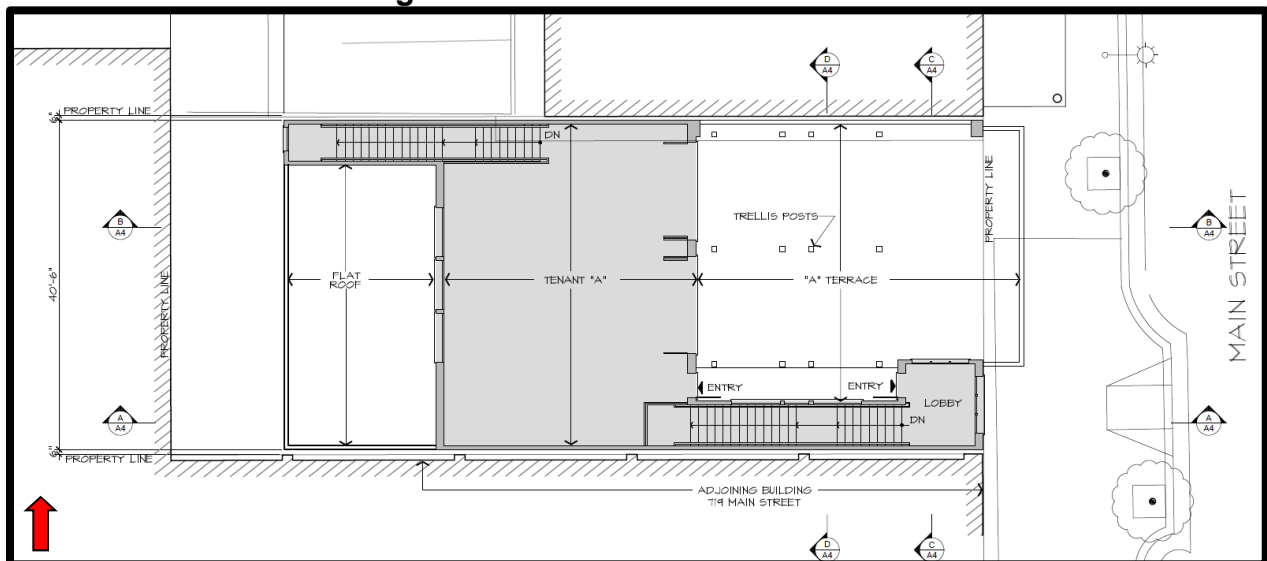
The applicants are proposing to construct an approximately 4,503-square-foot, two-tenant, two-story commercial building with no on-site parking. As proposed, the first floor has been divided into two tenant spaces, tenant spaces A and B, with two separate

ground-level patio areas for each tenant space. Tenant space A is approximately 1,958 square feet in area with an associated patio area of approximately 271 square feet. Tenant space B is approximately 1,095 square feet in area with an associated patio space of approximately 245 square feet. Half of the ground-level patio area for tenant space A and less than half of the ground-level patio area for tenant space B would encroach into the public right-of-way. The second floor would be exclusive to tenant space A, is an additional, approximately 1,450 square feet in area, and includes an approximately 1,316-square-foot outdoor terraced area. Please refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2, below, for the floor plans.

**Figure 1: Ground-level Floor Plan**



**Figure 2: Second-Level Floor Plan**



The building will be setback 0 to 9 feet from the front (east) property line, 14 feet from the rear (west) property line, and have zero setbacks on the side property lines (north and south). A portion of the building has been setback from the front property line in

order to accommodate the outdoor dining areas that would be located on both the first and second floors. The second floor terrace would project 5 feet beyond the front property line and provide cover for most of the ground floor outdoor dining area. A new trash enclosure would be constructed at the rear of the site.

The building would measure approximately 32-feet high at the top of the roof ridge. The applicants are proposing brick on the front (east) façade that extends from the base of the building to just above the floor-level of the second-floor. The remaining portion of the front façade of the second-floor would have a smooth stucco finish. 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 be unadorned. Those side portions of the second-floor that are visible would have the same stucco and/or brick treatment as the front façade. The rear of the building is not highly visible and would be all stucco. The applicants are proposing tan-colored stucco and red-toned brick. Trim and accent colors would include lighter tans and bronze. The roof is proposed as a Mission style tile roof containing terra cotta and brown blend color tiles. Please refer to Image 2, below.

