

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE DRB MEETING ON APRIL 26, 2023

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Multi-Purpose Room, Community Services Building, Basement Level
440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond CA 94804**

March 22, 2023

6:00 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS

Kimberly Butt
Marcus L. Christeson
David Plotkin

Brian Carter
Leah Marthinsen

Chair Brian Carter called the regular meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Brian Carter, Vice Chair Marcus Christeson, and Boardmembers Leah Marthinsen and David Plotkin

Absent: Boardmember Butt

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Planners Lydia Elias, Marytonae Sanchez, Roberta Feliciano and Hector Lopez, and Stephanie Vollmer from the City Attorney's Office

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 22, 2023

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Christeson/Marthinsen) to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2023 meeting, as submitted; approved by a voice vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Christeson, Marthinsen, and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: Plotkin; Absent: Butt.)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: No changes

MEETING PROCEDURES

Chair Carter stated with respect to Item 2, PLN22-259, Plant Medicine Park, that there was an adjustment to the staff report for that project to be clarified during the hearing for that item.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Roberta Feliciano advised that no written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR

CC 3. PLN22-396
Description

RESIDENTIAL ADDITION

DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A ±650 SQUARE-FOOT REAR ADDITION AND TO CONSTRUCT A DECK GREATER THAN FOUR FEET FROM THE GROUND (5.5 FEET PROPOSED).

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Location	951 YUBA STREET	
APN	523-093-006	
Zoning	RL2, SINGLE-FAMILY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT	
Owner	MORRISON GAIL	
Applicant	KRISTEN KERR	
Staff Contact	MARYTONAE SANCHEZ	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Christeson) to approve PLN22-396, Residential Addition, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with five Conditions of Approval; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Christeson, Marthinsen, Plotkin and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Butt.)

APPEAL DATE

The appeal date for actions taken by the Board at this meeting will be no later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, April 3, 2023.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 1. PLN21-046 NEW DUPLEX**

Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A NEW \pm 3,900 SQUARE-FOOT, TWO-STORY DUPLEX ON A VACANT PARCEL.	
Location	SOUTHEAST INTERSECTION OF SOUTH 20 TH STREET AND CUTTING BOULEVARD.	
APN	544-292-024, 544-292-025	
Zoning	CM1, COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE, RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT	
Applicant	KYLE TAM (OWNER)	
Staff Contact	LYDIA ELIAS	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Lydia Elias presented the staff report dated March 22, 2023 for a public hearing for a Design Review Permit to construct a new \pm 3,900 square-foot two-story duplex that included four bedrooms, four bathrooms and a total floor area of \pm 1,950 square feet. A lot line adjustment was involved to reconfigure the parcel from Cutting Boulevard to South 20th Street, which was subject to a separate planning process at the administrative level. All development standards were being met with the proposed project.

Ms. Elias advised that in 2022, the DRB's former Chair and staff had discussed several recommendations to improve the overall design, livability and compatibility with neighboring buildings, which she highlighted at this time and reported that the parcel had been reoriented as recommended, the massing had been reduced and the scale had been broken up by the use of multiple exterior materials, although the recommendation to develop a second duplex at the corner lot was not being considered at this time due to cost.

Ms. Elias reported that the applicant had reached out to the Coronado Neighborhood Council but had received no response about the proposed project and no letters in support or opposition had been received by staff. She recommended that the DRB conditionally approve the application based on four Findings and Statements of Facts and 12 staff-recommended conditions of approval identified in the staff report.

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Boardmember Plotkin requested illustrations to show the changes to the plan that had been recommended by the former DRB Chair.

Chair Carter opened the public hearing.

KYLE TAM, the owner/applicant and builder, described the two-story duplex that had been proposed and stated that when completed his family would live in one unit and the other unit would be rented. He explained that the DRB had previously reviewed the project which had gone through a number of iterations.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing.

Boardmember Marthinsen verified with the applicant that in addition to the wooden fence that had been proposed in the rear between the two units for privacy, a fence would be placed along the long side yard edge with the same type of construction. She recommended a window in the stairs to allow more natural light in that area, and Mr. Tam agreed with that recommendation.

