

Architectural Review Committee (ARC)
Alex Seidel AIA, Ellen Lou AIA, John Miller AIA

Meeting Summary

Purpose: To present high-rise project designs so the ARC can provide feedback to encourage creativity and exceptional urban design

Present: Staff: Darryl Boyd, Mike Enderby and Walter Rask
ARC: Alex Seidel, Ellen Lou, John Miller

Enhanced Downtown High-rise Design Review Brochure Discussion 6:30 - 6:40

1. Introductions and Project Overview 6:40 - 6:45

2. **Ohlone Mixed-Use¹** Team Presentation 6:45 - 6:55

by Michael VanEvery

A variety of unit types are preferred by the developer.

Not all parking will be subterranean.

In an earlier proposal a new street was moved away from the adjacent industrial area and internalized. Another internal street was removed to create narrower blocks.

15,000 square feet of retail is proposed along W. San Carlos Street.

Live-work space along Sunol Street is convertible to commercial space.

JM: How many levels of parking?

A: One full level below-grade.

EL: The podium courtyard will be open to the public?

How can we be sure that the height isn't increased in other areas of the Specific Plan?

A: We can not guarantee the outcome of potential future requests for Specific Plan Amendments. The current proposal is only for this site. No other current Midtown Specific Plan Amendments are on file, however, the Envision San Jose 2040 Task Force has identified Specific Plan Areas as potential key opportunity sites to meet future housing needs.

¹ File No. GP09-T-01 and PDC08-061. General Plan and Specific Plan Text Amendments to allow modification of Midtown Specific Plan on height, density, setbacks and public park location specifically related to the proposed projects; and Planned Development Rezoning from HI Heavy Industrial Zoning District to A(PD) Planned Development Zoning District to remove three existing warehouse buildings and allow up to 800 multi-family residences and 30,000 square feet for commercial use on a 8.25 gross acre site located at the southwest corner of West San Carlos and Sunol Streets. Some of the buildings are proposed to be 14 stories tall.

3. ARC Discussion

6:55 – 7:30

AS: Why does the project propose three identical towers with uniform spacing when that doesn't enhance the residential views?

A: The towers are spaced far enough apart that they do not cast shadows on the adjacent courtyards.

The pattern of tall buildings is perhaps too repetitive. There is room to change the pattern – perhaps different floor plates and a greater variety of building heights.

EL: The towers can be slid or staggered.

There should be a greater variety in heights.

I like the slightly larger setback on San Carlos St.

Varied or staggered setbacks could compensate for the lack of variety in heights.

Greater setbacks and variety of heights may be needed on the new north/south street to avoid looking too massive.

The Zoning should identify specific allowed heights.

The project overall needs a greater variation in height.

The raised courtyards will not be perceived as public.

There should be one public space larger than the others.

JM: I like the stairways to the upper courtyard but 3 times is perhaps too much of the same thing.

The corners at San Carlos are important and need unique treatments.

The blocks are very repetitive.

The towers could be pushed back to make a larger plaza.

Break

7:30 – 7:40

4. Introductions and Project Overview 7:40 - 7:45
5. **150 Brokaw Road**² Team Presentation 7:45 - 7:55
6. ARC Discussion 7:55 - 8:30

AS: The small connection from the office tower to the parking structure does not work well as a pedestrian or street entry.
Perhaps the entry is too hidden.
There is too much pressure on the connector as entrance.
The streetscape needs more regularity.

EL: The project needs better treatment to facilitate pedestrian traffic.
Brokaw should have a better urban connection to First Street.
Landscaping on Brokaw should be more urban, while landscaping on Bering can be more garden-like.
The project needs better pedestrian friendly finish on the garage fronting Brokaw.

JM: The Brokaw façade should be more urban
The concave side should face the street.

WR: The building should have a stronger presence/sharp curve at the corner.
Most tenants like rectangular floor plates.

² File No. PRE09-018. Preliminary Review Application for a ten-story office building (approx. 300,000 sq ft) project with an associated five-level, free-standing parking structure on a 3.2 gross acre site, located at the southeast corner of Brokaw and Bering Roads