



CITY OF GLENDALE, CA

DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – MULTI-FAMILY / MIXED USE

February 22, 2024

Hearing Date

246 North Jackson Street

Address

Design Review Board (DRB)

Review Type

5642-018-039

APN

PDR-002206-2023

Case Number

Art Simonian, Metro Investments

Applicant

Cassandra Pruet

Case Planner

Artshar LLC

Owner

Project Summary

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing three-unit multi-family building built in 1946, and construct a new 9,760 SF, three-story, 11-unit density bonus housing project on a 7,512 SF lot in the R-1250 Zone (High Density Residential Zone).

Environmental Review

This project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review as a Class 32 In-Fill Development Project per CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, because the project is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Code; occurs within city limits on a project site of less than five acres surrounded by urban uses; is on a site with no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species; upon approval would not result in any significant impacts relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. See Exhibit 1 for further information.

Existing Property/Background

The site is located on the southeast corner of North Jackson Street and East California Avenue, on a relatively flat lot 7,512 SF in size; there is a slight slope across the lot from the north-east corner to the south-east corner of the property. The lot is currently developed with a two-story multi-family building, constructed in 1946, with three units. The building is not identified as a historic resource. There are no indigenous protected trees per GMC 12.44 on or within 20 feet of the site.

Staff Recommendation

Approve with Conditions

Last Date Reviewed / Decision

First time submittal for final review.

Zone: R1250 - High Density Residential

Although this design review does not convey final zoning approval, the project has been reviewed for consistency with the applicable Codes and no inconsistencies have been identified.

Active/Pending Permits and Approvals

Density Bonus Case Number PDBP2120753 was approved by City Council on August 15, 2023, following an appeal from the Planning Commission's decision (appealed from the Planning Hearing Officer decision) approving the Density Bonus Case.

The Density Bonus approval includes the following incentives/waivers from Zoning Code Requirements: 1) 37'-6" height (vs. 26' allowed), 2) Reduced street front, street side, and interior setbacks (see Exhibit 2 for details), 3) 1.32 FAR (vs 1.2 allowed), 4) Reduced dwelling unit sizes (see Exhibit 2 for details).

Street Vacation Case Number 191V (Portion of Southeast Corner of Jackson Street & California Avenue) is currently being processed.

Site Slope and Grading

1500 cubic yards or greater of earth movement: The project proposes 3,823 cubic yards (CY) of cut (100 CY of fill, and 3,723 CY of export).

DESIGN ANALYSIS

Site Planning

Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Building Location

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ Setbacks of buildings on site
- ☐ Prevailing setbacks on the street

Yards and Usable Open Space

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ Outdoor space integrated into site design and acknowledges adjacent development
- ☐ Common space easily accessible from all units
- ☐ Appropriate separation/screening from residential units
- ☐ Discrete seating and amenity areas allow for multiple users

Garage Location and Driveway

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Garage fully integrated into overall structure
- ☐ Driveway and curb-cut widths minimized
- ☐ Grade-level garages and parking, if allowed, are appropriately screened from the street
- ☐ Decorative paving complements building design
- ☐ Stairs and lifts to subterranean garages incorporated into the design of the project

Landscape Design

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Complementary to building design
- ☐ Maintain existing trees when possible
- ☐ Provide landscaping adjacent to driveways and garages
- ☐ 20% of planting at above-grade common spaces is within 9 inches of finish floor
- ☐ Above-grade tree wells are at least 6 inches higher than box size of tree

Walls and Fences

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Appropriate style/color/material for building design
- ☐ Perimeter walls treated at both sides
- ☐ Retaining walls minimized
- ☐ Appropriately sized and located

Equipment, Trash, and Drainage

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Equipment screened and well located
- ☐ Trash storage out of public view
- ☐ All screening integrated with overall building and/or landscape design
- ☐ Downspouts appropriately located
- ☐ Vents, utility connections integrated with design, avoid primary facades

Lighting

☐ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☒ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Light fixtures are appropriate to the building and/or landscape design
- ☐ Avoid over-lit facades; consider ambient light conditions when developing lighting scheme

- ☐ Utilize shielded fixtures to avoid light spillover onto adjacent properties

Although a lighting fixture is shown on the material board, it is not shown on the elevations. A condition of approval is recommended to provide a lighting plan and show any fixtures on the elevations.

Determination of Compatibility: Site Planning

The proposed site planning is appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The building is located on the corner on North Jackson Street and California Avenue and is set back from Jackson Street five feet further than the building next to it. It is set back from California Avenue in line with the adjacent building.
- Landscaping and outdoor areas are integrated into the development, around the building at ground level and with a rooftop deck. These areas are open to the street.
- Vehicular access to the subterranean garage is taken from Jackson Street as there are driveway access visibility challenges with taking access from the alley; however, there is only one driveway which minimizes conflict with pedestrian/vehicular street traffic.
- The landscape plan includes a variety of low-water use plants appropriate to the architectural style. Nineteen trees will be added including four street trees.
- The driveway is decoratively paved and the various walls/fences/gates on site include a variety of materials appropriate to the style.
- Security walls and fences are featured; however they are minimized to the extent possible in terms of location and size. The six-foot tall wall/gate at the east of the property is set back from the street face of the adjacent building and provides transparency. The other street facing walls/fences are no more than 3'-6" high and fences/railing provide a high level of transparency.
- Mechanical equipment and trash enclosure are contained within the building (not visible from the street). The gutters, downspouts, and lighting have not been shown. A condition of approval is recommended to address this.

