



## CITY OF GLENDALE, CA

### DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

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| <b>July 8, 2021</b><br><i>Hearing Date</i>             | <b>200 S. Louise St (also 306 E. Harvard St)</b><br><i>Address</i> |
| <b>Design Review Board (DRB)</b><br><i>Review Type</i> | <b>5642-010-051</b><br><i>APN</i>                                  |
| <b>PDR2017601</b><br><i>Case Number</i>                | <b>Rodney Khan c/o Khan Consulting</b><br><i>Applicant</i>         |
| <b>Dennis Joe</b><br><i>Case Planner</i>               | <b>306 Harvard Owner LLC</b><br><i>Owner</i>                       |

#### Project Summary

200 South Louise, LLC. (the “Developer”) is proposing to demolish an existing surface parking lot and construct a new 3-story, 14-unit, 6,263 square-foot, residential building, featuring two affordable units and 12 market rate units, and a one-level subterranean parking garage. The project will be attached to the existing two-story, approximately 6,500 SF office building (to remain), located on a 12,000 square-foot lot, zoned DSP/EB (Downtown Specific Plan/East Broadway District).

#### Environmental Review

The project is exempt from CEQA review as a Class 32 “In-Fill Development Projects” exemption pursuant to Section 15332 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The project meets all the findings required by Section 15332 to qualify for this categorical exemption as detailed in Exhibit 4.

#### Existing Property/Background

The proposed project is located at the southeast corner of East Harvard Street and South Louise Street. The site is approximately 12,000 square-feet and currently developed with a two-story, 6,517 square-foot, general office building with an at-grade, 14 space, parking lot. The existing building will remain on site.

The site is zoned Downtown Specific Plan (DSP)/East Broadway District, which is located between the Arts and Entertainment and Civic Center Districts, and consists of a number of civic and cultural uses and historic buildings. The purpose of this district is to encourage development to expand upon the existing mixed-use and moderate residential density of this area with newer mixed-use projects.

Approximately 0.3 mile of walking distance from the project site is the intersection of North Brand Boulevard and West Broadway. This intersection is a transit-rich crossing serviced by multiple local and regional bus transit lines, such as Metro Bus Routes 92, 180, 181, 183, 201, and 780, and the City of Glendale Beeline Routes 3, 4 and 11. According to the City of Glendale and Metro's bus route schedules, this intersection is serviced by any of the above specified bus route with an interval no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute hours. Given the frequency of service intervals for any of these bus routes is 15 minutes or less during peak hours, this intersection is defined major transit stop by California Public Resource Code (Section 21064.3), and consistent with state's Density Bonus Law of one-half (0.5) of a parking space per bedroom for the affordable housing development.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Approve with Conditions

### **SURROUNDING USES/ZONING:**

|       | Zoning   | Existing Uses                 |
|-------|--|-------------------------------|
| North | DSP/EB (Downtown Specific Plan/ East Broadway) | Places of worship             |
| South | DSP/EB (Downtown Specific Plan/ East Broadway) | Offices/residences            |
| West  | DSP/EB (Downtown Specific Plan/ Civic Centers) | Central Library               |
| East  | DSP/EB (Downtown Specific Plan/ East Broadway) | Assistance League of Glendale |

### **Previous Permits for the Site:**

On June 7, 2021, the Director of Community Development approved Density Bonus Housing Plan Case No. PDBP2017607, as well as a single concession, pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65915, *et seq.* ("Density Bonus Law") for the subject project. The applicant was granted approval for a 3-story, 14-unit, multi-family residential building, featuring two affordable units and 12 market rate units. The applicant requested a single concession to not provide the minimum 1,200 square feet of publicly accessible open space. *(Note: The applicant had the option to request to eliminate all seven required residential parking space as another concession; however, the Developer had elected to reduce the amount of general office spaces via a parking reduction permit application and offset the general office parking deficiency within the Market Place public parking garage by purchasing 8 monthly passes. The Director of Community Development's decision letter is attached as Exhibit 6 for further information).*

On June 7, 2021, the Planning Hearing Officer approved a Parking Reduction Permit Case No. PPRP2017608 to allow for the reduction of eight parking spaces (12 parking spaces provided; 20 parking spaces required) in conjunction with the demolition of an

existing at-grade parking lot and the construction of the proposed project. The Planning Hearing Officer's decision letter is attached as Exhibit 7 for further detail.

