

**MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
JANUARY 17TH, 2007**

ROLL

APPROVED

Board Members Present: Chair Kent, Huntsberry, Alternate Machnowski

Planning Commission Liaison: Kirchmann

Board Members Absent: Crew, Dickens, Laird-Blanton

Community Development: Raffi Boloyan, Senior Planner
Katie Korzun, Economic Developer Coordinator
Steve Stafford, Assistant Planner
Sarjit Dhaliwal, Associate Planner

AGENDA

A. Staff Communications

1) Past City Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board Action on Design Review Matters

B. Board Communications

C. Approval of Minutes

2) Minutes, December 5th and December 19th, 2006

D. New Business

- 3) PA06-007 **Conceptual Review of a remodel of the existing VW dealership front elevation and landscaping and the construction of a new, two level dealership building over a parking deck on an adjacent lot. 740 Francisco Blvd. West (Sonnen) (Katie Korzun)**
- 4) PA06-006 **Conceptual Design Review for the redevelopment of Marin Square Shopping Center. The preapplication proposes to demolish 31,000 square feet of office/retail space within three freestanding buildings along Bellam Boulevard and construction of a single, single-story, retail/commercial building, 28,000 square feet in size, in the same location. The remaining larger retail building on the site (75 Bellam Blvd) would be retained and improved with upgraded exterior colors, materials, and architectural styling features and parking improvements; APNs: 018-051-20, 018-063-07, 08, 09 & 10**

25 Bellam Blvd. (Marin Square Retail Development) (Steve Stafford)

- 5) PA06-005 **Conceptual Design Review of a new, two-story, mixed-use building consisting of 3,425 square feet of office area on ground floor and three condominium studio units on the upper floor. The project would provide 7 onsite covered parking spaces and would utilize 10 uncovered parking spaces from a parking lot already approved on the adjoining property to the east; APN: 014-123023**
522 3rd Street (Sarjit Dhaliwal)

A. Staff Communications

- 1) Past City Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board Action on Design Review Matters

Boloyan reminded the Board that the next meeting of the DRB is a special meeting on the Loch Lomond project occurring Wednesday, January 31st. Staff provided a full size and reduced set of the revised plans for review on January 31st as well as a cover letter from Planner Paul Jensen and these are behind the dias for each Board Member. The preliminary architecture was taken to the Planning Commission and presented as a conceptual application where they gathered additional feedback on architectural concepts and the applicant incorporated both comments from the DRB and Planning Commission and is returning back with revised plans, which is before DRB on the 31st. The Friday before the 31st meeting, staff will provide a complete staff report on the project and revisions, but no additional plans will be given. Following that special meeting on the 31st, the DRB will be back on the regular schedule, which is February 6th. At the last meeting the Board asked that staff agendize a discussion regarding Member Dickens email that was forwarded to staff and the Board. Since Dickens is unable to attend tonight's meeting, staff will agendize that discussion at a later date when Dickens is in attendance.

Boloyan then explained that the City is in the process of starting a series of meetings on design to educate various homeowners associations, business groups and developer's regarding the current design process and components of what makes a good design. DRB must appoint two members to sit on this committee. The objective is to identify successes and shortcomings of the current process, assist members in articulating potential improvements to the design review process for presentation and consideration by the DRB, Planning Commission and City Council. Copies of the objectives and agenda were provided to the Board. The meeting will be made up of 19 total members from the community, City Manager, planning staff, local developer, local architect, one City Council Member, two DRB members, two Planning Commissioners, one member from the Citizens Advisory Committee, one business improvement district representative, one Chamber of Commerce representative, and six representatives from neighborhood groups in the City. The series will entail four to five meetings that will take about 2.5 hours to occur in late afternoons or early evenings. The anticipated starting date is early to mid February and the meetings will occur every two to three weeks thereafter. The criteria for the Board are members that consistently are able to attend all meetings and members

willing to be vocal and express their opinions and thoughts on the process. Staff will correspond with the Board and send out the request separately and hopefully two volunteers are provided through that process. The Planning Commission already elected their two members.

