

<p>Location: 529-39 17th Street, 524-28 16th St. & 1608-30 San Pablo Ave. (See map on reverse)</p> <p>Assessors Parcel Numbers: 008-0620-009-01 and 011 through 015</p>	
<p>Proposal: To construct a 4 ½-story structure containing +320 parking spaces (which includes 11 surface parking spaces) on a 36,410 S.F. site bounded by 17th Street, 16th Street and San Pablo Avenue in Downtown Oakland. The project includes demolition of the one-story building located at 1630 San Pablo Avenue and removal of surface parking lots.</p>	
<p>Applicant: Phil Tagami, (510) 268-8500</p> <p>Owner: California Commercial Investments</p> <p>Planning Permits Required: Major Conditional Use Permit to construct a building over 100,000 SF and Minor Conditional Use Permit for an auto fee parking activity.</p> <p>General Plan: Central Business District</p> <p>Zoning: C-55 Central Core Commercial Zone / S-17 Downtown Open Space Combining Zone</p> <p>Environmental Determination: An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a parking structure on this site was certified by the Planning Commission in April 2001. (Case File No ER-99-001).</p> <p>Historic Status: The portion of the project site fronting onto 16th Street (currently used as a surface parking lot) is located in the Downtown Oakland Historic District. The existing building located at 1630 San Pablo Avenue, which is proposed for demolition, is a Potentially Designated Historic Property (PDHP), rated Ec1+ by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.</p> <p>Service Delivery District: I-Downtown Metro</p> <p>City Council District: 3</p> <p>For further information: Contact case planner Heather Klein at 510 238-3659 or by e-mail at hklein@oaklandnet.com</p>	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide preliminary design review comments for a parking garage project located between 17th Street, San Pablo Avenue, and 16th Street. The proposed 4 ½-story building includes 320 parking stalls, 11 of which are located as surface parking.

The proposed parking structure has been designed to express the structure of the building. It would have a contemporary modern character. Proposed materials include concrete with a stucco finish. Major architectural components of the building include a tall tower element that will be the main pedestrian entry for the majority of users and a subordinate tower at the 17th Street and San Pablo corner.

The project requires a Major Conditional Use Permit is required to construct a building over 100,000 S.F. and a Minor Conditional Use Permit is required for auto fee parking. Additional discussion of this issue is provided later in the ZONING ANALYSIS Section.

The project includes the demolition of the LAI Insurance building, an existing 1-story concrete building at 1630 San Pablo Ave. The building is a potentially designated historic property (PDHP) with a rating of

Ec1+. In addition, a portion of the site fronting onto 16th Street (currently used as a surface parking lot) is located in the Downtown Oakland Historic District (DOHD).

An Environmental Impact Report was certified by the Planning Commission as the Lead Agency on April 4, 2001 for a larger 530-car parking garage and 22,680 S.F. of ground floor retail space on this site. Staff reviewed the proposed project in respect to the analysis in this EIR. Additional discussion of this issue is provided later in the ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION Section.

Staff is requesting comments and direction from the Design Review Committee and the public regarding the design of the proposed project as design work proceeds toward full Planning Commission Review.

PROJECT SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The .84 acre, irregularly-shaped, project site is bounded by 17th Street, San Pablo Avenue, and 16th Street. The site is located in the midst of a densely developed urban commercial area within downtown Oakland. Directly bordering the site on the south side, at the corner of San Pablo and 16th Street is the Adcock-Joyner building, containing approximately 50 residential units and ground floor commercial space. Directly bordering the site on the north side is the LAI Insurance building east of the project site, facing 17th Street, is the 7-story Dufwin Theatre Building, presently containing offices. A small, 3-story commercial building, the Traveller's Aid Building, is located southeast of the project site along 16th Street. To the north, across 17th Street is the Oakland Ice Arena. Directly across San Pablo Avenue is the Haley Law Offices, also known as Maclise Drug Store, a City Landmark, and a designated historic property. To the southwest, across San Pablo Avenue, is the City Administration Building and Frank Ogawa Plaza.

A portion of one of the vacant parcels, fronting on 16th Street, is within the Downtown Oakland Historic District (DOHD). Five contributor buildings to the DOHD surround the project site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed parking structure would be 4 ½ stories high (five levels of parking) containing +320 parking stalls, which includes a small surface parking area for 7 full size spaces and 4 disabled spaces on the 16th Street side of the project site. Each parking deck would accommodate approximately 60-65 spaces and the garage would be attended.

Types of Parking

The structure will be a mix of monthly and daily/hourly parking spaces. Up to 1/3 of the spaces (1/3) in the garage are transit spaces and remaining two thirds would be reserved for monthly patrons. Parking spaces for disabled patrons are proposed on the ground floor and in the surface parking lot near the entrance/exits. Of the total number of parking spaces proposed, eight spaces for disabled patrons are required to comply with the building code. The plans indicate that 11 disabled access parking spaces will be provided. Sixteen spaces are available for bicycles and 24 spaces for motorcycles.