## **PROJECT DESIGN**

The Project's proposed site planning and design are assessed below according to the urban design guidelines for development in the DSP East Broadway District:

### **Urban Design Framework**

#### *Site Planning*

The property is 12,000 square-feet in area, located on the south-east corner of South Louise Street and East Harvard Street, and zoned Downtown Specific Plan /East Broadway District (DSP/EB). It is currently developed with a two-story, 6,517 square-foot, general office building (former Glendale Chamber of Commerce) with an at-grade, 14 space, parking lot. This building is sited at the westernmost portion of the property and the primary façade fronts onto S. Louise Street.

The existing at-grade parking lot will be removed to allow for a new 3-story, 14-unit, 6,263 square-foot, residential building with a subterranean garage. The existing two-story general office building will remain on the site. The footprint of the proposed building will follow the rectangular-shape of the parking lot to be demolished - which is approximately 50 feet (wide) by 140 feet (length). The new building will have a 26-foot setback from the street, as measured from the curb along East Harvard to the foot print of the new building. This setback includes a ten-foot wide landscaped parkway, a six-foot wide sidewalk, and a ten-foot wide landscaped building adjacent zone (a total of 26 feet). Given that the existing building at the corner has no setback from the sidewalk along East Harvard Street, the ten-foot building adjacent zone in front of the new building will help relieve the taller building mass through deeper setback and landscaping and provide a more inviting pedestrian environment. The pedestrian entrance into the new building's lobby and vehicular access into the subterranean garage are from East Harvard Street.

#### *Building Design: Massing & Scale, and Architectural Elements*

The project features a three-story, 45-foot tall multi-family building, which is appropriate in the context of the eclectic mix of surrounding buildings: the Central Library to the west, Glendale Presbyterian Church/Children's Ministry Center to the north, Assistance League of Glendale to the east, and offices and multi-family residences to the south. The proposed building footprint will follow the shape of the existing parking lot, producing a narrow building profile governed by the site's available buildable area. The new building will closely adjoin the existing one- and two-story building at the corner. The massing of the two buildings shares an emphasis on rectangular volumes and the height changes create varied roof profiles that help avoid an overbearing presence at the street facades. Along the eastern interior façade, the new building is itself broken into separate volumes and includes private balconies for residential units. This façade will be highly visible from East Harvard Street because the adjacent parcel is currently developed with a surface parking lot servicing the Glendale Assistance League. To further develop visual interest at visible elevations, staff recommends

that larger balconies and/or deeper façade articulations be introduced to provide additional depth and rhythm.

The proposed building has been designed in modern/contemporary style and is clad primarily with painted stucco and hardwood siding. The siding is used at “framing” elements located at the upper floor windows and balconies. The windows and balcony doors will be of anodized aluminum and frameless glass railings will be used at the rooftop decks. The framing elements are not entirely successful due to their varied proportions and heights. A condition is recommended to reconsider their design, probably in conjunction with a condition discussed below to reconsider the overall material palette.

The Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) identifies that building materials establish a unique quality of a building’s design and are important in creating and reinforcing character. The street-facing façade is composed primarily of stucco and the wood-sided framing elements at the front and east-side elevations are not in keeping with the immediate visual context. Staff recommends a condition calling for a redistribution of cladding materials at all facades to reduce the overall amount of stucco. In addition, the new building has almost no visual relationship with the adjoining building on the same parcel. Their close proximity suggests it will be beneficial to redesign the new building’s exterior features and materials to allow for a dialogue between the buildings, without necessarily mimicking the existing design. To this end, staff recommends that the applicant consider incorporating metal-panel and/or brick veneer cladding, perhaps with different colors or modules than at the corner building, eliminating the wood siding, and reducing the amount of stucco to create a more harmonious overall composition. Finally, window patterns for new buildings should coordinate and be proportionally appropriate with the overall architectural design of the building. The shift in proportion and appearance between the second and third floor windows at the east and south façades is jarring and staff therefore recommends that these windows be redesigned to coordinate better with the design of the building.