When asked about the empty lot, Mr. Tam stated that he hoped to develop that lot in the future with a similar two-story duplex, and Chair Carter noted the need to consider that there would be two street frontages to address in that case.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Christeson/Marthinsen) to approve PLN21-046, New Duplex, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 12 Conditions of Approval; and subject to the following additional conditions: 13) Add a window to each stairwell in the rear; and 14) Provide side yard fencing; approved by a voice vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Christeson, Marthinsen, Plotkin and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Butt.)

2. PLN22-259	PLANT MEDICINE PARK	
Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A CANNABIS CULTIVATION FACILITY THAT INCLUDES FOUR (4) GREENHOUSES, LANDSCAPING AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS.	
Location	VACANT PARCELS ON FREETHY BOULEVARD, WEST OF GOODRICK AVENUE AND RICHMOND PARKWAY.	
APN	408-220-003, -032, -033, AND -034	
Zoning	IA, INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE DISTRICT	
Owners	JOE AND HEIDI SHEKOU	
Applicant	ASHWIN GULATI	
Staff Contact	ROBERTA FELICIANO	Recommendation: RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Roberta Feliciano presented the staff report dated March 22, 2023, for a Public Hearing to consider a recommendation to the Planning Commission to construct a cannabis cultivation facility including four greenhouses, landscaping and site improvements along Freethy Boulevard and west of Goodrick Avenue and the Richmond Parkway. She explained that on April 18, 2019, the prior applicant had received conditional approval for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from the Planning Commission, although given the changes in scope to the project and a smaller site, the subject applicant required a CUP from the Planning Commission once there was a recommendation from the DRB for the Design Review Permit.

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Ms. Feliciano identified the particulars of the application as shown in the staff report and explained that the application met all the development standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Feliciano added that an Addendum to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was being drafted, which would also be submitted to the Planning Commission. She reported that an additional condition to those shown in the staff report, Condition 116, had been recommended and had been provided to the DRB with copies made available to the public.

116. Richmond Parkway Bay Trail. The applicant shall repair and repave the existing Bay Trail along the project frontage on the Richmond Parkway and beautify the landscaping prior to occupancy to the satisfaction of the Public Works Director. The area along the Richmond Parkway from the extent of the property from the east to west shall be included in the landscaping plan and maintained by the applicant with native planting such as coastal live oak, baccharis, toyon, etc.

Ms. Feliciano explained that Condition 80 had also been revised to remove the text reading “and along the Bay side of the property” since there was no Bay side to the property. The applicant had also requested that the determination of Conditions 78 and 79 be reviewed by the Planning Commission since during the IS/MND review by First Carbon there may be some changes to how the Goodrick Avenue frontage would be treated.

Ms. Feliciano recommended that the DRB review the project and recommend Design Review approval based on Findings and Statements of Fact and the 116 staff-recommended conditions of approval to the Planning Commission.

In response to Boardmember Plotkin, Ms. Feliciano provided some background to the DRB’s review of the prior application last year and reported that the applicant at that time had met with the DRB Subcommittee which had provided feedback to the applicant, which feedback had been incorporated into the plan.

Chair Carter, a member of the DRB Subcommittee, noted that work had been done on the material composition, the colors, the implementation of the public art requirement, and the creation of friendly spaces for employees. He did not recall any major concerns that had not been addressed by the applicant.

Boardmember Marthinsen verified with Ms. Feliciano that the required regulatory requirements, primarily related to security, had been included among the recommended conditions of approval.

Boardmember Christeson also verified with Ms. Feliciano that greenhouses had a separate specification from other types of structures where the height had been reduced and where those standards had been met in this case.

Chair Carter opened the public hearing.

ANDREW BUTT, Architect with Interactive Resources, Point Richmond, described the parcel involved and a nearby parcel that was also cannabis-based along with the proximity of the Bay Trail and the Richmond Parkway. He identified the site circulation, stated the project had taken an existing parcel divided into four rectangular sites with a single building on each site, and that three quarters of the property was represented by greenhouses and a combination of circulation and support spaces. He provided the elevations of the building, identified the color scheme and stated the site would be well-landscaped. Most of the materials involved would be metal siding with a mix of color and patterns. The project had been involved for some time, there had been a

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series of DRB subcommittee meetings that had reviewed the project over time, and the applicant had incorporated many of the comments offered by that Subcommittee.

