



# Architectural Review Board

## Staff Report (ID # 9390)

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**Report Type:** Action Items **Meeting Date:** 7/5/2018

**Summary Title:** 3223 Hanover Street: New Office/R&D Building (2nd Formal)

**Title:** PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 3223 Hanover Street [17PLN-00225]: Consideration of a Major Architectural Review to Allow the Construction of a new two-Story 67,200 Square Foot Office / R&D Building. Environmental Assessment: An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was Circulated for Public Comment From June 28, 2018 to July 30, 2018. Zoning District: RP (Research Park) and RP(L) (Research Park with Landscape Combining District). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Graham Owen at [graham.owen@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:graham.owen@cityofpaloalto.org)

**From:** Jonathan Lait

### Recommendation

Staff recommends the Architectural Review Board (ARB) take the following action(s):

1. Conduct the public hearing to allow public testimony and provide comments on the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and
2. Recommend continuance of the Architectural Review application to a date uncertain and provide recommendations to the applicant for how to better meet the findings for approval.

### Report Summary

The subject project was previously reviewed by the ARB. An earlier staff report includes extensive background information, project analysis and evaluation to city codes and policies; that report is available online: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/63881> . A copy of the report without prior attachments is available in Attachment F.

The purpose of this report is to restate the comments made by the Board and detail the applicant's response to those comments. The analysis section below builds upon the information contained in the earlier report and modified to reflect recent project changes.

## Background

The ARB reviewed the project on March 15, 2018. A video recording of the Board's meeting is available online: <http://midpenmedia.org/architectural-review-board-74-2/>. The Board's comments and the applicant's response are summarized in the following table:

ARB Comments/Direction	Applicant Response
Consider alternative site plan arrangements that provide enhanced space between the two buildings	<b>Comment not addressed.</b> The buildings remain in the same location as the previous iterations of the plans.
Enhance the landscaping in the surface parking lot in order to reduce heat island effect and increase the aesthetic and habitat value of the space	<b>Comment partially addressed.</b> The revised site plan replaces one of the parking modules with a landscaped area containing seating and additional trees and shrubs.
Reduce the number of parking spaces proposed on the site to the minimum required	<b>Comment not addressed.</b> The site plan contains 20 parking spaces in a landscape reserve on the southern side of the main drive aisle that would put the site above the minimum required at the will of the applicant.
Provide enhanced pedestrian connectivity between the lower parking lot and the upper building terrace.	<b>Comment partially addressed.</b> Project now includes a garden stair connection on Sheet L0.02D, but the feature is not incorporated into any of the other plan sheets. Details are not provided that would indicate the path's surface type or whether railings and lighting would be incorporated.

In addition to the Board's comments, staff had requested changes to the surface parking lot that would reduce the number of intersecting drive aisles in order to prevent pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and provide for a more continuous pedestrian and bicycle path down the main drive aisle. While the number of drive aisles has been reduced from seven to six, with the addition of the new parking lot seating/landscaping area (discussed below), staff does not believe that the comment has been addressed in a responsive manner.

## Analysis<sup>1</sup>

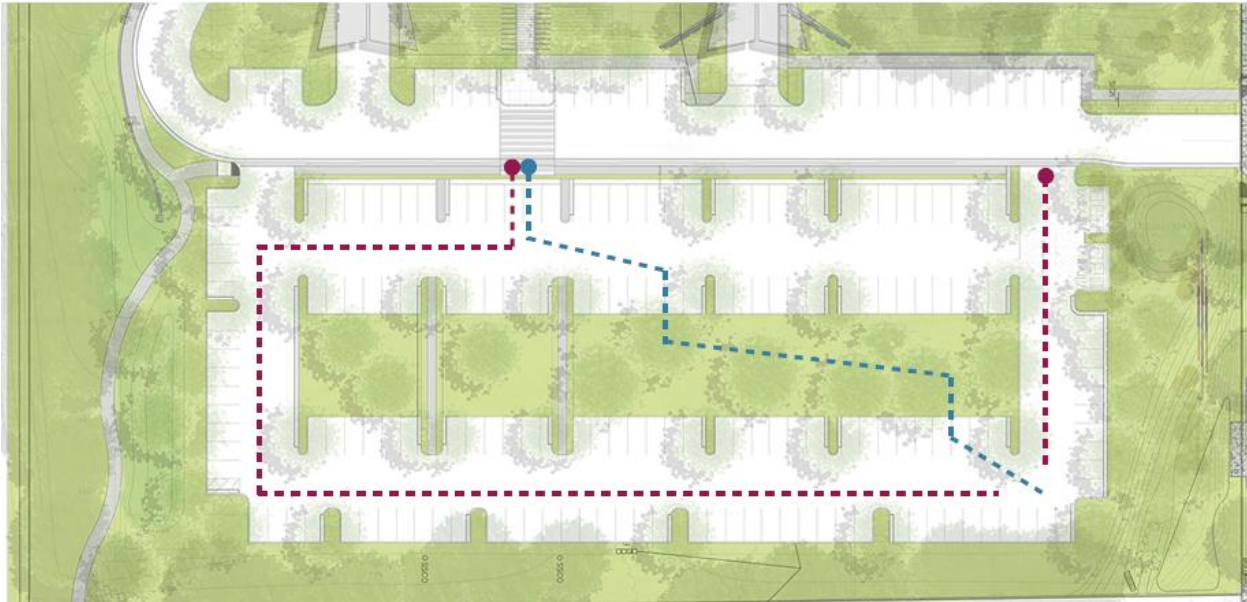
<sup>1</sup> The information provided in this section is based on analysis prepared by the report author prior to the public hearing. The Architectural Review Board in its review of the administrative record and based on public testimony may reach a different conclusion from that presented in this report and may choose to take an alternative action from the recommendation in this report.

