Architectural Review Board
Staff Report (ID # 14022)

Report Type: Action Items **Meeting Date:** 3/3/2022

Summary Title: 250 Cambridge Ave: Facade Improvements & DEE

Title: 250 Cambridge Ave [21PLN-00281]: Request for a Minor Board Level Architectural Review to Allow Renovation of the Façade for an Existing Three-Story Office Building to Create a more Inviting Public Entry and Improved Pedestrian Experience. A Design Enhancement Exception (DEE) is Included to Increase the Height of the Building to Allow for Light Monitors to be Installed on the Roof. Zoning District: CC(2)(R). Environmental Assessment: Exempt per Guideline Section 15301. For more information, Contact the Project Planner, Samuel Gutierrez at Samuel.Gutierrez@CityofPaloAlto.org.

From: Jonathan Lait

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

1. Recommend approval of the proposed project to the Director of Planning & Development Services (PDS) based on findings and subject to conditions of approval.

Report Summary
The applicant seeks to revitalize the exterior façade of 250 Cambridge Avenue, within the California Avenue business district on a parcel zoned CC(2)(R). The existing three-story building has been used for office tenants since it was built in 1986. The proposed exterior changes include new materials, refined facade proportions, new landscaping and planter boxes, and new public seating. The project also includes new bicycle parking and associated amenities such as a bike room, lockers, and showers.

The Architectural Review application is paired with a request for a Design Enhancement Exception (DEE). A DEE approval would enable a building height increase to create two new light monitors on the roof, which would exceed the 35 foot height limit by 3 foot 8 inches. Staff

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considers the light monitors an architectural features that are eligible for DEE consideration. The DEE is recommended for approval as it meets the required findings of PAMC 18.76.050.

Overall, the proposed changes to the exterior of the building are compatible, well designed, and present a much-improved façade to the street while providing a more pedestrian-scaled design. The project is shown to meet the applicable findings for approval and is consistent with the applicable zoning and staff is recommending approval to the Director of Planning & Development Services.

Background

The project is located on the northwest side of Cambridge Ave between Birch St and Park Blvd, directly across the street from the US Post Office and a City public parking structure. The project site is also directly adjacent to RM-30 zoned residential properties that include a range of single-family to multi-family uses. The character of the subject block is a mixture of retail businesses, commercial offices, and public facilities that range from one to three stories in height with painted stucco, exposed brick, and rectangular forms. Parking for the site is provided via an existing below-grade parking garage and past California Parking Assessment District parking spaces.

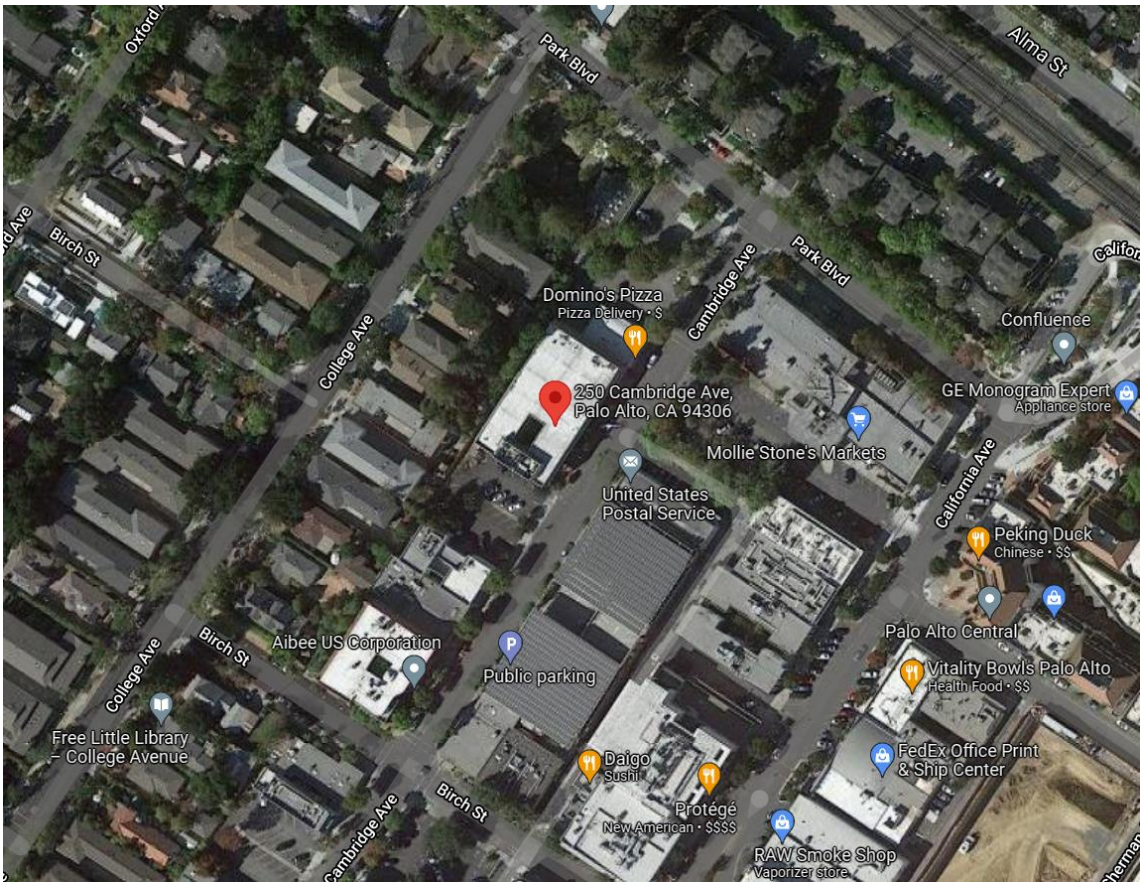
Project Information

Owner:	250 Cambridge Associates, LLC c/o Tarlton Properties, Inc.
Architect:	Heather Young/ Heather Young Architects
Representative:	N/A
Legal Counsel:	N/A

Property Information

Address:	250 Cambridge Ave
Neighborhood:	Ventura
Lot Dimensions & Area:	100’ x 150’; 15,000 sf
Housing Inventory Site:	N/A
Located w/in a Plume:	No
Protected/Heritage Trees:	Three Street Trees along Cambridge Ave
Historic Resource(s):	No
Existing Improvement(s):	34,438 sf; Three Stories; 42’ 4” (top of mech housing); Built 1986
Existing Land Use(s):	General Office Use
Adjacent Land Uses & Zoning:	North: RM-30 (Multi-Family & Single Family Residential) & CC(2)(R) (Retail) West: RM-30 (Multi-Family & Single Family Residential) & PF(R) (Parking Facility) East: CC(2)(R) (Retail) South: PF (Parking Facility) & PC-4127 (Parking Facility)

Aerial View of Property:



Source: https://www.google.com/maps

Land Use Designation & Applicable Plans

Zoning Designation:	Community Commercial (2) Subdistrict, Retail Combining District; [CC(2)(R)]
Comp. Plan Designation:	Community Commercial [CC]
Context-Based Design Criteria:	N/A
Downtown Urban Design Guide:	N/A
South of Forest Avenue Coordinated Area Plan:	N/A
Baylands Master Plan:	N/A
El Camino Real Design Guidelines (1976 / 2002):	N/A
Proximity to Residential Uses or Districts (150'):	Yes, rear property line abuts RM-30 Residential Zone & Uses
Located w/in the Airport Influence Area:	N/A

Prior City Reviews & Action

City Council:	None
PTC:	None
HRB:	None
ARB:	None

Project Description

The applicant requests Minor Board Level Architectural Review of a façade revitalization on an existing three-story office building located at 250 Cambridge Ave, zoned CC(2)(R). The exterior changes include new materials and refined facade proportions to create a more inviting public entry and improved pedestrian experience. The request for a Design Enhancement Exception (DEE) is to increase the height of a portion of the existing roof to allow for two new light monitors to be installed on the roof. The monitors would extend 3'8" above the 35' height limit.