To meet the City's art requirement, Mr. Butt reported the applicant had proposed a stained glass looking element that would serve as a wall/sound/visual/wind barrier to allow those using the site to have a quiet calm away from the wind to gather in a break area to have lunch. The piece would also be reflective of the sun rising over the Bay from the Richmond Parkway. He presented the signage program at the secured entry and also pointed out the bike parking area given the proximity to the Bay Trail.

PAUL STEVENSON, Landscape Architect, presented what he characterized as a straightforward landscape plan with oak trees, cypress trees and a Chinese pistache, with low evergreen, low water use plants and shrubs around the perimeter and with succulents and other flowering plants along the perimeter, entrances and garden areas. He stated the courtyard would include seating, shade, tables and a patio for those working in the complex.

Mr. Butt pointed out the park element and the windbreak wall along with a small wetland area that the landscape architect and civil engineers would be addressing with appropriate planting.

Boardmember Marthinsen verified the bio-retention elements of the plan and verified with Mr. Butt the trash enclosures and utility enclosures on the plan, most of which would be CMU. She sought visuals of those elements.

ASHWIN GULATI, the applicant, stated that energy efficiency was important in cannabis cultivation and some areas had been marked for utilities and water recycling. He clarified where the security fence line was located and the material to be used, identified as a metal mesh.

Boardmember Plotkin asked about runoff from the site, particularly given the recent rains, and Mr. Butt explained the civil engineer would address that issue in the construction document phase for the actual permit, and added that the county required specific and vigorous stormwater management during construction and operation of the project. Those standards would have to be met at the minimum. All site water would be treated and managed on site.

As to reusing the water on the site, a member of the development team explained that the long-term plan was for reuse and if not used for cultivation at a minimum it would be used for landscaping.

Boardmember Plotkin verified that a mix of artificial and natural light would be pursued and with respect to the design, Mr. Gulati indicated that had been taken from the meetings with the DRB Subcommittee to create a more appealing appearance.

It was also clarified that the bulk of the building would be comprised of transparent panels and was an actual greenhouse with a transparent roof. The structure could be used fully as a greenhouse with natural sunlight or a hybrid of artificial and natural light.

Boardmember Christeson verified there would be some processing on the site to dry and package, and Mr. Butt pointed out the various activities on the site related to growing and processing.

Mr. Butt expressed the preference for colors in green and gray schemes with the intent to alternate the colors to offer some dynamism to the site as reflected in the renderings, and as recommended by the DRB Subcommittee. The greenhouse buildings would be industrial types, all the siding

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would effectively be corrugated metal or profiled, and windows would be installed in limited areas where there was an office type function. Since the site was sufficiently secured, windows would not be grilled. As to security, there would be guard shack and cameras and the guard shack would be integrated into the site using complementary colors and materials.

Boardmember Plotkin appreciated that the applicant was incorporating the art and not just paying an in-lieu fee. He recommended that whoever designed the art piece make sure that it complemented the building, and Mr. Butt stated the design team proposed that the art be complementary in the sense that it respond to the verticality of the building patterns and the color scheme, more horizontal and softer with more pastel colors in a yin and yang approach.

Mr. Butt expected that the art piece would change with the required review by the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

SHEILA DICKEY, Richmond, opposed the application that if approved would set a precedent for future development along Goodrick Avenue resulting in urban encroachment against the boundary of the Dotson Family Marsh that provided critical habitat for large numbers of migrating birds along with the threatened California Black Rail. She had seen no commitment by the City to protect habitat and she referred to other developments that had been approved in the City without the protection of habitat and wildlife. There had also been no biological resources survey for the project. She expressed concern for the wildlife given the noise and light pollution expected to occur, and because of the relative isolation of the facility and proximity to the Richmond Parkway, she hoped that the safety of employees would be made a high priority.