### Parking Lot Landscaping

The largest substantive change between the current plans and those provided at the March 15, 2018 hearing is the replacement of one of the parking modules with a new landscaped area with seating, shade trees, and other landscaping. This feature would serve as a terminus to the staircase leading from the lower platform to the upper platform. This feature also reduces the number of parking spaces in the lower lot by 26 spaces, which brings the number of parking spaces planned for the initial buildout to the minimum number required for the site. However, the proposed plans still include 20 additional parking spaces above the minimum in a landscape reserve along the southern edge of the main drive aisle, all of which could be converted to parking at any time after project approval with minimal discretionary review. It is also unclear what these areas would be covered with at the onset, as the updated L\_1.0 sheet in the project plans indicates a surface type "PA" which is not included in the materials schedule (for reference, pavement surfaces have been noted "PV-#"), while Sheet L\_2.0 indicates that the landscape reserve areas will be planted with Coyote Brush. Staff believes that the number of parking spaces, inclusive of those shown as landscape reserve areas, should be reduced to the minimum required in order to provide latitude for alternative surface parking arrangements and to reduce the amount of asphalt to the degree necessary. The code-prescribed use of the 'landscape reserve' provision cited in PAMC 18.52.050(b) is associated with 'deferral of meeting full requirement' of parking spaces for the use, and not for a potential future parking expansion area that would result in an over-parked project.

### Parking Lot Orientation

The applicant showed an alternative surface parking lot arrangement to the Board at the March 15, 2018 hearing (image below), and indicated that such an arrangement, which contained only two intersecting drive aisles and a rotation of the parking modules, resulted in a site plan that was 10 parking spaces short of the minimum required. Staff is supportive of the alternative arrangement in concept and believes that an alternative site arrangement merits additional study by the applicant. To the question of parking noncompliance, staff believes that, on a 10 acre site, the 10 missing parking spaces could be located in a number of possible locations, including in a slightly modified parking garage or on either interior side of the central median shown in the alternative arrangement. If no alternative location for the 10 spots is viable, it is worth noting that the project includes a TDM plan to reduce peak hour trips by 30% over standard rates, and that a parking adjustment of 10 spaces (constituting 1.7% of the total number of spaces) could potentially be considered. Staff believes that the alternative arrangement also more sufficiently responds to the Board's comments regarding enhanced landscaping in the parking lot, and could provide heat island, aesthetic, and habitat improvements.



*Source: Applicant's March 15, 2018 Presentation to the ARB.*

#### Proposed Garden Pathway

Staff found the initial iterations of the site plan to be inadequate to meet Finding #4 due to the removal of an existing stairway near the drive aisle entrance to Hanover Street that connected the lower and upper platforms of the site without a replacement. The updated plans now include a garden stair and pathway in a detail on Sheet L0.02D in this area that meanders between two live oaks. However, the site plan, landscape plan, and civil plans do not show this feature. While this garden stairway would connect the upper platform to the sidewalk on Hanover Street, it is unclear if it would provide a direct connection to the lower parking lot. Moreover, materials for the pathway have not been indicated, as has been done with the Bol Park trailhead features and new landscape area in the parking lot. Staff supports the connection in concept but believes that further details and study are needed to meet Finding #4 and to ensure that the path will provide an all-weather surface that would support a permanent, usable connection between the buildings, street, and lower parking lot, while not impacting the adjacent 28" live oak. Additional details on railings and lighting would also help demonstrate the efficacy of this pathway from an access and safety standpoint.

#### Bol Park Bicycle Path Improvements

Staff is certainly supportive of the Bol Park Bicycle Path improvements proffered by the applicant, however approximately half of the bicycle path is located on the adjacent lease area which is controlled by a separate lessee. Staff does not have a mechanism by which to enforce off-site improvements without the controlling lessee's written authorization and agreement to the improvements as a part of the application. Most significantly, the concrete wall that stretches the length of the path adjacent to the site is located on the adjacent lease area, and contains aging, wall-mounted sodium light fixtures that may conflict with and duplicate the new bollard and pole lighting proffered by the applicant along this section of the path. Should the applicant wish to pursue these improvements, staff suggests that the wall and its associated



lighting be removed in order to fully implement the design intent as depicted in Sheet L\_0.02A through L-0.02C of the project plans with the written authorization and approval of the adjacent lessee.

## Environmental Review

The subject project has been assessed in accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the environmental regulations of the City. An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration have been prepared and are being circulated for public comment from June 28<sup>th</sup> to July 30<sup>th</sup>. The study identifies potentially significant impacts to air quality, hazards, noise, and biological and cultural resources associated with the project. With incorporation of the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, all potential impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level (Attachment G).

## Public Notification, Outreach & Comments

The Palo Alto Municipal Code requires notice of this public hearing be published in a local paper and mailed to owners and occupants of property within 600 feet of the subject property at least ten days in advance. Notice of a public hearing for this project was published in the Palo Alto Weekly on June 22, 2018 which is 13 days in advance of the meeting. Postcard mailing occurred on June 25, 2018, which is 10 in advance of the meeting.

### Public Comments

As of the writing of this report, no project-related, public comments were received.

## Alternative Actions

In addition to the recommended action, the Architectural Review Board may:

1. Recommend approval of the project following the close of the CEQA public comment period, with modified findings or conditions; or
2. Recommend project denial based on revised findings.

