



SAN RAFAEL

THE CITY WITH A MISSION

Community Development Department – Planning Division

Meeting Date: December 7, 2021
Case Number: ED20-051
Project Planner: Jayni Allsep, Contract Planner
Agenda Item: 2

REPORT TO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

SUBJECT: 326 and 308 Mission Avenue (Aldersly Retirement Community) - Request for Environmental and Design Review for a phased redevelopment of the Aldersly Retirement Community, including demolition and renovation of existing buildings and construction of new buildings; APN: 014-054-31 and -32; Planned Development (PD-1775) Zoning District; Peter Schakow, Owner; Peter Lin, Greenbriar Development, Applicant; File No(s): ED 20-051, ZC20-001 and UP20-022.

BACKGROUND

On October 5, 2021, the Design Review Board (Board) reviewed the Aldersly project. After discussion, the Board reached consensus on the following items:

- Find ways to reduce imposing façade of building along Mission Avenue through architectural setbacks, other features, or an increased setback.
- Make an effort to reduce bioswales along mission to allow increased tree screening of buildings and parking.

The Board voted 4-0 to continue the item to a future meeting to allow the Applicant an opportunity to address the consensus items noted above.

ANALYSIS

The following is a description of how the Applicant addressed each consensus item.

Mission Avenue Independent Living (IL) Building Facade

Board Recommendation: Find ways to reduce imposing façade of building along Mission Avenue through architectural setbacks, other features, or an increased setback.

Staff's Comments: The applicant has submitted revised drawings that show changes made to the south elevation of the proposed Mission Avenue Independent Living (IL) building. Revisions made include:

- Utilizing more vertical elements to break up the south façade
- Changing the form and material to break the roof line; and
- Changing the color and material (Stucco Color 4 - Scanda Blue) in center portion to provide more of a separate the building into east and west parts.

Below are the iterations of the Mission Avenue IL Building South Elevation, as it has evolved from the May 2020 Conceptual Design Review (Plan A), the October 2021 Design Review Board meeting (Plan B), and to the current proposal showing revisions in response to the Board's consensus comments (Plan C).

Figure 1: Revisions to South Elevation of Mission Avenue IL Building



A. Conceptual Design Submittal – May 2020: (submitted for August 2020 review by DRB Subcommittee Review)



B. Formal Design Review Submittal - Oct 2020 (Reviewed by DRB Meeting October 2021)

- Utilize existing material and color from the existing campus to maintain consistency
- Utilize window design to match existing
- Recess the 3rd floor and lighten color to reduce height visually



C. DRB Resubmittal - November 2021 (for review DRB Meeting December 2021)

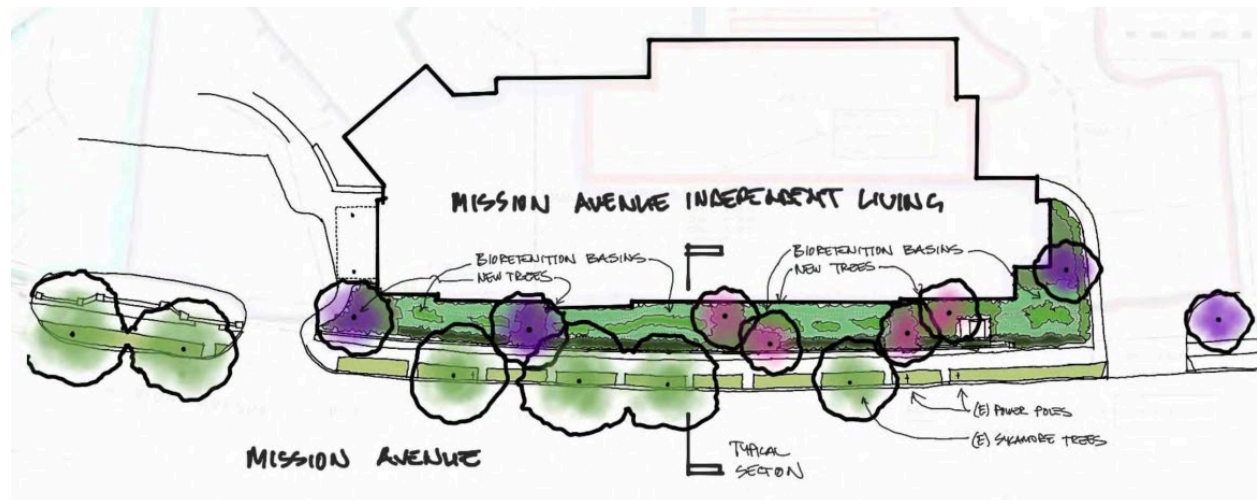
- Utilize vertical elements to break the south façade
- Change of form and material to break the roof line
- Change of color and material in center portion to separate the building into east and west parts

In addition, the revised plan set includes revised building elevations with proposed landscaping (Sheet 5.1A-R), revised colors and materials (Sheet A5.3-R) and additional perspective views from different points along Mission Avenue (Sheet A5.4-R).