Access

Vehicles would access the garage from 17th Street, between San Pablo and Telegraph Avenues with a secondary entry/exit on 16th Street. The primary pedestrian entry is located at the apex of the structure in the middle of San Pablo Ave. between 16th and 17th Streets. One elevator would be incorporated into the entry area, along with a stairway to the upper levels. Another pedestrian stairway is located at the 16th Street entrance.

Floor Plans

The ground floor plans show the building built to the property lines along 17th Street and adjacent to the Dufwin Theatre Building and the Traveller's Aid Building. The project will require demolition of the existing concrete building at the corner of 17th Street and San Pablo to provide adequate circulation within the garage. The project sponsor has indicated that he is presently working with a tenant and will have a design for this retail/commercial building within the next year. The development agreement with the City of Oakland Redevelopment Agency allows up to 5 years to complete this portion of the project.

A large triangular light well is proposed between the adjoining residential building and the garage. This light well has a minimum setback of 10 feet, with the widest point measuring approximately 38 feet along that side. The project proposes 60 parking spaces, an elevator and stair lobby, restrooms, and office on the ground floor. The 5th level will be uncovered and would include 4, 25' high light poles.

Major Design Elements and Architectural Character

The building construction type is shown as concrete and the exterior treatment will be painted concrete at the pedestrian level with painted stucco finish above. The apex of the structure is located in the middle of block along San Pablo Avenue and is designed to be a major element that is taller than the rest of the building. This tower element appears stark with only scoring to articulate it. This tower will function mainly as the pedestrian entry for the majority of the users of the garage because the elevators will be located within this corner element. A subordinate tower is located at the 17th Street and San Pablo corner, but not functional and purely for decoration. Architecturally, the building reveals the ramping and is reflective of structure. Exterior openings provide natural ventilation and are typical for this type of structure. These openings result in a distinct horizontal massing. The building will have solid masonry walls on the southern and eastern facades, which are adjacent to other structures. The solid wall facing the residential building will reduce noise, nighttime lighting and air pollutants from the garage and will increase reflected light into the residential units. The building height varies from approximately 66' at the top of the tower element along the San Pablo Avenue elevation to approximately 45' along 17th Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

An Environmental Impact Report was certified by the Planning Commission as the Lead Agency on April 4, 2001 for a 530-car parking garage and 22,680 S.F. of ground floor retail space on this site. At that time, the design of the proposed garage was developed only to a schematic level because the initial action to which the EIR was to be applied was site acquisition, not a conditional use permit. At the present time, with submittal of the application for a conditional use permit, the analysis contained within the EIR is being applied to the submitted project. The proposed project would provide 320 parking spaces whereas the EIR analyzed 530 cars and 22,630 SF of retail space. Based on applying the EIR to the submitted project, staff has determined the following: 1) The revised project is substantially the same as the project studied in the EIR; 2) No new impacts will result from the revised project and no impacts previously identified will be made more severe; 3) There have been no substantial changes that have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken that will require major revisions to the EIR; and 4) There is no new information of substantial importance that was not known at the time the EIR was prepared that would affect the impact analysis or the feasibility of the identified mitigation measures.

GENERAL PLAN ANALYSIS

The General Plan designation for the project site is Central Business District (CBD). The intent of the CBD designation is to "encourage, support, and enhance the downtown area as a high density mixed use urban center of regional importance and primary hub for business, communications, office, government,

high technology, retail, entertainment, and transportation in northern California.” The General Plan states that the future development in the area should include a mix of large-scale offices, commercial, urban residential, institutional, cultural, entertainment, and visitor services. The garage will meet the intent and character of the CBD by serving the minimum parking needs of existing and future businesses. The availability of public parking is also intended to spur private investment in this part of downtown and accommodate increased parking demand for retail and office space in the area.

ZONING ANALYSIS

The project site is zoned C-55, Central Core Commercial zone and S-17, Downtown Open Space Combining zone. The C-55 zone is intended to “preserve and enhance a very high-intensity regional center of employment, shopping, culture and recreation.” Within the C-55 zone, a Major Conditional Use Permit is required to construct a building over 100,000 S.F. and a Minor Conditional Use Permit is required for auto fee parking. The S-17 Downtown Open Space Combining Zone applies to residential projects located in downtown, and is therefore not applicable to this project.

Regarding development standards, there is no maximum height limit for this site within the C-55 zone and front, side and rear yard setbacks are not required for this site. Despite not being required by the Planning Code, the project has incorporated a 10'-38' setback along the interior side lot line, between the project site and the adjacent residential building.

The project is proposing 25 parking stalls that do not meet the parking dimension requirements when located next to a wall or other similar obstruction, however a Variance is not necessary because the parking spaces are not required.

MAJOR DESIGN ISSUES

After review of the plans, staff has identified a number of key design issues in the next section of this report. It is requested that the DRC comment on these issues, provide direction as to changes and provide any other comments about layout or design elements.

- *Massing and Bulk*

At the time the EIR was prepared and certified, only a conceptual design of the building was developed. Several mitigation measures were adopted that are intended to mitigate impacts that could arise from the proposed design. These include impacts on the Downtown Oakland Historic District (DOHD), as well as visual considerations.