### Report Author & Contact Information

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(650) 329-2552

[graham.owen@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:graham.owen@cityofpaloalto.org)

### ARB<sup>2</sup> Liaison & Contact Information

Jodie Gerhardt, AICP, Planning Manager  
(650) 329-2575

[jodie.gerhardt@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:jodie.gerhardt@cityofpaloalto.org)

### Attachments:

- Attachment A: Location Map (PDF)
- Attachment B: Applicant's Project Description (PDF)
- Attachment C: ARB Findings (DOCX)
- Attachment D: Zoning Comparison Table (DOC)

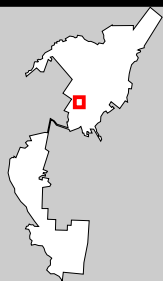
<sup>2</sup> Emails may be sent directly to the ARB using the following address: [arb@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:arb@cityofpaloalto.org)

- Attachment E: Performance Criteria (DOCX)
- Attachment F: March 15, 2018 Staff Report w/o Attachments (PDF)
- Attachment G: Project Plans and Initial Study (DOCX)





The City of  
Palo Alto



## 3223 Hanover Street Project Site Area Map

This map is a product of the  
City of Palo Alto GIS



0' 300'





**3223 Hanover Phase 2, Palo Alto**  
Project Narrative - Formal ARB Review 2

June 14, 2017  
*revised May 12, 2018*

To: City of Palo Alto Planning Division  
Architectural Review Board Members

From: Form4 Architecture - Applicant  
Robert Giannini, Architect

Subject: **3223 Hanover, Palo Alto**  
Formal Architectural Review Board Review

This application is for the 2nd Phase of a project where the 1st Phase was approved on March 2, 2017 (16PLN-00190). The approved existing project (now called Phase 1) includes Building 1, the below-grade garage, and stair & elevator pavilion in the courtyard, trash enclosure and the garage portals. Phase 2 includes Building 2, a second trash enclosure, and surface parking on the east lower tier of the property.

**Design Considerations for Phase 2:**

Phase 1 of the project was limited to replacement square footage. At 110,000 sf it was well below the 40% FAR allowed for this site in the Research Park. Proposed Phase 2 increases the FAR to the allowed 40%. The application provides the studies necessary to show there are no significant impacts when FAR is increased to what zoning allows.

As was touched on during our Phase 1 hearings, the original project was designed to provide options for Phase 2. We learned that the ARB committee's desire would be to avoid more surface parking in the upper tier. This proposed application follows that suggestion and locates the Phase 2 building on the upper tier on top of the existing underground parking garage, and locates the balance of parking needed on the lower level of the site. There are several advantages to this approach:

- a) Siting the building in this location creates a dramatic impression as you approach the site from Hanover.



- b) **The upper courtyard** provides a campus environment. It continues to provide habitat, and the architectural centerpiece remains the existing Phase 1 light well, stair & elevator pavilion from the garage below. Both building lobbies are directly adjacent to that pavilion.
- The distance between buildings at Hanover is 145'.
  - The central courtyard measures 1 acre.
  - There are several ways to arrive at this space; either from the sidewalk, through the large light well in the garage where one emerges into the central courtyard between buildings, or up the grand stair.



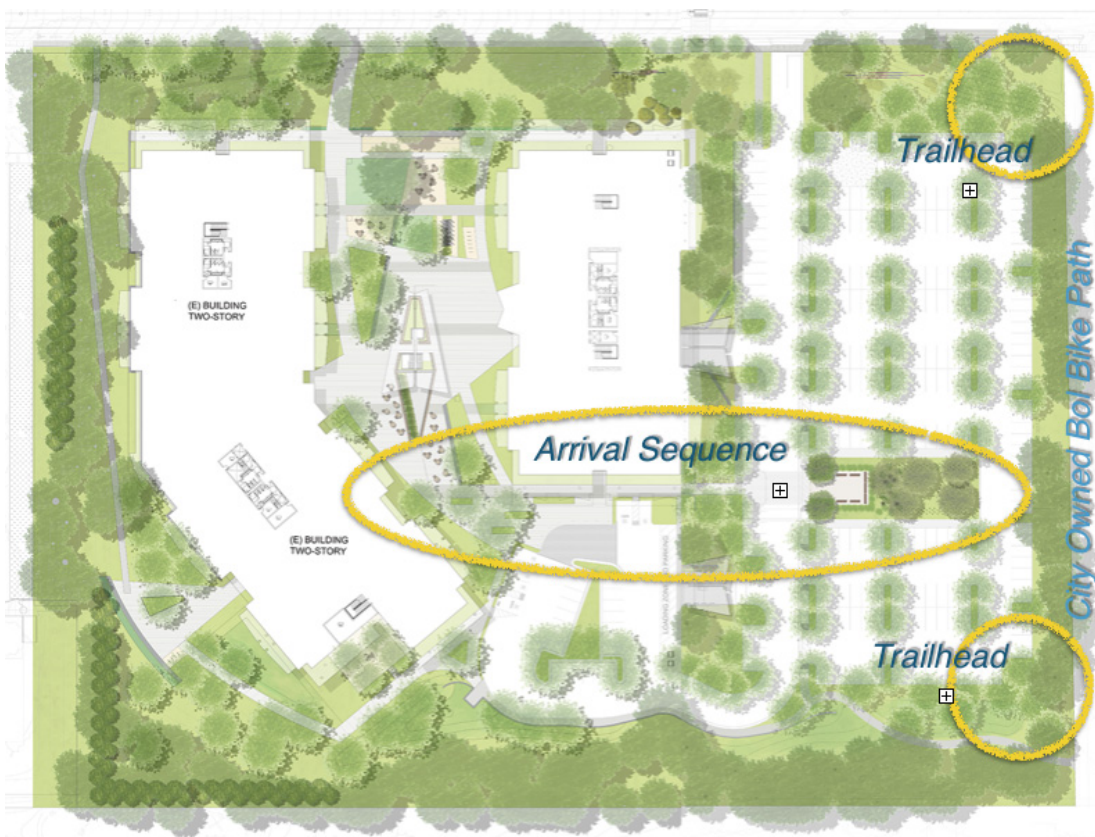
- c) **Design of the Lower Surface Parking:** The lower tier of the site has historically been a surface parking lot, however it was in bad repair, poorly laid out and will be demolished in Phase 1. Phase 2 provides a completely new surface parking needed to meet City requirements. The new parking field provides the proper geometry and shading required by current Palo Alto standards. Collector sidewalks parallel the entry drive and lead you to the grand stair that takes you to the courtyard above.

