



REPORT TO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

SUBJECT: 1530 and 1534 Fifth Ave. (Marin Academy Aquatic Center) – Requests for a Use Permit and an Environmental and Design Review Permit to allow the construction of a new aquatic center with a 25-yard x 33-meter uncovered swimming pool, a two-story, 2,256 sq. ft. support building (restrooms, indoor and outdoor showers, changing and office areas, mechanical equipment and chemical storage areas), flat work (concrete decking), site lighting and landscaping, perimeter chain link fencing and courtyard walls, bleacher seating and LED-illuminated scoreboard on two adjacent Downtown parcels with a combined lot area of 18,737 sq. ft. The existing sites are currently developed with two-story office buildings, each approximately 4,000-4,500 sq. ft. in size, and uncovered parking areas, which are proposed to be demolished; APNS: 011-195-05 and 011-201-07; Fifth/Mission Residential/Office (5/M R/O) District Zone; Mike Joyce for Marin Academy, Applicant; Marin Academy, Owner; Downtown Neighborhood.

PROPERTY FACTS

Location	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation	Existing Land-Use
Project Site:	5/M R/O	5/M R/O	Medical office
North:	P/QP	P/QP	Marin Academy
South:	5/M R/O	5/M R/O	Professional office
East:	5/M R/O	5/M R/O	Vacant Medical office
West:	P/QP	P/QP	Marin Academy

Landscaping (Min.)	Floor Area Ratio (Max.)
Required: 10% (1,874 sq. ft.)	Allowed: 0.50 FAR (9,368.5 sq. ft.)
Proposed: 2,004 sq. ft.	Proposed: 0.12 (2,256 sq. ft.)

Height *

Allowed:	36'
Proposed:	16'

Setbacks

	Required	Proposed
Front:	15'	77.5'
Side(s):	n/a	0' (east and west)
Street side	n/a	n/a
Rear:	n/a	8'

* Building height is measured from an established exterior finished grade elevation to top of roof deck of a flat roof building.

SUMMARY

The project is being referred to the Design Review Board (Board) for review of site and building design of a project proposing a new aquatics center for the Marin Academy (MA) campus. The current swimming pool is proposed to be demolished due to extensive and costly upgrades needed to meet strict health and safety standards. The project will require consolidation of two adjacent Downtown parcels, each currently developed with existing 2-story medical office buildings and associated surface parking. The project proposes to construct a new a 25-yard x 33-meter uncovered swimming pool, a two-story, 2,305.5 sq. ft. support building (restrooms, indoor and outdoor showers, changing and office areas, mechanical equipment and chemical storage areas), flat work (concrete decking), site lighting and landscaping, perimeter chain link fencing and courtyard walls, bleacher seating and LED-illuminated scoreboard.

The project will require the following approvals, with the recommendation(s) of the Board:

- A 'major' Environmental and Design Review Permit, for the new public/quasi-public structure;
- A Use Permit to allow the expansion of Marin Academy on the project site with the proposed project; and
- A Lot Line Adjustment for the consolidation of the two adjacent parcels within the project site and to consolidate the project site with adjacent parcel (APN: 011-195-06) located immediately west which contains MA's Library/Classroom building.

The project has been previously reviewed by staff as a Pre-application (PA18-004) and by the Board during Conceptual Design Review (CDR18-008). These preliminary design comments provided by the Board and the responses are discussed in detail in staff's report below.

Overall, staff finds that the formal project, generally, appears to meet many of the applicable design-related General Plan policies, development standards for the Fifth/Mission Residential/Office (5/M R/O) District, review criteria for Environmental and Design Review Permits, and Downtown Design Guidelines. In addition, staff finds that the formal project, generally, responds wells to the Board's prior conceptual review comments.

However, staff requests that the Board provide comments on the following:

Landscaping

- Whether the new landscape plan is appropriate (location and design of planting areas; species type and number, location and container size of each plant species proposed).

Signage

- Whether the proposed signage for the project is appropriate, given the exceptional building setback, limited visibility and unique sign needs of the Marin Academy campus buildings and athletic amenities.

Conceptual Design Review Comments

- Whether the proposed revisions to the site and building design responds adequately to the Board's previous Conceptual Design Review comments.

