

ATTACHMENT G
ARB FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL
640 Waverley
24PLN-00064

The design and architecture of the proposed improvements, as conditioned, complies with the Findings for Architectural Review as required in Chapter 18.76 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC).

Finding #1: The design is consistent with applicable provisions of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, coordinated area plans (including compatibility requirements), and any relevant design guides.

The project is consistent with Finding #1 because:

The proposed project complies with the zoning code. The project is subject to the context-based design criteria (as outlined under finding #2). The project is not located within the boundaries of a coordinated area plan area. The proposed project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, below is an analysis of the applicable goals and policies:

<i>Comp Plan Goals and Policies</i>	<i>How project adheres or does not adhere to Comp Plan</i>
<i>The Comprehensive Plan land use designation for the site is Community Commercial</i>	The Community Commercial land use designation allows for mixed-use projects and states that “non-residential FARs range from 0.35 to 2.0.” The proposed mixed-use project includes ground floor office and multi-family residential uses. The floor area of the commercial use is 0.45:1. Therefore, the project is consistent with this land use designation. Residential uses, especially as part of a mixed-use development, are encouraged in proximity to major transit stops. The project is located within 0.5 miles of the Palo Alto Caltrain Station and is walking distance to the University Avenue downtown shopping areas.
<i>Land Use and Community Design</i>	
Policy L-1.2: Limit future urban development to currently developed lands within the urban service area. The boundary of the urban service area is otherwise known as the urban	The project is located on currently development lands within the urban service area.

<p>growth boundary. Retain undeveloped land west of Foothill Expressway and Junipero Serra as open space, with allowances made for very low-intensity development consistent with the open space character of the area. Retain undeveloped land northeast of Highway 101 as open space.</p>	
<p>Policy L-1.3: Infill development in the urban service area should be compatible with its surroundings and the overall scale and character of the City to ensure a compact, efficient development pattern.</p>	<p>The project is an urban infill development proposal in the urban service area of the City.</p>
<p>Policy L-1.5: Regulate land uses in Palo Alto according to the land use definitions in this Element and Map L-6.</p>	<p>The project is consistent with the land use definitions in this element and Map L-6, which identify this site as Community Commercial.</p>
<p>Policy L-1.6: Encourage land uses that address the needs of the community and manage change and development to benefit the community.</p>	<p>The project replaces ground floor office space with pedestrian oriented ground floor office use and four net new residential units. The project seeks to address the housing crisis that the City Council has identified as a top priority.</p>
<p>Policy L-1.11: Hold new development to the highest development standards in order to maintain Palo Alto’s livability and achieve the highest quality development with the least impacts</p>	<p>The project utilizes high-quality material including smooth and textured concrete, tongue and groove wood, and metal and the design is high quality, meeting the ARB findings for approval.</p>
<p>Policy L-2.5: Support the creation of affordable housing units for middle to lower income level earners, such as City and school district employees, as feasible.</p>	<p>Although the project provides market rate units on site, it also will be required to pay in-lieu fees for 0.6 unit, which would be used toward below market rate units.</p>
<p>Policy L-2.8: When considering infill redevelopment, work to minimize displacement of existing residents.</p>	<p>The project replaces existing office with a new office space. No residents would be displaced as a result of this project.</p>
<p>Policy L-2.11: Encourage new development and redevelopment to incorporate greenery and natural features such as green rooftops, pocket parks, plazas and rain gardens.</p>	<p>The project includes ground floor common areas and private balconies that include planting areas in order to incorporate greenery into the design.</p>
<p>Policy L-3.1: Ensure that new or remodeled structures are compatible with the neighborhood and adjacent structures.</p>	<p>The development is generally consistent with the height of structures in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The project has</p>