Based on discussions at our March 15, 2018 initial hearing we revised the lower parking to include a mini park, diagrammed in the graphic below. Two rows of cars and the driveway between were replaced by landscaping. This “compartmentalized” the surface parking into two areas. More importantly it creates a small plaza with benches just before one crosses the drive and walks up the grand stair to the courtyard.





**Landscape Events:** To further enhance the lower parking area the project has agreed to voluntarily upgrade the adjacent City Bol Bike Path. The entire path that is contiguous with the property will be opened and upgraded with new lighting and landscaping. A “trailhead” on the project’s property will be constructed at both ends with a small clearing and benches. Those trailheads, together with the mini park, create a series of landscape events that make the lower parking area interesting and provide places to sit or meet with friends. Please refer to the landscape plans for additional detail of these spaces.





**Parking Orientation:** Per comments in the staff report the team studied rotating the parking orientation 90 degrees, however that would result in the need to walk over curbs and between cars to get to the sidewalks. The proposed parking has been oriented based on best practices to provide level and visible paths from parking spaces to collector sidewalks. The reason you orient parking the way we did is it allows people to walk in the aisles. This is the safest and most commonly used way to move through a parking lot because cars can see you as opposed to walking between cars where you pop out unexpectedly. Traffic engineers point out that this uncommon and unfamiliar exposure is where accidents happen. We respectfully request that the orientation remain as originally proposed.



#### Neighbor Considerations:

Phase 1 of the project addressed an effective buffer between the project and our Barron Park neighbors to the southeast. You may recall that there is a recorded 50' landscape setback on that property line. We not only honored that, but moved the Phase 1 building back an additional 40' for 90' total buffer. The Phase 2 building goes much further by pushing the building back 228' from that property line. As with Phase 1, the project will provide automatic blinds on that short end of Building 2 facing the residential district.

Car lights on the entry driveway were also considered in Phase 1. Through the use of landscape walls, hedges, new infill landscape material and a concrete wall we demonstrated that car headlights will be blocked and sound minimized. That buffer of landscape elements was already extended in Phase 1 across the entire southeast end of the new lower parking lot as can be seen in the above diagram.

Please also see the *photometric study* included in the package as sheet ED 1.2. It shows that not only is the project's foot candle level Zero at the property line, along the rear of the property adjacent to residential we are a Zero all the way back to the 50' building setback line.

Taking the extra steps of increased setback, and the effective buffer to be installed in Phase 1, help achieve our goal of being a good, near invisible, neighbor.





*View of project from Hanover at Central Courtyard*

#### **Architecture:**

The Phase 2 building design vocabulary matches existing Building 1. All Materials match Building 1, and a materials page is included in our planning set.

The design is meant to minimize aluminum, with wood and clear glass being the predominant skin materials. The topmost point of the “butterfly roofs” is at the code allowed height of 35’. Building sections are included in the planning set.

#### **DATA - Looking at both phases together:**

##### **Changes Required in Phase 1 to Accommodate Phase 2:**

This application addresses changes to approved Phase 1 needed as Phase 2 was developed as follows:

- 1) **Phase 1 Trash enclosure was relocated:** Phase 2 required its own trash enclosure that was located in the new lower parking lot. To improve the entry drive experience, the Phase 1 trash enclosure is proposed to be moved adjacent to it, and out of the line of sight as one enters the property.
- 2) **Surface “drop off” parking at upper level:** The geometry has been adjusted to allow for Fire Department truck access for the Phase 2 building.
- 3) **Stair connecting lower parking lot and upper courtyard:** The geometry of the stair is proposed to be enhanced to support the new importance of this stair.

##### **Combined Floor Area Ratio & Coverage:**

- 1) **The FAR of both Phase 1 & 2 together is 40% as allowed in the RP zoning.** Please see sheet A 2.2 for a diagram of the elements included in the FAR calculation. Besides the gross area of the buildings themselves, it includes the stair and elevator in the Courtyard Pavilion, and the trash enclosures.

3251 Hanover Phase 2 - Project Narrative - Formal ARB  
Palo Alto, California  
May 12, 2017

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- 2) **Coverage is at +/- 20%**, well below the 30% allowed, achieved in part due to the extensive use of underground parking.