BRUCE BEYAERT, Chair of Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC), noted the site was well located with the Bay Trail on two sides. He reported that TRAC had worked with Mr. Gulati and staff to incorporate Condition 116, which had been taken directly from the Power Plant Park project that had been approved last year immediately adjacent to the property. The trail was in bad shape in that area. There was also a section of the Bay Trail along Goodrick Avenue and TRAC had not raised a condition to improve landscaping in that area since there was no landscaping in that area and the trail was in good shape. As such, he stated that TRAC and Mr. Gulati would work together to incorporate seal coating and landscaping as part of the discussions related to Conditions 78 and 79 for Goodrick Avenue.

Boardmember Marthinsen asked about the landscaping proposed outside the perimeter fence, and Mr. Butt described the fence as a low visibility fence that was intended to disappear, the area between the fence and the Richmond Parkway would be planted with Bayfront grasses and some oak trees. He referred to a warehouse development across the parkway where the fence in that case disappeared visually.

Mr. Stevenson added that the landscaping proposed would make the fence disappear, which had also been a recommendation by the DRB Subcommittee.

Boardmember Marthinsen suggested pulling the fence line back and making the side of the street more than just grass or natural landscape to make it feel more like an amenity. She verified the location of the fence line in relation to the Bay Trail and the property line and verified the landscaping that had been proposed.

Mr. Gulati explained that the plans had gone through many iterations with the DRB Subcommittee and what had been proposed was the best option that had come out of those discussions.

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Boardmember Marthinsen recommended that if not covered by Condition 116, the siting of the fence in relation to Goodrick Avenue be pulled tighter to the building so that more of the landscaping was accessible and available to pedestrians walking by.

Mr. Gulati advised that he and Mr. Beyaert had just discussed that issue and additional landscaping had been proposed, and rather than a chain link fence a solid fence had been recommended. It was also noted that there was still a landscape buffer between the Bay Trail and the fence that would be landscaped and maintained by the company.

Chair Carter asked if there was a way to screen the artificial lighting at night and referred to a condition about exterior lighting that would have to meet Dark Sky regulations, and Mr. Butt referred to a horizontal curtain that would block out light, which could be used at night to avoid light pollution and which could block out the sun during the day if needed.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing.

Boardmember Marthinsen suggested a condition relative to the trash enclosures and future utility spaces and recommended that whatever closing material used be complementary to the metal façade of the buildings. She also suggested the use of the metal paneled patterning but noted that it alternated with the solid and she suggested the people part of the building, the front, have a relationship with the program inside, which should help with wayfinding to help orient people to the site. She did not want to dictate the result but recommended a way to differentiate program components and create some larger site organization with a better distribution of colors.

The DRB discussed a condition for site variation without being too specific where staff could consider the recommendation and share the plans if updated. The applicant sought more clarity to the DRB's comments, particularly since there had been a great deal of input from the DRB in multiple meetings in the past that had already been incorporated into the plans. The DRB continued to offer comment to treat the front part of the block with such things as a different roof type distinct from the greenhouse part of the building to clearly identify the entrance leaving the greenhouses as is, and since there was one main entry per building it was recommended that a canopy or overhang be considered for each building to better identify the entry and also serve as a rain cover, or that the entry be distinguished through color, patterning and siding to differentiate between the entry and possibly the non-greenhouse elements of the building.

Chair Carter recommended a condition that the applicant shall distinguish the entry and non-greenhouse components from the rest of the building using color and pattern. Canopies could be added over entry doors, with trash, equipment and utility in a material complementary to building facades. Where windows occurred within the patterned panel, the applicant shall ensure that the window proportions and datum were aligned with the material transition.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Marthinsen) to recommend to the Planning Commission the approval of PLN22-259, Plant Medicine Park, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 116 Conditions of Approval and the modification to Condition 80, along with additional DRB conditions as follows: 117) The trash and utility enclosures shall have materials complementary to the building facades; 118) Where the windows occur their proportions and datum lines shall respond to materials and color changes; 119) The entry doors to each building shall have canopies; and 120) The applicant shall distinguish entry and non-greenhouse components from the rest of the building using color and pattern; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Christeson, Marthinsen, Plotkin and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Butt.)