Bioswales and Landscape Screening

Board Recommendation: Make an effort to reduce bioswales along mission to allow increased tree screening of buildings and parking.

Staff's Comments: The applicant has submitted revised drawings that depict a proposed redistribution of bioretention areas on the site (Sheet C2.0-R). This redistribution of bioretention areas would allow for additional trees to be planted between the Mission Avenue IL building and Mission Avenue Right of way (ROW) as illustrated below, and as shown on Sheet L6.1-R:



TREE OPTIONS AT MAIL BUILDING - SEE PLANT LIST FOR MORE INFO



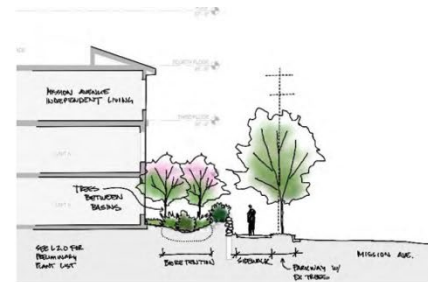
ARBUTUS UNEDO - STRAWBERRY TREE



LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA 'NATCHEZ' - CRANE WYRLE



PISTACIA CHINENSIS - CHINESE PISTACHE



Summary

Staff believes that the revisions made to the south elevation of the proposed Mission Avenue IL building, including changes to roof forms, colors, and materials; and the redistribution of bioretention areas on the site respond to the Board's consensus comments and help to reduce the perceived mass of building. The revised landscape plan will provide more screening with additional trees in locations that will improve the streetscape along Mission Avenue. Staff notes that the number, size, location, and species of planting in the public ROW is subject to review and approval of the Public Works Department.

Lot Coverage

Though not raised as a consensus item by the Board, there was discussion about the proposed lot coverage. At staff's request, the applicant provided a breakdown of how the lot coverage was calculated, and staff believes that the proposed lot coverage of 52.8% includes all areas that are to be included in lot coverage calculations as defined in the City's Zoning

Ordinance. The proposed 52.6% lot coverage is below the 60% maximum lot coverage standard established in both the approved and proposed PD Development Standards. The applicant has provided information showing existing and proposed lot coverage areas on Sheet A1.2R.

NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENCE

As with the previous meeting held on October 5th, notice of the Boards review of this project was conducted in accordance with noticing requirements contained in Chapter 29 of the Zoning Ordinance. A notice of public hearing was mailed to all property owners and occupants within a 300-foot radius of the project site, the appropriate neighborhood groups, and all other interested parties, a minimum of 15 calendar days prior to the date of this continued Board meeting. In addition, a notice was posted on the site along Mission Avenue a minimum of 15 calendar days prior to the date of this Board meeting.

The City has received no public comment as of the printing and distribution of this staff report. Any correspondence received will be included in Exhibit 4.

CONCLUSION

Staff believes that the revised drawings and information submitted by the applicant responds to the Board's consensus comments and is consistent with applicable general plan policies, zoning regulations, and Design Review Criteria, as presented in the October 5, 2021 staff report.

RECOMMENDATION: *Review and recommend approval of site and building design.*

EXHIBITS

1. Site and Architectural Plans prepared by Perkins-Eastman, revised, 11/10/2021
https://storage.googleapis.com/proudcity/sanrafaelca/uploads/2021/11/21-1110-ALDERSLY_DRB-RESUBMITTAL_sm.pdf
2. October 5, 2021, DRB Staff Report
<https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/meetings/design-review-board-october-5-2021/>
3. Minutes of October 5, 2021, DRB Meeting
<https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/meetings/design-review-board-october-5-2021/>
4. Correspondence

cc:

Peter Lin, Greenbriar Development
3232 McKinney, Ste. 1160
Dallas, TX 75204
plin@greenbrierdevelopment.com

Soo Im, Associate Principal
Perkins Eastman
100 Montgomery Street, Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94104