*Thanks very much for your attention and review of the various design aspects of this project!*

*Form4 Architecture*



*Robert Giannini  
Architect, President*

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**ATTACHMENT C**  
**ARB FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL**  
3223 Hanover Street  
17PLN-00225

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In order for the ARB to make a future recommendation of approval, the project must comply with the following Findings for Architectural Review as required in Chapter 18.76.020 of the PAMC.

**Finding #1:** The design is consistent with applicable provisions of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, coordinated area plans (including compatibility requirements), and any relevant design guides.

**Finding #2:** The project has a unified and coherent design, that:

- a. creates an internal sense of order and desirable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community,
- b. preserves, respects and integrates existing natural features that contribute positively to the site and the historic character including historic resources of the area when relevant,
- c. is consistent with the context-based design criteria of the applicable zone district,
- d. provides harmonious transitions in scale, mass and character to adjacent land uses and land use designations,
- e. enhances living conditions on the site (if it includes residential uses) and in adjacent residential areas.

**Finding #3:** The design is of high aesthetic quality, using high quality, integrated materials and appropriate construction techniques, and incorporating textures, colors, and other details that are compatible with and enhance the surrounding area.

**Finding #4:** The design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and providing for elements that support the building's necessary operations (e.g. convenient vehicle access to property and utilities, appropriate arrangement and amount of open space and integrated signage, if applicable, etc.).

**Finding #5:** The landscape design complements and enhances the building design and its surroundings, is appropriate to the site's functions, and utilizes to the extent practical, regional indigenous drought resistant plant material capable of providing desirable habitat that can be appropriately maintained.

**Finding #6:** The project incorporates design principles that achieve sustainability in areas related to energy efficiency, water conservation, building materials, landscaping, and site planning.

**ATTACHMENT D**  
**ZONING COMPARISON TABLES**  
 3223 Hanover Street  
 17PLN-00255

<b>Table 1: COMPARISON WITH CHAPTER 18.20 (RP DISTRICT)</b>				
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Previously Approved (16PLN-00190)</b>	<b>Current Proposal (17PLN-00255)</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>Development Standard</b>
Minimum Site Area, Width, and Depth	10.170 acres, 781 feet width, and 570 feet depth	No change	No change	1 acre, 100 feet width, and 150 feet depth
Minimum Front Yard	50 feet	50 feet	50 feet	50 feet special setback along Hanover Street
Minimum Rear Yard	90 feet	228 feet	90 feet (minimum)	20 feet (50 foot Landscape Combining District along the rear establishes de-facto setback on the site)
Interior Side Yard	447 feet to northeast; 73 feet to southwest	285 feet to northeast; 350 feet to southwest	285 feet to northeast; 73 feet to southwest	20 feet
Street Side Yard	N/A	N/A	N/A	20 feet
Max. Site Coverage	12% (55,000 sf)	7% (32,555 sf)	20% (87,555 sf)	30% (132,901 sf)
Max. Total Floor Area Ratio	0.25:1 (110,000 sf + 5,500 sf amenity space)	0.15:1 (67,202 sf + 3,783 sf amenity space)	0.4:1 (177,202 sf + 9,283 sf amenity space)	0.4:1 (177,202 sf)
Max. Building Height	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet (with additional 15 feet for mechanical and screen)
Daylight Plane	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Employee Showers	8 showers	8 showers	16 showers	R&D: 50,000 sf and up requires 4 showers

**Table 1: CONFORMANCE WITH CHAPTER 18.52 (Off-Street Parking and Loading) for Administrative Office and Research & Development uses\***

Type	Previously Approved (16PLN-00290)	Current Proposal (17PLN-00255)	Combined	Required
Vehicle Parking	381 spaces	226 spaces (new surface lot, includes 20 in landscape reserve)	611 spaces	1 per 300 sf of gross floor area (591 spaces)
Bicycle Parking	37 bike spaces (30 long term and 7 short term)	22 bike spaces (17 long term and 5 short term)	59 bike spaces (47 long term and 12 short term)	1 per 3,000 sf (80% long term, 20% short term = 59 spaces (47 long term, 12 short term)
Loading Space	1 space	1 space	2 spaces	2 loading spaces for 100,000-199,999 sf

\* On-site employee amenity space is exempted from the parking requirements



**Attachment E**  
**Performance Criteria 18.23**  
**3223 Hanover Street**  
**17PLN-00225**

Performance criteria are intended to provide additional standards to be used in the design and evaluation of developments in the downtown, multi-family, commercial, and industrial zones. The purpose is to balance the needs of the uses within these zones with the need to minimize impacts to surrounding neighborhoods and businesses. The criteria are intended to make new developments and major architectural review projects compatible with nearby residential and business areas, and to enhance the desirability of the proposed developments for the site residents and users, and for abutting neighbors and businesses.

**18.23.020 Trash Disposal and Recycling**

Assure that development provides adequate and accessible interior areas or exterior enclosures for the storage of trash and recyclable materials in appropriate containers, and that trash disposal and recycling areas are located as far from abutting residences as is reasonably possible.

**Project Consistency**

*Consistency will be finalized prior to recommendation on this formal application.*

**18.23.030 Lighting**

To minimize the visual impacts of lighting on abutting or nearby residential sites and from adjacent roadways.

**18.23.040 Late Night Uses and Activities**

The purpose is to restrict retail or service commercial businesses abutting (either directly or across the street) or within 50 feet of residentially zoned properties or properties with existing residential uses located within nonresidential zones, with operations or activities between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Operations subject to this code may include, but are not limited to, deliveries, parking lot and sidewalk cleaning, and/or clean up or set up operations, but does not include garbage pick up.

