



**DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION (DRC) STAFF REPORT**

**WORKSHOP**

**DATE:** February 5, 2014

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**SUBJECT: MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROJECT AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MAIN GATE ROAD AND “C” ST. P2013-040; DESIGN REVIEW GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN APN 157-980-05; MAIN GATE ROAD AND “C” STREET CEQA: Pursuant to Section 15063, an environmental review will be prepared based upon the recommendation by the Design Review Commission on the site plan and conceptual architecture. This review will be brought to the Planning Commission for a recommendation and City Council for action.**

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**REQUESTED ACTION**

Conduct a public hearing and consider making a recommendation to the Novato Planning Commission regarding the site plan, massing/scale, and architectural theme proposed for the multi-family residential townhome project at the northwest corner of Main Gate Road and “C” Street.

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The project site is a 2.7-acre parcel (117,617 square feet) on the northwest corner of Main Gate and “C” Streets. The project site has frontage along Main Gate Street on the south and frontage along “C” Street on the east. Immediately adjacent on the north is vacant Novato Unified School District property and immediately adjacent on the west is Lanham Village residential. Adjacent to the project site on the east side of “C” Street is North Bay Children’s Center, Novato Charter School, and two vacant lots owned by Novato Unified School District.

The project site is currently vacant. The previous use on the project site was a gas station, and the site includes a vacant building and canopy area associated with the old gas station. There is currently fencing around the project site.

An aerial photo showing the existing site configuration is included as Attachment 1 for reference by the Design Review Commission.

## **DESIGN REVIEW WORKSHOP**

The Design Review Commission ("DRC") conducted two public workshops on this project on December 4, 2013 and October 2, 2013. An overview of each of each meeting is provided below.

### *December 4, 2013*

This workshop was held to respond to comments received at the first workshop in October. The DRC reviewed the updated conceptual site plan proposed for the multi-family residential townhome project at the northwest corner of Main Gate Road and "C" Street (referred to as "the proposed project", hereafter). At the workshop, the DRC made several notable comments and suggestions regarding the site plan, including:

- variation in elevation is crucial and this should be shown in the next set of plans
- incorporating setbacks on the upper levels could help mitigate concerns about height and accommodate patios that look onto the park
- consider removing a piece of the internal road and connecting the parklet to Hamilton Square to increase common open space
- move the inside building to the perimeter in place of another access point because the width of the alley appears too tight for cars backing in and out of their driveways
- use "turf block" to reduce the amount of impervious surface (with Fire Dept. approval)
- provide a cross section of Main Gate in the next set of plans to show varying elevations
- investigate whether there is any benefit to putting fill over the site to cap any possible contamination
- consider building an attractive wall around the development, similar to surrounding subdivisions
- provide dimensions in the next set of plans

A copy of the minutes of the December 4, 2013, workshop is Attachment 2 for DRC reference.

### *October 2, 2013*

At the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Design Review Commission Workshop, the Commission reviewed a conceptual site plan that contemplated a multi-family residential townhome project with an internal street network and park space in the interior. The primary concerns of community members pertained to height, traffic, noise, drainage impacts, and leftover toxic substances at the site. Comments from the Commission pertained to hardscape requirements, a need for more park space, breaking up building height at Main Gate and "C" Streets, and creating a ring road to increase park space. Lastly, the Fire Marshall commented that the street and alley network needed to be adjusted for fire truck access.

A copy of the minutes of the October 2, 2013 workshop is Attachment 3 for DRC reference.

### **REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Thompson Development, Inc. has revised the site plan to respond to the comments and suggestions made by the DRC at the December 4, 2013 public workshop. In summary, the project changes include:

- increased common open space from 7,650 to 13,500 square feet by removing part of the internal road and connecting the parklet to Hamilton Square
- architectural concepts for both two- and three-story townhouses that include variations in elevation and upper story, covered balconies

The site plan modifications take into consideration the comments provided by the DRC to create a larger open space area within the development for residents to enjoy. In addition, the conceptual elevations depict building designs with pedestrian-friendly facades oriented to the street with varying elevations that blend in with the surrounding residential developments. Although the DRC suggested creating a sound wall around the development with buildings oriented inward, both staff and the developer believed this design approach did not seem appropriate for this location. Instead, the site plan features a hybrid design that includes two buildings on Main Gate Road and “C” Street oriented to the street and the remaining seven buildings oriented inwards towards the common park space. With the current site plan, there is an opportunity to create an engaging pedestrian experience and avoid isolating future residents from the neighborhood and residents in the larger Hamilton area with another subdivision with a tall perimeter wall.

Revised project plans are Attachment 5 for DRC reference.

### **BACKGROUND**

Property Owner:	Hamilton Square, LLC
Assessor's Parcel No.	157-980-05
Project Area:	2.7 acres
General Plan Designation:	Neighborhood Commercial (CN)
Existing Zoning:	Planned District (PD); Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan
Existing Use:	Vacant, previous gas station
Adjacent Zoning/Uses:	North – Planned District (PD): Novato Unified School District, Vacant South – Planned District (PD): Meadow Park Residential East – Planned District (PD): Novato Unified School District, Charter School/Child Center

**HISTORY OF ENTITLEMENTS AT THIS SITE:**

August 14, 2007: Mitigated Negative Declaration, Precise Development Plan, and Design Review approved for office condominium project

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

The proposed project is subject to environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A CEQA Initial Study will be prepared to determine the appropriate level of environmental review required for the project. The project design recommended by the DRC will be analyzed in the Initial Study.

**REGULATORY OVERVIEW**

In order to proceed with the project as proposed, the applicant will be requesting amendments to the General Plan and Hamilton Reuse Plan, and to amend the existing Master Plan and Precise Development Plan for the site. The project site has a current land use designation of Neighborhood Commercial (CN) in the Novato General Plan; however, a land use designation of Medium Density Multiple Family Residential (R10) is needed to accommodate the proposed project. The Hamilton Reuse Plan limits building heights to two stories in the Medium Density Multiple Family Residential land use designation. This would require the applicant to apply for an Amendment to the Reuse Plan to allow for up to three stories. Also, language in Planning Section 5 for the Exchange Triangle restricts building heights to 30 feet. The project sponsor will need to request an amendment to the Hamilton Reuse Plan to allow building heights greater than 30 feet.

The current zoning for the project site is PD, Planned District. In order allow a residential use at this location, the existing Master Plan and Precise Development Plan need to be amended. The Master Plan and Precise Development Plan approved in 2007 were for an office project. Amending the Precise Development Plan for the project site is needed to establish specific development standards for the proposed project, and to allow three-story buildings and a maximum height that exceeds 30 feet. These requests will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and a recommendation will be given to City Council. If these requests are approved, the DRC will be asked to review final architecture, including colors, materials, and a landscape plan.

**NEED FOR DESIGN REVIEW**

The proposed project is proposed on a parcel zoned Planned District (PD). New development projects proposed on a PD zoned property must be reviewed through what is commonly referred to as the "planned district process." The planned district process typically involves the adoption of a master plan, which establishes permitted land uses and maximum development intensity (e.g., floor area ratio, density) consist with a given site's underlying general plan land use classification. This process also involves the adoption of a precise development plan, which establishes site and project specific development standards (e.g., setbacks, height limit). The City Council is the decision authority for master plan and precise development plan proposals.

Novato Municipal Code Sections 19.42.060E.2 and 19.42.060F.2 describe the design review process and role of the DRC with respect to the review of projects requiring a master plan and/or precise development plan. According to these sections of the Municipal Code, the DRC is tasked with first conducting a public workshop to consider a project site's physical constraints and the project's design, including site design, massing/scale, and landscaping. At the applicant's request, the initial DRC workshop may include a review of the project's proposed architecture. Once the public workshop has been conducted, the project then returns to the DRC for a subsequent public hearing at which the Commission may consider making a formal recommendation to the Planning Commission regarding the project's site design, massing/scale, architecture (if requested by the applicant), and landscaping.

The purpose of the DRC's early participation in the review of projects requiring a master plan and/or precise development plan is to advise the Planning Commission whether a proposed project presents a design that is appropriate for its given site and setting. The DRC's recommendation helps the Planning Commission consider the implications of adopting a particular master plan and/or precise development plan as it formulates its own recommendation to the City Council. A landscape plan is forthcoming and will be considered by the Planning Commission as part of their review of the final design details for this proposal.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

As mentioned earlier, the DRC conducted public workshops for the proposed project on December 4, 2013 and October 2, 2013, which included a review of the conceptual site plan. At this time, Thompson Development, Inc. is requesting the DRC conduct a public hearing and consider making a formal recommendation to the Planning Commission regarding the site plan, architectural theme, and massing.