Requested Entitlements, Findings, and Purview:

The following discretionary applications are 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 applicable finding requires project redesign or denial. The findings to approve an AR application are provided in Attachment B.

- A Design Enhancement Exception (DEE) is allowed per PAMC 18.76.050 to allow a minor exception to zoning regulations to enhance the design of a proposed project without altering the function or use of the site, or its impact on surrounding properties; or enable the preservation of the architectural style of existing improvements on the site. A DEE may be granted to adjust site development and parking and loading requirements to enhance the appearance and design of commercial and multiple-family development and other development subject to architectural review. Items for which DEE may be granted include, but are not limited to, roof elements & design, bay windows, columns, arcades, fountains, art, balconies, stairs, entry features, and other minor architectural elements and design features.

  A DEE can allow limited minor changes to the setback, daylight plane, height, lot coverage limitations, parking lot design, landscaping configuration, and in the required proportion between private & common open space. A DEE shall not be granted that would increase floor area, decrease the number of required parking spaces, decrease the amount of required on-site landscaping, or decrease the required open space.

Analysis[1]

Neighborhood Setting and Character

The project is located on the northwest side of Cambridge Ave between Birch St and Park Blvd, directly across the street from the US Post Office and a City public parking structure. This Cambridge Ave block has a mixture of retail businesses, commercial offices, and public facilities that range from one to three stories in height. The architectural finishes and massing of the adjacent buildings include painted stucco and exposed brick, in rectangular forms. The current building form is long and linear, with unvaried massing at the third floor which transitions to a façade that engages the ground only at the parking garage entry. The street is lined with trees on both sides including three street trees in front of the project site.

The existing façade (shown above) has a brutalist design style where the bare building materials and structural elements are displayed with no decorative design elements. This building is not designed to a pedestrian scale; in particular, large openings to the building are presented as two-story elements. These make the building feel larger than it truly is from the sidewalk. The dark mirrored windows do not allow any views into the building. These are not consistent with the design standards of the Retail (R) combining district, where exterior ground floor windows are required to use transparent glazing to the extent feasible. The building is built to the front and side property lines and has a ten foot rear setback. Parking spaces for the site are located below grade, and within the parking assessment district.[2]

Exterior Improvements:

The applicant seeks to update the exterior façade of the building by changing the scale of the design elements and providing more relief in the massing. Adjustments will be made to the street-facing façade walls, with new glazing and recessed balconies will be installed. These façade changes will create variation and minor articulation, to improve the existing façade,

[1] 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.

[2] California Ave Parking Assessment District terminated in 2014. Past assessment district parking spaces or "credits" are continued today, no new assessment parking spaces are able to be purchased.

which is very flat. The ground floor entry would receive updated landscaping and public seating, and the support pillars would be adjusted.

Proposed materials include fiber cement panels (Equitone panels) in a smooth, natural, warm-colored panel around the building entry and a ribbed neutral color panel for the rest of the façade. The cement panels would be installed to create ventilation to avoid thermal bridges, condensation, and mold growth. These panels would have airflow behind them, and thereby reduce thermal gain from sun exposure. The cement panels are made of a natural composite that is non-combustible and is rated to last for at least 50 years. These panels are through-colored material which allows them to be weather resistant and hold their color.

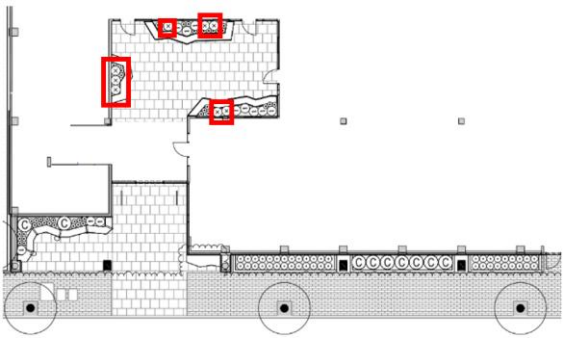
The existing design has two architectural pieces; the ground floor has a recess and the upper floors are built close to the property line. The proposed changes break the building façade into three sections: left side, middle, and right side. Though there are three pieces to the building, the proposed pieces are intended to work well together with compatible light and natural colors and materials, providing contrast and interest in the building façade (see image on the following page). The interior of the recessed entry would be finished with a warm wood-like composite material from the soffit down the new wall facing the city parking lot. The wood-like material would complement the new wood public seating benches, which would be attached to the new planter boxes. This would create a warmer, more pedestrian-friendly appearance for the entry of the building. The existing ribbon windows would be replaced with new taller windows along the third floor, opening the building to the street, completing the renewal of the façade.

Landscaping & Trees

The project site has limited open space. The 12 existing trees, located along the northern end of the rear property line, would remain. The project also has three street trees along the

Cambridge Ave sidewalk at the front of the building; these would also remain with the project. The existing planters have a high and angled concrete design that are not pedestrian in scale. The existing planters are to be replaced with new lower height planters that have wooden features (including the new continuous benches, sheet L2.1). The proposed landscaping will be lower to the ground and more pedestrian in scale, making the street level portion of the building more open and inviting.

Of the five proposed plant species, four are native California species. The lone non-native plant is Dianella Revoluta, a long grass-like shrub native to Australia (see areas in red in the table below). Though a non-native, only eight of these will be planted within the open atrium of the ground floor. This flowering plant species meets the low water usage requirement for landscaping and the habitat requirement; however, due to its interior atrium placement, it is unlikely to function as a habitat-forming plant. Instead, the Dianella Revoluta and the other interior atrium plants would function more like interior, ornamental plants. The four other species, to be planted along the front of the building within the new exterior planters, meet the AR findings for landscaping. These are California natives, habitat-forming, and have low watering needs.

Type	*Native*	*Habitat Forming*	*Water Use*	*Landscape Plan*
Gandelaria Lilacina	yes	flowering/ pollinators	low	
Dianella Revoluta	no	flowering/ pollinators	low	
Bouteloua Blonde Ambition	yes	-	low	
Asclepias Speciosa	yes	flowering/ pollinators	low	
Achillea Millefolium Californicum	yes	flowering/ pollinators	low	

In addition, the proposed landscaping appears to have compatibility with the proposed façade design change, which is more pedestrian in scale and modern via the new planter boxes with integrated public seating.

Zoning Compliance[3]

Staff performed a detailed review of the proposed project's consistency with applicable zoning standards. A summary table is provided in Attachment D. The proposed project complies with all applicable codes or is seeking through the requested permits permission to deviate from certain code standards, in a manner that is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.