**18.23.050 Visual, Screening and Landscaping**

Privacy of abutting residential properties or properties with existing residential uses located within nonresidential zones (residential properties) should be protected by screening from public view all mechanical equipment and service areas. Landscaping should be used to integrate a project design into the surrounding neighborhood, and to provide privacy screening between properties where appropriate.

**18.23.060 Noise and Vibration****Project Consistency**

The requirements and guidelines regarding noise and vibration impacts are intended to protect residentially zoned properties or properties with existing residential uses located within nonresidential zones (residential properties) from excessive and unnecessary noises and/or vibrations from any sources in abutting industrial or commercially zoned properties. Design of new projects should reduce noise from parking, loading, and refuse storage areas and from heating, ventilation, air conditioning apparatus, and other machinery on nearby residential properties. New equipment, whether mounted on the exterior of the building or located interior to a building, which requires only a building permit, shall also be subject to these requirements.

**18.23.070 Parking**

The visual impact of parking shall be minimized on adjacent residentially zoned properties or properties with existing residential uses located within nonresidential zones.

**18.23.080 Vehicular, Pedestrian and Bicycle Site Access**

The guidelines regarding site access impacts are intended to minimize conflicts between residential vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle uses and more intensive traffic associated with commercial and industrial districts, and to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle connections through and adjacent to the project site.

**18.23.090 Air Quality**

The requirements for air quality are intended to buffer residential uses from potential sources of odor and/or toxic air contaminants.

**18.23.100 Hazardous Materials**

In accordance with Titles 15 and 17 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, minimize the potential hazards of any use on a development site that will entail the storage, use or handling of hazardous materials (including hazardous wastes) on-site in excess of the exempt quantities prescribed in Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.95, and Title 15 of this code.



# Architectural Review Board

## Staff Report (ID # 8875)

**Report Type:** Action Items **Meeting Date:** 3/15/2018

**Summary Title:** 3223 Hanover Street: New Office/R&D Building (1st Formal)

**Title:** PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 3223 Hanover Street [17PLN-00225]: Consideration of a Major Architectural Review to Allow the Construction of a new two-Story 67,200 Square Foot Office / R&D Building. Environmental Assessment: An Initial Study is Being Prepared in Accordance With the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Zoning District: RP (Research Park) and RP(L) (Research Park with Landscape Combining District). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Graham Owen at [graham.owen@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:graham.owen@cityofpaloalto.org)

**From:** Hillary Gitelman

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) take the following action(s):

1. Recommend continuance of the Architectural Review application to a date uncertain and provide recommendations to the applicant for how to better meet the findings for approval.

### Report Summary

The application is a request for major architectural review of a new 67,202 square foot (sf), two-story office/R&D building and associated site improvements. The Board previously reviewed a project on March 2, 2017 for a new 115,500 sf two story office/R&D building on the site, which is currently going through the Building permitting process. The subject proposal is considered a second phase to the previously approved project, and would add to, rather than replace, the previous proposal. The site is located on Hanover Street in the Stanford Research Park and shares a rear lot line with several single family residences along Matadero Avenue. The site has a Comprehensive Plan land use designation of Research / Office Park, and is zoned Research Park (RP) with a 50 foot Landscape Combining District (L) along the rear lot line.

Staff recommends the project be continued to allow for refinements to the site plan that allow for enhanced pedestrian connectivity and refinements to the proposed surface parking lot.

## Background

### Project Information

Owner:	Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University
Architect:	Bob Giannini, Form4 Architecture
Representative:	Allison Koo, Sand Hill Property Company
Legal Counsel:	N/A

### Property Information

Address:	3223 Hanover Street
Neighborhood:	Stanford Research Park
Lot Dimensions & Area:	10.17 acres (781 feet in width along Hanover Street, 570 feet in depth)
Housing Inventory Site:	No
Located w/in a Plume:	No
Protected/Heritage Trees:	Yes
Historic Resource(s):	No
Existing Improvement(s):	None, previous buildings demolished in 2017
Existing Land Use(s):	Vacant, 115,500 sf office/R&D building including 5,500 sf of amenity space. Currently entitled and in Building permitting process.
Adjacent Land Uses & Zoning:	North: Research Park (Office / R&D Buildings) West: Research Park (Office / R&D Buildings) East: Residential Estate (Single Family Residences) South: Research Park (Office / R&D Buildings) and Residential Estate (Single Family Residences)
Aerial View of Property:	



Source: Google Maps

#### Land Use Designation & Applicable Plans

Zoning Designation:	Research Park (RP) with Landscape Combining District (L) along the rear
Comp. Plan Designation:	Research / Office Park
Context-Based Design Criteria:	Not applicable
Downtown Urban Design Guide:	Not applicable
South of Forest Avenue Coordinated Area Plan:	Not applicable
Baylands Master Plan:	Not applicable
El Camino Real Design Guidelines (1976 / 2002):	Not applicable
Proximity to Residential Uses or Districts (150'):	Yes, single family residences are adjacent to the site
Located w/in the Airport Influence Area:	Not applicable

#### Prior City Reviews & Action

City Council:	None
PTC:	None
HRB:	None
ARB:	March 2, 2017: ARB reviewed and recommended approval of a 115,500 sf office/R&D building on the site (Project #16PLN-00190). A link to the staff report is included here: <a href="https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/56127">https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/56127</a> . A copy of the staff report without attachments is included in Attachment F, and meeting minutes from the March 2, 2017 hearing are included in Attachment G.