The DRC's recommendation regarding the proposed project should be based on the findings of approval required for design review actions as specified in Novato Municipal Code Section 19.42.030.F. To assist the DRC in making its recommendation to the Planning Commission, the discussion below lists each design review finding and describes how the proposed the proposed project conforms thereto.

### **Design Review Findings**

***Design Review Finding No. 1: The design, layout, size, architectural features and general appearance of the proposed project is consistent with the general plan, and any applicable specific plan and with the development standards, design guidelines and all applicable provisions of this code, including this title and any approved master plan and precise development plan.***

#### *Novato General Plan*

Hamilton Square, LLC is proposing to develop a new proposed project. The project site has a current land use designation of Neighborhood Commercial (CN) in the Novato General Plan. In order to proceed with the proposed project as proposed, the applicant will have to apply for a General Plan Amendment.

The General Plan land use designation that would accommodate the proposed project would be Medium Density Multiple Family Residential (R10). The R10 land use permits a variety of residential uses, including multiple-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, detached or attached single-family dwellings, recreation, home occupations, community facilities, and other similar uses. The R10 land use designation has an allowable density range of 10.1 to 20.0 dwelling units per acre. As currently proposed, the proposed project is approximately 13 dwelling units per acre.

The 1996 Novato General Plan provides a framework of policies that were adopted to coordinate all major components of Novato's physical development over a 20-year period, including policies to guide the design of new project proposals. These policies are used to determine whether a given project's design is consistent with the General Plan. A project is considered to be consistent with the General Plan where the given project is found to be in general agreement with applicable policies. A project need not be in exact agreement with an applicable policy to be considered consistent with the General Plan. The following design policies of the Novato General Plan are considered to be applicable to the proposed project:

Housing Policy 3.2 Design that Fits into the Neighborhood Context. It is the City's intent that neighborhood identity and sense of community will be enhanced by designing all new housing to have a sensitive transition of scale and compatibility in form to the surrounding area.

Discussion: The proposed project is located in the Exchange Triangle Planning Area at Hamilton Field. This particular planning area is characterized by vacant parcels and sites that have been recently developed, including the North Bay Children's Center and Novato Charter School to the east of "C" Street. The parcel abutting the project site to the north is owned by the Novato Unified School District. To the south of the project site is Meadow Park, a master-planned community featuring 700 affordable units which include one- and two-story townhomes. To the west of the project site is the Lanham Village, a 154-unit townhome complex featuring two-story residential units and single-story carports. The project site is south of the Commissary Triangle Planning Area, which contains a mix of underdeveloped parcels and sites that have been recently developed, including the Next Key Center and a two-story, thirty-two room transitional housing facility. The proposed project is accessible from both Main Gate Road and "C" Street.

From a bulk and massing perspective, the proposed project's two-story building is reflective of the predominant pattern of development in the project area, which is characterized by two-story structures with single-story elements, including development at Meadow Park and Lanham Village. However, the proposed three-story buildings would be noticeably higher than the surrounding development. Recognizing this circumstance, the proposed project proposes placing the two-story building at the most visible corner of Main Gate Road and "C" Street. In addition, the architectural concepts include massing broken at the eaves and upper story balconies to draw attention to variations in elevation and minimize the mass and bulk of the three-story buildings. These design features also add articulation to the buildings and minimize what otherwise could be a flat and linear building elevation.

Overall, the site plan, building orientation, massing, and front stoops along the sidewalks create a presence and sense of activity at the street edge that would: a) contribute to the feeling of a neighborhood identity along Main Gate Road and "C" Street; and b) create an appealing streetscape. Given these observations and those above, the project is considered to have a form

and transition of scale that is compatible with existing development consistent with Housing Policy 3.2.

Housing Policy 3.3 Housing Design Principles. The intent in the design of new housing is to provide stable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods through high quality architecture, site planning, and amenities that address the following principles:

- a. Reduce the Perception of Building Bulk. In multi-unit buildings, require designs that break up the perceived bulk and minimize the apparent height and size of new buildings, including the use of upper story stepbacks and landscaping. Application of exterior finish materials and trim, and windows and doors, for example, are important elements of building design and an indicator of overall building quality.
- b. Recognize Existing Street Patterns. Incorporate transitions in height and setbacks from adjacent properties to respect adjacent development character and privacy. Design new housing so that it relates to the existing street pattern and creates a sense of neighborliness with surrounding buildings.
- c. Enhance the “Sense of Place” by Incorporating Focal Areas. Design new housing around natural and/or designed focal points, emphasized through direct pedestrian/pathway connections.
- d. Minimize the Visual Impact of Parking and Garages. Discourage home designs in which garages dominate the public facade of the home (e.g., encourage driveways and garages to be located to the side or rear of buildings, or recessed, or along rear alleyways or below the building in some higher density developments).

Discussion: The proposed project includes various design elements consistent with the design principles of Housing Policy 3.3, including:

- a two-story building oriented towards the street at the project site's frontage with Main Gate Road and “C” Street, which creates an appropriate transition of scale and bulk from the street to the rear of the project site where there are three-story buildings;
- a stand-alone Mail Pavilion at the Main Gate Road entrance to the project site with a two-story building on its right and a three-story building to its left. This variation create a focal point and helps reduce the apparent height of the proposed three-story building elements;
- fully articulated elevations featuring various forms of massing broken at the eaves, including chimney elements, which reduce the building's perceived bulk and add architectural interest;

- an architectural design and finishes that are aesthetically appealing and reflective of the Spanish eclectic architecture found throughout Hamilton Field, as represented by Unity in Marin (600 Palm Drive), and the Coast Guard Spanish Housing (Sunset Drive); and
- tuck under parking for all units accessible by a rear alley to minimize the visual impact of parking

Community Identity Policy 1 Compatibility of Development with Surroundings. Ensure that new development is sensitive to the surrounding architecture, topography, landscaping, and to the character, scale, and ambiance of the surrounding neighborhood. Recognize that neighborhoods include community facilities needed by Novato residents as well as homes, and integrate facilities into neighborhoods.

Discussion: See discussion for Housing Policies 3.2 and 3.3 above.

Community Identity Policy 12 Parking Standards. Reduce the visibility of parking facilities and the amount of land necessary for them to the maximum extent feasible.

Discussion: The proposed project's site plan recognizes the desirability of reducing views of parked vehicles. Therefore, the site plan includes tuck under parking for all units and 21 spaces of on-street parking on a new enclosed street within the development.

Community Identity Policy 15 Pedestrian Paths. Provide for maximum feasible pedestrian circulation.

Discussion: The proposed project will likely be required to provide frontage improvements along Main Gate Road. These improvements would consist of new curb, gutter, and sidewalk where none currently exist at this time. The proposed project also provides pedestrian paths around the common open space area which connect to pedestrian paths along the inner road and out to Main Gate Road to the south and "C" Street to the east. The pedestrian improvements contemplated by the proposed project are considered to be consistent with Community Identity Policy 15.

Community Identity Policy 32 Public Art. Promote public art that enhances the cultural life of the community.

Discussion: The project will include a Mail Pavilion at the Main Gate entrance to provide a distinctive gateway and possible location for public art. An art element would also potentially be located in the park space area or on the corner of Main Gate Road and "C" Street.

### *Novato Zoning Ordinance*

The proposed project is not subject to complying with the traditional site design and development standards of the Novato Zoning Ordinance. In this instance, the City's planned district process offers an applicant the flexibility to present a project that is designed in alternative manner or that relies on development standards unique to the project and its site. This flexibility is offered to PD zoned sites with the caveat that a project proposing alternative development standards must result in a development that is compatible with surrounding



structures and be of superior quality to a project that might otherwise result from application of the traditional standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

As the plans are still conceptual, they do not currently indicate building setbacks. As more detailed plans are developed, setbacks will be provided in accordance with PD zoning requirements.

The proposed project's design has been found to comply with the traditional development standards of the Novato Zoning Ordinance that would normally apply to new residential developments, including providing ample outdoor space per unit, conforming parking, and perimeter landscaping.