Boloyan indicated that the City Council desired some face time with the Board and Commission. They intend to meet with the Planning Commission and DRB together as the first of these sessions. Staff will be contacting the Board to schedule a date in February to meet with Council. Topics discussed at the Planning Commission were design issues, question of modern architecture versus hometown architecture, quality of approval, discussion on housing priorities, discussion on second story additions, Green Building Programming, and the concept of development, redevelopment or no growth.

Boloyan provided the Board a copy of the current Community Development Roster with contact numbers of all staff members due to all the changes.

Boloyan noted that due to the absences on the Board, Alternate Member Machnowski would be a voting member this evening.

B. Board Communications

Chair Kent thanked Crew for her fine stewardship of the Board this past year.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Kent noted a few minor corrections to the December 5th, 2006 minutes. Chair Kent asked for a motion.

Huntsberry moved and Machnowski seconded, to approve December 5th, 2006 minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

AYES:	MEMBERS:	Huntsberry, Alternate Machnowski, Chair Kent
NOES:	MEMBERS:	None
ABSTAIN:	MEMBERS:	None
ABSENT:	MEMBERS:	Crew, Dickens, Laird-Blanton

Chair Kent asked for a motion.

Machnowski moved and Huntsberry seconded, to approve the December 19th, 2006 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

AYES:	MEMBERS:	Alternate Machnowski, Huntsberry, Chair Kent
NOES:	MEMBERS:	None
ABSTAIN:	MEMBERS:	None
ABSENT:	MEMBERS:	Crew, Dickens, Laird-Blanton

D. New Business

- 3) PA06-006 **Conceptual Review of a remodel of the existing VW dealership front elevation and landscaping and the construction of a new, two level dealership building over a parking deck on an adjacent lot.**
740 Francisco Blvd. West (Sonnen) (Katie Korzun)

Katie Korzun, Economic Development Coordinator, summarized the staff report and requested that the Board identify relevant issues, prioritize concerns and develop a consensus as to the appropriateness of the conceptual design and its compliance with design review criteria and guidelines.

Huntsberry asked staff if the FAR is acceptable. Korzun responded that it depends upon how the lots are split up. Currently, there are four lots and there is enough lot area to have a confirming FAR for all three dealerships, but if they are divided in another way they might not be. For example, for the existing site and building, if the lot to the back is not included, it is not acceptable for FAR. Staff has had discussions with the applicant as to how much of the back lot will be added to the front lot. Staff's position is that they must have enough added on to provide an appropriate FAR, but closure with the applicant has not been reached.

Huntsberry asked staff if these properties would stand on their own in terms of meeting code. Korzun responded that is where staff is attempting to go with this application. Staff will process the remodel as a separate application from the new construction, so both projects should have complete conformance. Huntsberry asked staff about the variance for the required parking. Korzun did not know how the applicant would address the lack of parking and that is an item for discussion tonight.

Kit Wong, architect, representing Peter Sonnen, thanked the Board for their time and valuable input to their project in the conceptual stage. They desired comments on building massing and relationship to the street. He then described the project and stated that the project is difficult and they are trying to put out a dealership for three different brands over two lots. Most important is to tie the three brands together, considering each brand has their own identity. They developed a site design where the three dealerships can be seen as a campus by incorporating connectivity of vehicle circulation and use of the same palette of landscaping, site lighting, pylon sign design and material where possible to project the unifying aspect of the project. The site is located on a flood plain and the sales room must be five feet off the ground. The Highway 101 overpass is adjacent to the site, which is a tall structure. The site elevation prepared shows that the height of the overpass blocks a substantial part of the proposed building. In addition, the Caltrans "take" of the property removed a substantial amount of parking. The dealerships require visibility from Highway 101, each brand must have enough amount of surface bays to provide service to customers, and ample parking for showroom customers, service customers, employee parking and parking for new vehicles. The proposed concept is to place the showroom on the second level to gain visibility. Placing the parking below allows more parking onsite. The parking must remain open for the passage

of floodwater, which is a challenge. The essence of the site is that they are located at the end of a commercial strip, which is subject to a narrowing effect as shown from the sections provided. There is a wall created by the highway ramp and the building is in a very narrow space that opens up as the ramp structure changes to a bridge structure. They believe the narrowing effect is very important from an urban aesthetic point of view. They propose to set the building as far back as possible, eliminate parking out front and replace with landscaping and have more opening between the overpass wall and building. The loss of Caltrans "take" removed approximately 25 parking spaces that are critical for the customers. They propose to keep the remaining 20 spaces in front to allow some parking for salesroom customers. The proposal is to have a driveway that connects the three dealerships together and from a branding perspective each dealership must have its own parking for their customers. There is a walkway to achieve pedestrian connectivity, if desired. He requested direction from the Board on design.

