

**Hedgpeth Architects  
Response to Planning Division Comments  
Issues Letter #1, Dated May 12, 2021**

**Date:** September 30, 2021

**To:** Adam Ross, Senior Planner, Planning Division

**From:** Hedgpeth Architects

**Subject:** 1650 West Steele Lane Apartments; 1650 W Steele Ln; PRJ20-010  
Minor Conditional Use Permit, Modified Design Review, and State Density Bous

**Thank you for providing Completeness Review Comments.  
Please find our response below each comment.**

***REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION***

**1. Include a written response to each of the Design Review Board's** comments/considerations/recommendations from the March 3, 2020, Design Review Board Concept Item meeting. Approved minutes from the meeting are attached for your reference.

***Responses to Design Review Board Comment Summary:***

***1. Dynamic materials and color for courtyard facades encouraged.***

*Response:*

*See Sheet A9, 4- East and 5- West of Building "I" for monumental scale guardrail wall, arched openings with view into courtyard at exterior stair landings, and segmented arch at level 1 of exterior stair to Units 1, 11, and 25, and for 4-color tile accent panels inset into exterior cement plaster walls at floor assemblies between windows at levels 1, 2 and levels 2 and 3*

*See Sheet A10, 4- Building "III" West for 4-color tile accent panels inset into exterior cement plaster walls at floor assemblies between windows at levels 1, 2 and levels 2 and 3, and for double timber post over monumental scale piers at balcony guardrails.*

*See Sheet A10, 9- Building "II" North for 4-color tile accent panels inset into exterior cement plaster walls at floor assemblies between windows at levels 1, 2 and levels 2 and 3, and for double timber posts over monumental scale piers at balcony guardrails.*

*See Sheet A10.1, 2- Building "I" from Courtyard – the entry from the public plaza into the semi-private residential courtyard is articulated with large scale balconies at Levels 1 and 2. The arched entryway is flanked by a symmetrical planting of Japanese Maple trees.*

*See Sheet A12.1, view 4, for monumental scale guardrail wall, arched openings with view in to courtyard at stair landings, and segmented arch at level 1 of exterior stair to Units 1, 11, and 25*

*See Sheet A12.2, Entry Plaza, a metal arbor gives vertical definition to path of accessible ramp and is planted with climbing rose vine; an Arbutus Marina tree in center planter is proposed for shade and landscape focal point; at levels 2 and 3 above the arched entry into the residential courtyard, composite wood cladding simulates paneling in spandrel walls typical of oriole window fenestration*

**2. Consider reducing size of courtyard for unloading zone.**

*Response: An unloading zone at the intersection of West Steele Lane and Range Road would significantly compromise vehicular and pedestrian safety at the confluence of 2 two-way roads with pedestrian crossings at each*

**3. Design Guidelines – North Station Specific Plan Design**

*Response: See Sheet A1 Site Plan, Sheet A2 Ground Floor Plan, Sheets A12.1 through A12.5 Perspective Views, building and site walls, and the outer perimeter of the Entry Plaza, are built at or within 5 feet of the minimum front yard setbacks at West Steele Lane and Meadowbrook Court in order to clearly define the edges of the right of way and lend an urban sense of enclosure to the right of ways. More than 60% of the street fronting elevations of Buildings I (North and West Elevations) and II (West Elevation) are oriented parallel to the streets on which they front. At their street front elevations, Buildings I and II are designed to define, connect to, and activate the sidewalks and public sidewalks they face.*

**4. North Station Area Specific Plan Design - Avoidance of Blank Walls**

*Response: See Sheets A9, A10, A12.1 through A12.5. A rhythmic pattern of fenestration and tile panels give human scale and visual articulation to the three story elevations of Buildings I, II, and III. The facades of the residential buildings are active and open, engaging the street fronts at West Steele Lane and Meadowbrook Court, and architectural detail enhances the street level pedestrian and vehicular experience. The west elevation of Building IV, the automated parking structure, relates to the residential campus with an upper level register of ornamental laser cut aluminum panels simulating the patterning of the tile panels on the residential buildings.*