## Project Description

The site is located on the eastern edge of the Stanford Research Park, across Hanover Street from the HP Campus and adjacent along the rear property line are four single family homes on Matadero Avenue. Until May 2016, the site constituted the northeastern portion of a larger 25 acre lease area occupied by Lockheed Martin offices and R&D facilities. Hanover Street slopes uphill towards the southwest in the vicinity of the site, and the 25 acre lease area was terraced into three levels containing two groupings of buildings. The lease lines were reconfigured in May 2016<sup>1</sup>, and the 10.17 acre subject site constitutes two of these terraces: an upper terrace containing the existing buildings that were demolished in 2017, and a lower terrace with a surface parking lot and vehicular access to the site.

Previously Approved Project (16PLN-00190): On March 2, 2017, the Architectural Review Board recommended to the Planning Director approval of a project (Application #16PLN-00190) proposing to demolish the buildings on the site and construct a two-story, 110,000 sf office/R&D building with an additional 5,500 sf of traffic-mitigating amenity space. The Planning Director approved this project on March 22, 2017 following the ARB hearing and the conclusion of the circulation period for the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project. In addition to the 115,500 sf building, the project included the construction of a new two-level underground parking garage to be built beneath the higher terrace on the site, which would be covered at grade with a plaza containing landscaping, tables, and walkways. The proposal also included the removal of the existing surface parking lot that occupies the majority of the lower terrace in favor of a wildflower meadow for this area. A bicycle and pedestrian pathway was proposed with the application that connected the site to the adjacent Bol Park Bicycle Path to the north of the site. The site plan for this previous project is included for reference on Sheet MP 1.4 in the plan set for the current project (17PLN-00255).

Current Proposal (17PLN-00255): The current application was filed on July 18, 2017, and includes a new 67,202 sf office/R&D building with 3,783 sf of traffic mitigating amenity space oriented parallel to the previously approved building. The new building utilizes the same

<sup>1</sup> In conformance with the Subdivision Map Act, commercial lease parcels are not subject to City review. As agreed by Stanford and the City, these lease parcel changes will be tracked through the Mayfield Development Agreement annual reporting process.



architectural forms, materials, and colors as the previous project, which includes the use of inverted gable “butterfly” roof forms, metal canopy overhangs, glass curtain walls, blue-colored cornices, and wood soffits. The building is situated at the center of the site and on the upper terrace, and occupies an area above the underground parking garage previously proposed for a large patio. The building placement reduces the size and encloses the patio area, which is now framed on several sides by the two buildings. The wildflower meadow previously proposed for the lower terrace is now proposed to remain a surface parking lot, which is the existing condition. The existing trees in the parking lot would be removed and replaced in new island planters. As with the previous proposal, vehicles access the site from Hanover Street using the existing driveway entrance. As a component of the project, the applicant is proposing to enhance the Bol Park Bicycle Path along the site perimeter with new asphalt surfacing, perennial plantings, and seating walls. The application also retains a bicycle and pedestrian path linking the site to the Bol Park Bicycle Path that was proposed with the previous application.

#### Requested Entitlements, Findings and Purview:

The following discretionary applications are being requested:

- Architectural Review – Major (AR): The process for evaluating this type of application is set forth in PAMC 18.77.070. AR applications are reviewed by the ARB and recommendations are forwarded to the Planning & Community Environment Director for action within five business days of the Board’s recommendation. Action by the Director is appealable to the City Council if filed within 14 days of the decision. AR projects are evaluated against specific findings. All findings must be made in the affirmative to approve the project. Failure to make any one finding requires project redesign or denial. The findings to approve an AR application are provided in Attachment C.

## **Analysis<sup>2</sup>**

### Neighborhood Setting and Character

The site is located on the eastern edge of the Stanford Research Park, and is surrounded on three sides by two-story office / R&D buildings of various sizes and ages. The site also backs up to single family residences to the east, which are separated from the site by an existing forested landscape edge. The previously approved project included several design elements intended to buffer the use from these residences, including enhanced screening landscaping and earthen berms, a gradual change in grade to prevent noise associated with vehicles downshifting while ascending from the lower to the upper platform, and automatically timed window shades to prevent nighttime glare. These features/conditions would carry-over to the current proposal.

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<sup>2</sup> The information provided in this section is based on analysis prepared by the report author prior to the public hearing. The Architectural Review Board in its review of the administrative record and based on public testimony may reach a different conclusion from that presented in this report and may choose to make alternative findings. A change to the findings may result in a final action that is different from the staff recommended action in this report.

The placement of the new structure would reflect the previous pattern of development on the site, with two buildings situated on the upper terrace and a surface parking lot located on the lower terrace. The scale of the building as viewed from the public street would be in keeping with the previously-approved building, and is similar in architecture in most respects.

### Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, Area Plans and Guidelines<sup>3</sup>

The Comprehensive Plan includes Goals, Policies, and Programs that guide the physical form of the City. The Comprehensive Plan provides the basis for the City's development regulations and is used by City staff to regulate building and development and make recommendations on projects. Further, ARB Finding #1 requires that the design be consistent and compatible with applicable elements of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan land use designation for the project site is Research / Office Park Office, which allows for research and manufacturing uses. The project is consistent with this designation. The project appears generally consistent with applicable comprehensive plan policies, but additional review is required, in part based on the concerns expressed later in this report.

### Zoning Compliance<sup>4</sup>

A detailed review of the proposed project's consistency with applicable zoning standards has been performed. A summary table is provided in Attachment D. The proposed project complies with the basic development standards for the RP zone, however, the existing parking lot is nonconforming with respect to the City's 50% tree shading requirement (PAMC 18.54.040) and other design deficiencies detailed below. Through the architectural review findings, staff believes these issues should be remedied.