Huntsberry clarified that only landscaping will be in front and never any display vehicles in regard to the new dealership. Architect Wong responded in the affirmative. They really need to bring the customer into the showroom and more importantly they must have the dealership visible from afar and draw the customer into the showroom.

Huntsberry stated that by placing stored cars on lower level and bringing sales and service to the upper level, other than the façade of the building, he asked what kind of attraction is provided to the freeway. He then asked the architect why sales and service are not provided on the lower level as done in San Francisco. Architect Wong clarified that the front half of the parking level is for customer parking related to salesroom activity as well as storage of new vehicles and serviced vehicles. Huntsberry clarified with the architect that they are selling the building as an attraction, so it did not matter which operation is on the lower or upper level. Architect Wong responded in the affirmative.

Alternate Machnowski asked the architect if the signage shown really is maximized. Architect Wong responded that signage seen on the buildings are brand standards, each one of those brands indicated the size of the sign on the building. They propose three pylons signs in front to unify the sites, but they must have the individuality of the brands.

Alternate Machnowski asked the architect if these buildings would be illuminated. Architect Wong responded that the building would be illuminated in the same manner as the current site, with a stucco façade and enough lighting to view the building from afar.

Alternate Machnowski asked the architect if any mechanical elements are proposed on the roof. Architect Wong responded that the building in back is the service area of the facility, which has a parapet all around the building and on that high roof there is only ventilation equipment that will be tucked under the parapet level. None of the equipment will be visible, even from the ramp approach in the 580 overpass, but possibly seen on the flyover.

Chair Kent desired a general understanding of the landscaping proposed. Architect Wong

explained that the trees proposed is a series of 15 to 20-foot high mature trees. There is a palette that will be followed, but the concept is to have a number of trees 15 to 20 feet high against the first level wall and that line of trees will continue to the existing finger islands at the existing facility. The rest of the landscaping will be low shrubs or groundcover in order for customers to view the direction sign as coming into the facility.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item, and seeing no one wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion.

Huntsberry stated that it is a difficult project from a designer standpoint and from the Board's review standpoint. He was surprised to see the remodeling of the existing Sonnen building since it was improved around 6 or 8 years ago and the Board was very pleased with that building. In general, he is struck by the immensity of this in regard to "boxes," which is overwhelming. Given the bulk and height, more articulation is needed. More massing variation in front, on the sides and in the rear is needed. The setback for VW and Audi does not respect the future Nissan building that will be totally obliterated from any traffic traveling north both on the freeway and along Francisco. He suggested providing a greater setback in front of the proposed new building and have a more traditional setback in front to display new and used vehicles. He believed this very large facility will overpower, not only the small building, but also it will be overpowering in its own presence. He desired a model to help visualize the buildings to provide a sense of how this will come together. He is not in favor of campus architecture. He stated that Nissan is a foreign name to a German dealership and should retain its own identity. Traditionally Audi and VW have always been together, so he could respect that. He is looking for a less severe design in the neighborhood and questioned the mechanics of the sales and service area being located on the upper floor versus the first floor. Also, he recommended not calling the first floor a "basement." He recommended looking at the existing building and reducing the massing if the proposed building by providing parking underground in the same manner. In his view, the proposal is too large, too bulky and too massive.

Alternate Machnowski agreed that the massing, in such an important location of the City, should be seen more in a three dimensional manner. More information is needed in regard to massing and three-dimensionality. If the building is to sell cars, the design must be further elaborated to provide an identity. He is concerned that the narrow width of the new ramp of the building will feel like an alley and did not agree with the short setback. The design concept might work, but in his view, it is not inviting cars into the dealership and must be properly expressed. He objected to viewing mechanical elements on the roof and agreed the massing of this building will not only be seen from three or four sides, but also be seen while driving along Highway 101. The building should be more fragmented and not as massive. He agreed with the concept of vehicles being parked underneath, but is not sure if the entrances were resolved in a proper way because the entrances led to a "basement like" area. The ramp and entrance design must be more inviting to a showroom like condition. He expressed concern for the size of signage and suggested adding architectural elements. In general, he liked the architectural style, but it needs more design identity.