[3] The Palo Alto Zoning Code is available online: http://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/palo-alto_ca

The floor area ratio (FAR) of the building would be reduced via this project and bring the site closer to compliance with the maximum allowed FAR of 30,000 sf (2.0 FAR max in CC(2) zone). The existing FAR is 34,348 sf. Minor FAR is replaced to allow for street façade support beam/pillars to be adjusted in thickness, and the addition of a thickened wall at the ground floor (sheets A.5 & A.17). The project would remove 279 sf of FAR via changes to the 3rd floor where the new recessed balconies are proposed. The project does not change the setbacks; no changes to the existing building footprint are proposed.

Design Enhancement Exception (DEE)
The requested Design Enhancement Exception (DEE) would enable two new rooftop light monitors (clear story skylights) to exceed the maximum height of the building by 3' 8" (to reach 38' 8"). The tallest portion of the building is the southwestern tower-like feature where the roof equipment surround/screening reaches 42' 4" (6' 8" over the 35' height limit). The site's 35' height limit is due to the adjacent RM-30 zoned properties to the west of the project site; thish triggers a reduction of the 37' standard height limit to 35'.[4]

A DEE is allowed per PAMC 18.76.050 for the purpose of allowing a minor exception to zoning regulations that will:

1. Enhance the design of a proposed project without altering the function or use of the site, or its impact on surrounding properties; or
2. Enable the preservation of the architectural style of existing improvements on the site.

Attachment B provides required approval findings. The rooftop light monitors would not raise the entire roof, only a portion of the roof. The DEE process allows for minor height changes. The light monitors would:

- not increase FAR
- not cause any changes to the required parking spaces, landscaping, or open space on site.
- allow additional natural light to enter into the building without increasing rear window openings, which face the rear yard of residential properties.
- enhance the interior environment of the building
- allow improved energy savings (better than if additional windows were added along the rear and sides of the building).

Finally, the DEE request is a minor, additional architectural feature that will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, general welfare, or convenience. Staff believes that the requested DEE is within the context of the intent of the DEE process.

Multi-Modal Access & Parking

[4] PAMC 18.16.060(a) table 3, CC(2) Maximum Height within 150 ft. of a residential district (other than an RM-40 or PC zone) abutting or located within 50 feet of the site

The applicant proposes no changes to the pedestrian and vehicle access to the site, nor any changes to the below-grade parking facility. The project includes new short-term bicycle parking; two bicycle racks are proposed near the front entry (for a total of four parking spaces). Additionally, the project includes a new bicycle storage room; this enables 11 long-term bicycle parking spaces (sheet A.6 & A34). The bicycle room is located within the below-grade parking garage and provides lockers for employees who bike to work to store belongings. Another improvement associated with bicycle parking is the upgrade to the bathrooms, which feature new showers for employee use. These improvements bring the project site closer to compliance in terms of bicycle parking, and meet the requirement for employee showers for commercial office buildings. Given the project site's proximity to the Cal Ave Caltrain Station, VTA stops along El Camino Real, and access from Evergreen Park, Southgate, College Terrace, and the Ventura neighborhoods, these bicycle amenity improvements are welcomed and would promote cycling as a mode of transportation to and from the project site.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, Area Plans, and Guidelines[5]

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, AR Finding #1 requires the design to be consistent and compatible with applicable elements of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan land use designation for the project site is Regional/Community Commercial (CC). In general, the CC land use designation is intended for shopping centers and districts that have a wider variety of goods and services than the neighborhood shopping areas. Non-retail uses such as medical offices, software development, residential, mixed-use projects, may also be located in this land use designation. The existing building has long been occupied by office uses. Office uses are allowed uses per the CC(2)(R) zoning designation. The applicant does not seek to change uses with this application.

On balance, the project is consistent with several policies in the Comprehensive Plan such as:

- Policy L-4.4: The project better scales the building with the pedestrian environment and adds new public seating,
- Policy T-1.16 & Program T5.12.1: The project includes new bicycle amenities to facilitate the use of bicycles as a mode of travel to and from the site.

Attachment B provides a detailed review of the project's consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the applicable findings.

Overall, the project meets the applicable findings for approval and is consistent with the applicable zoning, given the DEE request's consistency with the DEE intent and the project's eligibility for DEE approval. Attachment D provides draft conditions of approval.

[5] The Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan is available online: http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/projects/landuse/compplan.asp

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. Specifically, the project is exempted from the California Environmental Quality Act under the Class 1 15301 Existing Facilities exemption as this project is proposing exterior alterations to an existing building that does not expand the existing use.

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 *Daily Post* on February 18, which is 13 days in advance of the meeting. Postcard mailing occurred on February 16, which is 15 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. Approve the project with modified findings or conditions;
2. Continue the project to a date (un)certain; or

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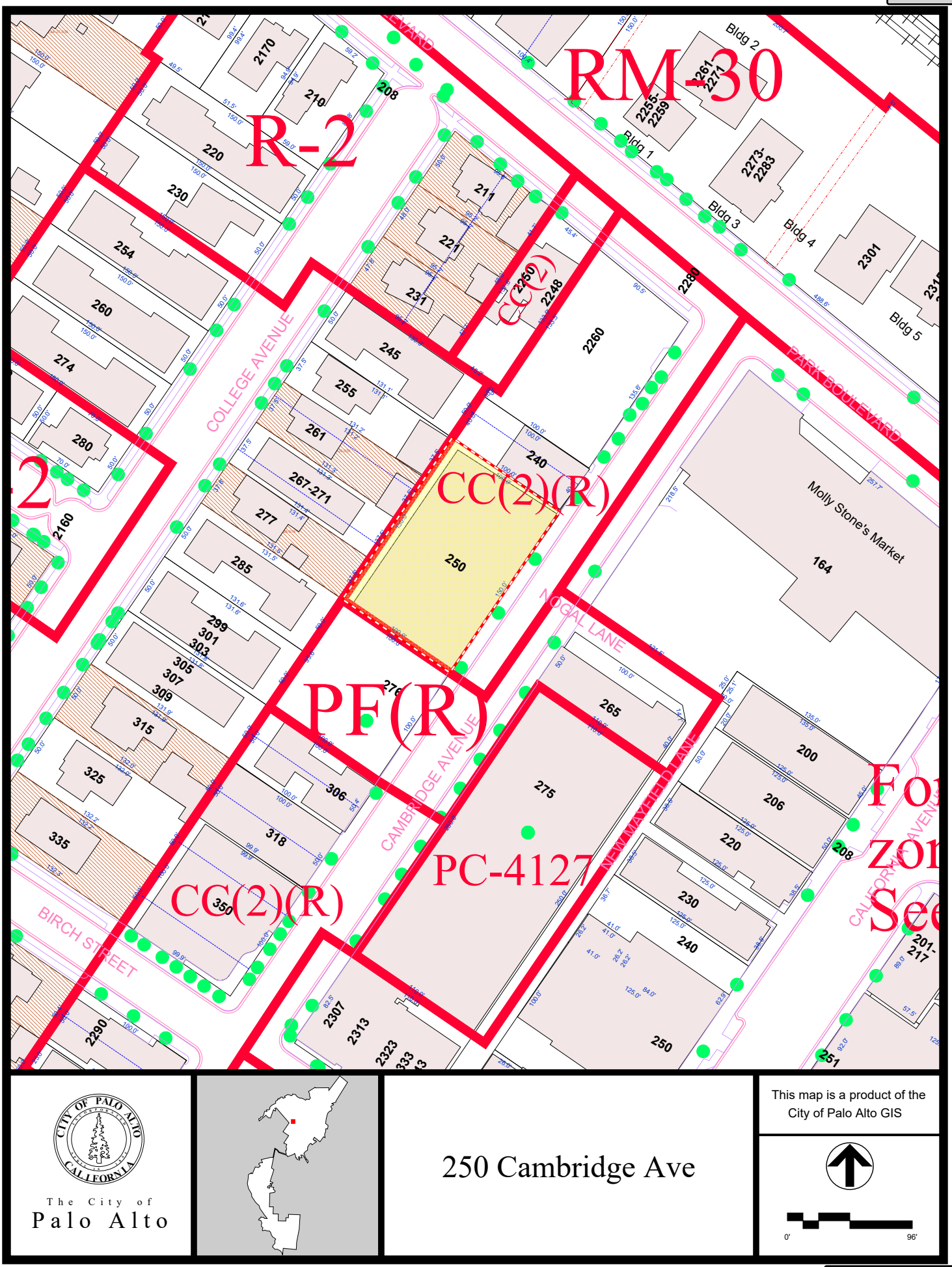
ARB[6] Liaison & Contact Information
Jodie Gerhardt, AICP, Planning Manager
(650) 329-2575
jodie.gerhardt@cityofpaloalto.org