**5. North Station Area Specific Plan Design, F - Urban Plazas**

*Response: See Sheet A12.2-*

- 1) The plaza includes a seat wall at the accessible ramp and at the perimeter wall defining the plaza as well as site furnishings for shaded seating.*
- 2) A vertical element, the semi-circular arbor is located out of the vision triangle.*
- 3) The Plaza includes an adequate area of hardscape and seating to host a range of activities. Landscaping and central tree planter complement the primarily social function of the space.*
- 8) A shade tree, Arbutus Marina, and shaded seating under the arbor and at umbrella tables provide sun protection for users*
- 10) The Entry Plaza is lit with exterior wall sconces - See Photometric Plan and Sheet A10.1, Colors and Materials, for exterior light fixtures.*

**6. Consider adding materials to the palette**

*Response: 4-color tile accent panels of glazed ceramic tile in architectural thin brick, traditional Norman shape, are added to the materials palette. Fiberon composite wood tone cladding is added to the materials palette. The exterior cement plaster color is revised from painted stucco neutral color "Sea Pearl" to an earth toned integral color stucco, La Habra "Fallbrook". The laser cut aluminum panel screening at the second level of the Building IV is color Bronze Sand, a metallic deep golden brown.*

**7. Make sure there is continuity of the accessory buildings with the finishes**

*Response: See Sheet A10, (8) Bldg "IV" West, for automated parking enclosure. The upper level of the parking device is screened with a laser cut aluminum screen that relates to the patterning of the 4-color tile accent panels on the residential buildings and site walls. The metal screen color is Bronze Sand, a weathered metallic color that complements the earth toned integral color of the stucco walls in the residential buildings.*

**8. Recommend grey color to verticals and in on courtyard walls for color variation**

*Response: Color and vertical grouping of windows is achieved with 4-color tile accent panels at floor assemblies between windows at levels 1 and 2 and levels 2 and 3, creating a repetitive rhythm of vertical bays around the building group. In lieu of grays, the primary exterior wall color is revised from a painted white tone to an earth tone integral color stucco.*

**9. Recommend 1 parking stall per unit**

*Response: 1 parking stall per unit is provided. See Attached Traffic Report concluding that parking provided is sufficient considering location of project within ¼ mile of high quality transit, retail, schools, parks, businesses, provision of 18 bike parking stalls, combined with reduction in demand due to unbundled parking.*

**10. Consider vines on courtyard walls**

*Response: See Landscape Plan Sheet L-1. Climbing Rose, Parthenocissus and Ficus vines are located at arbor and walls of Building I at Entry Plaza and at exterior walls and arbor in the residential courtyard garden*

**11. Consider adding tile returns at the courtyard element walls**

*Response: A hierarchy of architectural elements and articulation of walls surfaces is provided with the 4-color tile accent panels at floor assemblies above and below windows, between levels 1 and 2 and levels 2 and 3, and with composite cladding panels at windows above main Entry Archway in Building I, on both the Entry Plaza and Courtyard Garden elevations.*

**12. Recommend enhanced landscaping**

*Response: See Sheets A12.1 through A12.5 for rendered views reflecting landscape plants on Sheet L-1*

**13. Consider screening of equipment at mechanical wells facing West Steele Lane**

*Response: Acknowledged- mechanical equipment wells that are located at the roof level of Building I, facing West Steele Lane will be screened and details will be provided in the Construction Permit Documents*

**14. Incorporate glazing into top of garage doors**

*Response: See Sheet A10, (3) Bldg "III" South and (11) Bldg "II" South, glazing is provided at upper register of sectional garage doors*

**15. Traffic Study is encouraged**

*Response: See attached documents, Memorandum of Assumptions for the Focused Traffic Study for the 1650 West Steele Lane Project and Final Traffic Study for the 1650 Steele Lane Project*