Huntsberry discussed signage and saw three very large Sonnen signs and believed that the customers are trying to view Nissan, VW and Audi, so reversing the size of the signs would be appropriate.

Chair Kent agreed the massing of the new proposed building dwarfs the Nissan building and increasing that setback creates landscaping opportunities. He felt the percentage of landscaping to be increased. He is not sure if an inner connectivity is needed and recommended achieving that connectivity through a pedestrian access. Also, a plant palette for West Francisco has been established that must be followed.

Peter Sonnen, owner, pointed out that the signs depend on factory representatives and they have certain corporate identity, which is a pylon sign with the name of each franchise.

Korzun discussed the “take” and noted that in the initial approval, the parking ultimately taken by Caltrans was display, so it was assumed parking would work. Since then the dealership has gone through a few remodels, there are more service bays and the building has gotten larger, and parking may not have kept up with it. Initially, it was thought that after the “take” parking would be okay, but FAR was not discussed. After the building was built, the rear lot was added and made the lot so big that FAR was not an issue. The Use Permit was amended to associate that lot with the building, so it is a question of how that will be divided up as the new project goes forward.

Chair Kent requested more information on grading and drainage on this site when this matter comes back to the Board.

Clint Sly, Consultant for Audi/VW, discussed signage and after looking at the renders there are definite improvements to meet needed corporate sign guidelines. He pointed out that the VW sign is 57 inches in diameter, which is standard size. The nameplate next to it will be matching in size, which is lower in height, so the renderings are not quite accurate. The nameplate would be smaller and the logo would be larger for VW. In regard to Audi, the nameplate will be located lower to the left and the Audi logo is quite large, which can be 8 feet by 6 feet in height and the nameplate would be smaller at about 3 feet in height that could state, “*Sonnen Audi or Audi San Rafael,*” so there are choices. He noted that the scale is much smaller in the renderings, which will be corrected. Also, the ground floor or lower level cannot have any structure due to flood plain issues.

- 4) PA06-006 **Conceptual Design Review for the redevelopment of Marin Square Shopping Center. The Preapplication proposes to demolish 31,000 square feet of office/retail space within three freestanding buildings along Bellam Boulevard and construct a single, single-story, retail/commercial building, 28,000 square feet in size, in the same location. The remaining larger retail building on the site (75 Bellam Blvd) would be retained and improved with upgraded exterior colors, materials, and architectural styling features. The project also**

**proposes landscape and parking improvements on the site; APNs:
018-051-20, 018-063-07, 08, 09 & 10
25 & 55 Bellam Blvd. (Marin Square) Steve Stafford)**

Steve Stafford, Assistant Planner, summarized the staff report and requested that the Board identify relevant issues, prioritize concerns and develop a consensus as to the appropriateness of the conceptual design and its compliance with design review criteria and guidelines. Staff also requests the Board's recommendation with respect to plans and materials that the Board would like to see when the proposed project returns for formal review. Following the Board's comments, the applicant will submit their formal design review permit application.

Huntsberry asked staff if this is earmarked for a particular tenant. Stafford responded that formerly no one has indicated a particular tenant, but it is of general knowledge that it is earmarked for a "big box" retailer, which staff believed is Circuit City. Huntsberry asked staff about their very unique signage. Stafford responded that it must be taken under consideration when they amend the Sign Program

Alternate Machnowski asked staff what is the maximum height allowed on the site. Stafford responded that maximum height of 36 feet is allowed in the General Commercial Zoning District, so approximately three stories.

