

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
FEBRUARY 4, 2021

PROJECT TITLE

The Cube Building

ADDRESS/LOCATION

1255 Apollo Way

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

035-490-029

APPLICATION DATE

November 29, 2018

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Design Review

PROJECT SITE ZONING

Business Park

PROJECT PLANNER

Susie Murray

APPLICANT

James Huston

PROPERTY OWNER

Huston General Contracting, Inc.

FILE NUMBER

DR18-081

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE

November 29, 2018

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Business Park

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

Agenda Item #8.1
For the Design Review Board Meeting of February 4, 2021

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
FROM: SUSIE MURRAY, SENIOR PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: THE CUBE BUILDING

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Design Review Board, by resolution, grant Design Review for The Cube Building, an approximately 12,000-square foot commercial building, proposed at 1255 Apollo Way.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project site is located in the southwest quadrant, in the Corporate Center Business Park, and is currently undeveloped. The Cube Building (Project) proposes to construct an approximately 12,000-square foot commercial building, which will be divided into five suites, each comprised of office space taking access from the front of the building, and warehouse space taking access from the rear. The development site is located along the curve of the street, and the building has been designed to step with the street frontage.

The unique shape of the parcel presented some challenges. The site plan includes 24 onsite parking spaces and eight more spaces along the street frontage, which requires a parking reduction. The site plans also provide landscaping separating the building from the sidewalk and along the northeast property line; and includes a storm drain easement along the western property line.

While no uses are proposed at this time, warehouse and office uses are both permitted in this location.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

1. Project History

On November 29, 2018, the project applications were submitted.

On November 18, 2019, an Engineering Variance was approved reducing the size of the Storm Drain Easement from 20 feet to 15 feet.

2. General Plan (Existing and Surrounding Land Uses)

The Project site is in an area designated and as Business Park on the General Plan Land Use Diagram, as are all properties surrounding it. This designation is intended for planned, visually attractive centers for businesses which do not generate nuisances (noise, clutter, noxious emissions, etc.). This designation accommodates campus-like environments for corporate headquarters, research and development facilities, offices, light manufacturing and assembly, industrial processing, general service, incubator-research facilities, testing, repairing, packaging, publishing and printing, and research and development facilities. Warehousing and distribution facilities, retail, hotels, and residential uses are permissible on an ancillary basis.

The site is undeveloped, is surrounded by commercial uses to the east and south, a Kaiser Medical Office to the northwest, an approved church to the north (not constructed), and undeveloped property to the west.

3. Other Applicable Plans

Not applicable.

4. Zoning

The Project site is within the Business Park (BP) zoning District, which is consistent with the General Plan land use designation. The Project plans have been reviewed in compliance with development standards set forth in the Zoning Code, including height, setbacks and lot coverage.

The Project includes a request for a parking reduction. Zoning Code Table 3-4 indicates that 32 onsite spaces are required. The site plan includes only 24 spaces onsite, but clearly identifies another eight spaces along the street frontage. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-36.050(C)(1)(a) the Project is

allowed a parking reduction up to 25 percent, approved by the Design Review Board, if the following findings two are met:

1. *Due to special circumstances associated with the operation of the use at its location, the proposed use will generate a parking demand different from the standards specified in Table 3-4;*

A Focused Traffic Study, prepared by W-Trans, dated February 3, 2020, concluded:

Because the parking supply is less than the City's requirements, parking demand was estimated using standard rates published by ITE [Institute of Transportation Engineers] in Parking Generation, 5th Edition, 2019 for "General Office Building" (ITE LU 710) and "Warehousing" (ITE LU 150). As shown in Table 2 [Image 1 below], the peak demand anticipated for these uses is substantially less than the parking supply needed to meet the City's requirements. The parking supply is therefore expected to be more than adequate to meet the site's demand.

Parking is allowed along the site's street frontage, and there is currently no other demand for this parking. Since there is street parking available in the vicinity of the project and the projected demand is less than the proposed supply, it is suggested that the City grant a 25 percent parking reduction, which would bring the onsite parking requirement to 24 spaces, which is met by the proposed supply and is expected to be six more spaces than would be need based on the estimated parking demand of 18 spaces.

Image 1: Parking Analysis

| Table 2 – Parking Analysis Summary | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Land Use | Units | Supply (spaces) | City Requirements | | ITE Parking Generation | |
| | | | Rate | Spaces Required | Rate | Est. Parking Demand |
| General Office Building | 6.8 ksf | 27 | 1.0 per .25 ksf | 27 | 2.38 per 1 ksf | 16 |
| Warehousing | 5.0 ksf | 5 | 1.0 per 1 ksf | 5 | 0.39 per 1 ksf | 2 |
| Total | | 32 | | 32 | | 18 |
| <i>Parking Reduction</i> | | -25% | | -8 | | n/a |
| Net Total | | 24 | | 24 | | 18 |
| Notes: ksf = 1,000 square feet | | | | | | |

Source: Focused Traffic Study, prepared by W-Trans, dated February 3, 2020

2. *The number of parking spaces approved will be sufficient for its safe, convenient, and efficient operation of the use.*

With a combined total of 32 parking spaces, 24 onsite and eight offsite parallel to the street frontage, the Project provides adequate parking. The W-Trans report reference above also concluded that Adequate sight distance is available at the project driveway.