BACKGROUND

Site Description & Setting:

The project site is comprised of two (2) adjacent developed Downtown parcels with a combined 18,737 sq. ft. lot size. The project site has two frontages, Fifth Ave. to the north and Mission Ave. to the south. It is relatively flat (4% average cross-slope; north-to-south trending) and located outside the Downtown parking district. It is currently developed with two, 2-story medical office buildings and surface parking

areas, which are vacant. Both parcels are developed with access along both frontages, though currently both sites are secured.

The Marin Academy campus is located immediately west (current library and classrooms at 1540 Fifth Ave. and 2 Cottage Way) and north (athletic fields) of the project site, across Mission Ave. A medical office building is located immediately east of the project site and a combination of medical offices and professional offices are located south of the project site, across Fifth Ave.

History:

On November 13, 2018, staff provided the applicant with Pre-application review comments. The scope of the project during Pre-application review was similar to that proposed during both Conceptual Design Review and the current formal project submittal.

On December 18, 2018, the Board provided the following conceptual review comments:

- Relocated aquatic center use on site is fine; asset to the community
- Noise and light impacts will need to be studied and mitigated, if necessary
- Use of chain link fencing is not supported.
- East wall (shared with 1526 Fifth Ave.) requires 'softening' by breaking up the linear wall plane, and/or variation in finishes, textures and colors.
- Rear elevation of pool house building requires greater detailing and articulation.
- Planning Commission should also provide conceptual review on this project.
- Project requires exceptional landscaping.
- Front entry wall design and materials requires improvement so that the public can view inside the site better.
- The project proposes too much on the site.
- Need site sections and visual simulations at formal application submittal.
- Planning Commission Liaison added his concern with the lack of parking proposed by the project and why the project is not being rebuilt at its current location on campus.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Use:

The project proposes to construct a new aquatic center over two adjacent Downtown parcels to replace the existing swimming pool located elsewhere on the Marin Academy campus. Required upgrades to the existing pool have proven to be cost-prohibited and the existing pool is proposed to be demolished. The existing 2-story medical office buildings on each of the two sites will be demolished as well.

Site Plan:

The project proposes to construct a new, 25-yard x 33-meter uncovered swimming pool, a two-story, 2,256 sq. ft. support building (restrooms, indoor and outdoor showers, changing and office areas, mechanical equipment and chemical storage areas), flat work (concrete decking), site lighting and landscaping, perimeter chain link fencing and courtyard walls, bleacher seating and LED-illuminated scoreboard. Primary pedestrian access to the new aquatic center is proposed along the Fifth Ave. frontage with additional pedestrian access along the Mission Ave. frontage. No vehicular access is proposed by the project. No on-site parking is proposed by the project. The project proposes a dedicated, off-site bus loading/unloading area (approx..9.5' x 50') along the Mission Ave. or rear frontage.

Architecture:

The proposed 2,256 sq. ft. support building will relate with the contemporary design of the more recently constructed buildings on the MA campus, including roof form (flat) and exterior colors (off-white exterior walls with dark gray window trim) and materials (lime plaster finish). The new building includes a 769.5 sq. ft. roof deck (9.5' x 81') with bleacher seating facing the pool area.

A Material and Color Board was prepared by the applicant and submitted with the formal project; a photo of the Material and Color Board is included in staff's report as Exhibit 2.

Parking:

The project proposes no on-site parking.

Fencing:

The project proposes to secure the project site with an eight foot (8')-tall CMU with plaster finish 'courtyard' wall along both the east and south elevation and eight foot (8')-tall with metal pedestrian gates is proposed along the south front elevation, along the Fifth Ave. frontage. Eight-foot (8')-tall metal 'picket' fencing at both entries, at the primary public entrance along Fifth Ave. and the secondary entry along Mission Ave. gates are proposed along the north rear elevation, along the Mission Ave. frontage. A combination of eight foot (8')-tall metal 'picket' and chain link fencing is proposed along the west property line shared with MA library and classroom buildings at 1540 Fifth Ave / 2 Cottage Ave. (The perimeter fencing along the west property line is proposed to be architectural metal 'picket' fencing to the building face of the adjacent MA buildings and chain link fencing once obscured behind the existing MA buildings.