Massing and Scale

Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Building Relates to its Surrounding Context

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ Relates to predominant pattern through appropriate proportions and transitions
☐ Impact of larger building minimized

Building Relates to Existing Topography

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ Form and profile follow topography
☐ Alteration of existing land form minimized

☐ Retaining walls terrace with slope

Consistent Architectural Concept

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

☐ Concept governs massing and height

Scale and Proportion

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Scale and proportion fit context
- ☐ Articulation avoids overbearing forms
- ☐ Appropriate solid/void relationships
- ☐ Entry and major features well located
- ☐ Avoids sense of monumentality

Roof Forms

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Roof reinforces design concept
- ☐ Configuration appropriate to context

Determination of Compatibility: Mass and Scale

The proposed massing and scale are appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- Although the building’s height, floor area ratio (FAR), and setbacks do not meet the standards required by the Zoning Code (as authorized by the density bonus incentives/waivers that were granted), the project’s impact in terms of massing and scale are mitigated by certain factors. The project is located on a corner lot with two sides adjacent to a street, and one side adjacent to an alley. These public rights of way that are open to the sky provide a buffer of light, air and visual massing that mitigates the impact of the three-story building in a two-story neighborhood. And although the overall height is 37’-6”, the predominant building height is 35 feet which slightly reduces the apparent height. Furthermore, the building uses several design techniques that reduce the apparent massing and scale of the building, including featuring two-story massing at the central part of the building, varying the building form, roofline, and façade planes to break up the massing, and using a variety of exterior finish materials to further break up the apparent massing. Finally, the building provides setbacks in excess of code requirement on various sides/floors of the building to help compensate for the reduced setbacks in other areas, particularly on the south side of the building which is adjacent to another (two-story) apartment building.

- Two small street-facing entry courtyards along California Avenue provide additional breaking of the building massing. The project features several street-facing private patios with low walls.
- The ground floor and rooftop deck common open spaces are sized and located to provide light, air and sun to building occupants.

Design and Detailing

Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Overall Design and Detailing

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Design is compatible with neighborhood context
- ☐ Design is stylistically consistent
- ☐ Employs consistent vocabulary of forms and materials while expressing architectural variety
- ☐ Cladding materials and features such as balconies, canopies, and trim elements enhance the architectural concept and are applied around the building

Entryway

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Well integrated into design
- ☐ Avoids sense of monumentality
- ☐ Design provides appropriate focal point
- ☐ Doors appropriate to design

Windows

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Appropriate to overall design
- ☐ Overall window pattern appropriate to style
- ☐ Window operation appropriate to style
- ☐ Recessed/flush window appropriate to style and/or location
- ☐ Openings are well detailed

Finish Materials and Color

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Textures and colors reinforce design
- ☐ High-quality materials, especially facing the street
- ☐ Materials appropriately enhance articulation and façade hierarchies

- ☐ Wrap corners and terminate appropriately
- ☐ Cladding is well detailed, especially at junctions between materials
- ☐ Foam trim, finished on site, is prohibited

Paving Materials

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Decorative material at entries/driveways
- ☐ Permeable paving when possible
- ☐ Material and color related to design

Ancillary Structures

☐ **yes** ☒ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- ☐ Design consistent with primary structure
- ☐ Design and materials of gates, fences, and/or walls complement primary structure

Determination of Compatibility: Design and Detailing

The proposed design and detailing are appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The building features a contemporary design with a common vocabulary of rectangular and linear forms.
- The entry faces the street property line, is well-defined without being monumental in character, and is recessed to provide a sense of arrival to the structure.
- The design is consistent around the building while featuring street-facing façade designs that enhance the pedestrian experience, and well-designed alley-facing facades. Materials wrap corners appropriately.
- A variety of high-quality materials are featured including stucco, brick veneer and cement fiber siding; bronze, dark-colored metal railing, windows, and canopies; and a transparent metal roll up garage door. Although stucco appears on the elevations and material board to feature a smooth finish, this has not been specified. A condition of approval is recommended to address this.
- A variety of neutral earth tones are used, accented by dark gray façade areas broken up by window openings.
- Decorative paving is used at all five building entries.
- Window sizes, locations and configurations are varied while being balanced and proportional. Elevations and a typical window detail feature recessed windows with external grids to provide additional building façade articulation; however, no window schedule has been provided. A condition of approval is recommended to address this.
- A six-foot tall wall runs along the interior property line to provide privacy between windows on the first floor and windows on the adjacent building, and windows have

been staggered with those on the adjacent building, to the extent reasonably feasible.

- Balconies and railings are integrated into the building design and railings include solid and void area to provide additional visual interest. Although the renderings show the metal plates on the railings to be translucent, they are painted so are actually solid.
- Common areas within the units face the street, providing “eyes on the street” and activating the street frontage.

Recommendation / Draft Record of Decision

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends **approval** of the project with **conditions**, as follow:

Conditions

1. Project to comply with all conditions of approval per Density Bonus application PDBP2120753, approved by City Council on August 15, 2023, following an appeal from the Planning Commission’s decision (appealed from the Planning Hearing Officer decision) approving the Density Bonus Case.
2. Provide window schedule showing windows are consistent with elevations/sections.
3. Show gutters and downspouts on elevations and demonstrate they are appropriately placed.
4. Provide a lighting plan and show any fixtures on the elevations.
5. Specify stucco on elevations and material board will be a smooth finish.

Attachments

1. CEQA Analysis
2. Density Bonus Incentives/Waivers
3. Location Map
4. Plans
5. Photo Survey