3. Design Guidelines

[Design Guidelines Section 3.4](#) provides guidance for new construction within business and light industrial parks. Part III of that section focuses on building design. The Project is supported by the following goals and policies from that section:

- Design buildings specifically for the sites they are intended to occupy. Designs should be unique to Santa Rosa.
- Design buildings to fit into the character and context of the surrounding area. Buildings should not be stylized or ornamented in a garish and conspicuous manner.
- Use consistent building materials, colors, and textures within a park setting. Individual buildings may vary to reflect the character of the different businesses.
- Choose materials and colors thoughtfully and carefully detail connections and joining of materials. Avoid “false” or “decorative” facade treatments where unrelated materials are haphazardly placed on the building.
- Use building entries to protect people from the elements and create a “sense of entry” or focal point for the building.
- Utilize doors and windows in an organized pattern to articulate wall surfaces.

Image 2: Project rendering



Source: Project plans, Rev. January 5, 2021

4. Neighborhood Comments

No public comments have been received to date.

5. Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

A comprehensive list of required on and offsite improvement can be reviewed in the Engineering Development Services Exhibit A, prepared by Carol Dugas, dated February 6, 2020, attached to the draft resolution. To summarize:

- The Project will install a sidewalk and planter strip along the frontage;
- Landscaping throughout the project site, including street trees;
- Underground service connections; and
- Compliance with the City's Storm Water Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the Project will not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Project has been found in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, the Project is categorically exempt as infill development because:

- The Project site is less than five acres and is substantially surrounded by development;
- The Project is consistent with both the General Plan land use designation of Business Park and zoning requirements for the Business Park (BP) zoning district.
- All services are available at the Project site;
- The Project would not result in a significant impact in air quality or water quality;
- The Project would not result in a significant impact in traffic. A Focused Traffic Study, prepared for the Project by W-Trans, dated February 3,

2020, concluded that the Project is expected to generate fewer than ten vehicle trips during either peak hour and that there is adequate sight distance at the project driveway; and

- The Project site has no suitable habitat for listed species. An Assessment of Biological Resources was prepared for the Project by WRA Environmental Consultants, dated January 8, 2021. The Assessment concluded that there are no sensitive habitat areas within the project site that will be adversely affected by development; there are no sensitive habitat areas within the project site that will be adversely affected by development; no special-status plant species have a moderate or high potential for presence and no further action is necessary; no special-status wildlife species are expected to be adversely affected by development of the project site;

Pursuant to CEQA Guideline Section 15183, because the project is being developed consistent with the General Plan, for which Council certified an Environmental Impact Report in 2009, the project is eligible for streamlined CEQA processing.

No further environmental review is necessary for the Project as analysis has confirmed that there are no new environmental effects, or environmental effects of greater severity, peculiar to the parcel or the project that were not analyzed and addressed in a prior EIR.

The City has further determined that no exceptions to the exemptions apply and there is no reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2.) This determination is based on the infill nature of proposed site, and the previous site development.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

On December 24, 2018, a Notice of Application was mailed to property owners within 100 feet of the Project site.

In 2019, Zoning Code Section 20-50.050 was amended to require a noticing be sent to property owners and occupants within 600 feet of the site for any project that required a public hearing. Because the Project application was submitted in 2018, the Notice of Application was deemed in compliance with Zoning Code requirements.

THE CUBE BUILDING

PAGE 8 OF 8

In January 2021, all public noticing was completed in compliance with Zoning Code Chapter 20-66, including an onsite public hearing sign, and mailed Notice of Public Hearing, and a publication in the Press Democrat.

ISSUES

During staff's review of the Project plans, there was an issue relating an underground storm drain that runs along the western edge of the Project site. The matter was further complicated by a 20-foot Public Utility Easement (PUE) along the street frontage. The applicant was required to obtain an Engineering Variance to reduce the PUE.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Disclosure Form
- Attachment 2: Location/Neighborhood Context Map
- Attachment 3: Project Plans, prepared by HGCI, revised on December 16, 2019
- Attachment 4: Focused Traffic Study, prepared by W-Trans, dated February 3, 2020
- Attachment 5: Assessment of Biological Assessment, prepared by WRA
Environmental Consultants, dated January 8, 2021
- Attachment 6: Engineering Variance No. ENG-VAR 19-20

Resolution 1: Design Review (with Exhibit A)

CONTACT

Susie Murray, Senior Planner

SMurray@SRCity.org

707-543-4348