**Image 2: Main Street Rendering**



Wood-framed doors and windows would be featured on the north, east, and west elevations. A bronze-colored metal trellis would cover most of the second-floor. The

outdoor patio areas, on both floor levels, will include decorative bronze-colored wrought-iron railings. A color and material booklet is included in Exhibit C.

## **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 commercial space to serve residents and businesses of Pleasanton and its market area. The General Plan’s Land Use Element has the following policies:

Policy 4: *Allow development consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map.*

Policy 13: *Ensure that neighborhood, community, and regional commercial centers provide goods and services needed by residents and businesses of Pleasanton and its market area.*

The proposed project is consistent with these General Plan policies. Furthermore, the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of the proposed building would be approximately 108%, which complies with the General Plan’s 300% FAR limit for Downtown commercial properties (Table 2-3 of the General Plan).

The subject property is 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 uses. The proposed project is consistent with this land use designation.

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

New construction in the Downtown must be sensitive to the character of the downtown and must conform to the design policies contained in the Downtown Specific Plan and Downtown Pleasanton Design Guidelines. The proposed project’s building location, design, height and massing, and materials, finishes and colors, conform to the applicable Downtown policies and regulations as follows:

Building Location: The Downtown Design Guidelines indicate that building facades should meet the sidewalk, except where mini-plazas are provided, but give special consideration to conditions where existing buildings are set back from the sidewalk (page 13 of the Downtown Design Guidelines). The adjacent building to the south (719 Main Street) is not set back from its front property line, but does have a wide recessed entry. With the exception of an enclosed staircase and wing walls that are built up to the front property line, the adjacent building to the north (739 Main Street) is set back approximately three feet from the front property line. The applicant has proposed to recess most of the building facade in order to create more outdoor dining area in front of

the building, which staff believes meets the intent of the Downtown Design Guidelines. Therefore, staff believes that the building is appropriately located.

Height/Massing: The Downtown Design Guidelines state the new buildings shall generally be one to two stories high and that the height of contiguous storefronts should generally align (page 13 of the Downtown Design Guidelines). While the proposed two-story (32-foot-tall) building would be taller than the adjacent one-story building to the south (719 Main Street) and the adjacent two-story building to the north (739 Main Street), the building would be similar in scale to other Downtown buildings. In May of 2014, the Planning Commission approved the demolition of an existing 2,340-square-foot single-story building at 511 Main Street (Pastime Pool) for the construction of an approximately 8,659-square-foot two-story, 34-foot tall building, currently under construction. The proposed 4,503-square-foot building with a maximum height of 32 feet, measured to the highest point of the roof's ridge, is thus in keeping with other recently approved projects in the Downtown area.

Building Design: The Downtown Specific Plan encourage attractive building architecture which reinforces the traditional, pedestrian-oriented design character and scale of the Downtown (page 73 of the Downtown Specific Plan). The Downtown Design Guidelines encourage a variety of traditional architectural styles and shapes (page 13 of the Downtown Design Guidelines). The following are Specific Plan Policies and Design Guidelines applicable to the building's design:

- Protect and enhance the pedestrian-friendly scale of the Downtown by continuing its mixture of one-to-two-story facades at the sidewalk, at-grade entrances, and display windows every 25-30 feet.
- Maintain the Downtown's variety of stucco, brick, and wood facades with high quality materials in new construction appropriate to the architectural style of the building.
- Transom windows are encouraged in new construction if appropriate to the architectural style of the building.
- In new transom windows, a variety of glass types and patterns, and creativity in mullion spacing and design, is encouraged.
- A variety of entries is encouraged. The entry can be an almost invisible part of the display area (with bypass or folding glass doors), or Dutch doors whose top half is left open during business hours.
- The design of all buildings and storefronts shall be unique, not corporate, chain or franchise.
- A variety of traditional architectural styles and shapes is encouraged.
- Provide detailing of the roofline, upper façade, and storefront areas of the building consistent with the building's architectural style.