**16. Add tile and landscape details to next submittal**

*Response: See Landscape Details, Sheet L2.*

*See Sheets A9, A10, A10.1, A12.1, A12.2, A12.3, A12.4, A12.5. for 4-color tile accent panels inset into exterior cement plaster walls at floor assemblies between windows at levels 1, 2 and levels 2 and 3, and inset into stucco clad site and patio walls. Tile inset details will be provided in the Construction Permit Documents.*

**2. Appendix E: CAP New Development Checklist does not appear to be correct.** For instance, any item listed with an asterisk (\*) requires compliance while your response for item 1.3.1 states that the project does not comply. Clarify and revise the CAP New Development Checklist and include it in the next submittal. Staff has included an example from another project for responses for your reference.

*Response: See attached, revised and corrected Appendix E:CAP New Development Checklist. The project complies with all items with an asterisk. Items not provided are either Not Applicable or not required.*

**Issues**

*Design Guidelines*

**1. Table 2-14 of Zoning Code Section 20-28.070.** Total building height allowed is 35 feet. Plans appear to show 38 feet. Clarify this discrepancy.

*Response: See attached Density Bonus Request Project Narrative and Cost Reduction Statement. A waiver of the development standard limiting the maximum building height in the R-3-15 SA zone to 35 feet or less is requested. The project requests a waiver of the standard to permit a maximum building height of up to 40 feet to top of highest ridgeline from top of grade.*

*To be economically feasible, the development needs to build 36 units. In order to achieve this density and meet minimum parking requirements, provide market rate apartment dwelling amenities such as 9' and 10' high ceilings in all units, and adequate depth of engineered floor joists for sound and vibration resistance, the Developer is requesting a concession to permit a height increase from a maximum of 35 feet, to up to a maximum of 40 feet at the three story residential buildings.*

*In accordance with the Density Bonus Law, the City shall grant the requested density bonus, concessions, incentives and waivers of development standards. The requests outlined above are within the parameters of the Density Bonus Law, and will afford the City of Santa Rosa an attractive, well-planned housing development with affordable units. The Developer reserves the right to make additional requests as the project is studied through the entitlement process.*

**Table 2-5 of Zoning Code Section 20-22.050** states that for both front and exterior side setbacks 10 ft provided a 1-story portion may project up to 6 ft into the setback and required stairs and landings may project up to 10 ft into the setback.

*Response: See Sheet A1, Site Plan, the project proposes all building elevations located on the West Steele Lane and Meadowbrook front yards are either at the 10 foot building setback or behind it.*

**3. Table 2-5 of Zoning Code Section 20-22.050** limits fence heights to 36 inches in front and side exterior setbacks. Clarify and revise the discrepancy.

*Response: See Sheet A 9, (1), Building I – North Elevation, the site wall located in the front yard along West Steele Lane is dimensioned and is 3 feet high. See Sheet A 10, (9), (11), (12), the site walls at Building II located in the side – front yard setback along Meadowbrook Court are dimensioned and are 3 feet high.*

**4. The Design Concept Narrative requests a setback reduction** at the side yard to 5 feet at the parking structure, but Table 2-5 of Zoning Code Section 20-22.050 allows a 5-foot interior side setback for accessory structures. Please clarify and revise this discrepancy

*Response: See Sheet A1, Site Plan, the East exterior wall of Building IV, garage accessory structure is 5 feet or more from the property line and does not encroach in the 5 foot side yard setback for allowed for accessory structures. The south wall of the Trash Enclosure encroaches into the 5 foot setback allowed for accessory structures. A concession to permit a waiver of the setback standard for accessory structures in the side yard setback along the east boundary of the parcel is requested. See attached, a revised and corrected Design Concept Narrative and Density Bonus Request Project Narrative and Cost Reduction Statement.*