A portion of the project is located in the DOHD. Mitigation measure 5.1 states that the “design process for the garage should include review of, and incorporation of, the key physical defining elements of the DOHD along the 16th St. edge of the project site, in particular: 1) A three-part composition to the façade (top, middle and bottom); 2) A three-dimensional texture and skeletal articulation of the façade through the use of cornices, color and variation in materials; and 3) A mass and scale for the façade that will fill in the north building edge of the 16th St. canyon consistent with the mass and scale of the surrounding contributor buildings.”

Staff comments: More work is required to fulfill this mitigation measure. More articulation of the façade is required, along with finer grained ground floor treatments to provide better visual quality at the pedestrian level.

- *Proportions:* The building code requires a certain portion of the garage to be open if it is to be naturally ventilated. Therefore the pattern of the exterior openings is critical not only to the way the building reads from the street but also operationally.

Staff comments: Staff believes the proportions are too horizontal and seem to exaggerate the mass of the building. Staff recommends the inclusion of a major vertical feature and additional verticality to all the building facades. Although little can be accomplished to change the geometric shape of the structure, design elements can be added to push/pull the plane (front to back) through screening, railings, or other features. A consistent vertical screening pattern used throughout the structure would better articulate the elevations, and provide shadow, depth, and continuity.

- *Architectural Character:* The surrounding area is a mix of different styles including modern, Beaux Arts Revival, and utilitarian commercial. The building is presently design solely to express its core structure.

Staff comments: Staff believes that revising the proportions, breaking up the bulk and mass of the building will result in an improved design, will assist in combining all the elements and result in a more cohesive design. This can be achieved in several ways. Two ways to achieve further visual interest would be to 1) apply different types of material (brick, stone, metal screens, public art, etc.) and color over facades or 2) to use the structure of the building to emphasize major design features. Key issues in this regard include:

- a) *17th and San Pablo Corner:* This corner marks the gateway into the Downtown core area. As this entire corner is proposed to be undeveloped under the current proposal, staff believes that it is important to mark this in an architectural way on the garage structure. In this way a pleasing façade is presented until that space is developed. Plans show an unarticulated tower element at this corner. This element is subordinate to the main elevator/stairwell tower.
 - b) *San Pablo Ave.:* The tower on this façade is minimal, austere, and out of proportion. It needs to provide a stronger sense of entry and incorporate features that will provide interest. The only articulation is a pattern of scoring.
 - c) *Façade facing the Adcock Joyner building:* Mitigation measure 6.2 and 6.5 call for attention to be given to this side of the building and for special design features to be implemented. Staff requests additional information on this elevation, including colors and materials.
 - d) *16th Street frontage:* The area along the 16th Street frontage of the site at the sidewalk edge will remain as a surface parking lot. The applicant has proposed resurfacing the parking lot and providing low landscaping along the streetfront. Staff recommends an architectural façade or screen wall to continue the appearance of the parking garage in front of the parking lot so as to “fill in” the gap in the streetwall created by the surface parking lot. This façade should enhance the Downtown Oakland Historic District, within which a portion of the site is located.
- *Materials and colors* are a crucial component of this project given the strong geometric forms and massing. Staff requests that a materials and color board of all materials for review and that revised plans be submitted that detail all materials on the proposed garage.
 - *Ground floor design and details* are an important part of how the building will read from the pedestrian level. Although the architects have provided some information for this portion, staff recommends higher quality materials to provide a distinct base in contrast to the middle and top of the garage and in response to the mitigation measures regarding the historic district.

- *Landscape Plan:* Parcels 2 and 3 are reserved for future commercial/retail uses. According to the Development Agreement signed with the City, the applicant has five years in order to develop those parcels. Staff recommends a landscape plan be submitted that indicates paving materials, benches, street trees, as well as minimal plant and hardscape materials for the light well.

Parcel 3 is a light well for the neighboring residential building. Until a retail tenant is found, this area will be a visual courtyard only. Because the space is not accessible by patrons parking of the garage or by residents of the adjacent building, an ornamental fence should be placed between the tower pedestrian entrance and the Adcock Joyner building for security and public safety concerns. The landscape plan should complement the design of the building and the surrounding context.

- *Disabled Parking:* The World Institute on Disability (WID) occupies office space on 16th Street, just one building away from the 16th St. portion of the project site and was involved in previous designs for the garage. They stated that several other disabled access agencies are also located in downtown Oakland in areas where this will be one of the closest parking garages for their employees and visitors to park. Staff recommends that the applicant discuss the functional and operational design of the project with representatives of this group.
- *Multiple modes of transportation:* Staff recommends that space in the garage be reserved the City Car Share program, and charging stations for electric vehicles as was provided in the previous design.
- *Lighting:* At the community meeting for the previous designs, residents in the Adcock Joyner building were concerned with lighting on the top floor of the garage since this will not be covered. Details of the lighting should be submitted to staff for review.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends the Design Review Committee provide comments and direction on the design of the proposed project with emphasis discussed above, as well as any other issues the Committee may have.

Respectfully submitted:

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Development Director

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Attachments:

A. Project Plans