The building would be located very near the sidewalk, would provide at-grade entrances, and provide display windows that have the ability to open up to provide pedestrian friendly storefront elements. The building would add to the architectural variety of the Downtown, utilizing a variety of façade materials including stucco and

brick. Staff recommends that the front first floor windows incorporate transom windows, similar to the transom windows on the second floor tower. Staff has added a condition regarding the addition of transom windows (No. 7 of Exhibit A). Therefore, staff finds that the Downtown Specific Plan and Design Guidelines design policies have been met, as proposed and conditioned.

Storefronts and Windows: The Guidelines states that the storefront is the most transparent part of the facade and has its own elements common to all storefronts, regardless of the architectural style of the building.

The following are the applicable Downtown Design Guidelines regarding storefront elements:

- Space storefronts in a repeated rhythm along the sidewalk to maintain pedestrian continuity and interest. Minimize wall space (pier width) between storefront windows.
- Storefront display windows should be large and of clear transparent glass.
- Storefront entry doors to street level should be more than 50% glass or open.
- Recess entries from the facade; use recessed areas for window displays.
- Storefront bases should be no more than 24 inches high from the sidewalk.
- Facades with two or three storefronts should have consistent storefront design and materials. This includes the size and type of display windows, doorway locations, the design of transom windows, and storefront base height and materials.
- Upper story windows should create a rhythm, either symmetrical or equally spaced, across the facade related to the openings below.
- Vertical, rectangular windows are preferred. Recess windows in from the building wall. Use window trim to highlight windows. Use projecting sills.
- Consider using special window trim, bay windows, or flower boxes to increase attractiveness of upper level windows.

The proposed building would be consistent with these guidelines. The first-floor tenant storefronts would utilize recessed storefronts, a brick storefront, and is conditioned to incorporate transom windows. The upper story windows would be equally spaced, creating symmetry and rhythm, and decorative planters would be incorporated into the ground-floor outdoor dining railing along Main Street.

Building Materials, Finishes, and Colors: The smooth stucco finish, brick, and wood-framed windows and doors 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. The applicant is proposing to use decorative bronze-colored wrought iron railings for the patio areas and a bronze-colored metal trellis over the second-floor patio area. The proposed building and accent colors meet the Downtown Design Guidelines, which state that colors should be appropriate to the architectural style of the building.

## Zoning and Uses

The site is zoned Central-Commercial (C-C), Downtown Revitalization, Core Area Overlay District. A variety of commercial uses, including restaurants, are permitted uses in this District. As proposed, no rezoning or other land use modifications to the property are necessary to allow the proposed development. The proposed 108% FAR would be consistent with the maximum 300% FAR set forth for this property by the C-C District.

## Site Plan

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 and allow a maximum FAR of 300% and a maximum height of 40 feet. As shown in the table below, the proposed development would comply with the site development standards.

**Table 1: Required and Proposed Development Standards**

Site Development Standards:	Requirements:	Plan Proposal
Floor Area Ratio	300% max.	108%
Building Height	40 ft. max. - measured from the average grade covered by the structure to the mean height between the roof ridge and eave.	32 feet, to the top of the roof ridge. 26 feet, 6 inches, as defined by the Pleasanton Municipal Code.
Setbacks:		
Front (east)	None Required	0-9 feet - Measured from building wall to property line
Right (north) Side	None Required	0 feet
Left (south) Side	None Required	0 feet
Rear (west)	None Required	14 feet

Staff believes that the new building will enhance the pedestrian-friendly character of the Downtown by reinforcing its mixture of one-to-two-story facades at the sidewalk with at-grade entrances. Overall, staff believes that the proposed site plan, positioning of the new building, height, and FAR are appropriate for the subject property.

## Parking and In-Lieu Agreement

The site previously contained two parking spaces which were to be retained as part of the previously approved Design Review application to demolish the existing 3,666-square-foot Union Jack building and construct a new building. As allowed by the Pleasanton Municipal Code in the Downtown Revitalization District, the Planning Commission granted a parking credit for the previously approved project for the existing, demolished building area, finding that the replacement structure was an architectural improvement compared to the existing structure and that the new structure will enhance the overall character of the area. The credit was for 3,666 square feet of demolished area.