### *Open Space*

In accordance with Downtown Specific Plan Section 5.3 - Open Space, lots with a street frontage greater than 50 feet shall provide at minimum 10% open space as a percentage of the overall site – which equates to a minimum of 1,200 square-feet of open space on the 12,000 square-foot lot. As part of the applicant’s Density Bonus Housing Plan approval, the applicant was granted a concession to not provide any publicly accessible open space [pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65915, *et seq.* (“Density Bonus Law”)].

However, the project does include two common open space areas at the roof that are 745 square-feet and 740 square-feet in area (1,485 square-feet) located at the front and rear portions of the building. The common open spaces will include limited landscaping, benches and a barbeque area for the building’s occupants.

## PARKING AND CIRCULATION

Vehicular access into the new subterranean garage is from a new driveway entrance on East Harvard Street along the northern property line.

Per Zoning Code section 30.32.050, general offices located in the DSP zone are required to have two parking spaces per 1,000 square-feet. Zoning Code section 30.36.090 allows housing development that includes at least eleven (11) percent very-low income units and is located within one-half mile of a major transit stop to have a vehicular parking ratio, inclusive of handicapped and guest parking, that shall not be required to exceed one-half (0.5) of a parking space per bedroom.

| <u>Land Use</u>                                | <u>Parking Ratio</u>          | <u>Size</u>                 | <u>Require Parking</u> | <u>Parking Provided</u> | <u>Deficient Parking Amount</u> |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Residential<br>(at least 11 % very-low income) | 0.5 space per bedroom         | 14 one bed/<br>studio units | 7 spaces               | 7 spaces                | -                               |
| General Office (DSP)                           | 2 spaces per<br>1,000 sq. ft. | 6,517 sq. ft.               | 13 spaces              | 5 spaces                | 8 spaces                        |
| <b>totals</b>                                  |                               |                             | <b>20 spaces</b>       | <b>12 spaces</b>        | <b>8 spaces</b>                 |

Given the project will include 14 one-bedroom/studio units and the 6,517 square-foot office building will remain, the proposed development is deficient by eight parking spaces. The developer was granted a parking concession to provide 0.5 parking spaces per bedroom (in accordance with GMC 30.36.090 and California Government Code Section 65915 for housing developments that include at least twenty (20) percent low income units or eleven (11) percent very-low income units and are located within one-half mile of a major transit stop with unobstructed access) via a Density Bonus Review application, and a Parking Reduction Permit to decrease the amount of required parking spaces for the existing general office use on site by eight parking spaces. Further information regarding the Density Bonus Review and Parking Reduction Permit, decisions for each application are attached as Exhibits 5 & 6.

## DSP COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAM

The Project site is located within the "East Broadway" District of the DSP, which permits a maximum height of 65 feet and a maximum 2.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) by right. DSP Chapter 7 allows height and density bonuses in exchange for the provision of certain public benefits or incentives. SB 1818 Affordable Housing Density Bonus Law projects are one of the priority uses determined to provide a community benefit; as such, they are eligible for the maximum height and FAR under the incentive program. As proposed the Project would have a height of 45 feet and an FAR of 1.06. The project is therefore well within the height and density limits for projects in the East Broadway.

Staff recommends approving the conceptual Stage I design with the following conditions and comments:

1. Revise the material palette to provide better compatibility with the adjoining building to remain on the lot and the overall context of the area. This could be accomplished by incorporating metal-panel and/or brick veneer cladding, perhaps with different colors or modules than at the corner building, and eliminating the proposed wood siding.
  2. Include a greater percentage of high-quality cladding materials at all facades to reduce the amount of stucco cladding.
  3. If the proposed framing elements at the balconies and windows remain in the design, revise their proportions and heights to create a better compositional balance.
  4. Provide larger balconies and/or deeper façade articulations at the east façade to provide additional articulation.
  5. Revise the windows at the east and south façade to avoid the differences in proportion and style found between the second- and third-floor windows.
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## **Attachments**

1. Reduced Plans
2. Photos of Existing Property
3. Location Map
4. Density Bonus Housing Plan, Class 32 Infill Exemption
5. Decision Letter – Density Bonus Review Case No. PDBP 2017608
6. Decision Letter – Parking Reduction Permit Case No. PPRP 2017608