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Location Map (PDF)
- Attachment B: Zoning Comparison Table (DOCX)
- Attachment C: ARB and DEE Findings (DOCX)
- Attachment D: Conditions of Approval (DOCX)
- Attachment E: Applicant Request Letter (PDF)
- Attachment F: Project Plans (DOCX)

[6] Emails may be sent directly to the ARB using the following address: arb@cityofpaloalto.org



The City of Palo Alto

250 Cambridge Ave

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ATTACHMENT #
ZONING COMPARISON TABLE
250 Cambridge Ave, 21PLN-00281

Table 1: COMPARISON WITH CHAPTER 18.16 (CC(2) DISTRICT)
Exclusively Non-residential Development Standards

Regulation	Required	Existing	Proposed
Minimum Site Area, width and depth	No Requirement	15,000 sf	No Change
Minimum Front Yard	0-10 feet to create an 8-12 foot effective sidewalk width (1), (2), (8)	~0 ft setback with 9 ft 2 in sidewalk	No Change
Rear Yard	No Requirement	10 ft	No Change
Interior Side Yard (left & right)	No Requirement	0 ft	No Change
Min. yard for lot lines abutting or opposite residential districts or residential PC districts	10 feet (2)	~9 ft 3 in	No Change
Build-to-lines	50% of frontage built to front setback(7)	100% along Cambridge Ave	No Change
Max. Site Coverage	No Requirement		No Change
Max. Building Height	35 feet Within 150 ft. of a residential district(4)	34 ft 8 inches to parapet	**Roof light monitors increase to 38 feet 8 in tall (3 ft 8 in increase) – DEE required**
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	2.0:1 (30,000 sf)	2.295:1 (34,438 sf)	2.277:1 (34,159 sf, 279 sf loss)
Daylight Plane for lot lines abutting one or more residential zone districts other than an RM-40 or PC Zone	10 ft at the property with 45 degree angle due to single family uses in the adjacent RM-30 zone (6)	Not compliant	No Change (Roof Light Monitors do not increase any non-compliance with the daylight plane due to their offset to the edge of the building)

(1) No parking or loading space, whether required or optional, shall be located in the first 10 feet adjoining the street property line of any required yard.
(2) Any minimum front, street side, or interior yard shall be planted and maintained as a landscaped screen excluding areas required for access to the site. A solid wall or fence between 5 and 8 feet in height shall be constructed along any common interior lot line..
(4) As measured to the peak of the roof or the top of a parapet; penthouses and equipment enclosures may exceed this height limit by a maximum of five feet, but shall be limited to an area equal to no more than ten percent of the site area and shall not intrude into the daylight plane.
(6) The initial height and slope shall be identical to those of the most restrictive residential zone abutting the site line in question.
(7) 25 foot driveway access permitted regardless of frontage, build-to requirement does not apply to CC district.
(8) A 12 foot sidewalk width is required along El Camino Real frontage

Table 1: COMPARISON WITH CHAPTER 18.16 (CC(2) DISTRICT) continued
Exclusively Non-residential Development Standards

Topic	Requirement	Proposed
Hours of Operation (18.16.040 (b))	Businesses with activities any time between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. shall be required to obtain a conditional use permit. The director may apply conditions of approval as are deemed necessary to assure compatibility with the nearby residentially zoned property	Standard business hours, no late night activities requested
Recycling Storage (18.16.040 (i))	All new development, including approved modifications that add thirty percent or more floor area to existing uses, shall provide adequate and accessible interior areas or exterior enclosures for the storage of recyclable materials in appropriate containers. The design, construction and accessibility of recycling areas and enclosures shall be subject to approval by the architectural review board, in accordance with design guidelines adopted by that board and approved by the city council pursuant to Section 18.76.020.	Existing on-site
Employee Showers (18.16.040 (j))	Medical, Professional, and General Business Offices, Financial Services, Business and Trade Schools, General Business Services; 20,000-49,999 Gross Floor Area of New Construction (ft^2) = 2 showers required	Two (2) showers

18.16.080 Performance Standards. All development in the CS district shall comply with the performance criteria outlined in Chapter 18.23 of the Zoning Ordinance, including all mixed use development

18.16.090 Context-Based Design Criteria. As further described in a separate attachment, development in a commercial district shall be responsible to its context and compatible with adjacent development, and shall promote the establishment of pedestrian oriented design.

Table 2: CONFORMANCE WITH CHAPTER 18.52 (Off-Street Parking and Loading)
for Retail Services*

Type	Required	Existing	Proposed
Vehicle Parking	1/310 sf of gross floor area for a total of 111 parking spaces	28 spaces, with 85 parking spaces in Cal Ave Parking Assessment District 113 parking spaces	30 parking spaces (accessible parking double counted), with 85 parking spaces in Cal Ave Parking Assessment District 115 parking spaces
Bicycle Parking	1/3,100 sf (60% long term and 40% short term) equals 11 spaces; 7 long term, 4 short term	None	4 short term spaces – legal non-conforming While interior spaces to not count towards Code requirements, the project will provide 11 long term spaces in a new bike room
Loading Space	1 loading spaces for 10,000 - 99,999 sf	None	None - legal non-conforming

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

ATTACHMENT B
ARB FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL
250 Cambridge Ave
21PLN-00281

The design and architecture of the proposed improvements, as conditioned, complies with the Findings for Architectural Review as required in Chapter 18.76 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.

