

**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.