Chapter 19.30.040 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies the number of parking spaces required for the project. The proposed project meets this standard as shown in Table 1 below:

<b>Table 1: Required Parking Spaces for Multi-Family Dwellings, Condominiums and Other Attached Dwellings</b>		
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>REQUIRED</b>	<b>HAMILTON, LLC PROPOSAL</b>
Residential Parking: * 2-bedroom unit: 2 spaces/unit 3-bedroom unit: 2.2 spaces/unit  Guest Parking: 1 space/3 units  *At least one space per unit shall be covered in either a garage or carport	Residential Parking: 16 2-bedroom units = 32 spaces 15 3-bedrooms = 33 spaces  Guest Parking: 31 units = 10 guest spaces	Onsite: 62 spaces (covered, in garages) 21 spaces (along internal "new street")
<b>COMPARISON</b>	Total Required: 75 spaces *31 of the spaces required to be covered	Total Provided: 89 Spaces *62 of the spaces are covered spaces *Additional 6 spaces provided along C Street.

Section 19.30 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies standards for location of parking areas and access to parking areas/spaces. Section 19.28 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies standards for landscaping and Section 19.21 of specifies standards for the art program.

Section 19.34.124 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies standards for open space in multi-family residential projects. While the project site will remain PD, the density of the proposed project falls within the R10 designation. The required open space for multi-family projects within an R10 district is a minimum of 300 to 500 square feet of open space area per unit, depending upon the which R10 designation is used as the template for the development standards for this proposal. The R10 zoning designation requires at least half of the open space to be available to and private for the occupants of each dwelling unit, while the remainder may be combined in common areas available to other residents of the proposed project. The proposed project includes open space in the common park area, Mail Pavilion, front yard areas, and balconies. As proposed, the project will satisfy the minimum of 300 square feet of open space area per unit requirement where at least half is available to and private for the occupants of each dwelling unit.

Section 19.30.070 specifies parking area landscaping standards. The proposed project includes on-site parking along the new “internal streets” and these streets would include landscaping, with trees, and sidewalks to accommodate pedestrian circulation.

Staff and the project applicant would welcome comments from the Design Review Commission on potential landscaping schemes, and potential public art themes as discussed in the project description above.

### *Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan*

The Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan (Reuse Plan) was adopted by the City of Novato in October 1995 and serves as the master plan for a large portion of the former Hamilton Army Airfield. The Reuse Plan contains policies that describe the type, location, and intensity of new development, as well as policy guidance addressing the design of new residential and non-residential buildings. These policies should be used by the DRC to consider whether the proposed project is consistent with the Reuse Plan.

The project site has a current land use designation of Neighborhood Commercial (CN) in the Reuse Plan, which is consistent with the General Plan land use designation. In order to proceed with the proposed project as proposed, the applicant needs to apply for three amendments to the Reuse Plan: 1) change the land use from Neighborhood Commercial to Medium Density Multiple Family Residential; 2) allow more than two stories in the Medium Density Multiple Family Residential land use designation; and 3) allow building heights greater than 30 feet for the Exchange Triangle Area.

The land use amendments will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council, accompanied by the DRC's recommendation regarding the design of the proposed project. At this time, the DRC should focus its review and recommendation on the design related policies and guidelines that are applicable to the proposed project. The Reuse Plan defers to the precise development plan process to consider the particulars of project's proposed site plan in terms of setbacks, lot coverage, and so on.

The Reuse Plan contains a section providing an extensive set of design guidelines, which are presented as policies. A copy of Reuse Plan Section 8.0, *Design Guidelines*, is attached for DRC reference. This copy has been marked-up by staff to identify design policies that are considered to be applicable to the proposed project. The DRC should note that in several instances the design guidelines reference the creation of uniform design and landscape plans to guide future development. While these more detailed uniform design and landscape plans have not been prepared, the design policies contained in Section 8.0 are quite specific and provide sufficient design guidance to ensure new development within the Reuse Plan area is of high quality and appropriate to Hamilton Field.

The proposed project has been designed in a manner that is consistent with the applicable design policies of Section 8.0 of the Hamilton Reuse Plan based on the following general observations:

- the project's site plan creates a logical arrangement of buildings and parking that emphasizes the focal point of the development at Main Gate Road and “C” Street and

minimizes the visual impact of parking by including tuck under parking and on-street parking within the development;

- the massing and architectural design of the buildings is reflective of the Spanish eclectic architectural style that creates Hamilton Field's distinct identity and character;
- the horizontal and vertical articulations of the conceptual elevations creates visual interest, is aesthetically appealing, and reduces the apparent mass and scale of the building;
- the roof design includes chimney elements that fully screen all roof-top mounted mechanical equipment;
- the site plan includes street tree plantings to create an attractive streetscape

### *Precise Development Plan*

***Design Review Finding No. 2: The proposed project would maintain and enhance the community's character, provide for harmonious and orderly development, and create a desirable environment for the occupants, neighbors, and visiting public.***

Discussion: As discussed above, the proposed project is proposed in the Exchange Triangle Planning Area at Hamilton Field. This area is underdeveloped and is characterized by a former gas station, vacant buildings, and asphalt covered expanses. The current state of this area does not present an attractive environment, provide a positive neighborhood identity, or evoke a sense of community. Given these circumstances, the proposed project represents a significant opportunity to improve the character and appearance of the properties along Main Gate Road and "C" Street to the benefit of the residents at Lanham Village, the larger community at Hamilton Field, and future projects that may be contemplated in the Exchange Triangle Planning Area.

The proposed project, as designed, would provide for the harmonious and orderly development of the project site, as well as create a desirable environment for apartment residents and the neighbors at Lanham Village. Specific project features that create these positive benefits include:

- a site plan creating an appropriate arrangement of buildings, outdoor space, and parking, which recognizes the constraints of the project site and respects the existing residential development at Lanham Village;
- buildings oriented to the street along Main Gate Road and "C" Street to help create a feeling of activity at the street level, develop a sense of community, and begin to form neighborhood identity in the Exchange Triangle Planning Area;
- tuck under parking and on-street parking within the development which reduces the visibility of parked cars from Lanham Village;
- two- and three-story mass and scale that is sensitive to the proximity and scale of the residential units at Lanham Village and which is comparable to other buildings at Hamilton Field;

- an appealing interpretation of the Spanish eclectic architectural style which defines the identity of Hamilton Field;

***Design Review Finding No. 3: The proposed development would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; is not materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity; does not interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments and does not create potential traffic, pedestrian or bicycle hazards.***

Discussion: The proposed project is considered to better the public health, safety, and welfare by taking a site that is unattractive and improving it with a well-designed residential facility providing aesthetically pleasing architecture and landscaping. Similarly, the proposed project's orientation to Main Gate Road and "C" Street would place "eyes at the street," which commonly improves neighborhood safety and security by discouraging criminal activity.

The proposed project would be developed on its own site and involve improvements along Main Gate Road, including curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements. These improvements are considered to enhance the use and enjoyment of the project, neighboring properties, and future development.

The proposed project has been designed to avoid potential traffic, pedestrian, or bicycle hazards by including:

- formal street improvements along the project's frontage on Main Gate Road and "C" Street, including a new sidewalk to improve pedestrian safety;
- buildings with front stoops to the sidewalk along Main Gate Road and "C" Street that creates a neighborhood feeling, which encourages interaction with neighbors and helps discourage speeding;
- tuck under parking within the development accessible through a rear alley to avoid to traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

By incorporating both street oriented buildings and inward facing buildings, the proposed site plan encourages connections to both residents within the development and the neighborhood as a whole.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Recommend approval of the site plan and architectural theme for the proposed project as designed.
2. Recommend approval of the site plan and architectural theme for the proposed project with recommended revisions.
3. Do not recommend approval of the site plan and architectural theme for the proposed project.
4. Continue the public hearing with direction to staff and the applicant.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Design Review Commission forward a recommendation to approve the site plan and architectural theme for the proposed project, as designed, to the Planning Commission.

## **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS**

1. The Design Review Commission recommends approval of the site plan and architectural theme for the proposed project as presented on the plans prepared by Opticos Design, Inc., dated January 29, 2014, based on the findings below as more specifically discussed in the staff analysis section of this report above.
2. In accordance with Section 19.42.030.F. of the Novato Municipal Code and on the basis of the discussion in the staff analysis section of this report above, the Design Review Commission finds that:
  - a. The design, layout, size, architectural features and general appearance of the proposed project is consistent with the general plan, and any applicable specific plan and with the development standards, design guidelines and all applicable provisions of this code, including this title and any approved master plan and precise development plan.
  - b. The proposed project would maintain and enhance the community's character, provide for harmonious and orderly development, and create a desirable environment for the occupants, neighbors, and visiting public.
  - c. The proposed project would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; is not materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity; does not interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or future developments and does not create potential traffic, pedestrian or bicycle hazards.