Landscaping:

The project proposes 2,004 sq. ft. of new landscaping in a combination of trees, shrubs, grasses, vines and groundcovers. Nearly all of the new landscaping is proposed to be location at the entrances to the site, primarily along the Fifth Ave. frontage and to a lesser degree along the Mission Ave. frontage. Accent shrub plantings are proposed at the base of the fencing along the interior west elevation and accent vine plantings are proposed at the base of the plaster courtyard wall along the interior east elevation. The project proposes to remove four (4) existing trees (2 'significant' trees) on the project site and plant 11 new trees. The project also proposes to plant five (5) new street trees where there is none currently (3 new street trees along the Fifth Ave. frontage and 2 new street trees along the Mission Ave. frontage).

Lighting:

The project proposes six (6) new, 28'-tall LED lighting standards with fixtures on the concrete pool decking, two (2) new, 12'-tall LED lighting standards along the primary entrance along the Fifth Ave. frontage and miscellaneous recessed LED light fixtures throughout the interior roof deck and stairwells leading to along the Mission Ave. frontage. A photometric study is provided on their proposed illumination in the project plans (see Sh. No. E003). In addition, LED accent lighting is proposed to 'wash' behind the "Marin Academy" sign located on the plaster courtyard wall along the Fifth Ave. entry frontage.

Signage:

The project proposes new signage though the submittal does not provide details. This new signage would be limited to the Fifth Ave. frontage, the primary public entrance to the project site, and would be limited to 12'-tall metal letters attached to the front courtyard wall. The project appears to propose 30 sq. ft. (12' x 30') of total signage.

ANALYSIS

General Plan 2020 Consistency:

The General Plan land use designation for the project site is Fifth/Mission Residential/Office (5/M R/O). The 5/M R/O designation allows residential and office uses, with limited ground-floor commercial retail and personal services uses on cross streets east of C St. Land Use Policy LU-23 (*Land Use Map and Categories*) does not specifically identifying that quasi-public buildings and facilities, like the proposed new aquatics center on the Marin Academy campus, also would be allowed within the 5/M R/O designation. However, a further review of the allowable land uses in the 5/M R/O District zoning

indicates that quasi-public buildings and facilities are allowed, subject to Use Permit approval by the Planning Commission.

As identified in the Property Facts section of staff's report above, the project would also be in accordance with Land Use Policy LU-12 (*Building Height*) and the maximum 36' building height, based on the City's current measurement for building height (Building height is measured from finished grade pursuant to the Uniform Building Code 1997 method). The project also is in accordance with the allowable FAR (Floor Area Ratio) for the site. The project should also be consistent with the following design-related General Plan Policies:

- *Community Design Policy CD-1d (City Image; Landscape Improvements) recognizes that landscaping is a critical design component to. Encourage maximum use of available landscape area to create visual interest and foster sense of the natural environment in new and existing developments. Encourage the use of a variety of site appropriate plant materials.*
- *CD-3 (Neighborhoods) seeks to recognize, preserve and enhance the positive qualities that give neighborhoods their unique identities, while also allowing flexibility for innovative design. New development should respect the context and scale of existing neighborhoods.*
- *CD-10 (Nonresidential Design Guidelines) recognizes preserves and enhances the design elements that contribute to the economic vitality of commercial areas. Develop design guidelines to ensure that new nonresidential and mixed-use development fits within and improves the immediate neighborhood and the community as a whole.*
- *CD-18 (Landscaping) recognizes landscaping as a significant component of all site design.*
- *CD-19 (Lighting) requires project lighting at adequate levels for safety purposes while controlling light spillover and off-site glare.*

Planning staff finds the formal project submittal generally meets the applicable design-related General Plan Policies. The project proposes to update (and relocate) an existing athletic facility on the Marin Academy campus without also increasing student enrollment. The proposed improvements are also a reduction in the existing level of development on the project site with the removal of the existing medical office buildings (reducing FAR), while upgrading the overall landscape character along both the Fifth Ave. and Mission Ave. frontages.

The project plans include a photometric study (see Sh. E003) which calculate the proposed exterior lighting levels based on the proposed lighting fixture details. The lighting levels are proposed to comply with minimum recommended standards of both the City for generally development and the Illuminating Engineering Society Handbook (2018) for competition pools on academic campuses. The City's illumination standards simply recommend:

- A minimum one (1) foot-candle of ground-level overlap at building entries;
- A minimum one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) foot-candle of ground-level overlap at walkways and parking areas; and
- Less than one (1) foot-candle of ground-level overlap at all property boundaries.