The current application proposes to remove the two existing parking spaces and construct a new 4,503-square-foot building. The Municipal Code requires that the applicant provide 15 parking spaces for the commercial building area (one space per 300 square feet). Although the building was demolished in 2007, Pleasanton Municipal Code Section 18.88.020.D.2 doesn't specify a timeframe for when the new building must be constructed. Therefore, staff believes that the parking credit could still be used today for the current application.

Staff has included a photo of the demolished building as Exhibit D for the Planning Commission's consideration. Staff believes that the proposed building meets the criteria in No. 2 <sup>1</sup>below, and recommends that the applicant receive the same parking credit for the 3,666 square feet of demolished area (equal to 9 spaces). If credit is given for the demolished area, the following parking calculation would apply to the proposed project:

Area of proposed commercial building = 4,503 sq. ft.  
Parking Required @ 1/300 = 15 spaces

4,503 sq. ft. – 3,666 sq. ft. (the demolished floor area): = 837 sq. ft./300 = 3 parking spaces would be required for the project.

Although there is space that will remain undeveloped at the rear of the proposed building, the space is not adequate to accommodate parking; therefore, no on-site parking is proposed. The applicants would need to obtain approval of an in-lieu parking agreement for the deficient parking spaces as allowed by the PMC. The applicant would be required to pay in-lieu parking fees totaling \$57,353.07, based on the current surface rate of \$19,117.69 per space (per the Pleasanton Municipal Code, the rate is adjusted annually based on the Engineering News Record Construction Cost index).

The in-lieu parking fees are intended to be used to acquire public parking or construct public parking lots in the Downtown. An example of this is the portion of the Alameda County Transportation Corridor that was acquired and improved by the City through the in-lieu parking fund.

### **Circulation and Traffic**

Public access is not proposed at the rear of the building. Access to the 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. There are existing access easements in place with these adjacent properties.

Downtown intersections are exempted from Level of Service (LOS) standards (Program 4.1 of the General Plan) and the project would not contribute a substantial amount of traffic to local intersections, thus no mitigation is required.

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<sup>1</sup> Pleasanton Municipal Code Section 18.88.020D.2: 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.

## **Building Design**

Staff believes that the building has been designed with appropriate scale and mass for Downtown and believes that it will complement the existing character and architecture found in the Downtown. Furthermore, the building's colors and materials will be compatible with other buildings in the Downtown. The applicants have worked closely with staff on the design and, in staff's opinion, the building will be a positive addition to the area.

## **Landscaping**

Staff believes that the proposed planter areas within the ground-level patio seating area and the vines proposed on the metal trellis on the second-floor are an attractive accent to the building and would be acceptable landscaping since Downtown projects are encouraged to maximize building coverage. The City street trees, generally located in front of the building, will be retained with the proposed development.

A complete landscape plan (i.e., plant species, sizes) was not submitted with the application; therefore, staff has conditioned the project to require a landscape plan be submitted and approved by the Director of Community Development prior to issuance of building permits.

## **Signage**

Signage was not incorporated into the plans and/or submitted with the application. A condition has been included that requires the applicant to submit a comprehensive sign program for the entire building prior to installation of any signs (please refer to condition No. 14 in Exhibit A). The sign program would be required to comply with Pleasanton Municipal Code and the Downtown Design Guidelines.

## **PLEASANTON DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION**

The Design and Historical Review Committee of the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA) reviewed the proposed plans on March 10, 2015 and unanimously supported the project.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of this application was sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within 1,000-feet of the site. Staff has provided the location and noticing maps as Exhibit E for the Commission's reference. At the time this report was prepared, staff has not received any comments or concerns.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per section 15303. Therefore, no environmental documentation accompanies this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

The project, as proposed and conditioned, will help further improve the Downtown. The building meets all applicable requirements of the Downtown Specific Plan, PMC, and Downtown Design Guidelines. 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.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Case P15-0142 subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit A.

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