The project is consistent with Finding #1 because:

The proposed project complies with the zoning code as proposed. The project is subject to the Baylands Design Guidelines due to the project sites location. The proposed project is generally consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan, below is an analysis of the applicable goals and policies:

Comp Plan Goals and Policies	***How project adheres or does not adhere to Comp Plan***
The Comprehensive Plan land use designation for the site is Regional/Community Commerical (CC).	The project does not change the existing land use of the building which is office use.
Land Use and Community Design	
Goal L-1 A compact and resilient city providing residents and visitors with attractive neighborhoods, workplaces, shopping districts, public facilities, and open spaces.	The project is proposing changes to an existing building historically used for offices to improve its exterior façade, contributing to the improvement of the surrounding area. The changes proposed in the project maintain the overall size of the building which is compatible with the varied neighborhood character of commercial and government buildings that are single story and multi-story. The proposed changes to the exterior of the building seek to change the street façade to better scale it with the pedestrian environment and add new public seating (benches).
Policy L-3.1 Ensure that new or remodled structures are compatible with the neighborhood and the adjacent structures. **Policy L-4.4** Ensure all Regional Centers and Multi-Neighborhood Centers provide centrally located gathering spaces that create a sense of identity and encourage economic revitalization. Encourage public amenities such as benches, street trees, kiosks, restrooms and public art	

Policy L-4.10 Maintain the existing scale, character and function of the California Avenue business district as a shopping, service and office center intermediate in function and scale between Downtown and the smaller neighborhood business areas.	The project does not increase the size or foot print of the existing building, maintaining the existing pattern of single and multi-story buildings in the area.
Policy T-1.16 Promote personal transportation vehicles as an alternative to cars (e.g. bicycles, skateboards, roller blades) to get to work, school, shopping, recreational facilities and transit stops. **Program T5.12.1** Work with employers, merchants, schools and community service providers, to identify ways to provide more bicycle parking, including e-bike parking with charging stations, near existing shops, services and places of employment.	The project includes new bicycle parking, a bicycle room with lockers for employees to store bicycle equipment, and new employee showers. All of these amenities facilitate the use of bicycles as a mode of travel to and from the site.

The project has also been reviewed for conformance with the development standards in the zoning code and found to be in compliance with the intent and regulations contained therein. A comprehensive review of the project to applicable development standards is included in the administrative record.

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.**

The project is consistent with Finding #2 because:

The area is comprised of various commercial offices, retail, and government facailities that are one to three stories in height. The project proposes to update the exterior of the building to improve its function and appearance, while not changing its FAR or building footprint. The proposed project is consistent with the findings to provide high-quality materials and finishes in that is has a mixture of light and medium neutral colors as part of the palette. The overall visible

building height is not change, though a minor increase in roof height is requested with a DEE for new light monitors that would not be visible from the ground. The design elements of the existing building are changing with the proposed project to better scale the façade to the pedestrian environment. In general, the existing development envelope is being maintained. The building will maintain its function as a office building.

Pursuant to PAMC 18.16.090(b), the following context-based design considerations and findings are applicable to this project. These context-based design criteria are intended to provide additional standards to be used in the design and evaluation of development in a commercial district. The purpose is to encourage development in a commercial district to be responsible to its context and compatibility with adjacent development as well as to promote the establishment of pedestrian-oriented design.

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment

The design of new projects shall promote pedestrian walkability, a bicycle-friendly environment, and connectivity through design elements

The finding can be made in the affirmative in that the proposed project offers short-term and long-term bike parking for visitors and employees. Addionally, a new bicycle room located in the parking garage (no loss of vehicle parking) is proposed that includes a locker room for cyclists to store equipment. The project also includes amenity showers for employees to use. These bicycle focused amenities further promote bicycling as a mode of travel to the project site, which is in close proximity to bike lanes, Cal Ave Caltrain, and El Camino Real VTA bus stations.

2. Street Building Facades

Street facades shall be designed to provide a strong relationship with the sidewalk and the street (s), to create an environment that supports and encourages pedestrian activity through design elements

The project meets this finding as the changes to the façade includes façade elements that are pedestrian in scale. Also, the project removes the existing large planter boxes along the street facing façade and proposes new low level planter boxes that include new extensive public seating within the recessed entryway of the building. New light fixtures hang from the soffit of the entryway that function to enhance the entryway for pedestrians during the evening and nighttime hours. Additionally, the project proposed to replace the existing mirror filmed street facing windows with new more transparent windows, creating a more welcoming building experience from the street.

3. Massing and Setbacks

Buildings shall be designed to minimize massing and conform to proper setbacks

This finding is not applicable because the project does not involve changes to the site plan setbacks or the building footprint.

4. Low-Density Residential Transitions

Where new projects are built abutting existing lower scale residential development, care shall be taken to respect the scale and privacy of neighboring properties

This finding is applicable as this project site is directly adjacent to RM-30 zoned residential properties that vary from single-family to multifamily uses. The project does not increase the size of the building or its footprint. The project does not propose any changes to the exterior facades that faced the rear yard of the neighboring RM-30 zoned properties. Instead, the project only includes changes to the street façade windows and includes a DEE request to allow for the installation of new light monitors on the roof that are hidden from view due to their setbacks from the edges of the building and the existing parapets. These changes allow more natural light into the building without increasing any window openings or adding windows that would have sightlines to the adjacent residential rear yards.

5. Project Open Space

Private and public open space shall be provided so that it is usable for the residents and visitors of the site

The finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project provides a private outdoor amenity space for employees to gather during breaks via the existing rear yard open space, the newly proposed street-facing balconies, and the public seating area proposed within the recessed entry area of the ground floor.

6. Parking Design

Parking shall be accommodated but shall not be allowed to overwhelm the character of the project or detract from the pedestrian environment

This finding is not applicable as the existing parking is provided via a below-grade garage and no changes to the garage in terms of vehicle parking or the design of the garage are proposed.

7. Large Multi-Acre Sites

Large sites (over one acre) shall be designed so that street, block, and building patterns are consistent with those of the surrounding neighborhood

This site is less than an acre and does not include new development. Therefore, this context-based criteria is not applicable.

8. Sustainability and Green Building Design

Project design and materials to achieve sustainability and green building design should be incorporated into the project

The finding can be made in the affirmative in that the building will satisfy the requirements for CALGreen Mandatory + Tier 2 in accordance with the City's Green Building Regulations. Additionally, the project includes a façade concrete panel that allows for airflow behind the panels

which has a positive effect on lowering heat gain from sun exposure. The project also includes new landscaping that consists of California native and low water use plants. The project also includes substantial improvement to the bicycle parking and amenities on-site. These includes new short-term bike racks at the ground floor entry, new long-term bicycle parking within the new bike room that includes lockers, and new showers located within the bathrooms. The proposed changes to the site would allow for bicycling as a mode of travel to and from the site to be easier and would equal less vehicle GHG being produced by visitors and employees to the site who use bicycles. This is demonstrated on the GB sheets in the plan set.

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.

The project is consistent with Finding #3 because:

The project proposes a contemporary style that includes medium and light colors consistent with new façade panels that have either a smooth or textured finish to provide contrast between the different portions of the building. The proposed building façade panels are made of cement panels that are highly durable materials and have integrated colors that are rated to last for over 50 years. Additional materials include wooden-like panels for soffit within the recesses of the façade, which complement the new planter boxes and wooden benches that are located within the ground floor recessed entry. The changes to the street façade also include changes to the existing rounded support pillars where they are proposed to be squared and a new wall at the south end of the recessed entry adjacent to the City parking lot. This creates a separation from the parking lot to the new landscaping and public seating area. The street-facing glazing is replaced with larger windows to open the building façade up along with two recessed balconies on the third floor. Compared to the existing building, the project's changes to the façade appear to create three pieces to the building that are compatible, while different enough to create interest in the façade, and provide better pedestrian scale. The colors and proposed textures appear to be well integrated into the design of the existing building and modernize its dated brutalist appearance.