The Illuminating Engineering Society Handbook recommends the following average illumination levels:

- 30 foot-candles for the pool surface;
- 50 foot-candles for the "starts" and "stops" portions of the pool (east and west sides of the pool; 5'-wide);
- 10 foot-candles for the pool deck; and
- A minimum one (1) foot-candle of ground-level overlap along all path of travel for the public observation deck.

The project proposes the following average illumination levels:

- 45.38 foot-candles for the pool surface (76.1 foot-candles max, 23.5 foot-candles min);
- 45.40 foot-candles for the “starts” and “stops” portions of the pool (5'-wide east and west sides of the pool; 61.2 foot-candles min, 32.5 foot-candles min);
- 18.69 foot-candles for the pool deck (50.2 foot-candles max, 6.4 foot-candles min); and
- 6.46 foot-candles for all path of travel for the public observation deck and stairs (16 foot-candles max, 1.7 foot-candles min).

Zoning Ordinance Consistency:

Chapter 5 – Commercial and Office Districts

The project site is located within the Fifth/Mission Residential/Office (5/M R/O) District, a Downtown zoning district. The proposed project requires consistency with the property development standards for the 5/M R/O District, including minimum setbacks (15' front), building height (36') and minimum landscaping (10%). Those property development standards applicable to the project are identified in the *Property Facts* summary above.

As currently designed, the project will be consistent with all applicable development standards (minimum setbacks, maximum height and landscaping) for the 5/M R/O District. be required to provide landscape plans with the appropriate level of landscape details, including the total area of site landscaping, and the species, number, location and container size of each proposed planting.

Staff requests the Board's comments on the following:

- Whether the new landscape plan is appropriate (location and design of planting areas; species type and number, location and container size of each plant species proposed).

Chapter 16 – Site and Use Regulations

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Under both the City's General Plan (Land Use Policy LU-9; *Intensity of Nonresidential Development*) and Section 14.16.150 (A) of the Zoning Ordinance (*Floor Area Ratios and Densities Applicable to Nonresidential and Mixed-Use Development*), the maximum allowable intensity of nonresidential development on the project site is 0.50 FAR (Floor Area Ratio), or 9,368.5 sq. ft. (based on the 18,737 sq. ft. combined lot area for the project site). The current development on the site is 0.12 FAR for the 2,256 sq. ft. proposed new support building (restrooms, indoor and outdoor showers, changing and office areas, mechanical equipment and chemical storage areas).

Sight Distance

Pursuant to Section 14.16.295 (*Sight Distance*) of the Zoning Ordinance, driveways on the project site, and those existing on an immediately adjacent site, shall provide a sight distance triangle of 15' from the curb return, or as determined by the City Engineer. While the project proposes no driveways or parking on-site, existing driveways on the immediate adjacent parcels to the west (1540 Fifth Ave / 2 Cottage Ave.) and east of the project site (1526 Fifth Ave.) do create a sight distance triangle which require the project to comply with. The project plans show the sight distance triangle (Sh. L1.00B) which indicates the proposed project generally will be consistent with the required sight distance triangle.

Light and Glare

Pursuant to Section 14.16.227 (*Light and Glare*) of the Zoning Ordinance, the City recommends the following illumination standards:

- A minimum one (1) foot-candle of ground-level overlap at building entries;

- A minimum one-half (½) foot-candle of ground-level overlap at walkways and parking areas; and
- Less than one (1) foot-candle of ground-level overlap at all property boundaries.

The project plans include a photometric study (see Sh. E003) which calculates the proposed exterior lighting levels based on the proposed lighting fixture details. This photometric study shows the proposed lighting levels will comply with the City’s recommended lighting levels. The proposed lighting design includes photosensor ‘vacancy’ controls to automatically dim and then turn off select light fixtures when the area underneath is unoccupied.

Unlike recommend lighting levels, the Zoning Ordinance does not provide quantifiable standards to reduce or mitigate off-site glare. Instead, Section 14.16.227 requires a 90-day post-installation inspection or review period at occupancy, as a condition of project approval, to allow adjustment(s) in the lighting design, such as installing shields to the light fixtures or reduce fixture height while adding more fixtures, if necessary.