## **FURTHER ACTION**

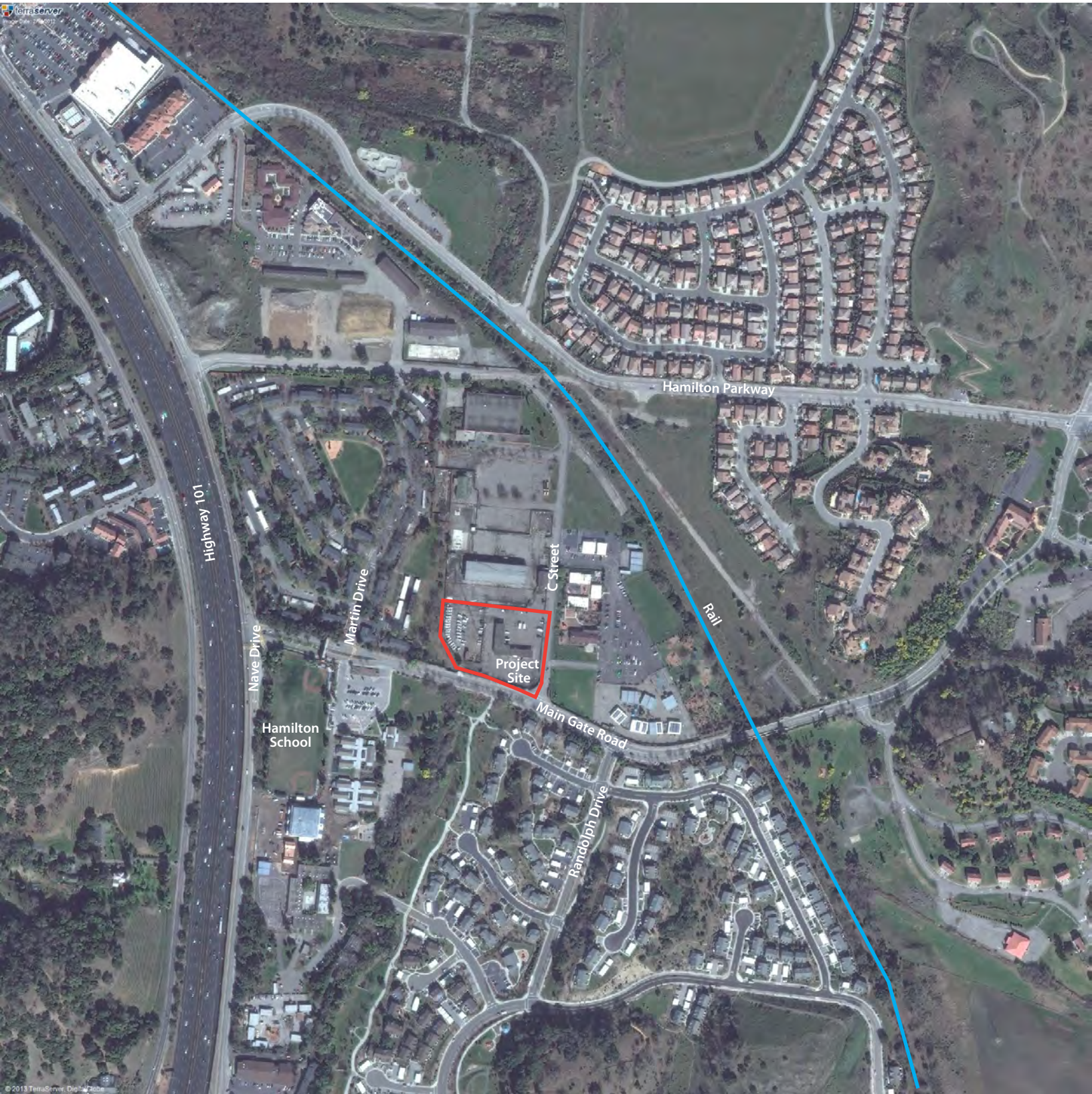
The proposed project will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council at future public hearings. If these requests are approved, the DRC will be asked to review final architecture, including colors, materials, and a landscape plan.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Aerial Photo of Project Site and Vicinity
2. Design Review Commission Minutes, December 4, 2013
3. Design Review Commission Minutes, October 2, 2013
4. Section 8, Design Guidelines (with applicable policies marked) – 1995 Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan
5. Revised Conceptual Plans Package – Opticos Design, Inc., January 29, 2014



Attachment 1: Aerial Photo of Project Site and Vicinity



MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROJECT AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MAIN GATE AND "C" STREETS P2013-0140; DESIGN REVIEW APN 157-980-05; MAIN GATE AND "C" STREETS





# Design Review Commission Meeting

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

December 4, 2013

## MINUTES

THE CITY OF  
**NOVATO**  
CALIFORNIA

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Mayor  
Pat Eklund  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Eric Lucan  
Councilmembers  
Denise Athas  
Madeline Kellner  
Jeanne MacLeamy

City Manager  
Michael S. Frank

**Present:** Michael Barber, Chair  
Joseph Farrell, Vice Chair  
Patrick MacLeamy  
Beth Radovanovich  
Tom Telfer

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Elizabeth Dunn, Planning Manager  
Alan Lazure, Principal Planner

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:**

The meeting was called to order.

**APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA:**

The agenda was approved without changes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**CONSENT CALENDAR:** None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS :** None

**CONTINUED ITEMS:** None

**NEW ITEMS:**

**1. PACHECO PLAZA BUILDING (LP)  
P2013-030; DESIGN REVIEW  
APN 160-190-13; 490 IGNACIO BLVD**

**Conduct a public hearing on the site plan, building architecture, colors and materials and landscape plan for a new 8,000 square foot retail building located in the Pacheco Plaza Shopping Center. It has been determined that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section §15303, New Construction.**

Staff gave a presentation on the proposal and answered questions from the Commission.

The public hearing was opened and the applicant and architect gave their presentation.

Speakers:

John Kieckhefer – Property owner  
Dusan Motolik – Architect with Avila Design

No one from the general public requested to speak on the application. The Commission closed the public hearing.

The Commission considered the merits of the application and continued the matter with a request for additional project details and information as:

- Provide a full landscape and hardscape plan.
- Provide additional details on exterior lighting, including fixture design and illumination.
- Provide additional exterior color and materials samples.
- Create a site section(s) that allow a comparison of the massing/height of the proposed building with the existing easterly “E” building.
- Review the design and location of the outdoor plazas, in particular the southeasterly plaza near the driveway and Ignacio Blvd.
- Review the location and function of the trash enclosure with regard to design, trash bin removal for pick-up, and potential impact on handicapped spaces.
- Study the use of mansards versus parapets on the two building elements and the appearance/function of overhangs and eaves in providing shade and rain protection.

Commissioner Barber made a motion to continue the project in order that the project return in response to the comments and direction made by the Commission.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farrell.

The motion passed 5-0



## **PROJECT DESIGN WORKSHOP:**

### **2. HAMILTON SQUARE, LLC (ED) P2013-040; DESIGN REVIEW APN 157-980-05; MAIN GATE AND “C” STREETS**

**Conduct a Design Review Workshop to discuss the site plan for a proposal to use the former gas station site at Main Gate and “C” Streets for residential use.**

Elizabeth Dunn, Carla Violet from Urban Planning Partners, adjunct staff to the City

Planner Dunn gave a brief overview of changes to the site plan from the last plan, namely: 31 units (from 35), 2-3 story buildings (2-stories on Main Gate and C Street), the addition of a parklet, more park space, main access at C Street and Main Gate, and on street parking removed from Main Gate. No elevations provided for this meeting. Planner Dunn also named the primary concerns of residents from the prior meeting and stated that this plan addressed the majority of these issues. As this is a workshop, staff, and the developer are looking for feedback from this site plan. No recommendation is requested at this meeting.