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.).

The project is consistent with Finding #4 because:

The project does not create changes to the access of the site. The changes to the façade in terms of the ground floor entry do present a more welcoming pedestrian environment and also provide new short-term bicycle parking at the entry.

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.

The project is consistent with Finding #5 because:

The project will provide a variety of drought-tolerant California native planting along the front of the façade. The proposed plants are appropriate habitats for wildlife as they flower and would be suitable for pollinators. The proposed landscaping enhances the visual appearance of the site and is better scaled with the new façade design over the existing landscaping and planter boxes.

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

The project is consistent with Finding #6 because:

In accordance with the City's Green Building Regulations, the project will satisfy the requirements for CALGreen Mandatory + Tier 2. The project includes new façade materials that allow airflow to past behind the façade panels which allow for better energy efficiency. The landscaping that is proposed is drought-tolerant California native planting.

DEE FINDINGS
250 Cambridge Ave
21PLN-00281

In order for the ARB to make a future recommendation of approval for a design enhancement exception, the project must comply with the following Findings for a Design Enhancement Exception as required in Chapter 18.76.050 of the PAMC.

The required approval findings can be made to support the **Design Enhancement Exception for a 3' 8" height increase for two rooftop light monitors** for the existing building located at 250 Cambridge Avenue.

Finding #1: There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to the property or site improvements involved that do not apply generally to property in the same zone district;

This finding can be made in the affirmative as the existing building height is primarily below the maximum building height of 35 ft when measured to the top of the parapets and the proposed roof-top "light monitors" would exceed the height limit by 3' 8" for a maximum height of 38'-8". The light monitors are to provide additional natural light to the interior of the third floor. While the existing building can add additional windows on the south elevation or to the east elevation, these face the rear yards of RM-30 zoned properties where a mixture of single-family and multifamily uses are located. Rather than increasing the window sizes on the south end of the building and increasing the impacts to privacy of the adjacent residentially zoned properties, the light monitors would allow for additional natural light to enter the building without increasing the vantage point to the residential rear yard, and light monitors are only visible from the upper levels of adjacent buildings. Additionally, the light monitors allow for better energy saving over standard skylights or additional windows being added to the exterior of the south, east, and west facades.

Finding #2: The granting of the application will enhance the appearance of the site or structure, or improve the neighborhood character of the project and preserve an existing or proposed architectural style, in a manner which would not otherwise be accomplished through strict application of the minimum requirements of this title (Zoning) and the architectural review findings set forth in Section 18.76.020(d); and

This finding can be made in the affirmative as the requested DEE for the rooftop light monitors involves a minor 3' 8" increase in height over the allowed 35' maximum height (height limit is due to the adjacent RM-30 zoned properties). Additionally, in context, the tallest portion of the building is the southwestern tower-like feature where the roof equipment surround/screening reaches 42' 4" (6' 8" over the 35' height limit) and is notably visible to the public. The proposed light monitors have been designed to be hidden from street view by existing façade and parapet

heights via a minimum of 18’-10” setback from the surrounding facades and roof parapets. The roof-top monitors enable renovation of the existing structure to be more usable, sustainable, and adaptable. The ability to have additional natural daylight decreases the electrical load without producing reflective glare that can impact adjacent properties. The minor exception does not increase floor area, change parking requirements, landscaping, or lot coverage.

Finding #3: The exception is related to a minor architectural feature or site improvement that will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, general welfare, or convenience.

Granting the DEE request would involve a minor architectural feature that would be added to the roof of the building that will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, general welfare, or convenience. Furthermore, granting the DEE would not negatively impact the privacy and general welfare of the adjacent residentially zoned properties by design as the light monitors do not provide direct views into or from, existing or potentially proposed projects around the property.

Draft Conditions of Approval
250 Cambridge Ave
21PLN-00281

PLANNING DIVISION

1. CONFORMANCE WITH PLANS. Construction and development shall conform to the approved plans entitled, "Exterior Building Improvements" stamped as received by the City on January 18, 2022, on file with the Planning Department, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California except as modified by these conditions of approval.

2. BUILDING PERMIT. Apply for a building permit and meet any and all conditions of the Planning, Fire, Public Works, and Building Departments.

3. BUILDING PERMIT PLAN SET. The ARB approval letter including all Department conditions of approval for the project shall be printed on the plans submitted for the building permit.

4. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: All modifications to the approved project shall be submitted for review and approval prior to construction. If during the Building Permit review and construction phase, the project is modified by the applicant, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the Planning Division/project planner directly to obtain approval of the project modification. It is the applicant's responsibility to highlight any proposed changes to the project and to bring it to the project planner's attention.

5. PARKING. The Project does not involve any loss in vehicle parking, any changes to the parking facility and or total number of parking spaces must first be submitted for review and approval by the Director of Planning & Development Services.

6. LANDSCAPING. The project proposes to change the existing landscaping planters along the frontage to install new planters with public seating. The landscape planter boxes, approved plants, and public seating (benches) are to be installed in compliance with the approved plans. The project also includes 12 existing trees that are located long the rear property line of site which are to remain on site.

7. AMENITY SPACE. The project includes new employee showers, locker room, and a new bicycle room within the parking garage. The addition of employee showers brings the existing building into compliance with PAMC 18.16.060(j) where general business office uses between 20,000-49,999 sf are required to have at least two employee showers. This amenity space is required to remain on site.

8. PROJECT EXPIRATION. The project approval shall automatically expire after two years from the original date of approval if, within such two-year period, the proposed use of the site or the construction of buildings has not commenced pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of the permit or approval. Application for a one-year extension of this entitlement may be made prior to the expiration. (PAMC 18.77.090(a))

9. INDEMNITY: To the extent permitted by law, the Applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the City, its City Council, its officers, employees and agents (the "indemnified parties") from and against any claim, action, or proceeding brought by a third party against the indemnified parties and the applicant to attack, set aside or void, any permit or approval authorized hereby for the Project, including

(without limitation) reimbursing the City for its actual attorneys' fees and costs incurred in defense of the litigation. The City may, in its sole discretion, elect to defend any such action with attorneys of its own choice.

10. FINAL INSPECTION: A Planning Division Final inspection will be required to determine substantial compliance with the approved plans prior to the scheduling of a Building Division final. Any revisions during the building process must be approved by Planning, including but not limited to; materials, landscaping and hard surface locations. Contact your Project Planner, Samuel Gutierrez at samuel.gutierrez@cityofpaloalto.org to schedule this inspection.

PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEERING

11. ENCROACHMENT PERMIT: Any encroachments in the public right-of-way such as sidewalk closures, installation of scaffolding, pedestrian protection structures and tunnels, crane lifts, and so on, shall require an encroachment permit from the Department of Public Works.
See the following link for more information -- https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Public-Works/Engineering-Services/Forms-and-Permits

12. CONSTRUCTION PARKING: Construction staff parking shall be done onsite or in a City parking garage. Street-parking is intended for business operations, their customers, and their deliveries. Long term parking passes may be purchased from the City Revenue Collections Division. Daily parking passes can be purchased from pay stations located in garages.

13. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT STAGING: Shall be stored onsite and not within the public right-of-way. Exception is given on a case-by-case basis for dumpsters which requires an encroachment permit.

Building Department

14. A building permit is required for this project. At time of building permit, please provide the following plans/details/specs/documents/calculations in accordance to the 2019 Ca Building Standards Codes as amended by the City of Palo Alto. Contact building department if there are any submittal or technical questions. Additional information may be required at building permit.

Public Works Urban Forestry

15. TREE PROTECTION COMPLIANCE. The owner and contractor shall implement all protection and inspection schedule measures, design recommendations and construction scheduling as stated in the TPR & Sheet T-1, and is subject to code compliance action pursuant to PAMC 8.10.080. The required protective fencing shall remain in place until final landscaping and inspection of the project. Project arborist approval must be obtained and documented in the monthly activity report sent to the Urban Forester.

16. PLAN CHANGES. Revisions and/or changes to plans before or during construction shall be reviewed and responded to by the (a) project site arborist, or (b) landscape architect with written letter of acceptance before submitting the revision to the Building Department for review by Planning, PW or Urban Forestry.

17. TREE DAMAGE. Tree Damage, Injury Mitigation and Inspections apply to Contractor. Reporting, injury mitigation measures and arborist inspection schedule (1-5) apply pursuant to TTM, Section 2.202.30. Contractor shall be responsible for the repair or replacement of any publicly owned or protected trees that are damaged during the course of construction, pursuant to Title 8 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, and city Tree Technical Manual, Section 2.25.

18. GENERAL. The following general tree preservation measures apply to all trees to be retained: No storage of material, topsoil, vehicles or equipment shall be permitted within the tree enclosure area. The ground under and around the tree canopy area shall not be altered. Trees to be retained shall be irrigated, aerated and maintained as necessary to ensure survival.

19. TREE PROTECTION VERIFICATION. Prior to any site work verification from the contractor that the required protective fencing is in place shall be submitted to the Urban Forestry Section. The fencing shall contain required warning sign and remain in place until final inspection of the project.

20. EXCAVATION RESTRICTIONS APPLY (TTM, Sec. 2.20 C & D). Any approved grading, digging or trenching beneath a tree canopy shall be performed using 'air-spade' method as a preference, with manual hand shovel as a backup. For utility trenching, including sewer line, roots exposed with diameter of 1.5 inches and greater shall remain intact and not be damaged. If directional boring method is used to tunnel beneath roots, then Table 2-1, Trenching and Tunneling Distance, shall be printed on the final plans to be implemented by Contractor.

21. PLAN SET REQUIREMENTS. The final Plans submitted for building permit shall include the following information and notes on relevant plan sheets:

    a. SHEET T-1, BUILDING PERMIT. The building permit plan set will include the City's full-sized, Sheet T-1 (Tree Protection-it's Part of the Plan!), available on the Development Center website at http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/31783. The Applicant shall complete and sign the Tree Disclosure Statement and recognize the Project Arborist Tree Activity Inspection Schedule. Monthly reporting to Urban Forestry/Contractor is mandatory. (Insp. #1: applies to all projects; with tree preservation report: Insp. #1-7 applies)

    b. The Tree Preservation Report (TPR). All sheets of the Applicant's TPR approved by the City for full implementation by Contractor, shall be printed on numbered Sheet T-1 (T-2, T-3, etc) and added to the sheet index.

    c. Plans to show protective tree fencing. The Plan Set (esp. site, demolition, grading & drainage, foundation, irrigation, tree disposition, utility sheets, etc.) must delineate/show the correct configuration of Type I, Type II or Type III fencing around each Regulated Tree, using a bold dashed line enclosing the Tree Protection Zone (Standard Dwg. #605, Sheet T-1; City Tree Technical Manual, Section 6.35-Site Plans); or by using the Project Arborist's unique diagram for each Tree Protection Zone enclosure.

hya HEATHER YOUNG ARCHITECTS

CITY OF PALO ALTO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

250 Cambridge Avenue Exterior Improvements
Project Description

The overall scope of this project consists of a street side façade improvement to an existing 40 year old, 3-story office building in Palo Alto, California. The primary objective is to revitalize the aging building façade with a new, highly curated design highlighted by more refined proportions; use of more sophisticated materials; creating a more inviting public entry to the building and an improved pedestrian experience.

Scope

The scope includes the following improvements;

- Replacing the failing existing Exterior Foam Insulation System(EFIS) with a new and more refined rain screen ventilated façade system
- Re-proportioning of the building façade forms to create a more human scaled massing and rhythm with emphasis on accentuating the pedestrian entry to the building.
- The introduction of new seating and landscaping around the building entry for a more inviting public interface.
- Re-proportioning the glazing at the 3rd floor to bring more daylight into the building and re-placing the existing single pane, mirrored and highly reflective glazing on the entire street façade with new clear, energy efficient insulated glazing.
- Introducing new recessed balconies at the 3rd floor to reduce the linear appearance of the façade.
- The introduction of 2 new north facing roof top light monitors (vertical oriented skylights) to provide natural lighting into the center of a deep and dark floor plate.
- Provide a new secure long term bike parking room and lockers in the below grade parking garage.

Use

The Existing building use is for professional and general business offices and there is no proposed change to that use.

Design Concept

The overarching design concept of this project is to improve the proportions, public interface, energy efficiency, and materials of an older, tired building that is seeing its exterior materials fail. The proposed investment in the public façade of this building solves many of its shortcomings.

81 Encina Avenue, Suite 100, Palo Alto, CA 94301
650-459-3200 / hyarchs.com

The current building form has a long, linear, and unvaried massing at the third floor which transitions to a façade which engages the ground only at the parking garage entry. The façade has no human scaled elements or relief in its massing. This flat façade, coupled with the 2 story thin columns, creates a looming mass at the street and an uncomfortable experience for the pedestrian. Furthermore the recessed space under this massing creates a relatively deep, dark and uninviting entry, which is exacerbated by the unwelcoming dark reflective glass on the façade.

The primary design move is to break up this long and linear façade by pushing the face of the 3rd floor wall back in the middle of the façade breaking the long linear run of EIFS and glazing. This enables the façade to develop varied planes which disrupt the flat, linear nature of the existing condition. The new massing establishes an "A-B-A" rhythm along the street, creating and entry mass (A); a center mass at the 3rd floor (B) and a distinct mass at garage entry (A).

Further improvements at the entry include re-skinning the existing, narrow proportioned columns with a warmer, more contemporary material and rectilinear form. The introduction of a variety seating using organic shaped forms with planters offer amenities to both the building tenants and the public and enhance the entry experience. The organic shaped bench theme continues into the courtyard space just past the entry doors. A warm wood like composite material is proposed to be used at the soffit will continue down the new wall facing the city parking lot. This warm material will further highlight the entry in conjunction with new lighting to make for a rich and welcoming pedestrian experience.