Chapter 18 – Parking Standards

Parking Requirement

Pursuant to Section 14.18.040 (*Parking Standards; Parking Requirements*) of the Zoning Ordinance, the proposed improvements to the project site, including construction of a new 2,256 sq. ft. support building, does not require on-site parking. Typically, off-street parking is required for both commercial and residential development based on physical construction (FAR or residential units) However, parking requirements for private high school uses, like Marin Academy, are based on maximum enrollment capacity with one (1) parking space per four (4) students. The current Use Permit (UP14-013) for Marin Academy allows a maximum enrollment of 450 students and this project to replace and relocate the existing campus swimming pool does not include a request to increase the maximum enrollment limit.

Bicycle Parking

Pursuant to Section 14.18.090 (*Parking Standards; Bicycle Parking*) of the Zoning Ordinance, construction of the new 2,256 sq. ft. support building, requires the installation of short-term bicycle parking spaces or racks. The specific amount of short-term bicycle parking spaces is determined by parking study or as specified by Use Permit. The project does not propose short-term bicycle parking since the MA campus already provides them throughout the campus. In addition, the project proposes to replace and relocate an existing campus athletic facility and does not proposed any additional new athletic facility.

Chapter 19 – Signs

Signs

Pursuant to Section 14.19.065 (*Signs; Downtown Districts*) of the Zoning Ordinance, the proposed project is allowed two (2) non- or externally-illuminated signs with a maximum 36 sq. ft. of total signage for the project site. The project proposes one (1), externally-illuminated wall sign, approx.30 sq. ft. in size (12” x 30’), located on the 8’-tall courtyard wall, at the front or primary pedestrian entrance to the project site, along the Fifth Ave. frontage.

Staff requests the Board’s comments on the following:

- Whether the proposed signage for the project is appropriate, given the exceptional building setback, limited visibility and unique sign needs of the Marin Academy campus buildings and athletic amenities.

Chapter 22 – Use Permits

As discussed earlier in staff's report, the project will require the amendment of the current Use Permit for Marin Academy to allow the relocation of the swimming pool and expansion of the Marin Academy campus.

Chapter 25 – Environmental and Design Review Permit

The project will require Environmental and Design Review Permit approval by the Planning Commission (Commission), given that; it proposes to construct a new public/quasi-public structure or facility. The pertinent review criteria for Environmental and Design Review Permits, pursuant to Section 14.25.050 (*Review Criteria; Environmental and Design Review Permits*), are as follows:

- *Site Design. Proposed structures and site development should relate to the existing development in the vicinity. The development should have good vehicular and pedestrian circulation and access. Safe and convenient parking areas should be designed to provide easy access to building entrances. The traffic capacity of adjoining streets must be considered. Major views of the San Pablo Bay, wetlands, bay frontage, the Canal, Mt. Tamalpais and the hills should be preserved and enhanced from public streets and public vantage points. In addition, respect views of St. Raphael's Church up "A" Street.*
- *Architecture. The project architecture should be harmoniously integrated in relation to the architecture in the vicinity in terms of colors and materials, scale and building design. The design should be sensitive to and compatible with historic and architecturally significant buildings in the vicinity. Design elements and approaches which are encouraged include: a) creation of interest in the building elevation; b) pedestrian-oriented design in appropriate locations; c) energy-efficient design; d) provision of a sense of entry; e) variation in building placement and height; and f) equal attention to design given to all facades in sensitive location.*
- *Materials and colors. Exterior finishes should be consistent with the context of the surrounding area. Color selection shall coordinate with the predominant colors and values of the surrounding landscape and architecture. High-quality building materials are required. Natural materials and colors in the earth tone and wood tone range are generally preferred. Concrete surfaces should be colored, textured, sculptured, and/or patterned to serve design as well as a structural function.*
- *Walls, Fences and Screening. Walls, fences and screening shall be used to screen parking and loading areas, refuse collection areas and mechanical equipment from view. Screening of mechanical equipment shall be designed as an integrated architectural component of the building and the landscape. Utility meters and transformers shall be incorporated into the overall project design.*
- *Landscape Design. Landscaping shall be designed as an integral enhancement of the site and existing tree shall be preserved as much as possible. Water-conserving landscape design shall be required. A landscaped berm around the perimeter of parking areas is encouraged. Smaller scale, seasonal color street trees should be proposed along pedestrian-oriented streets while high-canopy, traffic-tolerant trees should be proposed for primary vehicular circulation streets.*

The review criteria for Environmental and Design Review Permits require that the proposed design (architecture, form, scale, materials and color, etc.) of all new development 'relate' to the predominant design or 'character-defining' design elements existing in the vicinity.

