

heavy commercial and industrial neighborhoods to take advantage of close in living while reducing obsolete and under-utilized buildings and sites. The applicants proposal is consistent with these goals.

- Due to the large number of parking spaces required for the Imaging Center much of the above ground portion of the building is dedicated to parking . To minimize its visual mass, the applicant has proposed building faces along L Street and Seville Way that incorporate small-scale elements such as arched openings, cornices decorative metalwork and brick veneer. In addition , the applicant has submitted a landscaped plan that includes shrubs, vines and trees to further break down the building mass and enhance the pedestrian experience along L Street.
- The applicant has indicated an illuminated sign attached to the steel entry canopy. Staff recommends that this sign be carefully integrated in to the project design. Staff recommends the sign be placed on one of the side pillars at the main entrance and that it not be internally lit.
- The Boards criteria states that "service access should not block the flow of pedestrian, and that "trash storage should be located in a visually unobtrusive location". The trash enclosure will be located within the building in the far northwest corner of the site.
- Mechanical equipment, if proposed, should be screened with a raised parapet wall, such that screening is integral to the project design per the Boards guidelines. Back flow prevention devices, SMUD boxes, etc. should also be placed where not visible from street views, and screened from any pedestrian view. Such screening should be of a character consistent with the overall project.
- Supplementary to the Alhambra Corridor Special Planning District, the City adopted design guidelines to retain the human scale of development, and "help ensure the proper relationship and connection with the surrounding development between neighborhoods in the corridor, East Sacramento, and Midtown. The applicant's design generally addresses these guidelines. The guidelines are used by Design Review and Planning staff to review building and site design of structures proposed in the Corridor. The guidelines specify site and building design features that are preferred for new developments and remodels. They consist of the following items and issues: Architectural style should reflect Spanish Colonial and Mission; parking should be placed at the rear of sites when possible; parking areas should be screened with landscaping or other features; exterior construction materials should include tile roofs, stucco walls, tile trim and terra-cotta type flooring; pedestrian friendly features such as public art, water features, clear window glazing, and courtyards should be incorporated into the building and into the site design.

- The proposed building is broken into several masses as a means to reduce its apparent size and relate to pedestrian scale. Corner stair towers, a gabled one-story elements and a recessed portion in the middle of the south facade provide visual interest and variety.
- Adjacent buildings include a one-story brick fire station, two story apartment and the 80 foot tall water tank to the north. Staff finds that the proposed building height is compatible with these dramatically different adjacent buildings, and serves to screen views of the water tank from traffic on L Street. Some neighbors have expressed concern about the nature of the east wall of the building, which faces existing low rise apartments. In response, the applicant has proposed to articulate this wall with recessed arches containing planted trellises.
- The building design blends Spanish Colonial stylistic elements with a more contemporary aesthetic (revealed primarily at the building entrance) to create a building that fits into its historic neighborhood and yet expresses its underlying purpose as a center for state-of-the-art medical imaging. The corner towers and much of the first level area are sheathed in brick to offer texture and fine detail at the pedestrian level. Cornices at material transitions, decorative metal fencing, stone tile and recessed aluminum storefront with clear glazing all support the goals of the Alhambra Corridor SPD.
- The northern wall of the proposed building and the northern part of the west wall directly express the parking within and are therefore of a different character than the remainder of the building. It should be noted that the north wall faces the water tower and fire department training tower, where pedestrian access is prohibited. Furthermore, the northern portion of the west wall lies at the end of Seville Way and is recessed back from the plane of the remainder of the west wall. There is virtually no pedestrian traffic to this area, and it is well hidden from traffic on L Street.
- Staff finds that the applicant has proposed a building with a level of articulation and pedestrian scale that meets the Board's guidelines and contributes to the character of the Alhambra Corridor.

At the Design Review Board hearing, the applicant presented amended elevations which further addressed the concerns of the neighborhood regarding the compatibility of the project with the multi-family residential to the east. (These amended elevations are included as Exhibits in the Notice of Decision). The tower has been shifted to the west to reduce building massing directly adjacent to this multi-family development. Design Review staff and the Board were approved of the proposed changes to the original submittal.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:A. Environmental Determination

The Environmental Services Manager has determined that the project, as proposed, is exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Section 15332 (infill exemption).

B. Public/Neighborhood/Business Association Comments

The proposed project application was routed to the East Sacramento Alhambra Corridor Neighborhood Association (ESACNA). Land owners within a 500 foot radius of the project site were also received early notification of the project proposal. ESACNA submitted a letter expressing concern over project related traffic using nearby residential streets as a route to and from the project, and specifically, requested that a "pork chop" be installed on L Street that will direct exiting traffic to Alhambra Boulevard. The project will be conditioned to include this design feature. When required redesign of the project resulted in the need for a waiver of five parking spaces, ESACNA was informed of this development. In conversation with the representative of the Association, it was not indicated that the neighborhood group would be opposed to the proposed parking reduction.

C. Summary of Agency Comments

The project has been reviewed by several City Departments and other agencies. The comments will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the attached Notice of Decision.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS: The Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny all of the entitlements. The Planning Commission action may be appealed to the City Council. The appeal must occur within 10 days of the Planning Commission action.

RECOMMENDATION:


Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact which finds that the project is Exempt Exempt 153332.
- B. Major Project Special Permit to construct a structure greater than 40,000 square feet in the C-2 zone.
- C. Special Permit to waive five required parking spaces.

Report Prepared By,

  
Mark Kraft, Associate Planner

Report Reviewed By,

  
Jeanne Corcoran, Senior Planner

Attachments

Attachment 1	Notice of Decision & Findings of Fact
Exhibit 1A-L	Site Plans, Floor Plans, Elevations
Attachment 2	Vicinity Map
Attachment 3	Land Use & Zoning Map
Attachment 4	ESACNA Letter