Gilbert Carrasco, Executive Director
Aldersly Retirement Community
326 Mission Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
GilbertCarrasco@Aldersly.org

December 1, 2021

For the Public Record

Design Review Board

c/o Project Planner: Jayni Allsep and Leslie Mendez

via email

**Public Comment for Design Review Board Meeting 12/7/21
PROJECT - 326 and 308 Mission Avenue (Aldersly Retirement Community)**

RE: Belle Avenue border of proposed Aldersly project

We request that your review of this Project Plan include adequate consideration for design and use aspects of the site in regard to surrounding circulation, service requirements and inevitable construction impacts **pertaining specifically to Belle Avenue**. As the owner of the three-unit property directly across from the back (Belle) side of Aldersly, we ask for further consideration to the specific aspects of **the Belle Avenue border of the project** which *do not* seem to be sufficiently addressed with this Plan beyond a token mention and artistic rendering on Plan page A5.6 (note: the renderings do NOT overlay a tractor-trailer truck or multiple service vehicles which would then realistically depict the true situation— inadequate pull-out and roadway space).

Existing conditions at rear border of Project Property (Belle Avenue side):

- Belle Avenue and adjacent Ridge Way are very narrow two-way streets without sidewalks serving predominantly residential access and San Rafael High School students.
- Belle Avenue also currently services the back of the Aldersly Community.
- There is no street parking allowed on this section of Belle Avenue due to roadway width and maybe incline/visibility as well.
- There is very limited visibility, particularly at the intersection of Ridge and Belle Ave which is essentially a blind intersection for westbound traffic on Belle.
- This is a pedestrian route for San Rafael High School students and there's a Daycare, with associated pickup/delivery traffic, at Belle Avenue and Union.



EXISTING STREET VIEW
NOT TO SCALE

Figure 1 ref Project Plans page A5.6

PROJECT - 326 and 308 Mission Avenue (Aldersly Retirement Community)**Servicing the Aldersly Community****Existing negative impact**

Currently, Aldersly Community receives frequent truck deliveries, often of semi tractor-trailer size, from Belle Avenue. Although there now exists a small, designated area to pull-out for unloading, it is *not sufficient size to accommodate the vehicles/activity* and is **already** negatively impacting the surrounding area and safety. Depending on the service vehicle size, visibility and safe passing of vehicle and pedestrian traffic is difficult. Additionally, the access to the driveway is sometimes blocked for residents at 420 Belle Avenue to turn in or back out. Emergency vehicle access is also a concern at times when the road is partially blocked.

Proposed Plan

1. We request that more specific physical and functional aspects of Service Building 2a, driveway and pull-out be defined and that delivery vehicles be limited to a size that can be accommodated in the pull-out area without impeding passage on Belle Avenue.
2. Photos and Rendering of large vehicles “servicing” from Belle as existing SHOULD be included for you to assess the Design adequacy.
3. Dimensions of driveway and turn out from edge of road are necessary to review design concept--- especially given the placement of buildings and steep topography of site at the rear.
4. Answers of how a majority of service activities will function need to be clearly incorporated into the Design, and perhaps some or most service activities should take place off of Mission which is more capable of handling it.

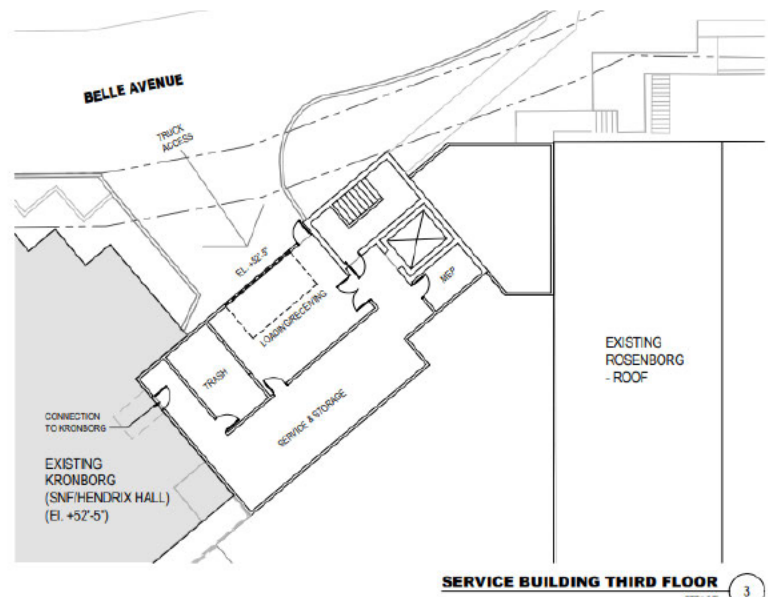


Figure 2 ref Project Plan A4.6

Whilst it may make sense for *some limited service needs* to be met from Belle Avenue, it is not suitable to continue or expand services at that location without improvements that eliminates safety and roadway impacts that exist today.