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4. PLN21-304	MUIR NEW RESIDENCE	
Description	DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A ±3,000 SQUARE-FOOT RESIDENCE ON A ±9,300 SQUARE-FOOT PARCEL.	
Location	1511 SOUTH 59 TH STREET	
APN	508-372-012	
Zoning	RL2, SINGLE-FAMILY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT	
Owner	TONY MUIR	
Applicant	MELANIE HECK (DESIGNER)	
Staff Contact	HECTOR LOPEZ	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Hector Lopez presented the staff report dated March 22, 2023, for a Design Review Permit to construct a new ±3,000 square-foot residence on a ±9,300 square-foot parcel located approximately 50 feet southwest from the corner of South 59th Street and Highland Avenue in the Richmond Annex Neighborhood. There was an existing dwelling that had been damaged by fire in 2011. Design Review approval had been sought to reconstruct the home with two-and-a-half levels in a contemporary design with four bedrooms and three-and-a-half bathrooms, and a two-car garage. The project had been scheduled as a study session item with the DRB in 2021 but that meeting had been cancelled. Some issues had been raised relative to style and concerns with the height of the structure, and the DRB's concerns had been communicated to the applicant.

Mr. Lopez explained that the applicant wanted to make modification to the former design, preferred a contemporary structure, had reduced the building height from 29 feet to 26 feet, and given the location secluded from the rest of the neighborhood the building preferred by the applicant had been supported and approval was recommended.

Chair Carter opened the public hearing.

TONY MUIR, the owner of the property, advised of his intent to rebuild the home. When asked, he clarified that the existing structure would not be demolished but would be modified to repair and rebuild the home. He presented a rendering of what had been proposed.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing.

There were no questions or comments from the DRB.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Christeson) to approve PLN21-304, Muir New Residence, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 9 Conditions of Approval; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Christeson, Marthinsen, Plotkin and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Butt.)

A five-minute break was taken at this time. The meeting reconvened with all members initially shown as present and absent.

5. PLN22-084	HOMEWOOD SUITES HOTEL	
Description	STUDY SESSION TO PROVIDE AND RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE DESIGN OF A NEW 109-ROOM FIVE-STORY HOTEL ON A 1.69-ACRE PARCEL.	
Location	3101 GARRITY WAY	
APN	405-290-054	
Zoning	CR, REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT	

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Owner 510 HOSPITALITY LLC
Applicant HILLVIEW CONSTRUCTION INC.
Staff Contact HECTOR LOPEZ Recommendation: PROVIDE AN RECEIVE COMMENTS

Hector Lopez presented the staff report dated March 22, 2023, for a Design Review request to construct a new 109-room five-story hotel on a 1.69-acre parcel at the northeast corner of Garrity Way and Blume Drive in the vicinity of Hilltop Mall. The site was the former location of Chevy's restaurant, which had been demolished. He described the surrounding uses as a 200-unit apartment complex, an approved but not built 98-unit residential project, an open space area that would remain undeveloped, an Extended Stay Hotel, two office buildings, the Marriot Courtyard Hotel, and Hilltop Mall with all uses predominately commercial. The project would subsequently require approval of a CUP by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Lopez explained that the project generally met all of the City's Zoning requirements but was slightly higher than what was allowed in that five feet of projection was allowed over the roofline and the proposal exceeded that by about 10 inches for the parapet wall surrounding the building. The landscaping requirement of one tree for each parking stall had also not been met.

Mr. Lopez stated that staff sought approval of the application although there were concerns related to the location of the site given that it was an elevated corner lot that would be highly visible and aesthetics were a concern. While there was a view of the Bay, the applicant's design had not taken that into account, the color scheme was not clear, and the porte cochère entry to the hotel was basically a roof structure and staff suggested that structure could be improved. Staff sought comments from the DRB.

DANA DEAN, Counsel, Hanson Bridgett, representing 510 Hospitality LLC, introduced the Development Team and the UC Berkeley student who had brought her team to the meeting to learn the design review process.