Site Design

The project proposes, essentially, to replace the current swimming pool and relocate it from the northern portion of Marin Academy campus to an expanding southern portion of campus. The primary pedestrian access to the aquatic center is proposed through a landscaped entrance along the Fifth Ave.

frontage with a secondary pedestrian access provided along the Mission Ave. frontage. No on-site parking and no vehicle access is proposed by the project.

Staff generally supports the proposed site design since the proposed project is consistent with the landscape requirement.

Architecture

Staff also generally supports the proposed contemporary architecture of the new 2,256 sq. ft. support building (restrooms, indoor and outdoor showers, changing and office areas, mechanical equipment and chemical storage areas), which will relate with contemporary design features of the more recently constructed buildings on the Marin Academy campus, including roof form (flat) and exterior colors (off-white exterior walls with dark gray window trim and medium gray doors) and materials (lime plaster finish). The proposed single-story support building is a significant reduction in scale from the current two (2), 4,000-4,500 sq. ft., two-story medical office buildings on the project site. Due to grade differences on the project site and the two and one-half-foot (2 ½')-high parapet screening wall, the new support building will have the visual appearance of two-story, (19'-tall) scale, which is similar to that of the other adjacent MA campus buildings located immediate west of the project site (1540 Fifth Ave. and 2 Cottage Way).

Staff generally supports the proposed architecture of the project.

Colors and Materials

The project proposes exterior colors for both the site and the new support building in the 'cool' off-white and gray shade colors. The proposed exterior material of both the new building and the 8'-tall courtyard wall is lime plaster finish, like the other Marin Academy campus buildings. The proposed exterior material of the new 8'-tall metal pedestrian gates is dark gray. The project also proposes dark gray chain link fencing along a portion of the west property line, between the project site and the other MA campus buildings.

A Material and Color Board was prepared by the applicant and submitted with the formal project; a photo of the Material and Color Board is included in staff's report as Exhibit 2.

Staff generally supports the proposed colors and materials of the project. During Conceptual Design Review, staff had prior concerns with the chain link fencing along the west elevation; however, the design has been amended to expand the use of proposed higher-quality, 8'-tall metal picket fencing for those portions publicly visible along eastbound Fifth Ave and limit the use of chain link fencing to those portions screened from public view by the adjacent existing MA campus buildings at 1540 Fifth Ave. / 2 Cottage Ave.

Walls, Fences and Screening

The project proposes 8'-tall courtyard walls along the south and east property lines, 8'-tall metal picket pedestrian gates at the primary entrance along the Fifth Ave. frontage and the secondary entrance along the Mission Ave. frontage, and a combination of 8'-tall metal picket and chain link fencing along the west property line.

Exterior Lighting

As stated earlier in staff's report, the project proposes a comprehensive lighting design for the site which complies with minimum recommended standards of both the City for generally development and the Illuminating Engineering Society Handbook (2018) for competition pools on academic campuses. The project plans include a photometric study of the proposed lighting levels (see Sh. E003). For comparison, the Board has historically recommended maximum lighting levels of 30 foot-candle for new and redeveloped service stations. However, the City and the Board has had no prior experience to help determine the appropriate lighting levels for competitive outdoor pools on academic campuses. To staff,

comparing the lighting levels needed for pumping fuel has no comparison to the lighting levels needed to ensure safety on competitive outdoor pools.

The project also proposes an LED scoreboard. This scoreboard is proposed to be located 18' 4" above the concrete pool deck or approximately 10; above the 8'-tall courtyard plaster wall. This scoreboard will be located along the east property boundary, facing west, and will be shielded from public view along both eastbound Fifth Ave. and Mission Ave. by either existing MA campus buildings (1540 Fifth Ave./ 2 Cottage Ave.) or the proposed support building itself. However, staff believes limited public view of the scoreboard may still exist along eastbound Fifth Ave. Since Conceptual Design Review, the project proposes a higher-quality 8'-tall metal picket fencing rather than chain link fencing along those portions not screened from public view by the existing MA campus buildings (library and classrooms) located immediately west of the project site. The design of this metal fencing proposes pickets spaced 6" on-center so, while the possibility of public views of the scoreboard along eastbound Fifth Ave. remains, staff finds it to be limited.