Commissioner MacLeamy asked for clarification on the height of the corner building. Staff confirmed it was 2 stories

Rob Davidson, representing Thompson Development, Inc., gave a brief presentation of the plans. He stated there were over 12 revisions. They addressed issues around hardscape and drainage that were mentioned at the last meeting. He emphasized the desire to keep tuck under parking and the park space was increased (from 4380 to 7500 sq ft). The proposed road to the north to the Novato Unified School District site was removed and driveways were reduced. He explained units faced Main Gate and “C” Street. Parking is in the rear, and a ring road has been provided for fire access and better noise buffer with angled buildings along the western property line (to deflect noise rather than reflect). Lastly, the current density was needed to make the project work financially.

Commissioner MacLeamy confirmed the school district owned property to the North and that Lanham Village is to the West. He wanted to know how tall the trees were next to the site? Mr. Davidson Rob was unsure.

Vice Chair Farrell asked if 2-stories would work with the floor plans. Mr. Davidson said he wanted the site plan to be approved before fine tuning the floor plans. But conceptually they would work. They would be market-rate units and the park space increased from 4380 to 7650 sq ft.

Commissioner MacLeamy inquired about what the Fire Dept said last time. Mr. Davidson stated they needed access on both sides for the ladder truck (required for 3 story buildings). Certain width required- 18 feet. This includes quest parking. While not required, this is a convenient place to add parking along the inner street. Parking is also not required on C Street, but convenient with the school nearby. Alley was 24 ft wide.

Commissioner MacLeamy remarked the space between the 2 buildings inside was tight. He was unsure if backing up would be possible. He began to sketch a ring road around the development with all buildings facing inside the square, (removing the 2 inside and placing 1 on the perimeter instead of another access point) keeping the road required by the Fire Dept, with no sidewalks.

All commissioners emphasized a variation in elevation was crucial.

Commissioner MacLeamy stated that 2 ½ stories could work even with the Spanish style architecture. Setbacks would be helpful so that only 2 stories could be seen from behind a wall wrapped around the development. It's critical to get the dimensions right in the next set of plans. Architecture is a game of inches. Call it Hamilton Park, not Hamilton Square. With a new site plan, the park could be expanded even greater. Could add 16 ft sidewalks.

Mr. Davidson asked how the parking would work. Commissioner MacLeamy responded that he'd rather have parking in the back and save the front for social interaction with neighbors. Could use "turf block" to reduce the amount of impervious surface. Would need to get Fire Dept. approval.

Mr. Davidson confirmed that one tenant would own all three stories of each unit. He was asked about the depth of the building and estimated 40 ft.

Commissioner MacLeamy suggested to make the depth a little longer and raised slightly to get a split level. Asked if there was any benefit to put a fill over the site to cap any possible contamination? He suggested a cool wall around the development (similar to other subdivisions) would be nice. A setback on the upper level could accommodate a patio that looks out onto the park space. Park space is essential and sells.

Mr. Davidson reminded the Commission that neighbors are worried about 3 stories and no view corridor into the development.

Commissioner MacLeamy offered flipping the design and having the opening on C Street instead of Main Gate. Important for the next set of plans to show sections with the varying elevations. Showing hand drawn sections is sufficient- don't need trees, just need dimensions. Keep the ring road only for the Fire Dept. Need sanctions on turning.

Commissioner Radovanovich asked about sustainability strategies in the development. Yes, for stormwater, and the developer is interested in including more.

Commissioner MacLeamy stated that the opening to the development needs to be reconsidered. There may be issues with traffic if the main access is on Main Gate. Makes more sense to open on C Street. All other subdivisions are walled- 20 ft then the back of the house. Varying 2-3 stories with pull backs are better and will mitigate concerns about height.

Mr. Davidson indicated that he worked on other development had setbacks with carriage houses. Marrying that concept with this development would be nice.

Commissioner MacLeamy reminded Mr. Davidson that a cross section of Main Gate is needed.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm .



# Design Review Commission Meeting

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

October 2, 2013

## MINUTES

THE CITY OF  
NOVATO  
CALIFORNIA

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Mayor  
Pat Eklund  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Eric Lucan  
Councilmembers  
Denise Athas  
Madeline Kellner  
Jeanne MacLeamy

City Manager  
Michael S. Frank

**Present:** Patrick MacLeamy, Chair  
Michael Barber, Vice Chair  
Joseph Farrell  
Beth Radovanovich

**Absent:** Tom Telfer

**Staff:** Elizabeth Dunn, Planning Manager  
Alan Lazure, Principal Planner  
Louise Patterson, Planner II

### **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:**

The meeting was called to order.

### **APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA:**

The final agenda was approved.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT: None**

### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

#### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 7, 2013 (PM,MB,JF,TT)**

The August 7, 2013 meeting minutes were continued.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 4, 2013 (PM,MB,BR,TT)**

The September 4, 2013 minutes were approved.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS: None**

**CONTINUED ITEMS:**

- 3. PUBLIC ART AT UMPQUA BANK (ED)  
P2013-027; DESIGN REVIEW  
APN 153-061-30; 999 GRANT AVENUE**

**Conduct a Design Review hearing on proposed art for one store front glass panel along Redwood Boulevard.**

Staff gave an update on the proposal to install art at 999 Grant. Umpqua Bank wants to pay the full in-lieu fee, and provide art along three panels along Redwood Boulevard. Additionally, they'd like to screen their internal, back of house, operations.

Liz Newhouse, and Tomami Marzan of Umpqua Bank provided additional technical information to the Design Review Commission. This would be a silver tone appliqué, and there is no space between the art and the glass panel. This is a permanent feature. The metal panels will be insulated, with lighting above the ATM and night depository, not from behind.

**COMMENTS FROM THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION**

This is an improvement over what was originally proposed. It represents the City of Novato. M/S Farrell/MacLeamy (passed 4-0-1) to approve the proposed art at Umpqua Bank.

**NEW ITEMS:**

- 4. SHELL GAS STATION REMODEL (LP)  
P2013-019; DESIGN REVIEW/USE PERMIT  
APN 152-102-04; 1390 S. NOVATO BLVD.**

**Conduct a public hearing to consider the site plan, building architecture, colors and materials and landscape plan for a remodeled Shell gas station, convenience store and car wash. It has been determined that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15302, Replacement or Reconstruction.**

Applicant attendees – Muthana Ibrahim, Architect

Planner Patterson gave a staff presentation stating that the project was reviewed at a design review workshop on August 7, 2013 and is returning for DRC review and approval.

Applicants presented the project site plan, landscape plan, lighting plan, building architecture and colors and materials.

There were no public comments.

The DRC liked the following elements of the project:

- ⇒ Site plan and circulation
- ⇒ Lighting plan
- ⇒ Landscape plan

- ⇒ Mansard roof
- ⇒ Colors and materials with the exception of the orange gradient ACH panel which was thought to be in conflict with the red of the Shell Logo color

The DRC continued the project with the following direction:

- Pedestrian access from the fuel pumps to the convenience store needs to be clear, transaction door needs to be located so as not to block pedestrian access
- Tower elements should be eliminated
- The “LOOP” area needs to eliminate the illumination of the white internally illuminated façade, remove the LED mounted screen and stainless steel metal frame
- The color on the orange gradient ACH panels should be minimized or eliminated
- Prepare a colored elevation drawing of the building

### **PROJECT DESIGN WORKSHOP:**

#### **5. HAMILTON SQUARE, LLC (ED) P2013-040; DESIGN REVIEW APN 157-980-05; MAIN GATE AND “C” STREETS**

**Conduct a Design Review Workshop to discuss the site plan for a proposal to use the former gas station at Main Gate and “C” Streets for residential use.**

Melinda Hue, contract planner, gave a presentation on the proposal.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Kim Stafford has concerns about the additional homes, and the traffic this use brings. The site is adjacent to Hamilton School which already has a lot of traffic. Additionally, there is a concern that noise will bounce off these townhomes and project into Lanham Village, the property to the west of Main Gate and “C” Streets. There are concerns about what drainage impacts this proposal might create to residents at Lanham Village, as well as the remediation of toxic substances that remain at the Main Gate site.

Another resident indicated that three stories is too tall and doesn’t fit with the neighborhood character. Main Gate is a very pedestrian street, and there’s no parking now along Main Gate. A third resident agreed about the proposed buildings being too tall, as well as concerns about toxic substances at the site.