PROJECT - 326 and 308 Mission Avenue (Aldersly Retirement Community)

- The impact studies and certainly the Project Design Plan should be clear how the majority of service vehicle traffic and activities will be accommodated and what mitigations or aspects of Plan will ensure safety and access for Belle Avenue pedestrians, residents, vehicles and bikes.

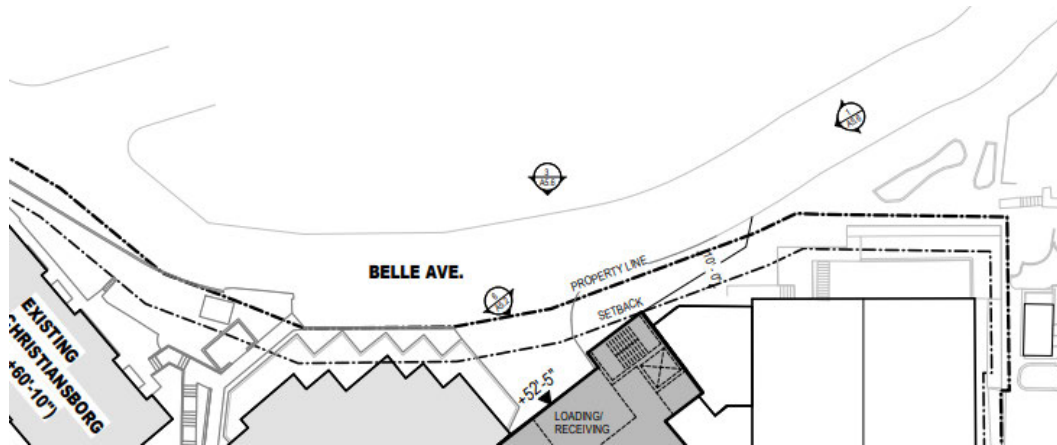


Figure 3 ref Project Plans A3.5

- Currently Aldersly has a **backup generator** that is very loud. Noise and Emissions negatively impact our tenants on Belle (and likely other neighbors). It is our understanding that there is to be a second such generator installed. Where is this going to be located and will it meet a higher noise limit/emission requirement?

Construction Activities

This is an enormous project for a developed residential neighborhood with full bustling streets, an established thoroughway, and presumably continued operations for the Aldersly Community itself. Aldersly wants to max out the income potential of their property with a wall-to-wall build-out that will negatively impact everyone else in the community not for a few months or even a year, but **FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS**. We provide 3 high quality housing units directly behind Aldersly and the impact on our long-term tenants is going to be unrelenting and it may prove impossible for them to stay under these conditions. It is absolutely unreasonable to subject a residential community to ten years of construction. There are *no timeframes attached* to the Phasing Plan but the scope of each Phase is considerable. In our opinion the scope of the project is too big and the timeline too long.

Of particular concern to us is the proposed West Campus Independent Living building (IL) which is at the northwest corner of the property and abuts Belle Avenue. This building is part of phase 4 of the project which means all the construction to the south (Mission Street) side of the building will already be completed and the only access for construction staging, equipment and activities will be from Belle Avenue. There is simply no room to do this without dramatically exacerbating the aforementioned problems on Belle to an

PROJECT - 326 and 308 Mission Avenue (Aldersly Retirement Community)

unsafe and unacceptable degree and will most likely require a number of road closures. If this IL building is a “must have” for Aldersly then they should build it at an earlier phase of the project when access from Mission is possible.

There is no way to prevent many aspects of a project this huge from leaking off the project site into the neighborhood and surrounding roads. This will include noise, dirt, extra trips by trucks and equipment, and certainly parking of workers, staging and heavy equipment and materials. . .

Belle Avenue, at the rear of the property, is not of sufficient size to take the hit.

The project design and phasing should need to contain and absorb a high percentage of the construction impacts ON THE PROJECT SITE and specifically limit inappropriate impacts toward Belle Avenue that decrease safety and accessibility to that area.

Sincerely,

Derek and Tymber Cavasian

