



CITY OF GLENDALE, CA

DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – MULTI-FAMILY / MIXED USE

July 8, 2021
Hearing Date

3411 – 3437 Foothill Boulevard
Address

Design Review Board (DRB)
Review Type

5602-007-020 and 5602-007-021
APN

PDR 2105883
Case Number

Garo Nazarian/Domus Design
Applicant

Roger Kiesel
Case Planner

Camellia Avenue LLC
Owner

Project Background and Summary

The applicant has submitted a preliminary design review application for the demolition of the existing on-site development and construction of a large new mixed-use project. No decision will be made at this meeting. The Design Review Board is being asked to provide direction related to site planning, mass and scale, and design and detailing to enable further project refinement prior to submittal of the Density Bonus and Design Review applications.

The subject site is a parallelogram-shaped, approximately 57,900 square-foot, corner property zoned CH (Commercial Highway). The site has approximately 405 feet of frontage on Foothill Boulevard and approximately 170 feet of frontage on New York Avenue, and is directly adjacent to New York Park to the north. The property slopes up in a westerly and northerly direction, with the lowest point being at the intersection of Foothill and New York.

The site contains two lots and all existing on-site improvements will be demolished. Demolition includes the used car automobile dealership (Hi Star Auto Sales) building, developed as a gas station in 1963 at the intersection of Foothill Boulevard and New York Avenue, and the adjacent multi-tenant strip commercial center (containing Los Padilla, Dollar King, Farmers Insurance, and The Hair and Now hair salon), constructed in 1968, as well as the surrounding surface parking lots.

The proposed mixed-use project presently includes 17,200 square feet of commercial space, 78 multi-family residential units (102,283 square feet total) and 208 parking spaces. The commercial space is proposed on the ground floor of the Foothill Boulevard frontage and divided into nine tenant spaces (ranging from 1,730-2,090 s.f.). The residential units are contained on the floors above and include four studio units

(486 s.f.), 28 one-bedroom units (1,037-1,314 s.f.), 33 two-bedroom units (1,282-1,667 s.f.) and 13 three-bedroom units (1,587-1,676 s.f.). Parking will be located within the building at street level and in a subterranean garage. Driveways leading to the commercial parking area will be located off of both Foothill Boulevard and New York Avenue. Access to the residential parking will be from New York Avenue.

The project will be developed as a one podium structure across the site with three separated residential building forms above. The east and central portions fronting New York will be four stories; the western portion will be five stories. An approximately 3,000 square-foot open space area is located between the eastern-most buildings, while a driveway leading to the commercial parking area separates the western-most structure from the middle one. Elevated walkways serve as bridges to connect second, third and fourth floors of the three residential structures. A 2,500 square-foot two-level open area is located adjacent to the street intersection. The lower level is raised above street level and will serve the commercial units and the upper level will provide common open space for the project's residents. The main residential lobby is located on New York Avenue between the two driveways leading to the commercial and residential parking.

Development Standards

As previously mentioned, the subject site is zoned CH (Commercial Highway). Multiple residential dwellings are permitted in the CH zone subject to the provisions of the R-1250 zone and provided that the ground floor level is occupied with permitted commercial uses. Development standards of the R-1250 zone include the following:

Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 1.2

Maximum Lot Coverage: 50%

Residential Floor Setbacks (in feet):

Street front		Street side		Interior	
1st	20 min. / 23 avg.	1st	5 min. / 8 avg.	1st	5 min. / 8 avg.
2nd	20 min. / 23 avg.	2nd	8 min. / 11 avg.	2nd	8 min. / 11 avg.
3rd	23 min. / 26 avg.	3rd	11 min. / 14 avg.	3rd	11 min. / 14 avg.

Maximum Height: 3 stories and 36 feet

Minimum Landscaped Open Space: 25% of lot area

Minimum Dwelling Unit Size:

1 bedroom - 600 s.f. 2 bedroom - 800 s.f. 3 bedroom - 1000 s.f.