**PRESENTATION BY JOHN MIKI, ARCHITECT FOR THOMPSON DEVELOPMENT, INC,  
THE PROJECT SPONSOR**

The height of the buildings at the eave is 30 feet; to the ridge is 36 feet. The project has been designed with a fire access break, and is proposing right in, right out along Main Gate.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION**

Check about the amount of hardscape and if this will be allowed with the new NPDES regulations. The park is very small. Break up the two and three story buildings, especially at Main Gate and “C”. It doesn’t look like there’s a lot of room between buildings at this location.

Commissioner MacLeamy likes the garages in the rear. Suggests that a ring road be the basis for the site plan, and the buildings can look onto a larger green area. The architecture of the rear of the buildings would have to be significant as the rear of the buildings would be visible from Main Gate and “C” Streets. The elevations and edges are critical.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**6. CITY COUNCIL/EXECUTIVE STAFF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:  
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES (BCC’S) (AL)**

Planner Lazure outlined the item before the Commission; that Council has requested that each BCC review recommendations, developed by a City Council subcommittee, designed to help improve the effectiveness of the BCCs. The Design Review Commission members had the following comments related to the subcommittee’s three issue areas:

**Recruitment, Assessment, Appointment and Retention of Members**

- Ensure that new candidates for the Commission have the proper qualifications for the job, i.e. educated as an architect, landscape architect, etc.

**Training/Orientation of Appointees**

- Make sure that projects to be brought before the Commission are “ready” for review. A project proposal should be well thought out from the general to the specific. The site plan should be the first item of discussion.
- Provide a refresher training course by using the “Function of the DRC/Reviewing Projects” video that was made by staff and commissioner MacLeamy, and/or other similar media.
- What do other cities do for the training of their commissioners?

**Fostering Interaction between Council and BBC Members**

- Have an annual assessment of approved projects to see what was accomplished or learned from those project reviews.
- Have members of the City Council and Planning Commission occasionally attend a DRC meeting to see what the process entails and to provide continuity and the sharing of an understanding of the Commissions “real time” function.
- Provide a DRC member liaison on a rotating basis to attend a Planning Commission or Council where items need a higher level of review or in the case of an appeal to explain the DRC’s basis or rationale for the determination they made on an application. The liaison would represent all views expressed by the Commission in their final determination of the matter.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Adjourned by the Chair at 10:15 p.m.



HAMILTON ARMY AIRFIELD REUSE PLAN

# REUSE PLAN

October 1995  
Revised November 1996



LIFE AREA TO SUSTAIN

## **8.2 GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **8.2.1 GOALS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO MULTIPLE PLANNING AREAS**

*Issue:* The need for a cohesive design plan to ensure that the aesthetic quality of Hamilton is retained.

*8.2.1.1 Goal:* Beauty and order throughout Hamilton.

**Policies:**

8.2.1.1.1 Develop a Design Plan for the Reuse Plan area. This Plan should address:

- Site planning and design,
- Architectural design guidelines,
- Landscape programs,
- Streetscape programs, and
- Design guidelines appropriate for each City district.

8.2.1.1.2 Ensure that on the Mainside portion of Hamilton, the Spanish Eclectic architecture shall be retained (with the possible exception of the Capehart Housing area).

**8.2.1.2 Goal:** A cohesively designed landscape plan for the Reuse Plan area.

**Policies:**

8.2.1.2.1 Review landscape plans for new development to ensure that landscaping relates well to the scale of structures and land use(s) it serves. To this end:

- Require new development to incorporate street tree planting mature enough to shade and beautify the area.
- Require new development processed as a Planned Unit Development to ensure permanent maintenance of landscaped areas through maintenance agreements, "Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions," or similar contracts guaranteeing perennial maintenance.

8.2.1.2.2 Require landscaping to screen, buffer and unify new and existing development.

- Require landscaping to provide visual continuity along a street, even where the buildings are in different zones or land use classifications.
- When conflicting land uses adjoin, require a dense landscape screen to mitigate the friction between land uses.

**8.2.1.3 Goal:** Interesting and attractive streetscapes throughout the Reuse Plan area.

**Policies:**

8.2.1.3.1 Develop a street tree planting and replacement program. Require street trees in new developments.

- 8.2.1.3.2 Maintain and promote a rhythmic and ceremonial streetscape along Palm Drive and South Oakwood Drive. Encourage the same along Main Gate Road and other primary roadways through Hamilton.
- 8.2.1.3.3 Preserve, when consistent with public safety, mature tree stands along Hamilton's streets.
- 8.2.1.3.4 Encourage a variation of building and parking setbacks along the streetscape to create visual interest, avoid monotony and enhance the identify of individual areas.
- 8.2.1.3.5 Require that all sides of a building visible from the street, or a different, adjacent land use, display fully finished architectural detail, including finished doors, windows and exterior surfaces identical to, or which complement, the front of the building.
- 8.2.1.3.6 Require landscaping treatment on any part of a building site which is visible from the street or a different, adjacent land use.
- 8.2.1.3.7 Consider contrasting paving for pedestrian crosswalks in order to increase pedestrian safety while adding visual interest to the streetscape.

**8.2.1.4 Goal:** Preservation of all Hamilton neighborhoods as attractive residential environments.

***Policies:***

- 8.2.1.4.1 Encourage and support neighborhood property owner associations which work to improve their communities.
- 8.2.1.4.2 Enhance neighborhood identity with landscaped, fenced or walled boundaries and distinctive neighborhood entrance treatments.

**8.2.1.5 Goal:** Non-residential properties which enhance the image of Hamilton.

***Policies:***

- 8.2.1.5.1 Review site plans for commercial and non-residential projects. To this end:
  - Discourage rectangular buildings parallel to street frontage, including:
    - Require the on-site building layout to be staggered, increasing visual interest and identity.

- Require structural positioning which provides visibility for the whole site, promoting visual interest and security.
  - Adjust setback distances according to the height of the structure(s) on the site.
- 8.2.1.5.2 Require mature landscaping be used to define and emphasize entrances, including those areas lying between a building and its parking lot.
- 8.2.1.5.3 Require on-site outdoor storage areas to be fully screened from view with a combination of walls and landscaping.
- 8.2.1.5.4 Encourage non-residential architecture which establishes identity, captures interest and is appropriately scaled to its environs. To this end:
- Encourage a strong geometry of buildings to increase visual interest.
  - Ensure the architectural scale relates to the mass of the building(s) to the proposed use.
  - Encourage architecture which disaggregates massive buildings into smaller parts, responsive to human scale.
  - Encourage variations in roofline and parapet treatments to add design interest.
  - Encourage the incorporation of varied planes and textures.
  - Encourage “shadow play” through the use of deeply recessed or projected building features, including: pop-out window masses, built-up relief details, cornices, windows, trim and entrances.
  - Encourage the use of natural, rather than manufactured building finishes and materials.
- 8.2.1.5.5 Require appropriate and attractive roof treatments, and require concealment of all roof-top mechanical equipment.
- 8.2.1.5.6 Enhance the identity and attractiveness of commercial centers.
- 8.2.1.5.7 Encourage commercial development to incorporate theme elements in the Spanish Eclectic tradition to promote Hamilton’s historical significance and public use of the center. Theme elements can include:

- Outdoor cafes,
- Patios and plazas,
- Kiosks,
- Flag courts,
- Fountains,
- Gardens,
- Outdoor markets,
- Trellises and arbors,
- Colonnades and arcades,
- Bell towers,
- Theme towers,
- Galleries,
- Clerestories, and
- Clock standards.

8.2.1.5.8 Encourage commercial projects to include internal features which are designed to draw pedestrians from building to building, or patio to courtyard.

8.2.1.5.9 Encourage the use of commercial site landscaping techniques which increase the pedestrian's pleasure in the immediate environment. To this end:

- Vary the texture of paving at all project entries, at pedestrian crossings, or at gathering areas in order to provide accent and break the monotony of concrete walkways.
- Shade all waiting areas from the sun, including bus stops and turn-outs.

8.2.1.5.10 Encourage bus shelters and bicycle racks to be incorporated in all commercial projects, as appropriate.

8.2.1.5.11 Ensure that all new and remodeled public buildings, service areas, storage facilities, and gathering places meet the design standards required of private development. To this end:

- Ensure that all new and remodeled public buildings are aesthetically attractive.
- Screen city service, maintenance and storage areas from public view with fencing and landscaping to improve the streetscapes in which they are located.

**8.2.1.6 Goal:** Preservation and enhancement of those structures and/or landmarks which are representative of historic Hamilton.