### Multi-Modal Access & Parking

The site is located adjacent to two VTA bus stops on either side of Hanover Street. As a condition of approval for the previous project, these bus stops will be relocated to areas along the site frontage that provide for safer lines of sight near the site drive aisle. From the Hanover Street right-of-way, one main point of access is provided for pedestrians at each terrace level. While these walkways provide sufficient access to each level, staff is concerned that the plan does not provide sufficient access between each terrace level, especially near the site frontage, which could otherwise be the highest pedestrian traffic area. The existing site, for example, provides a staircase between the terraces near the site entrance, which is a positive amenity, and could be replaced with the current application. Additionally, staff is concerned that the number of drive aisles in the parking lot presents an unnecessary number of conflict points and interruptions to the pedestrian and bicyclist paths along the northern side of the main drive aisle. Staff encourages the Board to study the pedestrian and bicycle movements from the surface parking lot to the proposed building to ensure safe, clearly delineated pathways.

<sup>3</sup> The Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan is available online: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/projects/landuse/compplan.asp>

<sup>4</sup> The Palo Alto Zoning Code is available online: [http://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/palo-alto\\_ca](http://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/palo-alto_ca)

The applicant is seeking to retain the 1950s era surface parking lot to support roughly 67,000 square feet of net new building area. Phase I, previously approved, incorporated a below grade parking structure with a thoughtful design supporting appropriate bike, car and pedestrian movement. The existing surface parking lot provides 46 parking spaces beyond the code requirement, inadequate canopy shading and fails to provide safe and convenient access for motorists exiting their cars and entering the proposed development. While staff recognizes the incremental environmental benefits of reusing the surface lot, to support the proposed development, staff recommends at a minimum that the surface lot be reconstructed to meet current parking lot design standards and transportation objectives, which will also serve to enhance environmental protections through improved storm water management, reduce the heat island effect and create more green space.

#### Consistency with Application Findings

The findings required for approval of an architectural review application are provided in Attachment C. At this time, staff is unable to support the project as it fails to meet Finding #4: “The design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and providing for elements that support the building’s necessary operations (e.g. convenient vehicle access to property and utilities, appropriate arrangement and amount of open space and integrated signage, if applicable, etc.)”.

Moreover, staff has some concern that Phase I was intended to include a meadow at the location of the subject surface parking lot. This was a point of discussion at the prior Board hearings and applicant noted its intent and interest in providing the meadow as an environmentally sensitive amenity. While it was understood that this was a temporary installation and that a future redevelopment of the site was contemplated, it was not foreseen that the meadow would never be planted. The applicant is proposing improvements to the Bol Park bike path perhaps to address the loss of the meadow. Staff encourages the Board to consider its comments regarding the meadow (see excerpted transcripts from prior meeting regarding meadow discussion in Attachment G), which was referenced in the findings of the previous approval to consider whether the proposed enhancements on and near the bike path are sufficient. Staff finds the improvements on the applicant’s property to be heading in the right direction, but would like to see attention paid to the adjoining property. The applicant has indicated they have had some initial conversations with the property owner regarding installation of some plantings along the existing wall near this location. Staff would like to see a formal agreement between the two property owners and plan for these improvements, which would include consideration of planting, irrigation, lighting, amenities and maintenance, when the project returns to the Board.

#### **Environmental Review**

The subject project has been assessed in accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the environmental regulations of the City. An initial study is being prepared.

## Public Notification, Outreach & Comments

The Palo Alto Municipal Code requires notice of this public hearing be published in a local paper and mailed to owners and occupants of property within 600 feet of the subject property at least ten days in advance. Notice of a public hearing for this project was published in the *Palo Alto Weekly* on March 2, 2018, which is 13 days in advance of the meeting. Postcard mailing occurred on March 2, 2018, which is 13 days in advance of the meeting.

### Public Comments

As of the writing of this report, no project-related, public comments were received.

## Alternative Actions

In addition to the recommended action, the Architectural Review Board may:

1. Continue the project to a date (un)certain; or
2. Recommend project denial based on revised findings.

### Report Author & Contact Information

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### ARB<sup>5</sup> Liaison & Contact Information

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### Attachments:

- Attachment A: Location Map (PDF)
- Attachment B: Applicant's Project Description (PDF)
- Attachment C: ARB Findings (DOCX)
- Attachment D: Zoning Comparison Table (DOC)
- Attachment E: Performance Criteria (DOCX)
- Attachment F: March 2, 2017 Staff Report for 16PLN-00190 w/o Attachments (PDF)
- Attachment G: March 2, 2017 ARB Meeting Minutes for 16PLN-00190 (DOCX)
- Attachment H: Project Plans (DOCX)

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<sup>5</sup> Emails may be sent directly to the ARB using the following address: [arb@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:arb@cityofpaloalto.org)

## Attachment G

### **Project Plans and Environmental Documents**

Hardcopies of project plans are provided to Board members. These plans are available to the public online and/or by visiting the Planning and Community Environmental Department on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall at 250 Hamilton Avenue.

#### **Directions to review Project plans online:**

1. Go to: <http://bit.ly/PaloAltoPlanningProjects>
2. Scroll down the center of the page and click “View pending projects”
3. Scroll to find “3223 Hanover Street” and click the address link
4. On this project specific webpage you will find a link to the project plans and other important information

#### **Direct Link to Project Webpage:**

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=4198>