



DATE: August 27, 2014

AGENDA ITEM # 2

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: Mixed-Use Building – 999 Fremont Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Review Design Review application 14-D-04 and Use Permit application 14-UP-05

BACKGROUND

As directed by the City Council, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission provides advisory recommendations on development projects that require a transportation review. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission provides recommendations on a project's bicycle and pedestrian elements to the Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council.

The City does not have a bicycle parking ordinance, but does use the VTA Bicycle Technical Guidelines as a recommended bicycle parking guideline. A Class I space is defined as one that protects the entire bicycle and its components from theft, vandalism or inclement weather and is appropriate for long-term parking (two hours to all day). A Class II space is defined as a rack to which the frame and at least one wheel can be secured with a user provided U-lock or padlock and cable and is appropriate for short-term parking (less than two hours).

DISCUSSION

This is a Commercial Design Review and Conditional Use permit application for a new three-story, mixed-use building with five residential dwelling units and two commercial units at 999 Fremont Avenue. The existing site has a commercial building with a beauty salon. The project site is zoned Commercial Neighborhood (CN) is within the Loyola Corners Specific Plan Overlay district, which allow for the development of mixed-uses with a conditional use permit. The site is located along Miramonte Avenue, Fremont Avenue and A Street.

The main entrances to the two office condominium units and the lobby for five residential units are directly off of Fremont Avenue. The proposed mixed-use building is served by with fifteen garage parking spaces, when a total of sixteen parking spaces are required. The parking area would be accessible via a driveway on Miramonte Avenue. Since the driveway is located along Miramonte Avenue and approximately 60 feet from the intersection of Fremont Avenue and Miramonte Avenue, and 57 feet from the intersection with Miramonte Avenue and A Street, there may be sight visibility issues. The applicant will be completing a Traffic Impact Analysis, which will assess the

development's traffic effects on the transportation network in the immediate area. The study will also evaluate on- and off-site circulation, which may impact sight visibility.

As recommended by the VTA guidelines, the project should provide five bicycle parking spaces (three Class I and two Class II). The project meets this guideline by providing six Class I bicycle rooms and seven Class II bicycle racks in the covered parking area.

The sidewalk along Fremont Avenue would be nine-feet, six-inch with planters and benches located at the back of sidewalk (five-foot sidewalk width at the planters). A Class II bicycle facility is proposed along this portion of Fremont Avenue per the Bicycle Transportation Plan. The proposal does not include a bicycle lane along Fremont Avenue. Staff notes the following limitations for pedestrian and bicycle improvements along Fremont Avenue and requests comments regarding the proposed design:

1. Existing Proposal - The proposal provides increased pedestrian walkways with planters separating the sidewalk and streets to beautify the street and improve pedestrian safety. The proposal will not permit on-street parking, Class II bicycle lanes along Fremont Avenue, or the required minimum lane width of 13 feet. Staff recommends revising the plan to provide a minimum lane width of 13 feet. Staff requests comments from the BPAC whether a Class II bicycle facility is recommended along Fremont Avenue. Staff must note that a shared-lane marking or sharrow located along the center of a travel lane may provide bicyclists an alternative along Fremont Avenue.
2. Proposal with Class II Bicycle lane – If the BPAC requests the retention of a Class II bicycle lane along Fremont Avenue, staff must note that the combined width of the five-foot wide bicycle lane with two 13-foot wide lanes, will not permit on-street parking and may require reduced sidewalk widths and/or landscaping features.
3. Loyola Corners Concept Plan – The Loyola Corners Concept plan recommends improving Fremont Avenue with corner bulbouts, sidewalk treatment, on-street parking, planter fingers and bicycle lanes. The proposal includes planters and enhanced sidewalk widths. As discussed above, the right-of-way width may not accommodate all features of the concept plan due right-o-way width. Staff requests direction on prioritizing elements to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and access for the project and immediate area.

The sidewalk along Miramonte Avenue and A Street would be five feet wide without street trees. Miramonte Avenue and A Street do not have an established sidewalk and street tree pattern.

The subject site is located within the Loyola Corners Specific Plan area, and the plan recommends providing adequate and safety pedestrian and bike paths through Loyola Corners. The plan also recommends improving the appearance of the area through landscape design and pedestrian amenities by providing enhanced pavers, creating friendly pedestrian “bump-outs for seating, bike parking news racks and landscaping. The proposal incorporates an enhanced sidewalk along Fremont Avenue. In order to ensure the right-of-way improvements enhance pedestrian safety and contributes to an enhanced streetscape, staff requests comments regarding the proposed design, placement and material chosen along Fremont Avenue, Miramonte Avenue and A Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project, which meets the definition for an infill project, may qualify for a categorical exemption under Section 15332 of the California Environmental Quality Act. A complete environmental analysis will be conducted prior to review by the Planning and Transportation Commission.

Attachments: Site Plan

Cc: Alpheus Jessup, AIA Applicant and Architect
 Gregg Bunker, Owner