<p>Policy L-6.1: Promote high-quality design and site planning that is compatible with surrounding development and public spaces.</p>	<p>been appropriately designed to ensure that the project would not impact the historic integrity of the neighboring structure.</p>
<p>Policy L-3.4: Ensure that new multi-family buildings, entries and outdoor spaces are designed and arranged so that each development has a clear relationship to a public street.</p>	<p>The proposed residential uses above are designed to include balconies that provide eyes on the street, consistent with this policy.</p>
<p>Policy L-6.2: Use the Zoning Ordinance, design review process, design guidelines and coordinated area plans to ensure high quality residential and commercial design and architectural compatibility.</p>	<p>The project is consistent with the City’s Zoning Ordinance and meets the City’s design guidelines and the ARB findings for approval.</p>
<p>Policy L-6.7: Where possible, avoid abrupt changes in scale and density between residential and non-residential areas and between residential areas of different densities. To promote compatibility and gradual transitions between land uses, place zoning district boundaries at mid-block locations rather than along streets wherever possible.</p>	<p>The project includes a four-story development within the commercial downtown district where surrounding development generally ranges from two to four stories. The project complies with the setback and daylight plane requirements that is required for a development on this site.</p>
<p>Policy L-6.8: Support existing regulations that preserve exposure to natural light for single-family residences.</p>	<p>The project is designed to provide deference to the adjacent single-family residential use, shifting massing toward the taller building to the north side of the site, consistent with this policy.</p>
<p>Policy L-9.2: Encourage development that creatively integrates parking into the project, including by locating it behind buildings or underground wherever possible, or by providing for shared use of parking areas. Encourage other alternatives to surface parking lots that minimize the amount of land devoted to parking while still maintaining safe streets, street trees, a vibrant local economy and sufficient parking to meet demand.</p>	<p>The project creatively integrates parking into the design through use of a lift system to a below-grade parking garage where the size of the site would otherwise provide limitations to constructing a ramp while maintaining the feasibility/layout of the underground parking.</p>
<p>Policy L-9.3: Treat residential streets as both public ways and neighborhood amenities. Provide and maintain continuous sidewalks, healthy street trees, benches and other amenities that promote walking and “active”</p>	<p>The project improves the street right-of-way through improved planting along the project frontage and clear separation of the public sidewalk from the private property.</p>

transportation.	
<p>Policy T-1.17: Require new office, commercial and multi-family residential developments to provide improvements that improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity as called for in the <i>2012 Palo Alto Bicycle + Pedestrian Transportation Plan</i>.</p> <p>Policy T-1.19: Provide facilities that encourage and support bicycling and walking.</p>	The project provides short term and long-term bicycle parking on site for both the residential and commercial use and improves the pedestrian experience along the sidewalk through improved landscaping and pedestrian oriented design.
<p>Policy T-5.1: All new development projects should manage parking demand generated by the project, without the use of on-street parking, consistent with the established parking regulations. As demonstrated parking demand decreases over time, parking requirements for new construction should decrease.</p>	The project provides parking on site in a below grade parking garage, consistency with this policy. In accordance with State law, the project is not required to provide any parking, but chooses to provide parking for the proposed use.
<p>Policy N-2.10: Preserve and protect Regulated Trees, such as native oaks and other significant trees, on public and private property, including landscape trees approved as part of a development review process and consider strategies for expanding tree protection in Palo Alto.</p>	There are few trees on site, and none of which are of high quality. Trees removed will be replaced pursuant to City requirements to ensure no net loss of canopy, as required by code.
<p>Program H2.1.2: Allow increased residential densities and mixed-use development only where adequate urban services and amenities, including roadway capacity, are available.</p>	The project is located within an urban area in the commercial downtown area, within close proximity to high-quality transit.
<p>Goal H-2: Support the construction of housing near schools, transit, parks, shopping, employment and cultural institutions</p>	The project replaces the existing commercial uses while adding housing in a transit rich environment near jobs and other retail and retail-like uses.

The project has also been reviewed for conformance with the development standards in the zoning code and found to be in compliance with the intent and regulations contained therein. A comprehensive review of the project to applicable development standards is included in the administrative record (See Attachment D for a complete zoning consistency analysis).

Finding #2: The project has a unified and coherent design, that:

- a. **creates an internal sense of order and desirable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community,**

- b. preserves, respects and integrates existing natural features that contribute positively to the site and the historic character including historic resources of the area when relevant,**
- c. is consistent with the context-based design criteria of the applicable zone district,**
- d. provides harmonious transitions in scale, mass and character to adjacent land uses and land use designations,**
- e. enhances living conditions on the site (if it includes residential uses) and in adjacent residential areas.**

The project is consistent with Finding #2 because:

The area is comprised of a mix of single-family residential, mixed-use, and commercial development along Waverley Street and within the immediate vicinity. The project proposes to construct a building that is similar in height to several other buildings within the vicinity and adjacent to the site, but that is taller than the single-family residence to the south of the property. However, the project is designed to give deference to the single-family residential building with respect to massing and through material choices, which provide a strong base (concrete) and lighter top (using glass and wood materials). The existing structures are not historic and an analysis of the project's impacts on the neighboring property concludes that the project would not impact the historic integrity of the neighboring historic residence. The project provides new tree plantings along the street and along the frontage and enhances the permeable, planted open space area on the site. The project provides new, high quality residential uses on site in an area close to transit, consistent with goals and policies set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

Pursuant to PAMC Section 18.16.090, the following context-based design considerations and findings are applicable to this project. These context-based design criteria are intended to indicate relationships between the site's development to adjacent street types, surrounding land uses, and on-site or nearby natural features, such as creeks or trees. Effective transitions to these adjacent uses and features are strongly reinforced by Comprehensive Plan policies. The purpose is to encourage residential development in the commercial districts to be responsible to its context and compatible with adjacent development.