**Policies:**

8.2.1.6.1 Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic structures, preserving the harmony and integrity of the structures and their neighborhoods. To this end:

- Renovate building facades to retain, as closely as possible, their historic character.
- Protect and enhance design features associated with historic Hamilton including street trees, gardens, mature trees on existing lots, and street furniture.
- Renovate historic structures with materials and designs compatible with Hamilton's architectural heritage.
- Incorporate historically and architecturally significant buildings into new projects, encouraging developers to renovate or restore those buildings which are considered candidates for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

8.2.1.6.2 When preservation of a significant site is not practical, ensure that the adverse impacts of the proposed project are mitigated in accordance with NEPA and CEQA, as well as with other City policies and procedures, including the following (or as required by the City):

- A site investigation under the supervision of a person qualified in his/her respective field, approved by the City, and certified by the County. Whenever possible, students and other residents, as well as organizations, should be encouraged to assist in the investigation.
- A report describing the site, its significance, and recovered data, and the recovered data, photographs and notes, should be deposited in an institution where they are available to the public, and the academic and scientific community. Provision should be made for the return of these materials at such time as the appropriate facilities for their public display, study, or use are available.
- In the case of archeological data recovery excavations, the cost should be the responsibility of the project applicant.

**Issue:** Frequently the first impression of any development is from the parking lot. Thus, it is extremely important to locate, configure and landscape parking areas to project the desired image.

**8.2.1.7 Goal:** Parking facilities with design amenities.**Policies:**

- 8.2.1.7.1 Encourage off-street parking as the predominant method of parking.
- 8.2.1.7.2 Parking requirements should be adequate to meet the needs of specific uses, but they should be minimized to reduce the size of the paved parking area. Small parking lots are usually preferable to large lots.
- 8.2.1.7.3 Locate parking on the site to de-emphasize the visual impact. Preferable locations of parking lots is to the rear and side of parcels, except for retail situations, where it is recognized that visibility of available parking is desirable. Avoid parking directly against buildings to allow adequate space for walks and landscape screening.
- 8.2.1.7.4 Separate parking from the street with low berms and a low solid barrier such as a hedge or wall, to soften the visual effect of car grillwork and paving. Consider perimeter planting of trees and shrubs to screen and control the adverse visual impact of parking lots.
- 8.2.1.7.5 Parking and driveway areas should be landscaped with trees and shrubs. Landscaped beds protected by curbs should be provided at the end of each row of parking. Trees should be used in islands to relieve visual monotony, to provide shade, and to reduce glare.
- 8.2.1.7.6 Encourage the continuous connection of planters, rather than isolated tree wells, in the design of new parking areas.
- 8.2.1.7.7 Encourage parking lot design which breaks up parking areas with landscaped belts.
- 8.2.1.7.8 Encourage the inclusion of pedestrian amenities in parking areas including:
- Pedestrian walkways clearly marked with striping or textured paving.
  - Bus waiting areas, benches, public telephones and other features for the convenience and safety of parking area visitors.
- 8.2.1.7.9 Provide separate access for service trucks.

8.2.1.7.10 All garbage can and dumpster container areas shall be screened on at least three sides with an opaque fence or wall of sufficient height to block views of the containers. In addition to the enclosure screening, plant material and earth berms shall be used for general screening of the trash collection areas from view of main roads, sidewalks, and building entrances. Garbage can and dumpster container areas should be directly accessible by paved parking lot or service roads.

**Issue:** Site furnishings are elements found in the exterior environment of HAAF. These elements include benches, trash receptacles, planters, tree grates, paving, flagpoles, lighting, drinking fountains, and picnic tables. The appearance of HAAF can be enriched through the development of a family of elements that are related to each other by compatibility of material, color, form and design detail.

**8.2.1.8 Goal:** Attractive street furniture, appropriate to each area of Hamilton.

**Policies:**

8.2.1.8.1 On the Mainside of HAAF, site furnishings should support the Spanish-motif theme.

8.2.1.8.2 Locate seating in response to the user's need for resting, waiting, socializing, or lunchtime activities. Benches should be placed adjacent to walkways, entryways, ramps, and stair areas, and at bus stops. Locate benches where they will receive sunlight.

8.2.1.8.3 Drinking fountains shall be provided along walkways and hard-surfaced paved areas, eating areas, and outside recreation areas. Drinking fountains shall be provided for the handicapped.

8.2.1.8.4 Locate telephone booths in highly visible locations for convenience and security from vandalism. Place all service line wiring underground. Provide lighting for nighttime use.

8.2.1.8.5 Trash receptacles shall be highly visible and immediately available for effective litter control. Locate receptacles conveniently and strategically along sidewalks, near major walkway intersections, building entrances, benches, vending machine areas, and recreation and picnic areas.

8.2.1.8.6 Use bollards to control traffic and to separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian traffic.

8.2.1.8.7 Memorial and commemorative plaques may be designed as an integral part of a building or landscape feature. They should be



compatible with the architectural character of their settings in terms of their scale, materials and details.

- 8.2.1.8.8 Provide planters and tree grates where landscaped areas are not available. They shall be located in plazas, patios, building entrances, and other areas where in-place landscaping areas are not available.
- 8.2.1.8.9 Locate kiosks in areas of high pedestrian use and visitor traffic areas.
- 8.2.1.8.10 Use bicycle racks where warranted by demand. They should be located near building entrances where they are open to visual surveillance, but do not impede traffic flow. Locate bicycle racks at major destination points for commuter and recreational bicyclists: at office buildings, the gymnasium, the theater, and other commercial areas.
- 8.2.1.8.11 Provide trash receptacles in convenient locations.

**Issue:** Exterior lighting performs a number of functions related to nighttime safety, security, pathfinding, and illumination of landmarks or special features. It should be designed as a coordinated system that is functional, attractive, efficient and easy to maintain.

At HAAF, there is a wide variety of lighting types and designs, resulting in inconsistency in the lighting fixtures or spacing. Many roadway fixtures are located on buildings; therefore, many streets are poorly lit or not lit at all. The general effect is of a roadway lighting system that contributes to visual clutter while performing inadequately in some areas.

**8.2.1.9 Goal:** Aesthetically pleasing, functionally adequate outdoor lighting.

**Policies:**

- 8.2.1.9.1 Develop a standardized lighting system along HAAF's primary roadways.
- 8.2.1.9.2 Require uniformity in street lighting standards within each neighborhood, commercial area and public space. Lighting designs that complement the setting, age, character, building, and landscape should be used.
- 8.2.1.9.3 Minimize outdoor lighting intrusion into residential neighborhoods.
- 8.2.1.9.4 Lights should not blink, flash or change intensity.

- 8.2.1.9.5 Encourage energy efficient outdoor lighting in new development and, when feasible, as a replacement for existing, high energy outdoor lighting.
- 8.2.1.9.6 Provide adequate lighting for safety and security.
- 8.2.1.9.7 Architectural landmarks, entry areas, monuments, and similar features shall be lighted with low-level spotlights, floodlights or wall lights. The light source should not be visible.

**Issue:** One method to improve HAAF visual environment is to provide screening of unsightly views (i.e., parking lots, storage areas, trash dumpsters, electrical substations, mechanical equipment, etc.). Screening for housing privacy is also an issue. Existing fences used for screening are not standardized in appearance.

**8.2.1.10 Goal:** Attractive and functional walls and fences throughout Hamilton.

**Policies:**

- 8.2.1.10.1 Encourage walls and fences which protect security without detracting from the appearance of streets, alleys and other public ways and spaces.
- 8.2.1.10.2 Discourage the use of chain link fencing and barbed wire. When they are necessary, require their screening with vines, shrubs and other appropriate landscaping.
- 8.2.1.10.3 Encourage the use of landscaping, vines and other decorative materials to improve the appearance of walled properties in residential areas.
- 8.2.1.10.4 Trash enclosures and other walls/fences which are incidental to the primary use within a Planning Area should be of a compatible architectural design to the primary buildings and structures.
- 8.2.1.10.5 Whenever possible, encourage electrical vaults to be placed underground. Where electrical vaults must be above ground, require these installations to be aesthetically screened.

**Issue:** In general, the existing signing system at HAAF detracts from the overall image of the base exterior by cluttering and confusing the street scene. There is little consistency of sign design, style, color, typeface, location, etc. Signs are not always in harmony with their architectural or landscape settings. Signs are small and often difficult to read; an example is the base directory sign. There are conditions where excessive information is being conveyed, resulting in confusion and potential traffic hazards.