Landscape Design

The project's landscape plans propose 2,004 sq. ft. of new landscaping in a combination of trees, shrubs, grasses, vines and groundcovers. Nearly all of the new landscaping is proposed to be location at the entrances to the site, primarily along the Fifth Ave. frontage and to a lesser degree along the Mission Ave. frontage. Accent shrub plantings are proposed at the base of the fencing along the interior west elevation and accent vine plantings are proposed at the base of the plaster courtyard wall along the interior east elevation. The project proposes to remove four (4) existing trees (2 'significant' trees) on the project site and plant 11 new trees. The project also proposes to plant five (5) new street trees where there is none currently (3 new street trees along the Fifth Ave. frontage and 2 new street trees along the Mission Ave. frontage).

San Rafael Design Guidelines:

Fifth / Mission District and Environs

Fifth and Mission Streets are less active than Fourth Street, the core Downtown commercial district. Projects should help create a more attractive and comfortable walking environment. The project site is located within the boundaries of the *Fifth / Mission District and Environs* area of the Downtown, where the following specific design guidelines apply:

- *To provide visual interest, long and monotonous walls should be avoided;*
- *Where retaining walls are needed, they should be low, or terraced and landscaped;*
- *Entries should be well-defined and orient to the street rather than to a parking lot;*
- *Where setbacks are provided, they should be landscaped; and*
- *Street trees are an important element and should be retained and enhanced.*

The project proposes to create the primary pedestrian access to the project site along the Fifth Ave. frontage, which also includes a 15' required setback. Staff finds the proposed landscaped entries to the site to be consistent with the *Downtown Design Guidelines*.

Downtown Vision

The proposed project is located with the Downtown and should be consistent with as many of the applicable policies in the adopted *Our Vision of Downtown San Rafael; Fifth / Mission District Design Principles*, including:

- Enhance the small scale, interesting pedestrian character of the streets by: 1) Making sidewalks and crossings safer; 2) Preserving mature landscaping; and 3) Planting more street trees; and

- Preserve the pleasing scale and character of the District, especially on Fifth Avenue west of “E” Street and on the east and west ends of Mission Avenue by: 1) Including landscaped front yards and historic building characteristics; and 2) Respecting the low scale and profile of existing development.

Again, the project proposes to create the primary pedestrian access to the project site along the Fifth Ave. frontage, which also includes a 15' required setback. Staff finds the proposed landscaped entries to the site to be consistent with the *Downtown Vision; Fifth / Mission District Design Principles*.

Subdivision Ordinance Consistency

The project proposes to allow construction of the proposed improvements, including the support building, concrete flatwork, fencing and courtyard walls, and landscaping over the current property boundaries of two adjacent Downtown parcels. In addition, the project proposes to allow the construction of the proposed improvements over the current property boundaries of the adjacent parcel (1540 Fifth Ave. / 2 Cottage Way; APN: 011-195-06) located immediately west of the project site, which is also owned by Marin Academy and is part of the MA campus. The project is subject to the lot consolidation provisions pursuant to Chapter 15.05. of the Subdivision Ordinance. The formal project application did not include a Lot Line Adjustment/Consolidation submittal so the project will be conditioned to require the subsequent approval and recording of the lot consolidations prior to building permit issuance.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Conceptual Design Review Comments

On December 18, 2018, the Board provided the following Conceptual Design Review comments on the project:

- Relocated aquatic center use on site is fine; asset to the community
- Noise and light impacts will need to be studied and mitigated, if necessary
- Use of chain link fencing is not supported.
- East wall (shared with 1526 Fifth Ave.) requires 'softening' by breaking up the linear wall plane, and/or variation in finishes, textures and colors.
- Rear elevation of pool house building requires greater detailing and articulation.
- Planning Commission should also provide conceptual review on this project.
- Project requires exceptional landscaping.
- Front entry wall design and materials requires improvement so that the public can view inside the site better.
- The project proposes too much on the site.
- Need site sections and visual simulations at formal application submittal.
- Planning Commission Liaison added his concern with the lack of parking proposed by the project and why the project is not being rebuilt at its current location on campus.