Jeff Hutchinson, project manager, looked forward to the Board's feedback on the design approach and any specifics desired when they come forward with the formal application. He explained that the southeast corner of the Marin Square Site will be pulled down to connect the office buildings of about 22,000 sq. ft. and a retail pad of 7,500 sq. ft. They will redevelop this portion of the site with a single retail building of approximately 28,000 sq. feet. Access and circulation would be primarily as it is now, with the exception of converting a two-way driveway along Bellam to "Exit Only". The alignment of the existing two-way driveways off Bellam Blvd and Gary Place will be maintained. The frontage of the building along Bellam Boulevard is approximately 250 feet and the depth varies as shown in the architectural drawings. Page 4 of the packet shows a general section of the building. It has been designed to mimic the scale of what exists and will remain as the L-shaped building at 75 Bellam. They will have a landscaped area with a parking strip, concrete pedestrian breezeway, 10-foot high aluminum and glass storefront, about a 3-foot high sign area and a tiled roof element approximately 22 feet above finished grade. The interior space will be about a 14-foot clear height with approximate 3 feet of truss and mechanical space to the flat roof. There is about 4 feet between flat roof and tile parapet where mechanical elements will be located. In regard to the key facades of the building, they wanted to tie the new building into the existing building on 75 Bellam. The façade facing the existing building is shown on top of Sheet 3 and the other important façade is along Bellam Boulevard shown on the bottom of Sheet 3. They created a pedestrian linkage and walkway between the two facilities. Currently, walking across the parking lot of Marin Square is dangerous and with this circulation and landscape plan that will be addressed. All landscaping will be addressed during the formal submittal, but any comments on the landscaping element at this time would be

appreciated. They are creating a Spanish or Mission style building design. They have rough timber, post and beam construction framing in a pedestrian breezeway. Primary building material will be earthtone stucco. There are existing tiled rooftops on 75 Bellam and they will maintain the same color and pattern of the tile on the new building to have the same tile approach to both buildings. Also, landscaping is proposed in front of the parking and breezeway.

Alternate Machnowski views only one handicapped stall for the entire development and asked if that is correct. Mr. Hutchinson responded that handicap spaces would be provided per code in front of the buildings.

Huntsberry asked if they considered the use of more substantial materials such as a stone wainscot rather than all material being stucco. Mr. Hutchinson indicated that they have not, but agreed to consider such material.

Huntsberry is concerned with the “take” of the landscaping along Bellam and Anderson and asked if they explored any plans for the building to be setback further for more landscaping. Mr. Hutchinson stated that there is an opportunity to provide more landscaping at the southeast corner of the site that is now shown, particularly from the Traffic Department’s comment that circulation cannot wrap all around the building, so they will explore ways to add landscaping along that portion of the site. Conceptually, they are looking to extend what is currently present along Bellam. They will extend the grass berm, trees and some shrubbery along that frontage and around the corner. In regard to the existing building, they will submit a separate application for the Zoning Administrator and DRB shortly and the color, material and scale of that renovation will mimic what is presented tonight. They are interested in receiving feedback tonight because the two building will essentially appear the same in terms of scale, color and material. All wood siding will be replaced with the same stucco material. The publicly viewed facades of the building will be same. Similar tower elements will be added as well to highlight the new entryways into the new building.

Huntsberry suggested stating Bellam is south and up the sheet is north to make conversations a lot easier as they move forward. Mr. Hutchinson agreed.

Huntsberry asked if any consideration was given to the northeast corner or rear façade of the new building to be more pedestrian friendly. Mr. Hutchinson believed that is a good idea that made sense. Also, they have received interest from several tenants and the design is designed that it could accommodate a single tenant or to accommodate a few tenants. Circuit City is no longer actively pursuing this site and it remains to be seen if they will in fact be the tenant at this location. The goal is to create a better facility and upgrade the Center.

Alternate Machnowski asked the reasoning for the Mission or Spanish style versus a fresher or different style. Mr. Hutchinson responded that it was an idea that the architect had that succeeded elsewhere and given the neighborhood orientation they felt it was a nice approach. It will be a “fresh” Mission style approach. He then explained that the

two-way access is not allowed to go around the building, so they are anticipating closing the area off and provide more landscaping. The City is supportive of the parking, but not the access in and out into Gary Place and then Anderson. They will create some type of dead end. The entire row of parking on Bellam and Anderson could potentially be a dead end, but more discussion with staff is needed.