**8.2.1.11 Goal:** Attractive and appropriate signage throughout Hamilton.

**Policies:**

- 8.2.1.11.1 Establish a sign program that is coordinated and consistent, while offering flexibility.
- 8.2.1.11.2 Establish the boundaries of Hamilton by marking major entries with uniform signs, landscaping and illumination.
- 8.2.1.11.3 Encourage the use of uniformly designed entry monuments to identify both residential and non-residential areas.
- 8.2.1.11.4 Require and enforce master sign programs to be developed and maintained in commercial and other non-residential areas.
- 8.2.1.11.5 Minimize the number of signs.
- 8.2.1.11.6 Use standard typography on all signs for effective communication.
- 8.2.1.11.7 Entry signs shall be integrated with the environment of the entrance.
- 8.2.1.11.8 Signs attached to buildings shall be composed with existing architectural features.
- 8.2.1.11.9 Avoid freestanding signs where possible, and consider motorist and pedestrian safety in sign location.

**8.2.2 GOALS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO SPECIFIC PLANNING AREAS**

**Planning Area 1: Rafael Village**

**Issue:** Rafael Village is the most visible Planning Area of HAAF and should become an aesthetically appealing asset to Novato.

**8.2.2.1 Goal:** Rafael Village as an attractive neighborhood.

**Policies:**

- 8.2.2.1.1 Ensure that all new residential development and renovation is compatible with the architectural scale, massing and landscaping of adjoining neighborhoods. To this end:
  - Landscape plans for new residential development shall complement neighboring lots, buffer adjoining land uses, and ameliorate variations in size, setbacks or architectural character of nearby buildings.

- New development shall relate structural size and bulk, placement of doors and windows, and setbacks, colors and materials to be compatible with the existing neighborhood.
- Prohibit scale extremes in development, so that multi-story buildings are never allowed adjacent to single-family, low rise residences without adequate setbacks.

8.2.2.1.2 Encourage multi-family residential development which incorporates innovative design appropriate to its site and environs. To this end, encourage multi-family residential site planning which provides residents with shared open space, semi-private common areas and recreational facilities.

8.2.2.1.3 Ensure that new residential development does not front along Ignacio Boulevard (i.e., driveway access).

8.2.2.1.4 Ensure that residential development enhances the streetscape within its neighborhood. To this end:

- Walls protecting residential development shall be landscaped with vines, and/or with trees and shrubs in the setback area.
- Encourage curvilinear wall alignments and meandering sidewalks along the peripheries of residential development.
- Require new residential development to incorporate shade trees on new streets.

8.2.2.1.5 Ensure that residential development avoids architectural monotony. To this end:

- Avoid boxy structures.
- Encourage varied wall and roof lines.
- Relate setback distances to the height of the proposed building in multi-family residential development.

8.2.2.1.6 Ensure that residential development is compatible with its environment. To this end:

- Encourage the incorporation of outdoor features compatible with Northern California's climate including colonnades, patios, automobile courts and the like.
- Encourage architecture consistent with Northern California traditions, including modern interpretations

of California Bungalow, shingle, Monterey, California Ranch, Mission and Spanish Colonial.

- Encourage the use of natural materials, including river rock, brick, wood timbers, glazed and unglazed tile.

- 8.2.2.1.7 Use the environmental review process to ensure that the environmental and aesthetic qualities of residential projects meet Novato standards and the policies identified in this document.
- 8.2.2.1.8 If the mature trees in the Planning Area are determined to be healthy, the master developer shall consider retaining as much of the streetscape as possible.
- 8.2.2.1.9 Underground overhead utility lines as required by the City.
- 8.2.2.1.10 At subsequent levels of planning, a detailed design program shall be established to address: architecture, landscape/streetscape, street furniture, lighting, and like design components. The design program shall be compatible with the adjacent neighborhoods. (It should be noted that this is one of two Planning Areas in which Spanish Eclectic architecture is not specifically being recommended.)

**Planning Area 2: Capehart Housing**

**Issue:** The existing structures in Capehart Housing are unattractive, with carports used for storage, creating a cluttered feeling.

**8.2.2.2 Goal:** Capehart Housing as an attractive neighborhood.

**Policies:**

- 8.2.2.2.1 At subsequent levels of planning, a detailed architectural improvement program shall be prepared to address: facade treatments, carport/garage treatments, street furniture and like design features. The architectural improvement program should identify architectural treatments with other design features which are compatible with the architectural style(s). The Spanish Eclectic architectural style is not required in this Planning Area.
- 8.2.2.2.2 If feasible, underground utility lines.
- 8.2.2.2.3 Preserve and maintain the existing mature streetscape.
- 8.2.2.2.4 Preserve and maintain the open space areas.

**Planning Area 4: Commissary Triangle**

Refer to issues, goals and policies in Section 8.2.1 which addresses non-residential uses, Spanish-style architecture, compatibility of land uses, parking, landscaping, and other related design issues.

**Planning Area 5: Exchange Triangle**

Refer to issues, goals and policies in Section 8.2.1 which addresses non-residential uses, Spanish-style architecture, compatibility of land uses, parking, landscaping, and other related design issues.

**Planning Area 6: Town Center**

*Issue:* The Town Center is the primary focal point at Hamilton with historic buildings which are architecturally significant.

*8.2.2.4 Goal:* Preservation and enhancement of the Town Center.

*Policies:*

8.2.2.4.1 Any new construction shall be a Spanish architectural style consistent with the existing structures in the area.

8.2.2.4.2 The existing landscaped median shall be extended to create the one acre park/plaza. The park shall be landscaped with similar or complimentary landscape materials as the median is at present. Appropriate street furniture shall be provided (i.e., sitting areas, fountains, lighting, etc.).

Refer to issues, goals and policies in Section 8.2.1 which addresses non-residential uses, Spanish-style architecture, compatibility of land uses, parking, landscaping, and other related design issues.

**Planning Area 7: Hospital Hill**

*Issue:* The removal of all the structures on Hospital Hill offers unique design opportunities.

*8.2.2.5 Goal:* An aesthetically appealing development atop Hospital Hill.

*Policies:*

8.2.2.5.1 Preserve and maintain the wooded hillsides to the extent feasible.

8.2.2.5.2 Preserve and enhance the landscaped island in front of the existing Hospital, if feasible.

**Planning Area 8: Bowling Alley**

Refer to issues, goals and policies in Section 8.2.1 which address non-residential uses, compatibility of land uses, Spanish-style architecture, parking, landscaping, and other related design issues.

**Planning Area 9: Officers' Club**

Refer to issues, goals and policies in Section 8.2.1 which address non-residential uses, compatibility of land uses, Spanish-style architecture, parking, landscaping, and other related design issues.

**Planning Area 10: Ballfields**

Refer to issues, goals and policies in Section 8.2.1 which refer to parking, lighting, and street furniture.

**Runway**

Conversion of the runway to wetlands will result in a natural open space with potentially high visual quality. As with most open space areas, appropriate maintenance will prove critical in retaining high visual quality. Please refer to the EIS prepared for the runway by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

**NHP Master Plan**

The approved NHP Master Plan and Design Guidelines contain extensive design guidelines to maintain and create high visual quality in the NHP Master Plan area. The reader is referred to these documents for additional information.



## Hamilton Square

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Hamilton Square LLC  
Novato, California

January 2014: Conceptual Plans



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Townhouses: Unit Types Summary				
Unit Type	No. of Bedrooms	No. of Stories	Sq. Footage	No. of Units
Plan A	3	2	1,584	5
Plan B	2	3	1,167	16
Plan C	3	3	1,624	10
<b>Totals</b>				<b>31</b>
Parking Summary				
Type	No. of Spaces			
On-Site				
Off-street Enclosed	62			
Off-street Open	-			
On-Street New Streets	21			
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>83 (2.7 per Unit)</b>			
Off-site				
On-street C Street	6			
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>6</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>			
Park Spaces				
Name	Sq. Footage			
Hamilton Square	13,500			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13,500</b>			

**Illustrative Site Plan**

Feet 10 20 30 40



## Hamilton Square

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Novato, California

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January 2014: 2



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**Two-Story Townhouse: Front Elevation Initial Concept**

Feet 4 8 12 16



**Three-Story Townhouse: Front Elevation Initial Concept**

Feet 4 8 12 16

## Conceptual Elevations

Hamilton Square LLC  
Novato, California

Conceptual Design  
Scale: As Noted  
January 2014: 3