KASTYTIS ČECHAVIČIUS, Design Cell Architecture, responded to some of the concerns related to the orientation of the building on the site with a street entrance where it would be most visible and most successful. He stated the placement had been deemed to be the most logical area with the dining areas and public areas at the front of the building. A patio had been created in the middle of the building that would be shaded and have great morning sun from the east where hotel guests could have breakfast in a well-lit environment. There would be views of the north, west and south from the upper levels of the building and with that consideration it was felt to be important to have positioned the rooms in the upper level for views all around.

With respect to the elevations, Mr. Čechavičius stated the building design was modern and some of the features reflected distinguishing branding elements that had been developed and adopted, although the branding could be modified as needed. It also had features that were distinguishable to the guests. The clean lines of the building and patterning and the colors were not offensive, and visits to the surrounding neighborhoods had shown that the colors were appropriate to the area. There were some contrasting colors in pop-outs to the elevations, which had the larger volumes in contrasting colors with the lighter colors having patterning and the darker colors having darker bricks in the modern approach where sometimes less is more. With respect to the porte cochère, he felt the wood underside and brick columns would be offer a light structure as opposed to having parapets and making it heavy creating a roof-type form structure that covered the driveway and provided access to the building. He stated there was no desire to add heavy elements to the design.

Ms. Dean added that the team had put a lot of effort to make thoughtful choices into the design

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and the project and the team sought comments from the DRB.

Boardmember Plotkin noted that the site used to be a restaurant and a place of activity and he asked the applicant if the program allowed for the public to use the restaurant area if not staying at the hotel.

Mr. Čechavičius stated the application was for a limited service hotel as opposed to one that had full kitchens and restaurants. The hotel had a breakfast pantry for hotel guests but that would be limited to breakfast periods. There would not be a full catering kitchen. In addition, there would be a meeting room that could be rented to guests or to the outside community, it was located prominently on the street corner, and hotel operators usually looked for opportunities to use the space. It would be primarily for hotel guests for a meeting or for a small party, which was part of the program of the site.

Ms. Dean added that the meeting room space could be used for community meetings such as the Hilltop Neighborhood Council or community outreach meetings for projects and other types of meetings could potentially use the space, which she stated was needed in the area, although it was intended for the guests coming to Richmond to use the new facility.

Mr. Čechavičius stated that the meeting room had a separate entrance to the site and could easily work for outside groups.

Boardmember Marthinsen sought more indoor/outdoor connections to create a more lively ground floor, which she suggested would go a long way to relating the site and the building to work together. As to the conference space, she suggested that more exterior space carved out related to those meeting rooms would also help.

Chair Carter noted that the entry canopy did not connect to the building and Mr. Čechavičius stated that element floated but the vestibule slid under to keep out inclement weather.

Boardmember Christeson expressed concern that the colors were too dark, especially in relation to the adjacent hotel, although Boardmember Plotkin explained that the Marriott had been repainted and it was now gray and white. It was noted that the printed colors on the plans were not the true colors and a better rendering was presented.

Boardmember Marthinsen referred to the stair tower where the walls could be used for a feature unique to the community. She suggested it would help if that location could be a design piece that would help it relate to the neighborhood.

Chair Carter suggested that more rigor could be brought to the proportions and he was not sold on the design at this point. He had concern with the proportion of the areas that were blocked out versus those that would fade into the background with the white, and while he liked the layer of articulation to the facades, he encouraged the applicant to keep playing with the design to see if it could be tied together more cohesively.

Boardmember Plotkin agreed and asked how the design was original and related to Richmond. He questioned how the building related to the sun and asked whether there were differences to each side of the building.

Mr. Čechavičius stated the architecture was consistent more or less from different views to show the same building and the same character and several themes had been proposed; a dark theme that was more organized and more rigid, with side notes next to the building wood- looking inserts

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that would look dramatic against the darker color and with a black brick base.

Mr. Čechavičius explained that those sections had a clear border and rigidity to them versus the lighter color that had an off-white taupe/beige random pattern. It would be visible from the freeway and the pattern would not include too many elements with light color randomized pattern versus rigid darker masses. The front elevation with the dark frame with a wood grain finish would bring warmth to the building against the colors and offer a warm feeling.