Chair Kent asked why they abandoned the mixed-use/residential/retail approach that was very favorable at the last meeting. Mr. Hutchinson responded that it is a general decision as it relates to the housing market and the location of this site as a housing location along with the changing retail environment, it was clear they would be facing a very uncertain outcome through the EIR process on the mixed-use project. In order to make economic sense, quite a lot of density was needed and it was not clear that could occur, so they are exploring this as an alternative. He added that traffic was the main concern in the EIR.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item.

Richard Bernstein, Gilbert Street resident, expressed concern for continuing problems in and around Marin Square that included increased traffic, long-term vacancies, congregation of day laborers at Marin Square and few features or businesses that benefit the neighborhood at all. The few shops that service the neighborhood currently reside in one of the buildings proposed to be demolished, so they will lose the only service business that exist in Marin Square. What is proposed will greatly visually impact the neighborhood. He objected to the "big box" concept, which is uninteresting and will not benefit the neighborhood. San Rafael has big box corridors. Francisco Boulevard East and West is a much more appropriate location for a big box development. The General Plan as reflected in the January minutes of this group indicated an acceptable FAR of .21 and the current FAR of .3 exceeds that and they would view any remodeling as a potential to bring that more inline with the General Plan. Also, this proposal is not in accordance with neighborhood policy NH-58, which emphasis mixed-use residential above ground retail. It is not in compliance or consistent with community design policy CD-10 indicating that nonresidential fits in and improves the immediate neighborhood, which they feel it does not. They welcome a remodel of Marin Square to improve their neighborhood. They desire a more community focused design offering service businesses, creative design and pedestrian friendly and possible a site to host community events. They desired a plan more visually creative and interesting. They looked forward to Marin Square as a good neighbor rather as a neighborhood negative.

Mark Lubamersky, President, Bret Hart Community Association/Chair, Park and Rec Commission, believed if the Board accepts this proposal they would be turning their backs on the General Pan. This is a very important site for the General Plan Committee and it was deemed appropriate for housing and it will be an opportunity missed if this big box proposal moves forward. He added that traffic will be an issue regardless and the City needs housing. He hoped the Board recognizes the time spent by the General Plan Steering Committee and to make sure the Housing Element is maintained.

Andree Jonsheske, business owner in area, felt any change to the site would be an

improvement to the current condition and maintenance of Marin Square. She expressed concern for the trash enclosures overflowing and desired assurances in the design that will hide or solve this problem with the trash. Also, the trash issue is beyond the dumpster area. There is loose trash throughout the existing mall. The proposed design should include an acceptable remedy to this problem. She noted that Marin Square has not maintained the existing landscaping and no remedies have been presented in this proposal to address such issue. She hoped that construction would not become an excuse for unsightly conditions at the Center. She noted that public urination is a safety issue for customers as well as business employees and is also a health issue. He believed public restrooms should be included in the plan. The management of Marin Square declined joining the clean up efforts along Bellam Boulevard and Fifth Street. While the local business community is in favor of improvements to Marin Square, she asked how the Board could begin to approve a project without being assured that management ownership will maintain the property to acceptable and reasonable standards. She then asked what steps can be taken when the property is neglected.

Susanne Andrews, Gary Place business owner, appreciated improvement to this site, but expressed concern for what will happen to the day laborers and felt they will be pushed onto Gary Boulevard. If there is no driveway access there will be the catering truck "roach coach" that will park in that area to feed the day laborers who leave all their trash along with traffic of contractors' picking up day laborers. Gary Place will become completely blocked. In addition to parking and traffic congestion, public urination and defecation occurs on a daily basis that she has to clean up, which she believed is from homeless residents who live on the Caltrans property. She shares concerns about landscaping and ongoing maintenance. With the back of the building facing Gary Place, it will become worse. She is concerned how this will look overall. She would love the idea of adding public restrooms to this site.

Robert Fenton, Gary Place business owner, expressed concern for day laborers in the area and approached the City in that regard and the City has done nothing to resolve the issue. He continues to have increased problems with the day laborers and the homeless defecating and urinating on his property. He recommended a hiring hall in order to have organization and hire individuals in the proper fashion as the City of Concord has previously developed. He also recommended providing public restrooms to help improve the area because the beauty of the Center is being destroyed and improvement of this Center will not occur until the serious existing problems are addressed.