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment

The design of new projects shall promote pedestrian walkability, a bicycle-friendly environment, and connectivity through design elements

This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project provides ground floor office use with an attractive landscaping design along the frontage and within the public right-of-way. The project provides bike racks near the building entrances for short term use to support the pedestrian and bicycle environment as well as at the ground level for officer users and in the parking garage for residents. Upper floor residential uses provide evidence of habitation that reinforce the frontage. Street trees and other landscape elements contribute to the streetscape environment.

2. Street Building Facades

Street facades shall be designed to provide a strong relationship with the sidewalk and the street (s), to create an environment that supports and encourages pedestrian activity through design elements

This finding can be made in the affirmative as the project is designed to allow views into the interior on the ground floor and provides glimpses into the upper levels to show evidence of habitation while maintaining privacy for residents. The façade is set back 5 feet to allow for landscaping, but the massing generally reinforces the street along the setback while giving deference to the historic property on the south side. The ground floor entrance is recessed but oriented toward the street.

3. Massing and Setbacks

Buildings shall be designed to minimize massing and conform to proper setbacks

This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project provides a five-foot setback to allow space for landscaping but reinforces the street, with massing focused toward the taller building on the north side and giving deference to the historic property on the south side. The design use materials or otherwise incorporates appropriate articulation that helps break-up the mass of the building.

4. Low Density Residential Transitions

Where new projects are built abutting existing lower-scale residential development, care shall be taken to respect the scale and privacy of neighboring properties

This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project is designed to give deference to the single-family residential use to the south side of the property, which is also a category 2 historic structure on the City's historic inventory.

5. Project Open Space

Private and public open space shall be provided so that it is usable for the residents and visitors of the site

This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project provides open space with private balconies for the residents and an at-grade landscaping and walkways for residents and office users.

6. Parking Design

Parking shall be accommodated but shall not be allowed to overwhelm the character of the project or detract from the pedestrian environment

This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project's parking is provided below grade. The lift system to enter the garage is visible but does not detract from the pedestrian environment.

7. Large Multi-acre sites

Large sites (over one acre) shall be designed so that street, block, and building patterns are consistent with those of the surrounding neighborhood

This finding does not apply.

8. Sustainability and Green Building Design

Project design and materials to achieve sustainability and green building design should be incorporated into the project

This finding can be made in the affirmative in that the project is subject to the California Green Building Code (CalGreen, Tier 2) and includes solar panels.

Finding #3: The design is of high aesthetic quality, using high quality, integrated materials and appropriate construction techniques, and incorporating textures, colors, and other details that are compatible with and enhance the surrounding area.

The project is consistent with Finding #3 because:

The project uses high quality materials that are incorporated well into the design of the structure. The design is well thought out to consider neighboring structures, including designing the massing to give deference to the historic structure to the south, while also considering the privacy of neighboring residents. The proposed colors are neutral and warm, compatible with surrounding color schemes. The project incorporates landscaping and reduces paving in comparison to the existing condition at the site in order to enhance the appearance of the site, particularly along the street frontage.

Finding #4: The design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and providing for elements that support the building's necessary operations (e.g. convenient vehicle access to property and utilities, appropriate arrangement and amount of open space and integrated signage, if applicable, etc.).

The project is consistent with Finding #4 because:

The design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic to the site. The project provides short-term bicycle parking within the front courtyard as well as one bicycle rack along Waverley. A long-term bicycle parking room is also accessible from the elevator to provide ease of access to residents utilizing this room. The project provides a single point of vehicular access from Waverley. The project provides appropriate trash rooms for the different uses and provides appropriate utilities rooms and connections on the site. The project exceeds the require on-site open space requirements.

Finding #5: The landscape design complements and enhances the building design and its surroundings, is appropriate to the site's functions, and utilizes to the extent practical, regional indigenous drought resistant plant material capable of providing desirable habitat that can be appropriately maintained.

The project is consistent with Finding #5 because:

The project will provide drought-tolerant planting, the majority of which were selected from a California native palette.

Finding #6: The project incorporates design principles that achieve sustainability in areas related to energy efficiency, water conservation, building materials, landscaping, and site planning.

The project is consistent with Finding #6 because:

In accordance with the City's Green Building Regulations, the project will satisfy the requirements for CALGreen Mandatory + Tier 2. This includes providing solar and being an all-electric building. Drought tolerant native planting would also help to reduce water use and the planting palette complies with the Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance requirements.