Relationship to existing conditions

The introduction of two recessed balconies at the third floor help to create further depth and variety to façade by providing a play of contrasting shadows. Tenant use of these balconies will further activate these spaces and how the façade engages with the street. In addition, by replacing the existing narrow ribbon windows with re-proportioned taller windows all along the 3rd floor, the balconies will help to mitigate the existing long featureless façade and engage with the street more openly.

Introduction of 2 north facing light monitors on the roof will provide much needed natural lighting the center of a the third floor plate and help to further reduce the lighting and HVAC load requirements for that space, further enhancing the sustainable design approach. The monitors are proposed to be slightly taller that the existing parapet. They are located in the center of the building plan, 19' from the property line and well away from the building perimeter minimizing visibility from the street and nearby surrounding properties.

Materials & Colors

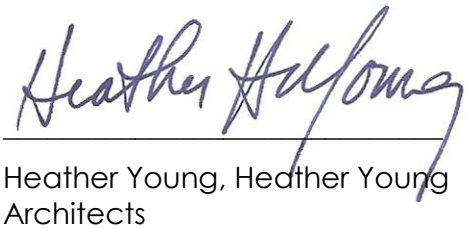
These proposed refined materials include the use of Equitone panels, a stable fiber cement panel, to create a new ventilated façade for the building. The construction principal of incorporating a ventilated "rain-screen" facade helps to avoid thermal bridges in materials and eliminates condensation and mold growth on the exterior envelope. It allows air to freely circulate behind the building panels creating a well

ventilated and comfortable building. In addition to helping create a more consistent insulated envelope, the Equitone panels are a fully natural composite with outstanding physical properties, are non-combustible, and have a life expectancy well beyond 50 years. The Equitone panel is also a through-colored material, which means the material will retain its rich physical color properties over its life-time.

The project proposes to use 2 variations of the Equitone panel; a smooth, natural, warm colored panel to highlight the building entry and a ribbed more neutral color panel for the remainder of the façade. The use of a ribbed or textured panel will provide interesting shadow play on the façade and to help highlight the buildings' entry by contrast. The subtle texture of the proposed Equitone in conjunction with the changing with angle of the sun will provide a dynamic and ever-changing façade throughout the day. Panels are mechanically fastened and the panel seam & sizes have been carefully studied to reinforce the architectural lines and proportions of the building.

We believe that approval of the 250 Cambridge Exterior Improvements with greatly enhance the existing 40 year old structure and bring richness and detail to the existing diverse fabric of the Cal Ave Neighborhood.

Sincerely –



Heather Young, Heather Young Architects

hya HEATHER YOUNG ARCHITECTS

December 08, 2021

Samuel Gutierrez | Project Planner
City of Palo Alto Planning Department 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301

RE: **DEE Request**
ARB Application
250 Cambridge Ave, Palo Alto, CA 94306
Application Number: **21PLN-00281**

This letter of application requests Architectural Review Board Approval of the Design Enhancement Request for new roof top light monitors as part of the renovation of an existing, three-story commercial office building at 250 Cambridge Ave.

Project Overview
The overall scope of this project consists of a street side façade improvement to an existing 40 year old, 3-story office building in Palo Alto, California. The primary objective is to revitalize the aging building façade with a new, highly curated design highlighted by more refined proportions; use of more sophisticated materials; creating a more inviting public entry to the building and an improved pedestrian experience.

Scope
The scope includes the following improvements;

- Replacing the failing existing Exterior Foam Insulation System(EFIS) with a new and more refined rain screen ventilated façade system
- Re-proportioning of the building façade forms to create a more human scaled massing and rhythm with emphasis on accentuating the pedestrian entry to the building.
- The introduction of new seating and landscaping around the building entry for a more inviting public interface.
- Re-proportioning the glazing at the 3rd floor to bring more daylight into the building and re-placing the existing single pane, mirrored and highly reflective glazing on the entire street façade with new clear, energy efficient insulated glazing.
- Introducing new recessed balconies at the 3rd floor to reduce the linear appearance of the façade.
- The introduction of 2 new north facing roof top light monitors (vertical oriented skylights) to provide natural lighting into the center of a deep and dark floor plate.
- Provide a new secure long term bike parking room and lockers in the below grade parking garage.

Findings

A Design Enhancement Exception is being requested to allow for the addition of two, roof-top light monitors to the existing building that project above the allowable maximum height limit of 35'-0" by 3'-8". We believe that the findings that can be made to support the exception are as follows:

1. *There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to the property or site improvements involved that do not apply generally to property in the same zone district.*

   The existing structure was constructed with the primary building height remaining below the maximum building height of 35' at the exterior parapets. As allowed by code, the existing elevator core and mechanical housing are permitted to extend beyond this maximum height, set here at 42'-4", to provide required building functionality. This mechanical enclosure is integrated into the primary design of the building and reads as an anchoring tower to the Southwest end of the building and the true maximum height of the structure.

   Like the mechanical enclosure, the roof-top light monitors are an integral part of the renovated building's lighting and energy use systems. These minor architectural elements will remain well below the mechanical enclosure height topping out at 38'-8" and only be visible from the upper levels of adjacent buildings with little to no impact on pedestrians or motorists around the property.

2. *The granting of the application will enhance the appearance of the site or structure, or improve the neighborhood character of the project and preserve an existing or proposed architectural style, in a manner which would not otherwise be accomplished through strict application of the minimum requirements of this title (Zoning and the architectural review findings set forth in Section 18.76.020(d).*

   The proposed light monitors are located above the center of a 150' wide by 85' deep floor plate and have been designed to be hidden from street view by existing façade and parapet heights. The monitors are 51' long by 13'-8" wide and are set back on all sides a minimum of 18'-10" from the surrounding facades and roof parapets. The addition of these light monitors significantly enhances the amount of natural light provided to the center of the existing office floor plate without impacting the surrounding properties or street level pedestrian experience. The "saw-tooth" design of the monitors allow for the collection and even dispersion of indirect light into the space without adding internal glare, which would occur by providing flat skylights that remained below the maximum building height allowed by the municipal zoning code.

   The roof-top monitors enable redevelopment of the existing structure to be more usable, sustainable, and adaptable. Harvesting natural daylight decreases the load on our electrical grid and unlike the addition of solar

panels do not produce glare. The minor exception does not increase floor area or alter the number of required or provided parking spaces.

3. *The exception is related to a minor architectural feature or site improvement that will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, general welfare or convenience.*

   The granting of this DEE will enhance the health and welfare of the building occupants without negatively impacting that of neighbors, pedestrians or motorists in the area of the site. The height of the roof-top monitors has been minimized to allow for a water resilient curb at the roof level, 2'-6" of vertical glazing, and 10" of structure imbedded within a fire-rated assembly. The design of the light monitors allows for the inclusion of natural light without providing direct views into or from, existing or potentially proposed projects around the property due to the location, shape and size of the proposed glazing openings on the roof.

Sincerely –

Heather Young
Heather Young Architects

Attachment F

Project Plans

During the ongoing Shelter-in-Place, project plans are only available online.

Directions to review Project plans online:

1. Go to: bit.ly/PAendingprojects
2. Scroll to find "**250 Cambridge Ave**" and click the address link
3. 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-Articles/Planning-and-Development-Services/250-Cambridge-21PLN-00281?transfer=0577bcf2-54f1-47bf-ba0d-31147f53d5e4