Clive Finless, San Rafael resident, shared the same concerns of how this project affects the character of the neighborhood and some of the architectural concerns of the project. He did not believe Spanish style architecture is appropriate for the area. He is concerned if the use of palm trees is proposed and having a "big box" store. He appreciated that the project is lower in building height, but the massing of the project is also very important and should be given consideration. He expressed concern for the earthtone stucco material in regard to glare and visibility impacts. He believed signage should be considered for this project. He also expressed concern for the landscaping along Bellam and he hoped the landscaping could be increased or add a berm to screen the parking.

Also, in the current layout the existing design structures extend to screen the parking, but moving the building will open up the parking and lighting and hoped a pedestrian access within the middle of the parking lot could be provided to break up the visual impact of the parking lot. He further noted that lighting levels must be carefully considered as well.

Mr. Hutchinson agreed to address the maintenance issues and those day laborers are a concern, which is very frustrating for all business owners in the area. They will continue to evolve the project and try to address all the concerns.

There being no further public testimony on this item, Chair Kent closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion.

Alternate Machnowski expressed concern for this design not showing the mixed-use component has earlier discussed. This is an opportunity to improve the site and would have liked to see a design that provides some mixed-use, residential use and not simply a retail building, which uses may not help the surrounding areas. He agreed with the fact that the style can look good and be approved and architectural elements can be enhanced with stones, but he felt the design should go in a different direction. He felt Mission style is not suitable for this location. He is looking for a creative design to appear more of a "community place". Also, if the General Plan can accommodate for housing and mixed-use, he would like to see that occur in this area. He is missing the big bigger in the sense that he had no idea what will happen with the larger building and wanted to know how the other building will appear. In regard to circulation, he appreciated the pedestrian connection between the two buildings. He suggested making these two buildings more active within each other. The parking plaza should have some landscaping to appear friendlier. He expressed concern for the small amount of landscaping along Bellam and it must have a berm or some element to address that area. He reiterated that the design should be different from what is proposed for this location.

Huntsberry had no objection to the Mission-style architecture. He sees a very successful Center that has Mission-style, which is Strawberry Village; and it is a thriving Center quite nicely designed. There is a real problem with the day laborers and no one has an answer. He wondered, in an effort to make this a more secure site, to install picket fencing to alleviate day laborers congregating. He objected to losing landscaping along Bellam. The setback and landscaping currently mirrors what is existing on the remaining area of the Center and that type of landscaping must be maintained. Possibly make this a reversed building with gracious landscaping in front with parking and access to shops along the rear of the building. He felt there is adequate space in the unoccupied portions of the remaining building to have a big box tenant. He believed more articulation, more landscaping in front, more setbacks and less parking in front must be provided. Supporting shops are needed in this location and that will not occur unless this site is cleaned up.

Chair Kent indicated that the neighborhood has spoken and several problems must be solved. It will take cooperation with the City and Police Department to help address some of these issues. He did not believe the neighborhood is in favor of a destination shopping

center, but that did not mean that a big box retailer could not occupy this site. The neighborhood desires a nice mix of tenants to make this a successful shopping center for the neighborhood. He stated that the trash enclosure as well as bike racks must be addressed. The new building results in more parking area visible from the street, so more trees are necessary to screen the parking lot as well as the lighting. He appreciated the pedestrian friendly atmosphere to separate pedestrians from vehicles. He suggested considering pedestrian access from Bellam such as a paving pattern to help move pedestrians in the site. Also, the sense of entry as it stands is very weak and desired some type of paving pattern at the entryways. He further recommended that the applicant listen to the neighborhood.

Huntsberry added that whatever material is chosen it should be 360 degrees because they are looking for the buildings to have total design. Chair Kent agreed and could support the Mission-style. Also, it is not so much the style, but the detailing of the building to make them attractive.

Huntsberry believed this is the gateway to San Rafael from those coming from the East Bay and two stories is an appropriate height, but it must be well designed.

Chair Kent was disappointed that the applicant moved away from mixed-use and hoped the applicant would consider some residential. Mr. Hutchinson appreciated all the feedback and looked forward to coming back to the Board.