Chair Carter commented that the areas with the frame around them with a clear formal design were the most compelling aspects of the design so far. He liked that contrast of the warmer wood tone next to a darker cladding. He asked about the entry frame and the grill.

Mr. Čechavičius stated that most of the hotel rooms had mechanical air handling units and the grill was on the elevation and would be painted to match the wall color. The grills were larger than necessary to match the height and proportions of the windows. He described the detail behind the grill where the wall would be painted black and at some angle would all look consistent.

Boardmember Plotkin would have integrated the grills differently and he would have tried to find a way to make them work with a dark element that organized them to avoid the shadow lines. He suggested consideration of how they could almost disappear working off of the shadows.

Mr. Čechavičius stated they had worked on that element for many hotels and the grills were very tight and looking from the front the black lines would not be visible but if looking at a particular angle more of the dark areas could be visible. The intent was that the entire wall be painted dark to avoid the black lines.

Boardmember Plotkin noted that it was somewhat nice and compelling to see the warmer color against the dark, which should be the hierarchy and the rest of the building should have a secondary relationship to it. He suggested the canopy seemed flimsy because the frontage hierarchy was being lost and being repeated throughout the building but the canopy was smaller and he suggested more attention in that area. He referred to landscaping at the end of the canopy and recommended more “oomph” to the canopy. He urged looking at proportions around the rest of the building and was sad to hear that the plan did not meet the minimum requirement for trees. He urged the inclusion of more landscaping.

Boardmember Marthinsen referred to the podium elevation and reiterated that could be an opportunity to do something unique beyond the use of flat brick concrete, with something more indoor/outdoor to make the building feel like it was landing softly on the ground.

Chair Carter suggested that the hierarchy of base/middle/top offered clean modern lines that would work well, and integrating the building at the landscape level with certain materials or proportions could be considered, especially thinking of the courtyard and pedestrians walking around the building and the courtyard. He asked whether dogs or pets would be allowed and urged consideration of a situation where someone might want to take their dog out for a walk.

Boardmember Christeson reiterated his concern that the building was very dark. He suggested that the charcoal was too dark and needed to be more of an earth tone to fit in better with the area. With respect to the entryway and the canopy, the canopy was light with not much to it and the building was block heavy making the canopy appear as an afterthought that did not fit the design. He stated there needed to be more element to it. He also questioned the design of the grills.

On the discussion of the canopy and the entry, the DRB sought a softening at the edge of a

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transition area for the entry that could take many forms. While the DRB did not request new renderings, it was suggested that the other components to be considered could be added to the elevations using the components already identified and making the hierarchy of the project clear to help guide a solution using size, bench or texture to transition into the building for a clear entry, more appealing at the ground/entry level.

Mr. Čechavičius referred to the existing eucalyptus trees at both of the streets flanking the property, which were very tall and which would remain.

Boardmember Christeson suggested that the canopy needed a wind block given that the area was very windy.

Chair Carter expressed the willingness to set up a subcommittee meeting to work with the applicant to clarify some of the DRB's comments, if needed.

Hector Lopez stated that a subcommittee meeting could be set up and suggested that the applicant could prepare some basic sketches in response to the DRB's comments.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/[second not audible]) to continue the meeting to 9:15 P.M.; approved by voice vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Christeson, Marthinsen, Plotkin and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Butt.)

Hector Lopez noted that there were surplus parking spaces in the plan and as such the parking may be reduced somewhat to consider additional landscaping for the project.

Mr. Čechavičius commented that more parking than what had been required had been proposed given that the applicant had a guest satisfaction requirement where parking was actually increased to adequately accommodate guests.

Ms. Dean expressed a desire for a subcommittee meeting to discuss the DRB's concerns and she sought examples of the DRB's desires.

Board Business

A. Staff reports, requests, or announcements: None

B. Boardmember reports, requests, or announcements

Chair Carter welcomed David Plotkin to the Design Review Board.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 P.M. to the regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, April 12, 2023.