Private Outdoor Space: 40 s.f. for each dwelling unit

Common Outdoor Space:

1st 25 units 200 s.f./unit

2nd 25 units 150 s.f./unit

Units > 50 100 s.f./unit

Private Storage Space: 90 cubic feet minimum/unit

Parking:

Studios 1 and 2 bedrooms - 2 parking spaces

Three bedrooms - 2.5 parking spaces

Environmental Review

No environmental determination has been made at this time, since none is required for preliminary design review. Environmental review will be completed prior to any future discretionary decision.

Active/Pending Permits and Approvals

There are no active or pending applications or permits at this time. The applicant intends to submit a Density Bonus application to provide affordable housing units as part of the project. The 78 residential units currently proposed represents a 35% density bonus from the maximum of 58 units that would otherwise be permitted to be developed. When an applicant seeks a density bonus, incentives and waivers can also be requested from the City's development standards. The incentives and waivers will be identified when the project proposal is finalized following preliminary design review.

Staff Comments

Since the City does not have design guidelines specifically for mixed-use projects, staff utilizes the commercial design guidelines for the ground floor, commercial portions and the multi-family residential design guidelines for the residential components. The points below also reflect staff's primary comments on the project in relation to the applicable guidelines, in addition to any salient issues with regards to the North Glendale Community Plan.

Site Planning

- The subject site is challenging to develop given its long and shallow configuration, the cross slope, parallelogram form, and its lengthwise alignment with New York Park.
- Building breaks should allow a view corridor from the adjacent New York Park. Adjust the proposed building breaks so that the existing maintenance building within the park does not obstruct the view corridor
- Open space should be better integrated into the design of the project and provide a well-designed landscape plan to address building edges, paseos and open space features by providing planters, seating, and feature elements (fountains, public art, or specimen trees) to encourage activity.
- The large sizes of the units create building masses that eliminate the opportunity for larger breaks between the buildings and larger, more useable open spaces. Reducing unit sizes across the board would enhance the project site plan, as well as the overall massing and contextual compatibility.
- The two-level open space at the intersection does not successfully define the corner. Redesign this area for better integration of the corner open space feature, or combine this open space with a building break to create a larger plaza. Regardless of the solution, the tight corner provides an opportunity to create an interesting architectural statement that would enhance the streetscape.

- Eliminate one curb cut and driveway along New York Avenue and combine residential and commercial parking access; and provide restricted access to residential parking within the shared covered parking area.
- A pedestrian-friendly streetscape with appropriately spaced street trees and planted parkways should be provided on both streets.

Mass and Scale

- The project is designed as three separate buildings above the podium level with connecting bridges but still appears massive. The pedestrian bridges minimize the effectiveness of the building breaks.
- The unit sizes are extremely large. Reduce the overall massing of the project by reducing the sizes of the units. This will also allow for height reductions at the three residential buildings, possibly even by a full story at parts of the project, more common open space, a better overall site plan, and better massing in terms of both Foothill Boulevard and the park to the north.
- Use a variety of architectural strategies to express or break up the massing including variations in building height, setbacks and stepbacks.
- Building height follows the topography of the site in an east/west direction. Aligning with the topography in the north/south direction would also reduce project massiveness.
- Upper stories of the proposed project need to step more with the topography to maintain pedestrian scale.

Design and Detailing

- Building should have greater architectural interest, with a variety of shapes and forms, corner features, and variations in height.
- Provide more variety at storefronts. For example, eliminate colonnade along portions of the building, vary building setbacks at second floor and above
- The street level facade should be well-crafted with quality materials and detailing including decorative pavers and light fixtures. Stucco as the only finish material for the size of this project does not provide a high-quality design. A variety of materials should be proposed.
- Project shall provide four-sided architecture, since the entire project is highly visible.
- Natural colors and warmer tones shall be provided for the project.
- Residential entry needs to be better integrated into the overall building design.

Attachments

1. Reduced Plans
2. Photos of Existing Property
3. Location Map
4. Comment Letters