- 5) PA06-005 **Conceptual Design Review of a new, two-story, mixed-use building consisting of 3,425 square feet of office area on ground floor and three condominium studio units on the upper floor. The project would provide 7 onsite covered parking spaces and would utilize 10 uncovered parking spaces from a parking lot already approved on the adjoining property to the east; APN 014-123-23**
522 3rd Street (Sarjit Dhaliwal)

Sarjit Dhaliwal, Associate Planner, summarized the staff report and requested that the Board identify relevant issues, prioritize concerns and develop a consensus as to the appropriateness of the conceptual design and its compliance with design review criteria and guidelines.

Jerry Johannessen, architect, discussed the project and indicated that currently they did not know what the theme of the mural will be at this point. They will make it as graffiti resistant as practical, perhaps ceramic. They have two mechanical wells in the building, which are approximately 6 feet deep, one for the office building and one for the condominiums. The covered portion of the parking has an opening on both sides, so if there was a future opportunity for cross traffic between parking areas that could be accommodated. Huntsberry asked the architect the size of the parking spaces and drive aisles. Mr. Johannessen responded that the spaces are standard full and compact spaces, some of the spaces are deeper than required and the drive aisles are 26 feet.

Alternate Machnowski asked why the balconies are not larger. Mr. Johannessen believed it is a possibility, but being single person units they did not need to be very large.

Huntsberry asked staff if this parking lot was approved before with the pharmacy. Dhaliwal responded that it came later in April of 2006 and was now under construction. Boloyan explained all of the parking lots proposed and approved for use of the pharmacy were on other lots not owned by Elephant Pharmacy and they did not need to provide for off street parking from the City's point of view. However, for their own purpose they elected to acquire parking down the strip, so they negotiated deals with different property owners that have been approved. One parking lot has been built and the other is ready for construction. The proposed new building being built on a portion of that 41 space parking lot would generate the need for 17 off street parking spaces with 3 being covered. They propose to provide 7 covered spaces on the property and enter into an agreement to dedicate 10 of the spaces on the adjacent parking lot for use by the office building. As part of the application process they must submit for a use permit to allow the remote parking situation to occur and to tie those together in perpetuity.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item.

Lynn Mason, Jewell Street resident, representing the Montecito Association, expresses she was pleased with the design, but received the plans yesterday and requested that in the future to receive the plans earlier to review with the entire Board. They appreciated additional parking in the neighborhood and they liked the idea of the three studios. The guidelines are meeting the 2020 plan and felt the design is appropriate. She further reserved comment on the mural for when that matter is discussed.

Scott Kaplan, Jewell Street resident, found this design a very pleasant departure from the ugly commercial/industrial design.

There being no further public testimony on this item, Chair Kent closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion.

Huntsberry found it very refreshing to hear positive comments from the public, which goes to the talent of the architect who prepared the project. He believed it is a well-designed project. He appreciated the three residential units and considering future development of the drive-thru to tie other possible lots in the future and supported the project as presented.

Alternative Machnowski appreciated the three residential units as well as the parking being provided. He wanted the balconies larger, if possible. The design is quite nice, but desired more plantings since residences will be provided. Also, the rear portion of the parking lot must be addressed and wondered if some type of trellis or lattice could be added in that area. The mural intent is a very artistic incentive and will be in a location that is almost private and felt it would be nice. He just hoped the mural will be easy to maintain and not end up being a nuisance, so material must be carefully considered. He further suggested the use of a more vibrant color for the building color.

Tom Galli, landscape architect, stated that during the working drawing process for the parking lot, they added trees and vines to grow on the required fence at the rear of the parking lot in the two planters provided.

Chair Kent liked the project with residential use in back and agreed it would be nice if the neighborhood could have some input on the mural since it is a gift to the neighborhood. He did not understand the cobbles and the garage area and did not believe it is pedestrian friendly. Also, if the cobbles are not mortared in they could become safety hazards. If mortared they are a magnet for debris to collect and recommended as an alternative, use of bunch grass to soften up the streetscape. He also recommended providing a bike rack He further agreed that the project is fine as presented.

ADJOURNMENT

BY ORDER OF THE CHAIR, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Woods, Recording Secretary