Staff's Comments. The project design has been revised to address the Board's comments made during conceptual review and the applicant has submitted a project description narrative with responses to the Board's comments, dated May 2020 (Exhibit 5):

- The project has submitted a photometric study showing that the proposed comprehensive lighting design for the site complies with minimum recommended standards of both the City for generally development and the Illuminating Engineering Society Handbook (2018) for competition pools on academic campuses. An acoustic study has been submitted with recommended mitigation measures for construction of the site and operation of the pool, which shall become conditions of approval should the Planning Commission approve the project with the Board recommendation.

- Perimeter fencing previously proposed as chain link have been upgraded to higher-design metal picket fencing to match the design of the entry gates to the site, with the exception of those portions on the west elevation which are screened from public view by existing MA campus buildings (library and classrooms at 1540 Fifth Ave./ 2 Cottage Ave.) located immediately west of the project site.
- The landscape plan has been revised to include vine plantings (either Boston Ivy or Creeping Fig) along the outside base of the east courtyard wall, which will help soften and create interest along the side property boundary shared with the adjacent medical office building located at 1526 Fifth Ave.
- The north elevation of the new support building has been revised, generally, to improved proportionality and location of the windows and louver. Specifically, metal panels have been added in between windows, vertical control joints have been added and a parapet has been added to screen the rooftop mechanical equipment, which has the added effect of providing greater building scale to relate better with the adjacent existing two-story MA campus buildings west of the project site.
- In addition to adding vine plantings to the base of the east courtyard wall, the landscape plan has been revised provide a deeper, more robust landscape setbacks for both the primary and secondary entrances along Fifth Ave. and Mission Ave., which also serves as rain garden/bioretenion stormwater treatment planters. Both entries propose frontage improvements, including new sidewalks and street trees.
- The design of the primary entrance to the site, along the Fifth Ave. frontage has been revised to expand the installation of 8'-tall metal picket fencing beyond the pedestrian gates. The 'perimeter metal fencing wraps around the southwest corner of the project site and up the lower portion of the west property line, which was upgraded from chain link to provide a higher-quality design and improve view-in opportunities for the public along the Fifth Ave. frontage.
- The size of the relocated pool (25 yds x 33 meters) is the same as existing pool on the MA campus and is, purportedly, smaller than similar competitive pools on other high school campuses in the vicinity. Revisions to expand landscape setbacks and to provide more 'viewable' metal picket perimeter fencing along the south and west property lines help create a more inviting, inclusive aquatic center on the MA campus.

Staff finds that revisions to the proposed site and building design generally respond to the Board previous Conceptual Design Review comments. Staff requests the Board's comments on the following:

- **Whether the proposed revisions to the site and building design responds adequately to the Board's previous Conceptual Design Review comments.**

A video of the December 18, 2018 Board meeting may be viewed at the City's website of archived meeting videos:

<https://publicrecords.cityofsanrafael.org/WebLink/Browse.aspx?id=30093&dbid=0&repo=CityofSanRafael>

NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENCE

Pursuant to Policy Statement adopted by the City Manager on April 1, 2020 (Exhibit 3), no notice was required or provided for the Board meeting though staff still received one (1) public comment. Staff received a letter of support from the owners of the adjacent property located immediately east of the project site (see Exhibit 4). This adjacent site is developed with medical offices and is the closest property and, arguably, most impacted by the project. This letter of support also rescinds their previous opposition to the project made during Conceptual Design Review.

CONCLUSION

Staff finds the proposed revisions to the project design generally responds well to the recommendations provided by the Board during Conceptual Design Review. The project proposes to rebuild an existing aquatic facility on the Marin Academy campus and relocate it to the project site. The swimming pool has been determined by Marin County Environmental Health Services to not comply with current health and safety code requirements. Staff supports the proposed project; it continues to allow Marin Academy to upgrade their existing facilities on campus while mitigating new potential impacts (light and noise). The project will provide an opportunity to improvement landscape character on the project site and along both Fifth and Mission Avenues.

Staff requests the Board's comment on the appropriateness of the revisions to the project design made in response to the previous directions provided by the Board during Conceptual Design Review.

EXHIBITS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Material and Color Board Photo
3. Policy Statement
4. Public Comment
5. Project Narrative and Response to Board Comments

Reduced (11" X 17") color plans have been provided to the Board members only.

cc: Mike Joyce – Marin Academy; 1600 Mission Ave.; San Rafael, CA 94901